Growing Community Assets Evaluation (Scotland)

Section 2 Annex 1 (Tender 2101)

6 November 2007

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Contents

Contact:	Bruce Macdonald	Tel:	0131 243 0721	email:	Bmacdonal@sqw.co.uk

Approved by:	Bruce Macdonald	Date:	06/11/07		
	Associate Director				

1: Introduction

1.1 This proposal has been prepared by SQW in response to the Big Lottery Fund's (BIG) Invitation to Tender (ITT no. 2102). The proposal is structured to reflect the 14 questions set out in Annex 1 of the Tender. In addition, our proposal also includes as supporting information fuller descriptions of our relevant project experience, our Quality Assurance policy and CV's of the proposed team.

1.2 SQW Consulting is a leading independent consultancy in the area of economic and social development. The firm was founded in Cambridge in 1983 and now employs 76 staff (including around 60 consultants) at its offices in Cambridge, Edinburgh, Leeds, London and Manchester. This assignment would be led from our Edinburgh office. SQW Consulting is part of the SQW Group which now employs 150 people. We would be a robust partner for the duration of the contract offering a strong track record and depth of resources.

1.3 Our core skills include economics, management, public administration and science and technology. We offer consultancy services in a diverse range of fields, from innovation, skills & learning, ICT and business growth, to rural development, neighbourhood renewal and regional development. We have strong statistical and analytical skills and are known for our work in economic appraisal, monitoring and evaluation. We have carried out major evaluations into the economic, social and environmental benefits of many high profile public sector and Lottery investments. Many of these involve rural and urban development, skills and capacity building as well as economic impacts.

Overview

1.4 This evaluation is very important for BIG, its partners and many others involved in supporting asset-based community development. Where the Scottish Land Fund has led the way, GCA represents a step up in the delivery of support for community asset ownership. The evaluation is an opportunity to carry out a full programme of research into the effects of this support. With a good budget and over a six year period it will be possible to provide evidence of the impact of the interventions and policy lessons as the Programme develops over the next few years.

1.5 SQW is well placed to carry out this programme of research. We have worked extensively with BIG, central government departments and the Scottish Government. The proposed team has experience of developing baselines and assessing the performance of community-based projects of all kinds in the UK.

1.6 While a good knowledge of the issues and research expertise is undoubtedly important, over a six years period, the team will need to have experience of carrying out long-term evaluations. We set out some examples in the following table but we highlight specifically our work on the large sale evaluations for the Big Lottery Fund, including Transforming Your Space, the Scottish Land Fund, New Opportunities for Quality Childcare, Activities for Young People and Out of School Hours Childcare.

1.7 Our experience of working on long term evaluations also includes Neighbourhood Renewal Unit's Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders 2002 – 2005. Our contract has now been renewed to 2008. This has been valuable in understanding the importance of having a strong organisational structure, experienced teams, good back-up and robust management systems. We have built on this experience in our proposal by offering the preparation of baselines using available published data for all projects, a household survey, facilitation of Practioners' Panel and support through an evaluation web-site.

1.8 The remainder of the proposal is based around the 14 questions and is structured around four themes; key issues, approach and work plan, team and budget.

Table 1-1	
Criteria	**Page**
1. Demonstrated a clear understanding of the Big Lottery Fund and the GCA investment area	Page 4 and supported by project experience in Annex
2. Demonstrated a clear understanding of the aims, objectives and main concerns of the Evaluation	Page 5
3. Demonstrated an awareness of the policy context in which GCA operates, and of related issues including community involvement, community ownership, rural/urban contexts and sustainable development	Page 5
4. Demonstrated a capacity and ability to undertake the Evaluation on a Scotland-wide basis	Page 13
5. Demonstrated their proposed design and methods are well-developed, appropriate and meet the aims and objectives of the Evaluation	Page 13
6. Demonstrated experience of undertaking longer-term evaluations and the use of indicators to measure social and other impacts over time	Page
7. Demonstrated a clear and realistic project plan, showing the tasks for each stage of the Evaluation and the roles and responsibilities of each member of the team	Page 16
8. Demonstrated team members have the full range of research and technical skills and experience required by the Evaluation	Page 23
9. Demonstrated the bidder has the capacity and resources to carry out the Evaluation within the timescale, or, if working in partnership, each organisation has the capacity to fulfil its role and the roles of each partner are clear	Page 26
10. Demonstrated effective arrangements for project management, team support, quality assurance and delivery of Evaluation outputs	Page 27
11. Demonstrated a well-considered plans for dissemination of the Evaluation findings	Page 28
12. Demonstrated distinctive elements or a creative approach in the proposal or otherwise add value to the delivery of the Evaluation	Summarised page 28
13. Demonstrated the overall charges offer good value and costs are appropriately distributed between different elements of the contract	Page 30
14. Demonstrated a record of producing high quality research reports to support policy and practice development.	Page 14 and examples throughout

