



# Strategic Business Plan

A New Future for PLUS at the Family Hub, Cornton

October 2023



# Contents

<b>1.</b>	<b>Organisational Details</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Our Vision for the Family Hub</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>PLUS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>The Asset</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>What we will do with the Space</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Cornton</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>How the Space will Benefit PLUS and the Wider Community</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Strategic Fit</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>What the Community Thinks</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>11.</b>	<b>Governance</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>12.</b>	<b>Cost and Funding Strategy</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>13.</b>	<b>Financial Sustainability</b>	<b>39</b>
	<b>Appendix 1: Cash Flow Projections</b>	<b>40</b>

## 1. Organisational Details

Name of Organisation	PLUS (Forth Valley) Ltd		
Address of Organisation	Broadleys Road Springkerse Industrial Estate Stirling, FK7 7ST		
Lead Contact	[REDACTED]		
Telephone Number	[REDACTED]	Email Address	[REDACTED]
Website	<a href="http://www.plusforthvalley.org.uk">www.plusforthvalley.org.uk</a> Facebook: @PLUS88		



## 2. Our Vision for the Family Hub

PLUS will transform the Family Hub into a sustainable place-based facility that will change the lives of families across the Forth Valley. Though we have a focus on children and young adults with disabilities, we are passionate about integration and want this to be a place where everyone is welcome, can get the help they need and will be valued contributors to what happens here.

The centre itself will be a local sustainable social enterprise which secures jobs by creating a unique supportive hub, with fully accessible services, both inside and out, in the heart of the Forth Valley. We need a home for our work and we have searched for a home for many years that is a welcoming place for the whole community.



## 3. PLUS

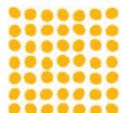
### The Organisation

PLUS is a registered charity which has been operating since 1988. We are a highly regarded, well established organisation with a stable history, working across the Forth Valley to provide a better quality of life for children and young people with disabilities and their families through social inclusion and regular short breaks. These short breaks offer parents and carers valuable time to themselves, which increases the capacity and resilience of families to continue in their caring role. For the young people, it offers them supported time with peers, with opportunities to develop independence, whilst taking part in events and activities which build their confidence and widen their experiences.

We facilitate group based support which enhances opportunities for children to reduce their social isolation and to increase the time they spend with their peers out of school hours. In addition, we are also able to complement this through the addition of 1:1 support where this may be more suitable to meet the needs of the child/their family or to enhance their care plan.

Our support also reaches out to parents and carers to offer them a safe space to ask questions, offload their difficulties and seek advice. We support in a variety of different ways such as 1:1 support, support groups, information and training sessions, Parent and toddler group, WhatsApp groups, private Facebook group.

Through our community of disability, we also reach out to the wider community, and over the years (and currently) have informed numerous local strategies such as the Autism Strategy, Play Strategy, Parenting Strategy, The Physical Activity, Sport and Wellbeing Strategy, and Stirling Alive with Volunteering. We have active partnerships with MacRobert Centre, the Tolbooth and Youth Services which enhances the provision we deliver. We have also worked closely with Clubs and groups in the area such as Scouts, Youth Clubs, Active Stirling, Coach My Sport, Rugby Tots and other local groups to support inclusion into



mainstream opportunities. Often through the provision of training, we enable groups to increase their confidence and knowledge of disability in order to support inclusion.

Our connectivity and longevity of service means that we are well networked. Having a presence within a physical geographic community, rather than an industrial estate will raise our profile and result in our reach widening further.

### **Need**

In discussions with Stirling Council Commissioning Team and Children with Disability Social Workers, which have taken place in August and October 2023, it has been made clear that there is significant strain on their services at present. Whilst the team have been working through their waiting list to assess the needs of individual children, they now have 30 children with a budget allocated, who are unable to access any support as there are no local providers with capacity.

They are now facilitating regular provider meetings to increase opportunities for communication and collaboration between providers. They also hope to ensure that if there is any ability to develop new approaches, that this is prioritised in order to take young people off the waiting list.

There is a further 53 young people on the waiting list, waiting for their assessment of need to be undertaken. The team are anticipating that most of these young people will have been reviewed by January 2024. However, this doesn't provide any additional capacity for providers to develop increased space.

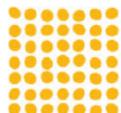
One issue we experience is the lack of suitable buildings in the area for us to provide a service - spaces that are truly accessible. For example, there are some buildings we use, but their accessible toilets are not big enough for a hoist or changing bed. Others are suitable buildings, but require a walk across cobbles, which a significant number of the young people we support can struggle with. Or venues don't have access to any outdoor space which is difficult for children who want to be able to

benefit from outdoor spaces. Or great venues, but no local parking or safe drop off point.

### **Our Current Situation and Experience of Leasing**

We have leased our current building since February 2013, so just over 10.5 years. We have a full repair and insurance lease and in the time we have made a number of improvements on the building including numerous upgrades to the outdoor area (with support from local businesses, the local community payback team and Glenochil Prison), oil tank replacement, boiler replacement, sensory room development, toilet renovations, new windows in 50% of the building, our new soft room (with indoor swing) and have just renovated our kitchen in April 2023.

We currently employ approximately 80 members of staff, ranging from part time to full time roles. The majority of our staff live within Stirling or the wider Forth Valley area. We also have active volunteers and would be keen to promote paid and voluntary opportunities within the community. We work closely with local schools and have 3 staff trained as mentors for school pupils. We host work experience pupils, who often have additional support needs. We work closely the Employability Teams within Stirling and Clackmannanshire.





## 4. Proposal

Our ask is as follows;

- The Family Hub Building and the associated grounds to the rear of the building
- The 4 garage spaces identified on the floor plan
- The 5 space car park immediately in front of the Building

This has been valued at [REDACTED]. PLUS is submitting an offer for [REDACTED]. This deduction of can be explained by the essential work required in order to ensure that the building will comply with the higher level accessibility requirements that our client group has.

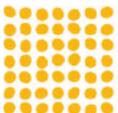
In addition to this we request full access to;

- All street car parking, the length of Castle Vale
- The overflow car park on the right hand side of Castle Vale, which is currently in use by Prison contractors

We appreciate the timescale for this element will be impacted until the contractors have completed the new build for the Prison Service, which is why we are acknowledging this area separately.

There is no cash value being offered for this space as it would be retained for open community access and as a result has no private value. Retention of this space is crucial to alleviate concerns from local residents, primarily in relation to health and safety risks around access for emergencies.

It is important to highlight some key benefits of this request for the Prison Service.



1. The Prison Service would no longer have liability for the on street parking bays or the overflow car park
2. There would be no cost to the Prison Service to demolish the concrete spaces to turn into a landscaped area
3. There would be a lower cost for immediate landscaping and for the longer term maintenance requirements

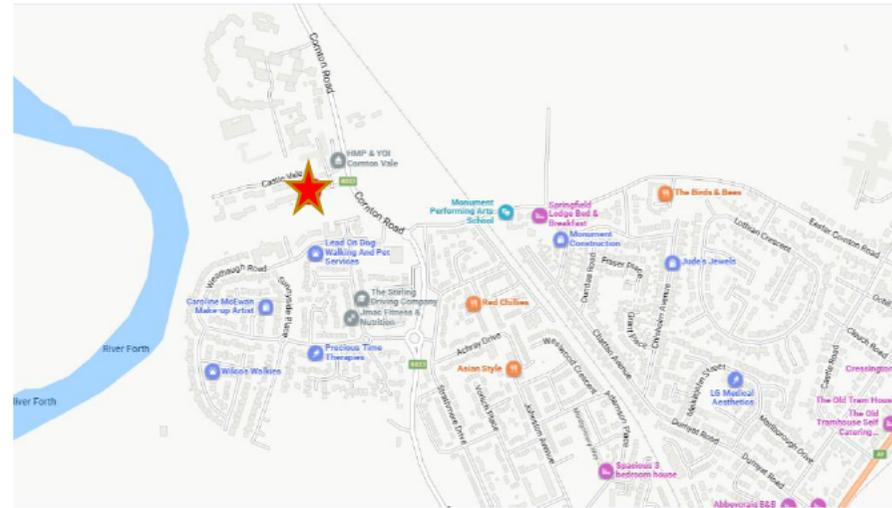
If successful, we have an addition request to consider.

- In order to allow PLUS to act asap, we request a 'Licence to Occupy' agreement to be initiated promptly. This would allow PLUS to have access to the building to begin the process of reconnecting utilities, making repairs, applying for funding etc. Our ambition would be to have the building in use by Summer 2024, which is a very tight timescale. This would allow for contracts and legal support to take place in the background, without delaying progression in the space. PLUS would be willing to cover the cost of this.

## 5. The Asset



Photo of front of building and 5-space car park. Garage area behind trees on right of image (top). Internal and garden space (right).





