

# Fa'side Area Partnership

The Fa'side Area Partnership provides a forum for local communities to be better able to influence decisions and service provision in their area on a ward wide basis. The Fa'side ward covers the communities of Tranent, Elphinstone, Macmerry, Pencaitland and Ormiston, and the Partnership brings together Community Councils, Tenants groups, Parent Councils, elected members and representatives from local community groups and networks across this area to identify local priorities and plan for the action needed to deliver change.

A key task for the Fa'side Area Partnership is to develop a 10 year Area Plan for the ward. We are working on this at the moment and will be putting it out for wider consultation towards the summer.

## Improving Active Travel across Fa'side

Active Travel means walking and cycling (or skating and scooting) not just for leisure but also for accessing services and facilities like school or work. Being able to choose to use active travel to get where you want to go has many benefits such as improving health and wellbeing or reducing congestion and our impact on the environment. It can also improve opportunities for young people who don't have access to cars.

A working group was set up to develop plans for improving active travel in Fa'side. The group has held several meetings with council officers and have come up with 3 key goals we want to focus our attention on. These are:

1. Encouraging commuters to use walking or cycling for their journey, or at least part of their journey, to work.
  - This could help significantly reduce congestion in Tranent – but we would need to tie active travel routes in with bus and train services in the area and provide more secure cycle parking.
2. Encouraging more students to cycle to school.
  - There is a cycling culture at many Fa'side primary schools but this seems to disappear at Ross High. To build this up we need safe routes from the villages and safe bike storage at school.
3. Encouraging more people to use the path network we already have and identifying specific gaps in the routes.
  - There are lots of good paths in the ward both recreational and practical. We need to improve awareness of the path network, and ensure it effectively links with local amenities like the Loch Centre, or attractions like Glenkinchie Distillery.

Working in partnership with East Lothian Council on this has already started delivering benefits - including the building of a new shared-use path between Ormiston and Tranent for cyclists and pedestrians - and over the next few months we will be inviting the wider community to get involved and help prioritise which routes would make the biggest difference to them and encourage them to choose to use active travel more often.

## Newsletter April 2015

This is the first newsletter produced for the Fa'side Area Partnership.

It is designed to give the local community information about some of the work being undertaken by the Partnership to develop an Area Plan for the ward.

Here you can find updates on what is being done to:

- Improve opportunities for active travel in Fa'side;
- Involve young people in setting local priorities;
- Develop a masterplan for the future of Tranent Town Centre;
- Look at how existing community facilities in the ward are used and better understand the need for new / improved facilities;
- Explore what can be done to improve health outcomes for local people

## Plan for the Future of Tranent Town Centre

Thursday 30 April  
Ross High School

Drop In Exhibition 6pm  
Presentation &  
Discussion 7pm



# Tranent Town Centre Charrette – March / April 2015

## An intensive design process planning for the future of Tranent Town Centre

### So what is a 'charrette'?

The Oxford Dictionary defines a charrette as:

- a public meeting or workshop devoted to a concerted effort to solve a problem or plan the design of something.
- a period of intense work, typically undertaken to meet a deadline.

### Origins of the term 'charrette'

The word charrette is French for "cart" or "chariot". In the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris in the 19th century, it was common for student architects to continue working furiously in teams to meet a deadline at the end of term, when a cart would be wheeled among the students to pick up their scale models and other work for examination. As they kept working to apply the finishing touches during the trip the students were said to be working 'en charrette' i.e. in the cart. The term evolved into the current design-related usage to sum up the idea of working together right up until a deadline.

### What does this mean in planning?

In planning and urban design the term charrette is now commonly used to refer to a technique for consulting with a wide range of stakeholders over a short period of time. This type of charrette typically involves intense multi-day workshops with officials, residents, businesses and other groups with an interest in the area.

While the structure of a charrette varies, depending on the design problem to be addressed, charrettes often take place over a number of sessions with the group dividing into sub-groups. Each sub-group then presents its ideas and drawings to the full group for further discussion so that everybody's ideas are used to build up an overall picture of the way forward. In this way charrettes can be a way to quickly generate design solutions using the skills and ideas of a large and diverse group of people.