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2: Key issues and approach

Key issues

2.1 This section set*s* out our understanding of the brief and highlights some of the main challenges that will be addressed in the assignment.

1. Demonstrate a clear understanding of the Big Lottery Fund and GCA investment area.

2.2 SQW has worked with the Big Lottery Fund on a number of important and high profile projects. We have a good understanding of the way in which BIG works, its objectives and its approach to using evaluation as a means of learning about its investments. Its use of legacy reports and publication of reports is good practice in improving funding delivery.

2.3 At the heart of BIG's investments is its mission to bring improvements to communities and to do so in a way that is distinct from government (i.e is additional). "Growing Community Assets" (GCA) is a way of empowering and enabling communities to take decisions that will improve the lives of local residents. GCA has grown out of the successful Scottish Land Fund and is one of the four areas of investment for BIG's Investing in Communities programme. Its purpose is to help local communities obtain assets that will help them become stronger and more sustainable. These will usually be physical assets (land, buildings or equipment), but may also take the form of skills and knowledge. BIG wants communities to acquire and develop local assets through which they can provide quality services and amenities that are sustainable in the long-term - both financially and environmentally.

2.4 The shift towards outcomes-based funding means that applicants are required to show how their project will directly contribute to the achievement of at least one of five specified outcomes (these are summarised in the Tender). Where an intervention is designed to produce purely economic outcomes, these can be evaluated in a fairly straightforward way. However, evaluation of projects with predominantly 'softer' outputs and outcomes can easily become advocacy documents rather than serious evaluation. There is little point in simply describing the positives and ignoring the negatives.

2.5 Investment in assets is not simply about changing ownership, it is about creating a platform on which communities can build confidence, skills, create new enterprises and provide better services. Our work on the Scottish Land Fund (SLF) indicated that, in general, this was happening, but that there was scope for support to *enable* communities to make the most of the assets they owned. For example help to invest in equipment to start new businesses, stronger networks to exchange ideas and help with capacity building to ensure that there is succession.

2.6 This approach raises a number of fundamental questions which would be investigated in this evaluation. For example, how sustainable is ownership by the community? Are these genuinely community-led projects or are they opportunities for public sector organisations to

off-load assets that they no longer wish to maintain? How does the community-ownership of assets change outcomes?

2.7 Our work on the SLF and the Community Land Unit evaluations over the past three years has given us a lot of experience in the theory and practice of asset-based development. Throughout this period we have visited and interviewed many of the community projects that have been supported and discussed their experiences. Many of the recommendations and ideas generated through the SLF and CLU evaluations are reflected in the way in which GCA is operating.

2.8 In England, the neighbourhood management evaluation has been a major undertaking. We have carried this out for DCLG since 2002 and it has allowed a longitudinal approach to evaluating changes in community conditions across 35 pathfinder communities. Neighbourhood management is about creating a platform for communities to influence (or bend) mainstream resources to better meet local needs (one of the objectives of GCA). Details of the evaluation, reports and guidance on evaluating neighbourhood initiatives can be found at http://www.sqw.co.uk/nme/reportsl.htm

2.9 Other examples of relevant experience include:

- For the Scottish Executive we have undertaken several large assignments that have involved evaluation and research amongst these sectors. Examples include:

  ➢ Evaluation of the Quality of Life Fund (where research was conducted primarily amongst Scottish local authorities)

  ➢ Evaluation of the Scottish University for Industry (including focus groups with local learning centres, the majority run by public and community based organisations)

- For BIG, our recently completed three year evaluation of the Transforming Your Space programme involved in-depth case study research with 36 projects across the UK, all of which were to do with local communities developing local assets. We conducted extensive consultation with representatives from local community organisations and also with beneficiaries of the projects.