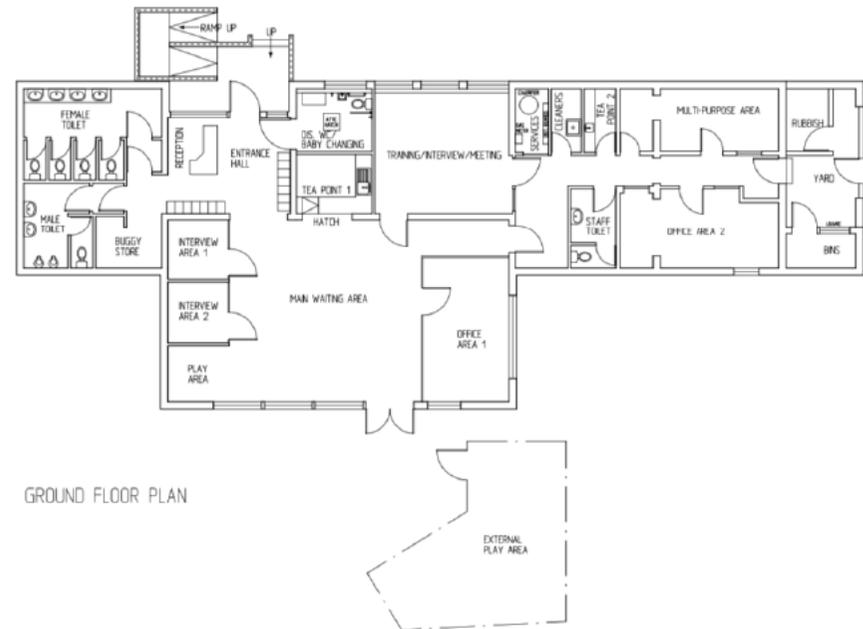
### Location

The Family Hub building is situated within Castle Vale which is nestled in beside Cornton Vale Prison in Cornton. The area is made up on one residential street with 43 properties. There are garages situated along the length of the road. All properties are on the left hand side forming two separate rows.

The Family Hub is the first building you approach as you enter the street. Continuing to the end of the street, there is a river walkway which takes you to Bridge of Allan or Stirling. Immediately across the river is Forth Valley College, Stirling Campus, Raploch.

The property has a gross internal area of 178 sq m (1916 sq ft). (For reference, our current building is 257 sq m, 2767 sq ft).

### Accommodation Schedule



The accommodation comprises the following:

### Main Space

- Entrance Vestibule with open reception area, small accessible toilet/baby change to the left hand side and male and female toilets to the right hand side behind the reception area. Additional storage space by toilet facilities noted as 'buggy store' on floorplan.
- Open plan, high ceiling bright hall/café area. Windows along length of back wall looking out into garden area.
- Small open server area with units, sink and fridge – no cooking facilities
- Cosy play corner
- 2 small meeting rooms/offices/pods
- 1 larger meeting room/pod, seat 3-4 desks and storage
- Main access door to garden.

### Additional Meeting Rooms

- Board Meeting Room/Training Space/Large office for 4-6 staff
- Cupboard with utility access
- Cleaners Store
- Galley kitchen
- Single staff toilet
- Large meeting room/office, seat 3-4 desks (small window and sky light)
- Smaller/narrower office or meeting room, seat 2-3 desks (no windows)
- Fire exit leading to bin store and utilities

### External to Building

There is a large fenced in back garden area with some secure play equipment. The fencing goes round the majority of the perimeter, with some fencing requiring reinstating. There are 2 gates into the back garden area, one at each end of the building.



### Parking

Immediately in front of the building, there is 5 parking spaces, 2 of which are disabled access spaces.

In addition, there are 4 garages included within the floor plan of the building. These are slightly further in front of the building, by the parking area.

### Additional Parking Requirements

There is on street parking bays down the right hand side of the street and a private overflow car park, which was for use by Prison Staff. Due to the current Prison renovations taking place, this car park is primarily in use by the contractors undertaking the work.



*These areas are also requested as part of the asset transfer request. Loss of access to these spaces is causing significant worry within the community. Retention of these spaces for the community is crucial to alleviate their concerns over access and safety in the longer term. These spaces would be for public access, with liability taken on by PLUS.*

### **Equipment**

The property contains a range of furniture at present. It is unclear at present whether any of this equipment will be included in the asset transfer.

---

## **6. What We Will Do With the Space**

These are our outline ideas at present and will be fleshed out following further research and engagement with the wider community, receipt of updated quotations and access to required funding.

### **For PLUS**

#### **Main Space**

This space will give us the ability to expand on the work of the charity from a site which we plan to ensure is fully accessible for all the young people we support. It is difficult for us to identify buildings to facilitate events due to the complex needs of some of the people we support. Events out in the community are not always suitable for the more complex support requirements experienced by the young people at PLUS. Being able to create a space that is safe, secure and adapted specifically for a highly vulnerable group within our community will continue to create a sense of belonging whilst supporting improved wellbeing for the parent/carers we work alongside.

We would undertake our core day-to-day activity here which would help us to increase our capacity to reach more children and young people with disabilities and their families. This would reduce the bottle neck in support which has occurred due to limited capacity within health and

social care providers. This is a National challenge, but definitely experienced locally.

This main space would be used creatively, with access to the 2 small pods and the larger meeting room space. We would want to create a mix of uses including:

- an IT room
- chill out space
- play area
- indoor swing
- arts and crafts space
- family support area
- a music room
- soft play space

Some areas would be able to be multipurpose to enable the team to utilise the space in a way which best suits the group attending. Likewise, this offers a benefit for external hires of the space when it doesn't purely resemble a playroom.

A review of the exit into the garden is required to ensure it is suitable for use by wheelchair users, or young people with unsteady gait. There may be a requirement to create a ramp at the door to ensure ease of entry/exit.

#### **Toilets**

The current accessible toilet within the building is not suitable for many of the young people we work alongside, who require support with their personal care. For example, there would not be space to have a hoist (mobile or ceiling), changing table, wheelchair and staff.





As a result, the toilets are not currently fit for purpose for the client group we support. Whilst the accessible toilet is in good condition, it is more suitable for use as a baby changing area. We would require the standard to increase to reflect the recommendations for 'Changing Places' toilets<sup>1</sup>. To enable this, we would propose a redesign of the current toilet area and 'buggy store' to encompass this.

<sup>1</sup> <https://pamis.org.uk/campaigns/changing-places-toilets/>

Due to concerns identified in the Building Condition Survey, particularly around the male toilets, an overhaul was required. We would be looking to reconfigure the toilet area to incorporate a much larger accessible toilet space, which will allow us to meet the needs of our young people in a dignified way.

### Server Hatch/Kitchen

There is not a fully functioning kitchen within the building. At a minimum, we would require a kitchen that would allow us to be able to close/lock the door for safety reasons. A significant proportion of the

children and adults we support have little or no awareness of danger. The current layout would significantly add to the risk assessments we have for individual young people.

Our hope would be to create a proper kitchen, which will ensure that we can continue to work on life skills with young people at our events, through cooking, baking, cleaning etc.

To enable this, we would be looking to remove the current accessible toilet, take down the dividing wall between the toilet and the server area and then combine this into a new Kitchen space. Guidance to be taken with regards to location for the kitchen door, with access to be reviewed with health and safety at the forefront.

Having access to a fully functioning kitchen within the building also increases the future potential to generate an income from renting the space out for meetings or other events with and for the community.

### Other spaces

There are 3 further meeting room spaces in the building. We would initially be looking for some of these spaces to be flexible, however some suggestions for these specific spaces are;

- The large board room

Youth space, adults activity room, which would also be suitable as a parent support area. This room can be set up with sofas, a pool table and other activity suggestions, which would be more focused on the older people we support.

- Narrow office

Consideration as to whether this would be best placed as a staff room, sensory room, or a back office. This could be for office staff working in the building and/or Event Coordinators. Equally, with there being no windows to the outside in this space, there is consideration of this space being suitable for use as a sensory room. Being at the end of the hallway would also mean this would be a quieter space, which could become a 'chill out' area with soft furnishings, beanbags, books etc



- Larger office

As with the office above, there is potential for this room to become a sensory room, although it would be large. Alternatively, it could be a quiet space, a games/IT area, TV room or a craft area.

We believe the space offers so many opportunities and our challenge will be to utilise the space in a way which maximises the opportunities for the community.



### Secure Entranceway

The young people supported by PLUS are highly vulnerable. Everyone we support has a disability. Around 70% are autistic, however we support individuals with any disability including individuals with a

diagnosis of Epilepsy, Cerebral Palsy, Diabetes, Global Learning Delay, Downs Syndrome, Tourette's, Fragile X Syndrome, Visual Impairments, Hearing Impairments, Hydrocephalus, Pica, Sensory Processing Disorder, ADHD, Williams Syndrome, Sotos Syndrome... to name a few.

We take a personalised approach to our service delivery to ensure we are able to meet the needs of each individual. Everyone's disability presents differently, however it is common to find that our young people can have a low awareness of danger. Because of this, it is important that we ensure the building is secure.

We mentioned repairs required to fencing in the garden, for example. However, we would also have to review the entranceway to the building which would currently be assessed as a high risk area.

This is due to the fact that there is only one door to go through before being out in the street and onto a busy, fast moving road which has limited visibility in some areas. We would also require entry and exit to be controlled as you would see within a school setting, for example.

We will review the entranceway to consider an alternative layout to enhance security. Not only would this allow us to create a welcoming entrance, but it would also provide an opportunity to reduce heat loss when the main entrance door is open.

### Car Park

We would look to continue using the car park immediately in front of the building, enabling families to use it as a drop off/pick up zone. However, we are conscious of the tension locally along with the high level of concern around the potential loss of parking which is detailed within the site plans for the Prison development.

We do not want to put additional pressure on to the street parking when we have staff at the building. Having a positive relationship with our neighbours from the outset is essential. This is a significant change for them and we want to consider how they are supported and informed throughout the transition. We want to be able to work with our neighbours in a cooperative manner, rather than hearing



discontent and the strain when members of our team are looking for a parking space.

Consequently, we are proposing that as part of the asset transfer request, PLUS also takes ownership of the street parking and overflow carpark. This is land currently marked for greenspace, which would require further time and budget for the Prison Service to develop and maintain. We would hope for this land to be retained as is.

Specifically, our request would include;

- Street parking the length of Castle Vale, spaces currently open for community access, although under the ownership of the Prison Service
- The Prison overflow car park which is accessible from Castle Vale and currently in use for the contractors involved in the Prison Development

Whilst it is likely that the full car park would not be required for cars, we would be keen to retain the full area and engage with the community as to how the space could be utilised. For example, introducing planters and encouraging an intergenerational gardening project, whilst making the space more appealing. Using the space to allow the children to get out on bikes and scooters, where they are not on a main road.