The challenges facing Tranent Town Centre are well known to anyone who regularly uses the town – traffic congestion, available parking, and a lack of clear pedestrian routes between key local facilities and services. There has also been a lot of change in the Town Centre in recent years as a growing population means there are more and more people moving through it and key services, like the library, council office and the day centre, have relocated away from the high street leaving civic buildings empty. Recent consultations across the community have also shown that residents tend to feel the town centre generally looks a bit run down, neglected and in need of a 'facelift'. Despite this the town centre is still a busy retail area, offering a range of retail, leisure and convenience services to the community.

With all of this in mind East Lothian Council, in collaboration with the Fa'side Area Partnership, secured funding for a **Town Centre Charrette – a 3 day intensive design and planning event focussed on developing a masterplan for the future of Tranent town centre.**

Over 3 days at the end of March 2015 Tranent residents, business owners, school children, teenagers, Council officers from Transport, Housing, Economic Development and Planning, community members from across the surrounding villages, elected members and staff from Historic Scotland, Sustrans and local community groups were involved in a range of events looking at how we can make Tranent work better for everyone living, working, using and moving through the town. These workshops concentrated on taking what we already knew about the issues for the town centre and designing solutions.

### Some of the questions the groups asked themselves included:

Would a 1-way system through the High Street help ease congestion problems?

What about having a roundabout at the Ormiston Rd junction?

What should we do with the old library building and council office at Civic Square? Knock them down? Put a road through the area? Or redevelop them for retail use?

What would draw a greater variety of businesses into the Town Centre?

What about other empty buildings? What is needed in the Town Centre and how could these be used to meet these needs?

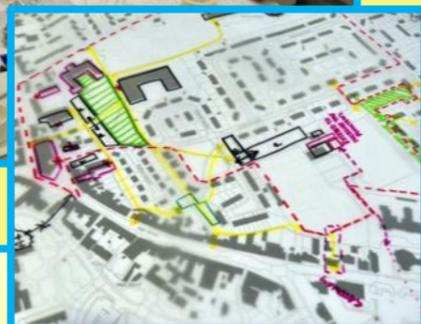
Most of Tranent High Street is within the town's Conservation Area. How can we better showcase and promote the history and heritage of the area?

How can we better use the greenspaces in the Town Centre?

What can we do to improve the backside paths? Could they be opened out further or given better lighting and signage to encourage more people to use them?

How can we better link the area around the Health Centre and the Loch Centre to the High Street?

What about the parking areas on Lindores Drive and at the George Johnston Centre? Can these be better organised?



Over the 3 days everyone involved took part in discussing, drawing and debating their ideas for change and began to map out a range of possible improvements. Kevin Murray Associates, the team of architects, planners, transport consultants and town centre specialists who were brought in to guide the process, have now taken all of this information away to work on developing some practical recommendations to make the town a better place to be.

At the end of this month they will be coming back to Tranent to present these options to the wider community with at a **public exhibition and meeting at Ross High School on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> of April from 6pm. Community members from across the Fa'side ward are invited to come along.**

There will be a drop in exhibition from 6pm providing a chance to look at and comment on the options, and a presentation of their recommendations from 7pm, followed by

opportunities for questions and discussion. If you are not able to attend on the 30<sup>th</sup> there are still ways you can make your views known - contact Fa'side Area Partnership by email or phone, tweet [@tranentcharret](https://twitter.com/tranentcharret) or find the project on facebook [tranentcharrette](https://www.facebook.com/tranentcharrette)

### - BREAKING NEWS -

In March 2015 Tranent was awarded £570,900 to fund improvements in the town's Conservation Area.

This should enable some of the ideas improving streetscape and highlighting history and heritage that are being developed through the Charrette to start being implemented straight away.

Find out more at the public meeting on the 30<sup>th</sup> April.

The Fa'side Area Partnership will then take all of this information and, working closely with East Lothian Council Planners, Transport, Conservation and Economic Development officers, develop a masterplan and town centre strategy to guide work and investment in the area over the next 10-20 years. It won't happen all at once but with a clear plan in place, everything that does happen will be adding to the same overall vision.

