

## **Dunbeg Development Group: Executive Summary**

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### **Executive Summary**

CADISPA undertook this piece of work based on its ethos of 'helping communities to help themselves'. The Dunbeg Development Group were involved at each stage of this survey and without their input, advice and guidance, this survey would not have been possible. The ultimate aim of this research was to help the people of Dunbeg explore what sustainable development could mean to them with regard to the community itself, the proposed Community Centre development, and the proposed housing development, based upon their own needs, ideas and visions for the future.

Results from the survey indicated that a number of people wished Dunbeg to remain as it is. However, for the majority of the residents, particularly amongst the youth, there was a great desire to witness change and development of the community.

The research highlighted the hopes and fears of the present and future for the residents of Dunbeg. Although there was some disagreement, there was much consensus. The range of issues which were raised in the survey included the following:

- The need for a space that would offer social facilities – sport, recreation and leisure that would simultaneously act as a focus for the community and a gathering place.

The community set out very clearly their wish for a suitable place for interaction. The school was the only available community venue at present and local people found that they have to travel to Oban to access most amenities. It was hoped that all ages could benefit from the facility but especially the young, the elderly, and those with special needs.

- The survey highlighted a desire to see more local services such as medical provision, as well as an increase in commercial opportunities such as shops and coffee shops.

Without the provision of a good public transport service those without cars were further disadvantaged, and there was a feeling that a cycle of decline would lead to younger people leaving the village.

- The young people (teenagers) of Dunbeg made clear their desire to be included in future planning of life in the village.

As there were presently two hundred and three young people living in the village, it was important that they were able to contribute to the planning and development of the village over the coming years.

The creation of a forum, through which young people could discuss and influence issues such as the future planning of the village was considered necessary. In addition, it was thought to be important that the Dunbeg 'shadow group' (primary pupils) should continue.

It was widely agreed that more housing was necessary. However, there was uncertainty on how this would affect the village. It was hoped that there would be further discussion, information dissemination, and consultation with the local population.

- There was concern over the proposed housing development. This stemmed mainly from the speed proposed by the developers to erect new housing and the size of the project, rather than the development itself.
- There were some immediate infrastructural issues that needed to be addressed, especially concerning roads and parking. Unless these issues were overcome in the near future they were likely to be compounded by future developments.
- There was a need to protect the natural and cultural heritage of the area and to enhance the village as a tourist destination.

Dunbeg was seen as an area of outstanding beauty that could attract tourists for reasons other than the marina or the Castle. It was thought that there was huge potential for development but that this should be balanced with preserving the fragile nature surrounding the area, and the tranquillity that attracted new residents to the village in the first place.

- There was a desire for the proposed Community Centre development to be driven and led by local people

The community was keen to pursue positive change. If local development is led by local people it produces additional skills in the community, and as a result, creates a skills base to proceed confidently towards resolving future issues. There seemed to be an energy in the community to drive development forward. With a history of smaller successful initiatives, the Dunbeg Development Group seemed competent and confident to undertake the proposed work.

Within the report that follows is an analysis and discussion on the consequences that future development could have for the village of Dunbeg. A development agenda is set out and recommendations are made for the community to consider.