In addition, there are opportunities to work alongside local charity 'Recyke-a-bike' to facilitate events for the community and 'Bikes for All', an Active Stirling Project providing access to accessible bikes and trikes for people with disabilities. In discussion with Active Stirling we could support a meeting point for local walking groups, with members of our team attending training as walking leaders. This would encourage the local community to improve their wellbeing in an inclusive manner.

We would discuss any potential projects with the local community in advance of any developments taking place.

These parking areas would be retained for community use, with liability for the spaces being with PLUS.

### Enclosed Garden

The garden offers an exciting opportunity for our children and young people. Surrounded by a natural environment of green space and trees, we would like to continue to develop opportunities within this space.

An immediate priority would be to undertake a risk assessment of the area, reviewing the vegetation and checking for any sign of any unwanted/dangerous weeds. We would need to upgrade the fencing around the perimeter of the garden – a section is damaged and no longer standing.

The internal facing design of the fencing would need altered as the horizontal bars create a high risk for some of the young people we support, who would be able to use these bars as a ladder for climbing. We would want to ensure that the garden space is also accessible to children who are unsteady on their feet, or who use wheelchairs.

### Community Garden

We are keen to support the community in their drive to have increased opportunities to meet socially within their community. From the Report by Stirling Council, 'Cornton Conversations', residents shared what they would like to improve in the area and access to fresh fruit and vegetables at a reasonable charge was raised as a current issue.

We asked in our community engagement events whether an intergenerational gardening project would be of interest and 48 (77.42%) were in support of this with a further 5 (8.1%) maybe being interested in a development like this.

Knowing the positive impact that the Community Garden Project in Braehead, Stirling has, it would be great to be able to create a smaller scale opportunity within Cornton. This may be within or around our garden area, utilising some of the parking spaces, or working with the



community to identify a more suitable location – for example, near or at the local allotments.

The benefit of this is that it encourages more people to spend time outdoors. It reduces the social isolation felt by so many. It will contribute to the regeneration of the community spirit that residents told us they missed. It would involve all elements of the community – the nursery, school, youth group, residents, as well as young people who attend PLUS.

We see great potential here to have a high level of community involvement and engagement alongside considerations of an intergenerational approach to the development.

---

## 7. Cornton

Cornton is an area with a high level of deprivation, but a low level of presence from external organisations and support. (More than a third of people in Cornton live in one of the most deprived 10% of all areas in Scotland. Ref: Locality Action Plan for Cornton, attached)

Spaces which used to be available to the community to congregate either no longer exist, are deemed unsafe to visit by some residents or have restricted access. The locality plan notes ‘there has been a long-term continuing decline in the availability of services, and in the capacity and resilience of the community.’ There is a complex narrative in the area and a feeling of ‘nobody caring’, however there was a real openness and transparency in our community engagement and a desire by residents to bring back the sense of community which several generations of residents felt has been lost.

There are some great services in the area, such as the library, the food bank and the lunch club – all of which have been spoken about so highly by residents we met with. Youth activities were praised, but as felt in many areas, there just isn’t enough.



---

PLUS is a charity and so we do have a specific remit in place. However we don’t want to just be based in Cornton. We want to be part of the area and contribute to change with the community.

From our discussions this would include collaboration with the nursery and school around ASN and family support. It would involve being a partner in community developments, facilitating litter picks, intergenerational gardening projects and community volunteering. We want to be present and where possible contribute to regenerating the sense of community the residents are so keen to be part of.



## 8. How the Space will Benefit PLUS and the Wider Community

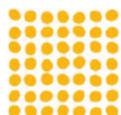
Social and Community Benefit	
Community development opportunities	<p>Letting space to the local community, community organisations and bringing external service providers into the community will open up opportunities for activities such as for young people, isolated older people and struggling families.</p> <p>We will encourage community involvement, engaging with different groups to develop initiatives like a coffee morning, community garden, litter picks, walking groups or alternative options.</p>
Collaboration and engagement	<p>PLUS has always taken a collaborative approach to what we do. We ask and we listen. We evolve and we develop. We can't be everything to everyone, but we can make connections, share our experience and support positive change which is community led. We have a history of working alongside other organisations and professionals and are highly regarded, not only in the Forth Valley, but across Scotland – particularly in relation to organisations similar to PLUS where we have initiated a community for support and networking.</p>
Visibility and local support	<p>The disabled children and young people we support will have a safe space, a community location which isn't hidden away, resulting in</p>

	<p>better awareness of our work and earlier access to support for those who need it.</p>
Retention of a high quality fixed asset in the community	<p>A building will be saved from demolition, at time when there are so few opportunities like this in the area. This is a significant asset which will continue to be of benefit to the wider community as well – a place to meet, to share stories, to have a cuppa, to access support, to rent a space, to contribute to the rebuilding of the community spirit.</p> <p>The building will be made available to the community.</p>
Reduction in waiting lists – access to support before crisis	<p>The significant waiting lists for health and social care support will be reduced. Unpaid carers will have access to respite when they need it. Unpaid carers and their children will feel less isolated, will be more networked and better supported in their caring role.</p>
Wider benefits	<p>We have already been providing input within the Prison Service, in partnership with Inclusion Forth Valley. We have delivered training to Prison Officers and to inmates with a focus on disability awareness and Autism.</p> <p>We have then provided bespoke support to individual families outside of the prison, advising them and guiding them to enable them to best meet the needs of their children. We will continue to grow our partnership with Inclusion Forth Valley to help where we can.</p> <p>It is well known that there are large percentages of the prison population who are likely</p>



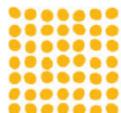
	undiagnosed with additional needs. Our service focuses on getting the right support to the right people at the right time.
Increased opportunities	<p>We would work with other providers to enhance the opportunities in the community rather than duplicating. More available at different times, rather than residents having to choose an opportunity to engage with.</p> <p>We want to be part of the community, by supporting but also by initiating opportunities for community involvement. Looking at ways to enhance the area and the pride residents experience. For example, an action day to clear the burn to reduce the risk of flooding, regular litter picking sessions, supporting community walking groups and more – which we can identify through continued listening and engagement.</p>
20 Minute Neighbourhoods	<p>We are committed to 20 minute neighbourhoods and can support the development of local accessible services.</p> <p>Bringing a new service in to the area will be beneficial to families locally who have a child with a disability. As PLUS provides support to children and adults across Stirling, we know we have several families in the immediate areas of Cornton, Causewayhead, Raploch and Bridge of Allan. In discussion with nursery staff, it is clear that there are young children being identified as requiring additional support and interventions. Our family support staff would be able to work closely with the nursery and families to ensure</p>

	<p>they have the information they need to support their children to the best of their ability.</p> <p>We would engage with services that are currently in the area, as well as services looking to have a local presence with the potential of offering space in our building to enable easier local access to support. This would support access to services for the community in their community.</p> <p>Our young people would also be wanting to be part of the community as they support us to build our identity locally. We would look at opportunities to upskill members of the community around inclusion, disability awareness and communication. We would be arranging visits to the local library, spending money in the local shops and engaging with other services in the area to identify volunteering opportunities for young adults with disabilities.</p> <p>We will explore opportunities to work closely with the School which might range from support to parents, engaging with pupils around disability awareness and inclusion and community activities like litter pick events. It was proposed that we review a cluster led approach to raising awareness and this will be considered once there is progress made.</p>
Community Involvement and Ownership	<p>PLUS was founded by parents and carers whose children had disabilities. We continue to ensure that there are parents on our board to ensure their ongoing involvement in the development of our charity.</p> <p>We also involve our young people in decision making, supporting their independence but also</p>



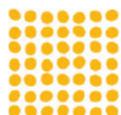
	<p>helping us – for example being involved in recruiting senior members of staff.</p> <p>We do this through choice. We do this because we care about the opinion of those we support. We do this because our young people and their parents matter.</p> <p>We would continue to promote this within the wider community, where it would be appropriate to do so.</p> <p>In terms of ownership, if we are successful with the asset transfer request, we would be enabled to own a building and invest in the future of the children and families we work alongside, whilst finding our role within the community.</p>
Social and leisure opportunities	<p>Further consultation would offer clarity around this as to whether there would be interest in PLUS providing support for Community Walking groups in the area (in collaboration with Active Stirling), or indoor yoga/pilates classes open to the wider community.</p> <p>Creating a regular event for the community to join us, such as a breakfast club or a drop in café, or a parent and toddler groups and baby classes would also fulfil this target.</p> <p>*We are aware a Parent and Toddler group has just opening in October 23. We would make ourselves available to support, particularly if any children were showing signs of having additional support needs.</p>
Other benefits	<p>There is a want to improve the Play Park facilities in the area. PLUS would be keen to support this engagement and development.</p>

Health Benefits	
Health and wellbeing, isolation and companionship opportunities	<p>This is integral to the work that PLUS does at present. We feel strongly about providing this to individuals who access PLUS and so naturally we would be keen to ensure these opportunities are more widely available to the community.</p> <p>Integration is central to our vision, opening up opportunities for our children, young people and families to mix with the community and vice versa, rather than creating segregation. While safe space is important, we are passionate about opening up the centre to the wider community.</p>
Tackle Inequalities	<p>PLUS was founded to remove barriers which existed for children with disabilities and their families. They were not allowed to attend play schemes, holiday programmes or clubs without a parent.</p> <p>As we say on our website;  ‘PLUS works across the Forth Valley to improve the lives of children and young adults with disabilities, and their families. Along with our trustees, staff and volunteers, we aspire to work alongside the young people we support and their families, joining them in their journey’s from diagnosis, throughout education and into early adult life.’</p> <p>The earlier these relationships can develop, the more enabled local parent carers will be, which directly tackles the inequality and disadvantage our family’s experience.</p>