- Also for BIG, we are two years into a three year evaluation of the New Opportunities for Quality Childcare programme in Scotland. This has involved a survey of all grant recipients and a series of 12 case studies, the majority involving community or public sector childcare providers. Our case studies have involved in-depth interviews with childcare staff, and some with children themselves. A discrete element of the study is an evaluation of a demonstration project for children with additional support needs, which is being delivered in partnership between public and community sector organisations.

- For the Department for Communities and Local Government, SQW Consulting has been leading a consortium of research teams conducting a long-term and large scale evaluation of Neighbourhood Management. This has involved working closely with

local authorities, local strategic partnerships and community based organisations across England over a period of several years.

2.10 On a smaller scale, we have conducted research and strategy development at a very local level with communities in rural Scotland, for example:

- we worked with Land Use Consultants to produce a Regeneration Framework for Luss, Tarbet, Arrochar and Ardlui (for Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park, 2004): the aim of this project was to place the future development of four west Loch Lomond villages onto a sustainable footing. Part of Scotland's first national park, these communities are important destinations and local assets. The project sought to address the combination of development pressure and local potential by building on the communities' aspirations, and led to the design and development of a comprehensive strategic framework addressing the environmental, social and economic issues facing west Loch Lomond.

- we were recently commissioned by the Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust to evaluate the progress achieved by the community on Gigha since it bought the island five years ago: this involved consultations with islanders and community groups, to assess progress towards a sustainable economy and examination of the role of the community in the regeneration of the island.

2.11 There is a growing emphasis on the involvement of the voluntary sector in the provision and shaping of services. SQW has undertaken a number of studies examining this role of the voluntary sector and how it can be supported to fulfil this role. Our experience includes extensive research on third sector access to finance on behalf of the Office of the Third Sector in the Cabinet Office: the research and policy developments which arose from this fed directly into the government's 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review. We have also completed research for the North West Development Agency on voluntary and community organisations' leadership and management practices, and consultancy for Communities Scotland assisting in work aimed at expanding and assisting the Scottish social economy.

2. Demonstrate your understanding of the aims, objectives and main concerns of the evaluation, and…

3. Demonstrate your awareness of the policy context in which GCA operates and of the related issues including community involvement, community ownership, rural/urban contexts and sustainable development

2.12 The ownership, occupation and use of land in Scotland, particularly in the Highlands and Islands, have long been controversial topics. The early 1990s saw the successful acquisition of land by communities in Assynt, and Borve and Annishadder in Skye; these pioneering initiatives were given increased political support by the incoming Labour government in 1997. In 1999 the Scottish Land Fund was created, complementing the Scottish Parliament's plans for wider land reform legislation.

2.13 Alongside land reform is the growing interest in asset-based community development. In our evaluation of HIE's Community Land Unit we reported that community ownership of assets

is a means to supporting strong and vibrant communities. It is based on a community development approach that works from the inside out rather than by imposing initiatives or programmes centrally. The ownership of the land or other asset is fundamental to this, providing strength and focus to communities. Ownership of tangible assets gives more leverage in accessing further funding, provides opportunities to generate income streams and a stronger base for negotiating agreements with other agencies. It is an opportunity to manage and deliver local services in a different way, directly related and responsive to community need.

2.14 Asset-based community development has been pioneered in Scotland, but is gaining momentum across the UK. We have witnessed this in our evaluation of Transforming Your Space, where community-led regeneration has included projects such as the purchase and development of village halls and the transformation of derelict land into nature reserves and parks.

2.15 The aims and objectives of the evaluation are set out in the tender. Broadly these are described as assessing the impact of the GCA investments, identifying the success factors and evaluating the effectiveness of delivery. More specifically, the tender expects the evaluation to address some specific areas and it is useful to summarise these:

- social impact on community and service provision

- economic impact through income generation and community enterprise

- effectiveness of the asset-based approach in urban and rural settings

- sustainability of activities and benefits (possibly including revisiting projects supported under SLF)

- analysis of the process projects go through to identify the key factors that contribute to successful community ownership

- assess benefits of contracting out delivery.