### The next steps...

- Come to the exhibition and presentation on the 30<sup>th</sup> April – from 6pm at Ross High School
- Tell us your preferred options and any concerns you have about the recommendations

## Community facilities across the ward

Over the last few months the Partnership has been mapping the range of venues available for community activities in the Fa'side ward. We have compiled a database of what facilities they offer and how they can be booked by local groups/individuals (and we are currently doing a similar exercise for sports facilities in the area). Details for 19 local venues are now available at [http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/16413/community\\_facilities\\_in\\_faside](http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/16413/community_facilities_in_faside). This information has been supplied by each venue however if you spot any omissions or errors please let us know.

Key priorities for the group at present are:

- Supporting Recharge's efforts to find a permanent base;
- Making village halls/centres more available to local people;
- Looking at how empty buildings in the area could be used to provide additional facilities for the community.

We have also been working closely with the Fraser Centre during their consultation about what is needed from a new community centre in Tranent. The information gathered here will be used by the Fraser Centre for a funding application to significantly redevelop their space and will also help the Partnership identify any remaining gaps in local provision.

## Understanding Health Inequalities in our area

Area Partnership members attended a workshop about Inequalities in Health on 17<sup>th</sup> January to help gain an understanding of the underlying causes of poor health outcomes. These are rooted in the inequalities people face throughout their lives – the condition in which people are born, grow, live, work and age. Tackling these means looking at issues wider than health: such as earnings, shift patterns, jobs, education, housing, stress, opportunities and lots more.

A sub-group to explore this further has met once and, drawing on information from the [Area Profile](#), began to identify some of the key issues local people face. It's early days yet but some of the emerging themes for the Area Plan may be around: support for families and good maternal health; healthy food in the community; increasing physical activity; social inclusion - particularly for single men. We recognise we need to explore more how these issues affect groups of people in our community. The next meeting of the sub-group, where we will be developing ideas for local initiatives, will be on May 12<sup>th</sup> at 6.30pm (venue tbc). If you would like to take part in this contact the Area Partnership.

Fa'side  
Area Partnership

## Engaging with young people

To truly be representative of the community it is important that the Area Partnership engages with people of all ages. To help do this a youth reference group was set up in October 2014.

This Group is co-ordinated by Recharge and meets regularly to discuss the topics raised by the Area Partnership from a young person's perspective and to raise their own topics that may not otherwise have been considered.

It is also not just typical 'youth issues' that the group is looking at. Recently they were involved in the consultation on the Main Issues Report and expressed strong views regarding the protection of landscape and wildlife, use of the Cockenzie power station site, a need for more facilities (not just more housing) in Fa'side and other local issues.

Through their discussions the group have identified 4 priorities for local young people which they are feeding into the Area Plan:

1. Improving the look, safety and environment of Tranent High St.;
2. Safeguarding and enhancing local greenspace and recreation areas;
3. Expanding the commercial and community facilities available;
4. Ensuring safe and accessible walking and cycling routes throughout the ward.

Finally the group has chosen a couple of short term projects to focus their activities on over the coming year.

These include:

- Working in partnership with ELC to establish a Skate Park in Tranent, ideally in the town centre and near other recreational facilities;
- Improving recycling and refuse collection facilities in our village and town centres.

**The Fa'side Area Partnership** is one of 6 Area Partnerships across East Lothian operating as the local voice of the East Lothian Partnership to deliver community planning across the county. You can contact Fa'side Area Partnership at [Faside-AP@eastlothian.gov.uk](mailto:Faside-AP@eastlothian.gov.uk) or on 01620 827822 and find meeting dates and minutes at [www.eastlothian.gov.uk/meetings/committee/107/east\\_lothian\\_partnership-faside\\_area\\_partnership](http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/meetings/committee/107/east_lothian_partnership-faside_area_partnership).

More information about Area Partnerships in other parts of East Lothian can be found at [www.eastlothian.gov.uk/EastLothianPartnership](http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/EastLothianPartnership)