	<p>PLUS has created opportunities for young people and their families where they can be themselves. They don't have to act, to mask. Their needs can be met by our highly skilled staff team, parents can trust that their children are safe when they are with us. They can access short breaks which supports them in their caring role. They know we care and can provide additional support during difficult times.</p> <p>Our tagline is 'disabilities are no barrier to fun'. We focus on inclusion and personalising our approach to each individual to enable them to participate in a way that works for them.</p> <p>This is very much within the ethos of everything we do.</p>
Aligns with ambitions for wellbeing	<p>We take a wellbeing approach within our organisation – both in relation to the individuals we support, but also to our staff team. We engage regularly with the staff via supervision and team meetings. We complete individual and team wellbeing plans to enable us to be more aware of the needs of the team and how best to support them. We have an employee counselling service in place and are in the process of setting up financial wellbeing and savings opportunities via a Credit Union.</p> <p>This is more than just a building for PLUS. It is a safe space for unpaid carers, with increased opportunities to access support, guidance and advice in a more accessible location. It is awareness that PLUS exists so we can reach vulnerable members of our community earlier – providing opportunities for engagement and</p>

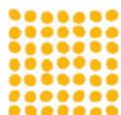
	<p>making connections to reduce the isolation that many carers experience.</p> <p>Disability isn't connected to class or location and as a consequence, there are impacts of disability across every community in Stirling. The young people we support want to give back. They want to experience a sense of achievement, develop their confidence and to feel that they belong. Being part of the wider community will enable them to give back to the Cornton Community. This will result in inclusion taking place, relationships developing and shared outcomes in terms of contributing to Cornton being a positive, safe and connected place with a reinvigorated community spirit.</p>
Reduced distress and access secured	<p>Distressed families will be able to park safely beside their homes. They will not have to worry about access for emergency services when cars are lining both sides of the street. They will retain the status quo with the support of PLUS, which the main thing they are asking for. They want to feel safe and listened to. We want to support this.</p>
Collaboration for Health and Wellbeing	<p>We will continue to explore our initial discussions with Active Stirling and Recycle-a-bike with regards to working more closely with them in reviewing physical health and wellbeing opportunities for the community.</p>





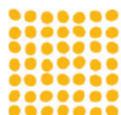
Economic Benefits	
<p>Employment opportunities and economic regeneration</p>	<p>PLUS is an employer of approximately 80 members of staff at present. We recruit regularly and as the Family Hub would allow PLUS to expand our services, there would be a requirement to recruit staff and volunteers to our team, In addition to staff providing direct support to our young people, we may also be looking for a caretaker and cleaner.</p> <p>We create opportunities for volunteering, supported volunteering and work placements, and host placement students from local colleges and universities. We believe in a circular economy</p>

	<p>approach, where feasible, and encourage our expenditure to remain local.</p> <p>As we make further progress, we may also require additional administrative staff and family support staff.</p> <p>We would establish a local supply chain (including sole traders and social enterprises) to ensure we are developing local and community wealth.</p>
<p>Training and education opportunities</p>	<p>We already have significant experience hosting students from school, college and university to undertake work experience and placements. In addition, we work alongside the employability teams to host placements. We are keen to continue to develop opportunities which will be influenced by future engagement with the community and other local service providers.</p> <p>We currently have a focus in supporting and developing the young people we work alongside, encouraging them to consider ways to be part of the community, for example via supported volunteering opportunities. Whilst this doesn't generate an income for individuals, there is a significant volume of research detailing the benefits of volunteering, which includes but isn't limited to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased confidence</li> <li>- Improved self esteem</li> <li>- Knowing their contribution is making a difference to other people</li> <li>- Skill Development</li> </ul>



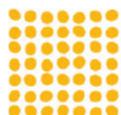
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunity to include within CV and have access to a referee</li> <li>- Feeling valued and part of a teamImproved mental well being</li> </ul> <p>We provide high quality training to our team of staff who are skilled in their roles and are currently our strongest asset. We look after our team. We care.</p>
Community regeneration	<p>By being present in the area, this will bring more people to Cornton.</p> <p>As an independent charity with a specific remit for disability we cannot solely contribute to regeneration of a geographical community.</p> <p>However as noted above, we absolutely would want to be part of this. We would manage this sensitively however, ensuring that we focus on the development of relationships and trust, rather than jumping straight in. Our role may be in providing a safe space to meet in the evening or supporting the community to have their voices heard.</p> <p>We would look to have the voice of our young people involved in this as well. If there are opportunities to provide support, which wouldn't go against our charity registration, then we would encourage, support and take part in the wider drive within the community.</p> <p>We noted before about not just being in a building in the area. We would be part of the community. We would be neighbours and therefore we would be looking to focus on relationships and support within our community.</p>

	<p>Elements of our service wishes, for example the recruitment of staff and volunteers, collaborative working with the nursery, school and youth services, intergenerational activities and gardening projects will all naturally contribute to the sense of neighbourhood involvement and development.</p>
Community Wealth Building	<p>PLUS is a Real Living Wage employer. We would be recruiting for staff, and there will be new roles created in relation to this space. We invest in our workforce, including our volunteers, ensuring that they are highly skilled in the work they undertake. This supports the retention of our valuable team.</p> <p>We have experience in supporting work and volunteer placements often for those with no experience, but at times for individuals who have their own difficulties perhaps with their mental or physical health or their own disability. We are able support and adapt opportunities to engage with a variety of support needs. This can often be the first step in terms of confidence building to then enable individuals to move on to alternative opportunities which could include transitioning into longer term employment.</p> <p>Where possible we believe in a circular economy approach – identifying local companies to undertake work we require. Retaining our expenditure in the locality strengthens our local economy and directly contributes to community wealth building.</p> <p>Having the opportunity to purchase the Family Hub will also enable growth and development of PLUS, a charity which has provided significant services in the Stirling area for over 35 years. This purchase would support the sustainability of our services for</p>



	<p>many years to come, allowing any investment we make to be retained within the charity rather than benefitting a profit making landlord. Having security of accommodation, adapted to ensure accessibility is prioritised and meets the needs of all of our young people is key. At present there are so few facilities offering safe space for personal care – for example, with access to a changing bed and hoist. This limits the opportunities available for some of our children, young people and their families.</p>
<p>Investment shaped by needs and aspirations of local community ambitions</p>	<p>We know the need for families whose children have a disability. PLUS has been supporting families locally since 1988. Our growth over the last 5 years has been significant. Demand continues to outstrip capacity. We need to review and redesign our approach to enable more families to access respite. We are working closely with our social work colleagues to understand the pressures – whilst also listening to the young people and the families we support.</p> <p>From a geographical community perspective, we would want to revisit conversations, which took place during our community engagement events. We would be looking to find similarities in our ambitions that would enable us to engage with local residents in the community and support increased community wellbeing and pride.</p> <p>The chair of our board has a career in Community Education and Development, continuing to work at local and national levels in relation to Youth Work. Our CEO is experienced in working with communities across Scotland to enable them to create models of support that suit their needs, but</p>

	<p>also working in individual communities within the Stirling Council area, engaging with people where they are, where they feel safe. This offers 2 examples whereby we have the skills and knowledge to join the community and guide them towards their aspirations – but allowing this to continue to be community led. Working in partnership with community members and established local groups will be key relationships to support this ambition.</p>
<p>Aligns with ambitions for inclusive economic development</p>	<p>A fairer economy is a stronger economy and one where a 3rd sector organisation can have ownership over a community space rather than remaining in the rental market will align with these ambitions.</p>
<p>Community need</p>	<p>From a geographical community perspective, more than a third of people in Cornton live in one of the most deprived 10% of all areas in Scotland. This is more than just PLUS being able to offer supported employment or volunteering.</p> <p>Collaboration is key to support the community to continue to raise their resilience to support more positive outcomes and less social-economic disadvantage.</p>
<p>Being present to support through ongoing challenges eg cost of living crisis</p>	<p>At a time when we are working through a cost of living crisis and are still recovering from the pandemic, things are difficult for so many in our community. Unpaid Carers are disadvantaged from a financial perspective, often unable to work because the support needs of their children are so high. However, the area of Cornton also has a high level of deprivation as evidenced by the SIMD index, which brings an additional vulnerability to the community. With limited community spaces in</p>



	the area, PLUS would be able to support the work of the nursery, school, church, Community Council, CAPP, Community workers in adding to the safe spaces available for the most vulnerable members of the community
Sustainability	PLUS will have increased security and sustainability for the future. Investing in a building, we own rather than paying money to a landlord. Opportunities for the transfer of assets is about bringing sustainability in a socially moral way.
<b>Environmental Benefits</b>	
Aligns with ambitions for Net Zero	<p>We are committed to Net Zero, although we will have further work to undertake on the building to enable us to reach targets.</p> <p>We would intend on undertaking reviews within the building in relation to utilities, lighting, heating, insulation, water usage, the energy efficiency of windows etc. We would establish a plan for reducing the impact the building has as well as reviewing opportunities for carbon offsetting.</p>



## 9. Strategic Fit

### National

#### Scottish Government National Performance Framework

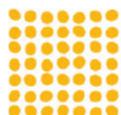
Scotland's National Performance Framework provides a vision for Scotland with broad measures of national wellbeing covering a range of economic, health, social and environmental indicators and targets. The Framework is intended to inform discussion, collaboration and planning of policy and services across Scotland, encompassing the public sector, businesses, civil society and communities. The table below sets out the National Outcomes of most relevance to the concept at the Family Hub:

<b>Children and Young people:</b> people grow up loved, safe and respected, so that	Development of indoor and outdoor space helps to provide the conditions in which all children can be healthy and active. These facilities, along with our own support to children and young people with disabilities, can help to provide stimulating activities and
--	--



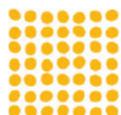
<p>they can realise their full potential.</p>	<p>encourage children to engage positively with the built and natural environment and to play their part in its care.</p> <p>More broadly, the Family Hub contributes to the aspiration that our communities are safe places where children are valued, nurtured and treated with kindness.</p> <p>With opportunities for the geographical community to access and work alongside PLUS in some specific projects, the benefits are wider than just the families we support.</p> <p>A commitment to work alongside the nursery, primary school and youth services also contributes to a Cornton which has a richer offering for young people on their doorstep, whether this be from a learning and educational perspective, via volunteering opportunities or future employment.</p>
<p><b>Communities:</b> people live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe</p>	<p>This National Outcome focuses specifically on the development of resilience and empowerment in deprived communities (such as Cornton). Development of the Family Hub will include working alongside the community to create opportunities where we can support and promote access to the natural green space. With the river walkway on our doorstep and the ability for PLUS staff to become trained as community walking leaders to explore the surrounding area, there will be a promotion of leisure activities which will positively enhance our lived and our health.</p> <p>More generally, the work of the Family Hub would contribute to the aspiration that we live</p>

	<p>in friendly, vibrant and cohesive communities which value diversity and support those in need; where people are encouraged to volunteer, take responsibility.</p> <p>The local residents have the ambition to re-energise the community spirit and PLUS would feel privileged to be able to work alongside the community to support this goal.</p>
<p><b>Health:</b> people are healthy and active</p>	<p>Whilst there is no specific sport or play area nearby, we are aware of the drive within the community to make improvements within the local play park. PLUS has been involved in the development of 2 other parks in the Stirling Council area – King’s Park and a park in Calendar. By reaching out to our families to support engagement in the design of these parks, we were able to ensure that accessibility for children and young people with disabilities was considered at the planning stage and not as an afterthought.</p> <p>As noted before, working alongside Active Stirling to support local walking groups would also enable us to increase activity levels, whilst reducing any social isolation experienced in the community. Our mental health is as important as our physical health. Developing relationships and feeling connected are crucial – alongside the well-researched benefits of spending quality time outdoors.</p>
<p><b>Poverty:</b> people tackle poverty by sharing opportunities,</p>	<p>The aspiration is that our achievements, potential and life choices are not decided at birth or by class or background; and that we are</p>



<p>wealth and power more equally</p>	<p>all able to enjoy financial security, have a decent job, home and a good life.</p> <p>The Family Hub will improve the opportunities offered to unpaid carers in our area. Unpaid carers have been hard hit from the cost of living crisis, are more likely to be in poverty<sup>2</sup></p> <p>A Carers UK report stated ‘many carers experience significant disadvantage to their own lives; often living in poverty, in poorer health’.<sup>3</sup></p> <hr/> <p><sup>2</sup><a href="https://www.jrf.org.uk/blog/unpaid-carers-changing-systems-trap-them-poverty">https://www.jrf.org.uk/blog/unpaid-carers-changing-systems-trap-them-poverty</a></p> <p><sup>3</sup><a href="https://www.carersuk.org/media/yswdcjur/state-of-caring-2022-a-snapshot-of-unpaid-caring-in-scotland-final.pdf">https://www.carersuk.org/media/yswdcjur/state-of-caring-2022-a-snapshot-of-unpaid-caring-in-scotland-final.pdf</a></p> <p>We aim to bring people together to support connections, which then makes it easier to identify when people are struggling.</p> <p>Whilst we are unable to directly target poverty within the wider community of Cornton<sup>4</sup> we would be supporting in other ways via volunteering and employment opportunities, working with local groups and organisations, being involved in community initiatives, creating opportunities which support general health and wellbeing (walking projects, intergenerational gardening). Projects with mutual benefits which will support and promote a sense of belonging and achievement whilst reducing isolation.</p> <hr/>
--------------------------------------	---

	<p><sup>4</sup>This is due to our specific charitable status with OSCR which focuses on service delivery for individuals with disabilities.</p>
<p><b>Environment:</b> people value, enjoy, protect and enhance their environment</p>	<p>The project will encourage people to spend more time outdoors. This could be especially beneficial for the young people supported by PLUS as well as members of the local community.</p> <p>We are looking for creative ways to utilise our space where we can grow, nurture and support opportunities with people and in the environment.</p> <p>To further align with this National Outcome, the impacts of the project on the local biodiversity should be considered, including the sustainability of any infrastructure created.</p>



## A More Active Scotland: Scotland's Physical Activity Delivery Plan (2018)

The aim of the framework is to encourage everyone in Scotland to be more physically active, more often. Increase in physical activity is intended to have a positive impact at the individual, community and national levels. On an individual level, being physically active is *"one of the very best things we can do for our physical and mental health"*. Physical activity and sport also have a transformative effect on communities; by providing opportunities for people to connect with their neighbourhoods and come together in shared activities which inspire and motivate. The Plan states that sport and physical activity are powerful means of addressing isolation, building community cohesion, and developing confidence.

There are six outcomes:

1. Encouraging and enabling the inactive to be more active.
2. Encouraging and enabling the active to stay active throughout life
3. Developing physical confidence and competence from the earliest age
4. Improving our active infrastructure people - and places
5. Supporting wellbeing and resilience in communities through physical activity and sport
6. Improving opportunities to participate, progress and achieve in sport

**How this project fits:** Our proposal aligns with this Plan as we aim to invest in our team and their skills and training to support outdoor initiatives and developments. Some of this will enable us to support and encourage people to participate in physical activity.

The proposals to develop the outdoor space align with other themes running through the Plan:

- Reducing inequalities by providing facilities and opportunities to people in an area of deprivation as well as those with disabilities: The plan recognises the need to reduce inequality in the opportunities to participate in physical activity and will seek to allocate resources towards the actions needed to engage the least active and those who face the greatest barriers to participation.
- An intention to provide opportunities for all ages: The proposed developments will seek to provide opportunities for all people at all ages and abilities to participate in community opportunities. The current proposals are low level to support inclusion of all abilities and disabilities – walking and gardening. However, we look forward to exploring other opportunities with the PLUS community, the residents in Cornton, local groups and organisations like Active Stirling. This will contribute towards the priority of addressing disparities and reducing inequalities.

### Progress review of Scotland's Play Strategy 2021

The Play Strategy vision is *"we want Scotland to be best place to grow up. A nation which values play as a life-enhancing daily experience for all our children and young people: in their homes, nurseries, schools and communities"*.

Eight recommendations were provided as part of the progress review in 2021: (1) Refresh the Play Strategy and ensure national and local leadership; (2) Renew and develop the national and local commitment to outdoor play; (3) Listen to children and young people and act on what they say; (4) Ensure the inclusion of all children and young people; (5) Ensure cross sectoral and inter professional approaches to play; (6) Sustain and support play provision through adequate funding; (7) Maintain a focus on playful learning and play in schools; and (8) Strengthen the play sector nationally and locally.

**How this project fits:** The development of PLUS and the Family Hub can play a role in helping to achieve the Play Strategy – especially through



development of play opportunities for children with disabilities, a highly vulnerable section of our community. Our inclusion agenda and focus on ensuring accessibility is a key priority for any developments will ensure that anyone wanting access to our space will be able to join in with activities.

Our developments will help to support and strengthen the play sector locally and to develop local leadership regarding play, as it is led by a local community organisation. We will continue to strengthen our relationship with Stirling Council Play and Youth Services as well as the local nursery and school as we look to showcase positive examples of good practice.

Other elements of the strategy to which the proposals are aligned are the emphasis on consultation with children and young people; and emphasis on outdoor play. To further align with Scotland's Play Strategy as well as multiple other national and local policies, PLUS will ensure that the Family Hub will be accessible and inclusive for all children and young people, regardless of their background and abilities.

#### **A Connected Scotland: Scotland's Social Isolation Strategy (2018)**

The vision is: "A Scotland where individuals and communities are more connected, and everyone has the opportunity to develop meaningful relationships regardless of age, stage, circumstances or identity". The strategy is underpinned by four priorities:

- Empower communities and build shared ownership
- Promote positive attitudes and tackle stigma
- Create opportunities for people to connect
- Support an infrastructure that fosters connections.

The Strategy also recognises the key role of third sector and social enterprises in tackling social isolation locally.

**How this project fits:** The development of a good community space will create opportunities for local people to connect – through shared

activities, partnership working and through community use and volunteering.

Integration of children and young people with disabilities will be a vital component of connecting people from different backgrounds, improving understanding about disability and reducing stigma. In discussion with the local school, there was a keen interest to take forward inclusion and disability awareness training sessions with pupils.

#### **Scottish Government - Community Empowerment Act (2015)**

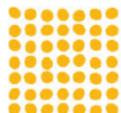
One of the Act's specific actions is to support communities to own and develop assets. The Government recognises that asset ownership and development can give local people a renewed sense of control over their communities: a real sense of a stake in the future of the places they live and work. In addition, the act highlights the importance of involving the entire local community in making decisions in order to build community capacity.

**How this project fits:** PLUS would use this opportunity to work closely with the children and families connected with our organisation to control and develop this asset. We also commit to continued relationship development with the wider community, considering ways in which this asset can benefit the wider community as well.

#### **Community Wealth Building**

CWB is a model whereby locally based anchor institutions (such as local authorities, NHS, etc.) focus spend locally to encourage the development of local economies and to limit procurement spend leaking out of the area.

The Scottish Government have bought into this concept. This is driven by statutory sector spend. One key element is the drive to strengthen local, community and social enterprise businesses (and co-operatives in particular) so that when opportunities arise, the sector is strong enough to exploit them.



**How this project fits:** Where feasible, PLUS has a commitment to using local sole traders and small Cornton/Stirling businesses and social enterprises to serve the Family Hub. This includes areas such as catering, cleaning, printing, grass cutting etc.

## Local Strategy

### Stirling Council 10 Year Strategy (2020-2030) 'Thriving Stirling'

This strategy has a 10-year focus which aims to ensure that Stirling is prosperous, healthy, achieving and resilient. The Council is committed to ensuring the best possible outcomes for everyone who lives in the Stirling area, and working alongside partners in achieving this goal. Key issues provide the context, including an increase in general population, with a noticeable increase in the over 75 population. School populations of children with additional support needs in secondary schools is expected to double in this time period. New legislation, inequalities across communities, climate change and digital inclusion help to mould the priorities which include:

- Thriving Partnerships
- Thriving Organisations
- Smart Digital Solutions
- Thriving Workforce
- Thriving Communities
- Smart Use of Space

This strategy has principles of working collaboratively in relation to service design with a framework to encourage solution focused responses and ensuring that people are at the heart of everything they do.

**How this project fits:** A current challenge facing PLUS is capacity and so being able to plan for expansion for the years ahead will ensure that we will be in a position to offer increased support to the growing

population of teenagers with additional needs. This can be done on both a formal and informal basis – supported by an increased awareness of PLUS, will ensure these children, their siblings and their families are able to thrive in their communities.

Furthermore, we are keen to be part of supporting the community of Cornton to thrive – to have opportunities within their own community, driven by them and supported to make their visions a reality. We are committed to working with and for the community and to genuinely listen in order to support change when we can.

This strategy references strong economic growth and we would contribute to this via training, volunteer and work opportunities.

### The Stirling Plan

The Stirling Community Planning Partnership has set out a clear vision for the Stirling area as somewhere that everyone can thrive. It identified how the partnership will work to support communities who are experiencing the poorest outcomes and outlines four key outcomes which form the common strategic goals of the Council and its partners; Prosperous, Healthy, Achieving and Resilient. Through partnership working we can increase equality and promote fairness with a collective effort placed on tackling inequalities caused by a lack of opportunity or disadvantage. The plan identifies that one datazone in Cornton is in the top 10% most health deprived areas nationally. Crime rates in Cornton are about double the Stirling Council area average.

**How this project fits** Our ambitions for parent/carers of disabled children is that they are able to get access to support earlier. That they are not alone in their parenting and the complex navigation that families experience through everything that they do. By having a presence within a geographical community, we will be able to support carers to be more resilient in their caring roles.

Inequalities for carers have risen, as they have in areas like Cornton. Timing is crucial to work in partnership with the community and other



providers in the area to increase access to and promote community participation and support.

Access to opportunities such as volunteering, training and employment will contribute to a more resilient and prosperous community. Exploring opportunities for intergenerational work will also ensure the centre is not focused on one area of need. Health inequalities can be targeted via the provision of a fully equipped kitchen space and the development of cooking groups e.g. cooking on a budget and the potential for a community garden to grow health fruit and vegetables with and for the residents of the area.

Working alongside other organisations in the area will allow us to nurture and grow relationships with the community to provide opportunities on their doorstep to create an environment for children, young people and adults to thrive.



### **A locality Action Plan for Cornton**

This action plan has stemmed from 'The Stirling Plan', which is Stirling's Local Outcome Improvement Plan. The plan is clear that there has been a long-term decline in the availability of services in the area. There is a reduction in the availability of activities, there are concerns about isolation and crime and limited retail offering in the area.

Progress in building capacity has been taking place, including the development of CAPP and the relaunch of the Community Council. Services like the food banks and Tuesday lunch club are providing opportunities for people to come together. However, there is still a lot which could be done with and for the community to further enhance their wellbeing.

If successful, PLUS will be able to connect with the community to identify ways in which we can support further community control and change. Whilst we would not be solely focused on the geographical community, we will have the same wants as our neighbours. Somewhere we feel safe, where there are things to do, connections to be made and we feel a sense of belonging.

### **Community Engagement Strategy**

This document sets out how the authority will empower citizens and communities to influence and shape the priorities and decisions made about the areas they live in and work. They will ensure that the citizens and community will be effectively informed, engaged and empowered to define local priorities.

**How this project fits** PLUS shares the ethos of this strategy and as a result we ensured that prior to application we engaged with the community groups, residents and elected members. This was a key priority for us to understand the community dynamic alongside their needs and aspirations. Only after communicating with the local residents, did we reach out to families who access PLUS for support. This has given us confidence that our vision is aligned to the needs of the community – the geographical community of Cornton and the community of interest within PLUS families.



Consultation doesn't end now. We will commit to working with Cornton Community Council, CAPP and other key stakeholders. In addition we will create regular opportunities with local residents, in particular our immediate neighbours in Castle Vale, to come together to share successes, discuss concerns and plan for improvements. Our engagement with PLUS families will also continue as we take the opportunity to grow and develop into the space.

### **Community Learning and Development Plan 2021-2024**

This plan seeks to ensure national outcomes can be implemented at a local level. For example, consideration to Community Empowerment, Fairer Scotland, Tackling Child Poverty, The UNCRC and The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. How these then link with the previously mentioned local strategies. The focus is for creating opportunities for everyone to thrive and seeking ways to close the equity gap is a key priority. Within this there are specific targets around adults, communities, young people and the planning, reviews and development required to target progression.

**How this project fits** We have a long standing relationship with Youth Services and have had discussions around their recent consultation with young people in the area which informed the style of services which reopened post pandemic. The area has been impacted with very little face to face youth work opportunities which will have increased inequalities. We will review their engagement overview when considering whether there will be opportunities for joint working in the future – for both short and long-term projects.

We are keen to ensure that any developments which take place are able to complement other services in the area as additional opportunities rather than duplication. PLUS contributes to the CLD strategy and engages in the regular Stirling Youth Providers Forum. In addition, we seek to find way to support steps into work and will continue to collaborate with employability teams locally helping to provide an increased number of placements, work experience opportunities and paid employment.

### **Children's Service Plan**

Areas for improvement identified within this plan include tackling the impact of poverty, supporting children and young people's mental wellbeing, and ensuring that our children and young people have the support and opportunities they need to thrive in spite of challenging circumstances, are as important now as they have ever been.

There are specific outcomes around child poverty and disabled children, such as;

- Reducing the impact of poverty on children and young people's wellbeing and opportunities
- Increasing income from employment for parents and young people
- Families experiencing an integrated process, especially at points of transition
- Early interventions, supported by earlier stage joint planning
- More children and young people will have their needs met at an earlier stage of intervention.

A key message is that children, young people, parents and carers have a vision of a Stirling that is safe, inclusive and nurturing and where all children and young people are able to thrive. Stirling Council has a vision of a Stirling as a place where every child grows up feeling loved, safe, and respected, so that they can realise their full potential.

**How this project fits** Having a community resource where we can support families in their journey as parents through opportunities like a parent and toddler group, with the provision of a warm lunch will contribute to a safe place for the children and their families. This early support, often in a natural way could contribute positively to Stirling being safe, inclusive and nurturing. Our key skill area is working with children and families, more specifically within the field of disability, where transitions are things we support on a daily basis.



We also support families in their life journey, from birth through to age 35, supporting them to navigate several major transitions of life. We already contribute to positive outcome for children and young people with disabilities and have aspirations for this to grow further in future.

We know there are increasing pressures locally with a rise in the number of children and young people with a disability. We will have greater capacity to support this within the centre. We are keen to create opportunities for skill development to help the community be 'work ready', in addition to creating employment opportunities through our work.



### **Stirling Local Child Poverty Action Plan 2019-20**

The child poverty plan aligns with 'The Promise' obligations around recognition that working together to prevent and mitigate for the impact of poverty and inequality will have a direct positive effect on

both improving outcomes for looked after children and young people and supporting early intervention with vulnerable families to reduce the risk of family breakdown. The situation faced by families has worsened over the COVID-19 pandemic with an estimation of nearly half of families with children in Scotland were in serious financial difficulty or struggling to make ends meet.

**How this project fits** The draft strategy in place for the development of the Family Hub is written with an understanding of the complexities of the area. We already support a number of families who live in the area and have a child with a disability. When PLUS first started up, our offices were in Cornton. We understand that there is a community wide approach required to consider ways to meet the needs of the community which might not be building based.

As a result, our vision of the development would ensure there are safe areas for children, their families and other individuals in the area to go to reduce their isolation and provide new opportunities for engagement, would be aiming to mitigate for elements of the poverty and inequality being faced.

### **The Stirling and Clackmannanshire Strategic Commissioning Plan 2023-2033**

This plan has been developed by the Clackmannanshire and Stirling Health and Social Care Partnership, who have a responsibility for adults who require direct support and to all unpaid carers, amongst many other key responsibility. Our proposals clearly align with all five strategic themes noted below;

- Prevention, Early Intervention & Harm Reduction

*(with a community presences, more people will be aware of PLUS which might encourage earlier contact by families who are looking for support).*

- Independent Living Through Choice and Control



*(creating increased flexibility about how and where our services are delivered, continuing to ensure that the voices of the young people and their families and integral to decision making).*

- Achieving Care Closer to Home

*(by having a second base to develop our services and relocating to a geographical community, we will be providing services closer to where families live).*

- Supporting People and Empowering Communities

*(whilst the focus on this strategy is around care, we would contribute to this strategic theme by continuing with our personalisation approach, remaining person centred, valuing the relationships we have and nurturing new relationship for the future).*

- Reducing Loneliness and Isolation

*(By increasing support opportunities, more people will have opportunities in the community. This is as much for the young people we support, but also for parent carers. Developing drop in opportunities for families, supporting peer relationships and increasing the frequency of activities would also support this).*

---

## 10. What the Community Thinks

There are 4 elements of the community we have engaged with. All feedback has been collated together.

- Residents in Castle Vale
- Residents in Cornton
- Professionals in the Cornton area
- PLUS families- who have a child/adult with a disability.

Our vision is representing the input and views of the geographical community and also our Community of Interest – which is Disability.

Engagement initially started online due to a 3 week timescale being provided for the asset transfer request. Once this deadline was extended, we were able to revisit our engagement to undertake this more appropriately.

We developed an online questionnaire, to help us to understand the interest in the community for the Family Hub to be saved from demolition. We were keen to understand any support for the building being retained, but also to understand the dynamic locally and any concerns the residents might have had.

We also wanted to find out more about what is missing from the community. What aspirations the community has, whether there was interest in some of the proposals for PLUS within the Hub and considering how the immediate community could benefit.

The online questionnaire gave us significant background information which helped to inform the in person events. Most meetings in relation to the Family Hub are noted below, to share the breadth of reach we have had.

1. Meeting with the Prison Service, Local elected members and community representation regarding the building (online, 20/4/2023, follow up in person 22/5/2023)
2. Questionnaire for residents in Castle Vale, where the building is located. This was an initial questionnaire to understand any immediate local pressures and concerns (27/4/2023)
3. Questionnaire for PLUS families living in Cornton and wider Cornton residents (28/4/2023)
4. Questionnaire for all of Cornton, all PLUS families and professionals (11/8/2023)
5. 2 meetings at Castle Vale, in the street (in person, 1/5/2023, 1/9/23)



6. Meeting with Chris, Community Worker for Cornton (online, 28/7/23)
7. Leaflet drop in Community, including all households in Castlevale (in person, 18/8/2023)
8. 2 lunch club events in partnership with Inclusion Forth Valley (in person 18/8/23, 22/8/23)
9. 1 evening event in partnership with Stirling Council Community Services (in person, 21/08/23)
10. Meeting with local Minister (included discussions about CAPP – met other CAPP members in face to face meetings above) (in person, 22/8/2023)
11. Attendance at a Community Council Meeting (in person, 30/08/2023)
12. Meeting with Stirling Area Access Panel (online, 1/9/2023 – ongoing communication and clarification pre and post this meeting regarding accessibility and guidance specifically for entry to the building and toilet requirements)
13. Meeting with Gary, Youth Services Worker in Cornton (online, 14/9/2023)
14. Meeting with Head Teacher, Cornton Primary School (in person 15/9/2023)
15. Meeting with Cornton Nursery Leaders (in person 19/9/2023)
16. Attendance at an open Parents Evening Event at Cornton Nursery (2/10/2023)
17. Meeting with Active Stirling (online, 16/10/2023)

### Engagements:

- In person, including teams meetings: 108
- Questionnaire responses: 69

Please note, this is not 177 different engagements. Some individuals attended engagement sessions and completed the questionnaire. Several chose to remain anonymous with the questionnaire making it difficult to specify the number of unique individuals.

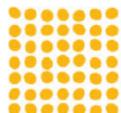


### Support:

Following the engagement with members of the community, we have been able to gather support for PLUS to take on the Family Hub. There has been some concern however, which we are hopeful of mitigating for.

For example, key areas of concern for the community were;

**Losing their street parking:** The Prison Service own all the street parking bays and it is their intention to turn these spaces into green



space. PLUS will be requesting all parking spaces to be retained within our asset transfer request. This will mean that PLUS would take on the liability, however it is clear that the distress this was going to cause the residents in the immediate vicinity was high.

The local authority have been clear that they would not take on the liability. There is no alternative route for the residents to take the parking on themselves either individually or collectively. This will require further negotiations with the Prison Service and some spaces (primarily the current overflow car park) will not be available for use until the Prison Development has been completed. This is due to parking spaces being used by the developers.

**Bin/Refuse Uplift:** Concern about access to bins being hindered if parking was to be removed. Our intention to retain the parking would alleviate this concern.

**Access for emergency services:** Concern from a safety perspective around emergency vehicles being unable to access the street safely with street parking removed. Our intention to retain the parking would alleviate this concern.

**Increase in teenagers spending time in the street, coming directly from PLUS:** Residents have been reassured that only 1 user of PLUS services is currently able to travel independently. All other young people and adults are picked up and dropped off for their sessions. There would not be instances of groups of young people 'hanging about' in the evening as a result of PLUS having access to the Family Hub.

**Noise from the building in evenings and weekends:** Reassurance provided that despite the size of the building, PLUS activities will likely engage with up to 15 young people per session, which would have the building significantly under capacity. This is to ensure that we can continue to take a person centred approach to our work and meet the bespoke needs of each young person we support.

On occasions, numbers may be higher e.g. a celebration or activity for families. Commitment to provide notice to residents of events taking place and to facilitate quarterly meetings initially, where we will welcome residents into the building to share what is happening. Intent to work with our neighbours around identifying new concerns or issues and being solution focused around identifying resolutions.

#### **Positive Feedback:**

Some feedback provided has included:

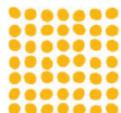
63 out of 67 respondents (94%) believe this would be of benefit to PLUS and the Community, as opposed to the building being demolished. A full list of responses is available as an attachment.

#### **Benefits:**

Fantastic, local, family centred support and respite. Also great volunteering and employment opportunities within the community.

Volunteering opportunities for local residents. Employment opportunities for local residents. Family centred facilities for families with a child / young adult with a disabilities. Disability toilet facilities in the Cornton area of Stirling. A suitable space for youth activities in the Cornton area of Stirling. An increase in the provision of social care and social activities for the children and young adults that are supported by PLUS. A closer and easily accessible location for many of the families PLUS supports.

Anything that offers support and activities for ASN children and their families can only be a positive. These facilities are already few and far between in Stirling and with limited spaces. PLUS already offers high quality care and support and for them to be able to expand would be a huge benefit to the area and Stirling as a whole.



Being more central in Stirling allows families to more easily access plus as a service

A place where they can meet other families in similar situations. A place that can help with all the needs of families who have a family member with a disability. Community integration.

The building is designed for family and children and is in a location that has options for outdoor experiences too. Establishing partnerships with the primary school and nursery would be possible. Road and bus access is available. The residential and countryside balance would bring a foundation of wellbeing to any event or session that Plus would be hosting.

It would be amazing to have Plus somewhere so close to home and within a community. It would make access considerably easier. It would also allow Plus to access the village of Bridge of Allan easily for walks/days out with children and young adults. The current office is out of the way and not really in a good area for taking children out.

Cornton is a mixed catchment with postcodes of multiple deprivation and significant financial and social hardship. Having PLUS within Cornton will bring significant social benefits to families with a disabled child or adult, both in terms of social care, respite, peer support and educational benefits. Volunteering, training and employment opportunities, and most especially inclusive volunteering and employment opportunities for people with disabilities themselves, are scarce to non-existent in the Cornton Community and often out of reach to those most in need because travelling outwith the area is cost prohibitive. It can only be a positive for a supportive, inclusive, flexible organisation to offer employment, training and volunteering opportunities in the area and fantastic for the area for PLUS users to access and support activities in the community.

### Support for Proposal:

In the Questionnaire, we provided an initial list of opportunities which would be facilitated if PLUS was to be successful in taking on the building. There was support between 76.8%-89.9% for all the options provided. This is detailed in the table below:

Proposal	Yes	Maybe	No	No Opinion
Day Support for Adults	88.4%	2.9%		8.7%
Weekend Play Activities	89.9%	1.4%		8.7%
After School Clubs	89.9%		1.4%	8.7%
Evening Youth Activities	89.9%	1.4%		8.7%
Information and Advice for Parent/Carers	88.7%	1.6%		9.7%
Parent and Toddler Groups	85.5%	2.9%	2.9%	8.7%
Volunteering for teenagers and adults	85.5%	6.45%	1.6%	6.45%
Supported volunteering eg ASN, Mental Health	79%	6.7%	4.8%	9.7%
PLUS joining the community voice to advocate for change	80.65%	6.45%	1.6%	11.3%
Intergenerational Gardening Group	77.4%	8.1%	4.8%	9.7%
Ongoing access to free street parking	80.6%	6.5%	1.6%	11.3%



### Additional Comments:

- I thoroughly support the repurposing of a building as a community resource by PLUS. PLUS work has enormous social value within and without of the disability community and will provide opportunities for the whole community to learn, grow and develop.
- Plus would be a wonderful addition to any community area, supporting the charity itself with community ties and relationships but most importantly supporting the children/young people with opportunities to be part of a community rather than feel excluded in an industrial estate!
- Plus is an invaluable to so many families - the aspirations plus has as a charity are inspiring and I wish every family like mine had access to such a supportive service
- Quite happy having other professionals and groups to belong to the Cornton community.
- Very excited about the possibility!
- I have confidence in PLUS delivering excellent services from the hub and recognise the opportunity to offer so much more than is presently available to current users of PLUS. They can also offer support to many more families and be a lifeline, especially when health and social services are experiencing such difficulty times and services are limited.
- This would be hugely advantageous for Plus and the local community - part of the regeneration.
- The Forth Valley Health and Social Care Partnership has recently published its 2023-2033 Strategic Plan and much of the plan is taking Health and Social Care into communities and localities which exactly what PLUS are looking to do.
- It would be a travesty to bulldoze a quality community space that can be utilised for social good in a community which lacks a positive focus and social and economic opportunities. PLUS can provide extensive, flexible employment and volunteering opportunities which can only be good for the area.

- I think this is a wonderful opportunity for people with additional support needs and their families to have a permanent support base in a central location in a local community. I think is also a real potential asset for the Community in Cornton as Plus would ensure engagement and partnership opportunities with local residents.

It is clear that there is a great deal of support for PLUS's vision within the Family Hub, with an understanding from participants that the benefits are wider than just for PLUS.

---

## 11. Governance

### Governance and Accountability

As a charity, we are led by a group of Trustees who bring a wealth of experience to our organisation. Our trustees are also directors of the charity.

We have Project Management experience on our board of trustees. Our Treasurer is the Finance Director for an NHS Board. Other skills within our board include Senior Manager in and Local Authority Community Education/Youth Work, retired Head Teacher of ASN School, retired Paediatrician, ASN Teacher, IT Specialist, Child Protection Trainer, 3rd Sector Leader with interest in Governance and an Independent Consultant supporting workforce learning and development and practice improvement.

We regularly undertake a skills analysis of our board which enables us to focus our recruitment to bring in the skills and experience where we have gaps.

Our board has 4 sub groups; Business and Finance, Quality Improvement, Strategy/Hub, Safeguarding. Additional short life working groups are created based on need and circumstances.





improvement of the quality of life of the children and adults and their families.

2. The advancement of education, expertise and best practice in the personal and social development of children and adults with disabilities through the delivery of training courses, seminars and conferences.
3. To assist the development and provision of services for children and adults with disabilities.

### Organisational Objectives

1. Provide school holiday and term time play opportunities for children aged 5-17
2. Provide social activities for young adults aged 18 -25
3. Support other organisations to include children and young people with disabilities
4. Develop opportunities for 0-5 year olds
5. Provide individual services to children and young people
6. Support the development of Family PLUS
7. Continue to develop service provision across the Forth Valley
8. Promote the development of staff and board
9. Remain financially secure

Taking on the asset would be allowable within our core charitable objectives. We would be required to have further dialogue with the Care Inspectorate regarding the site to ensure we can register it for service delivery. We would also have to review our insurance. by the Care Inspectorate.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

PLUS has a significant track record of compliance in relation to the monitoring and evaluating of our activities. This is evident from number of grants listed within our annual accounts. We also liaise with our families and young people to ensure the services we develop continue to be suitable to meet the outcomes we have agreed. (Copy of 2022 family feedback is included as an attachment, the 2023 version will not be finalised until next month).

In order to gather relevant data, we have a bespoke database which records all the young people we support, their profiles and best ways to support the, the number of events we facilitate, who works at them and who attends for support, how many hours are involved, how many individual attendances, breakdown of disabilities by any factor eg age, location, project. We record our staff training and hours worked which enables us to accurately pay them, and also accurately collate invoices for services produced.

### Infrastructure

Our infrastructure will support this growth as our current systems are e-based and can be accessed with wifi access. This includes our phone system which is also online and so not restricted to one building.

We have recently restructured the organisation and introduced a Business Administrator position to create capacity within our leadership team.

PLUS staff would be able to be situated in either of our office spaces or can work from home. We would commit to there being a staff presence throughout the working day. We would review capacity on an ongoing basis to ensure that the structure we have in place is effective for the development of growth.

PLUS has a strong and effective leadership, strategic connectivity and financial viability.



## Partnerships

If successful, we see our next steps as continuing to develop relationships with the community. This will include the professionals in the area so we can ensure that we have a clear understanding of the gaps in the area and how we can best support.

Relationships already in place includes:

- Cornton Community Community
- CAPP
- Stirling Council Youth Services and Play Services
- Cornton Baptist Church
- Cornton Nursery
- Cornton Primary School
- Stirling Council Youth Services, Community Support
- Active Stirling
- Inclusion Forth Valley
- Stirling Community Enterprise
- Recycle a Bike
- Home-Start Stirling
- Stirling Carers Centre
- Stirling Council Social Work and Commissioning
- Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise

We will look to build relationships with;

- Cornton Library
- Local Residents
- Forth Environment Link
- Home Schooling Group
- Health and Social Care Partnership

This is not an exclusive list, but shows our need to work collaboratively to ensure the best outcomes.

---

## 12. Cost and Funding Strategy

### Capital Cost Estimate

We have some insight into the cost of the future renovations. However we only identified one quotation in order to ensure that any figures without our financial planning had element of expertise informing them. We are aware that we will require external funding to be secured to enable the developments.

Some costs around

- Kitchen: no oven, unable to support life skills development without adequate resources. Fully equipped kitchen makes the building more suitable for events, rent for meetings, training, events, contribute to sustainability
- Toilets: current damage, particularly at gents making the door difficult to open due to expansion from dampness. Floor



covering has been removed in some areas. Accessible toilet not suitable for a changing bed and hoist.

- Front door area: from a Health and Safety and Risk Assessment Perspective, we would require a review of the front door area in order to ensure that the building is secure for the young people we support. The vulnerability of the young people combined with a low/no awareness of risk means that we need to have additional measures in place to ensure safety.
- Full décor: The building would benefit from a deep clean and full repaint.
- Roof (between year 2-5): The building condition survey noted this was not an immediate requirement but would require replacement within a few years.
- Windows (between year 3-6): Again, the building condition survey noted that some windows were in worse condition than other. Some of the roof/ceiling windows in particular.

### Funding Opportunities

The following list of possible capital funders is simply set out to show that a future renovation is possible in principle and that the success of such a fundraising strategy will be in part due to a good partnership with the local authority while also maximising the track record of PLUS, which would be the parent organisation.

Fund source	Comments	Projected Amount
Garfield Weston	Expect 50% of funding to be in place before an application and will normally fund no more than 10% of costs.	£40,000

Smaller funds	Clothworkers, Wolfson, Dulverton, Scottish Communities Environment Fund, MacRoberts, Spifox, Wooden Spoon	£175,000
Regeneration Capital Grants	Focus on community regeneration, health, wellbeing, jobs and enterprise  Bid submitted by Local authority in June of each year	Average grant £1m.
UK Gov – Community Ownership Fund	The fund has a quick spend period so may be challenging to secure.	£250,000 max grant
Levelling up	This is post EU funding  Large bids are encouraged and the Council would be involved	Unknown
Place Based Investment Fund	Scottish Government Funding allocated via the Council.  Application submitted 16/10/2023 to secure contribution to the development.  If unsuccessful, this will primarily be down to a misalignment of dates, with	£100,000



	the spend due to be committed by 31/3/2024. Further application can be submitted September 2024.	
The Edward Gostling Foundation	PLUS has been selected and 1 or 125 legacy partners for this funder, who aims to spend all reserves and close by 2031/2032.  As a legacy partner, we will be beginning discussions about our organisational requirements to develop resilience and capacity to grow and maintain our services in a sustainable way.	£550,000 over 3 years
Bank of Scotland Change Programme	Combination of Capital and Revenue Grant	Up to £100k p.a for 2 years
Loan Finance / Small mortgage	A small social loan will have softer requirements and more likely to secure payment holidays	Propose 5% over 25 years.

### 13. Financial Sustainability

#### Up front funding

Based on the draft of our strategy and financial modelling, we currently have [REDACTED] in a designated fund specifically for us to use to develop an opportunity like this for PLUS. We have an application live for funding at present from Stirling Council and are in discussions with regards to a legacy grant to support our sustainability.

This is all detailed in our financial report.

We also have a great level of success in generating income via trusts and grants – which we would continue to drive forwards with. We would like to work with the community to encourage their involvement, for example, with any clearing out, painting and decorating etc, which may reduce any costs for these tasks.

We have a positive relationship with several businesses in the area which would support us with access to supplies such as paint, as well as corporate staff teams who are keen to have their team days helping a local cause.

#### Grants

Some revenue grants are highly likely but we have not factored grants into the cash flow to ensure contingency and to show that this can be sustainable without external subsidy.

#### Income Generation

Expenditure is based on estimated costs for the building which will be reviewed once we have more detailed information. At present, we are basing areas of expenditure on current building, utilities, maintenance and services costs which we have in our current building.

Our current building is not energy efficient and relies on an oil boiler. It is larger than the Family Hub and has little/no insulation. So overall, we would anticipate the costs being less for this space.

As noted previously, we are in a full insure and repairing lease and so have almost 11 years’ experience of this model of leasing a space. This evidences our ability to own and manage our own space.



## Appendix 1 : Budget Projections

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	Total
<b>Income</b>					
<b>Trading income</b>	£665,388	£761,349	£899,972	£1,023,148	<b>£3,349,857</b>
<b>Revenue grants</b>	£375,027	£534,075	£594,075	£642,075	<b>£2,145,253</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	£1,040,415	£1,295,424	£1,494,047	£1,665,223	<b>£5,495,110</b>
<b>% sustainability</b>	64%	59%	60%	61%	61%
<b>Staff costs</b>	£977,193	£1,095,568	£1,273,277	£1,426,113	<b>£4,772,151</b>
<b>Operating costs &amp; overheads</b>	£138,597	£133,223	£142,812	£151,908	<b>£566,540</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	£1,115,790	£1,228,791	£1,416,089	£1,578,021	<b>£5,338,691</b>
<b>Operating surplus/deficit</b>	-£75,374	£66,633	£77,958	£87,203	<b>£156,419</b>
<b>Capital grants</b>	£250,000	£55,300	£0	£0	<b>£305,300</b>
<b>Capital expenditure</b>	£99,600	£175,500	£50,000	£0	<b>£325,100</b>
<b>Loan repayments</b>	£10,785	£10,785	£10,785	£3,593	<b>£35,949</b>
<b>Balance going forward</b>	<b>£475,603</b>	<b>£411,251</b>	<b>£428,423</b>	<b>£512,033</b>	£512,033

Full breakdown of financial plan is available on a separate spreadsheet.