2.16 The social impacts relate to two distinct strands; **benefits that relate to the experience, skills and opportunities of managing or engaging with the projects, and the benefits created directly by improvements in (or access to) services**. Both of these require a baseline that uses feedback from individuals in the communities. In the discussion of the survey tools we draw a distinction between the set of questions that relate to *social conditions* and a second set that relate to the *social impacts of the intervention.*

2.17 The economic impacts are intended to reflect new income and employment opportunities created as a result of the project. There are several issues here. Consideration needs to be given as to whether any new income or employment has been created at the expense of other businesses in the area. Even if there is evidence of these "displacement effects", this can still be justified on the basis of distributing economic opportunity to lower income communities. From our past experience, economic benefits tend to follow social benefits and usually take longer to become apparent. In the SLF evaluation we argued on the basis of various literature, that better social conditions can form a platform for developing business activities.

The baseline and monitoring of economic conditions would be covered in household and business surveys. The direct impact of any community businesses would be monitored separately through interviews.

2.18 The third outcome listed is the *effectiveness of the asset-based approach in urban and rural settings*. This is clearly central to the development from the SLF (which was restricted to rural communities) to GCA. While many of the rural projects funded find it relatively easy to define their communities, this may not be the case in urban areas with larger populations in smaller areas. We would anticipate that this could lead to several interesting effects. For example, projects in areas of larger populations could mean that the impacts are only on a subset of a community. It also providers the potential for bigger impacts – the project would be operating in a "larger market" and more people can access the assets or participate in activities. Theoretically, the social return on investment could be larger. From a commercial perspective, the bigger markets may provide a stronger base for community enterprises than would be possible in rural areas.

2.19 The relative benefits to urban and rural communities could be between more substantive engagement among a smaller community and a "thinner" impact spread across more people. This depends on the size of the projects. There are plenty of examples of rural projects being so small as to impact only on a subset of a community, or projects which impact on much wider communities (such as community radio station)

2.20 The processes too may differ. Stronger geographic communities may already have mechanisms for developing project ideas and experience of managing them. In rural areas these social networks may already be well established out of necessity. In some urban areas this may not be the case and as a result, identifying opportunities might be more limited. It will be interesting to see whether these have been issues in promoting GCA and its take up.

2.21 A related issue is the extent to which differences are reflected in demand. It is assumed that there is a strong demand for community ownership in urban areas and if so, this would be reflected in the pattern enquiries. It raises the question of whether the promotion and delivery of GCA needs to be different within these different settings. As the Programme matures it will also be clearer whether projects in an urban environment face distinctly different challenges.

2.22 Sustainability is one of the biggest issues for projects and it is frequently raised as a concern about the whole community-ownership approach. The indications from the Scottish Land Fund cases suggested that, although still at an early stage, communities were continuing to take forward their plans. Only time will tell how the supported projects develop and how sustainable their structures and planning are. The real test will come over the next five years when interest could decline along with funding opportunities. Ensuring adequate succession planning will be key. In order to continue to assess sustainability, we have proposed that a small number of SLF projects are included in the sample. From the SLF research we have a good understanding of the issues facing each of the projects and their managers.

2.23 Finally, although the issues around the process of delivery are of less importance in the first phase of the evaluation, the evaluation will still be able to collect feedback from project officers and stakeholders. Even at this early stage there will be issues and examples to learn

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from. And these would reported throughout all the Phases of the work. In particular the inclusion of face to face case visits will provide a lot of really good feedback on the way in which GCA has been delivered including both pre and post ownership support.

Developing the baseline – key tools

2.24   SQW has produced a number of guidance and good practice documents for setting baselines for community development projects. An example, Good Practice Note 1: Creating, Using and Updating a Neighbourhood Baseline[1], provides illustrations of our approach used for the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit. The report contains a comprehensive overview of identifying, collecting and updating baseline data. The sources in Scotland will be different, although the approach would be the same.

2.25   Our methodology, set out in more detail in the work plan would be to use a suite of research tools that provide both coverage of all projects and depth for some specific cases. A baseline alone does not demonstrate that the changes are attributable to the project investment. Determining attributability requires a more sophisticated analysis of data. The combination of tools in Figure 2.1 allows monitoring of direct activities, social and economic conditions and attributability to the investment.

Figure 2-1: Baseline tools
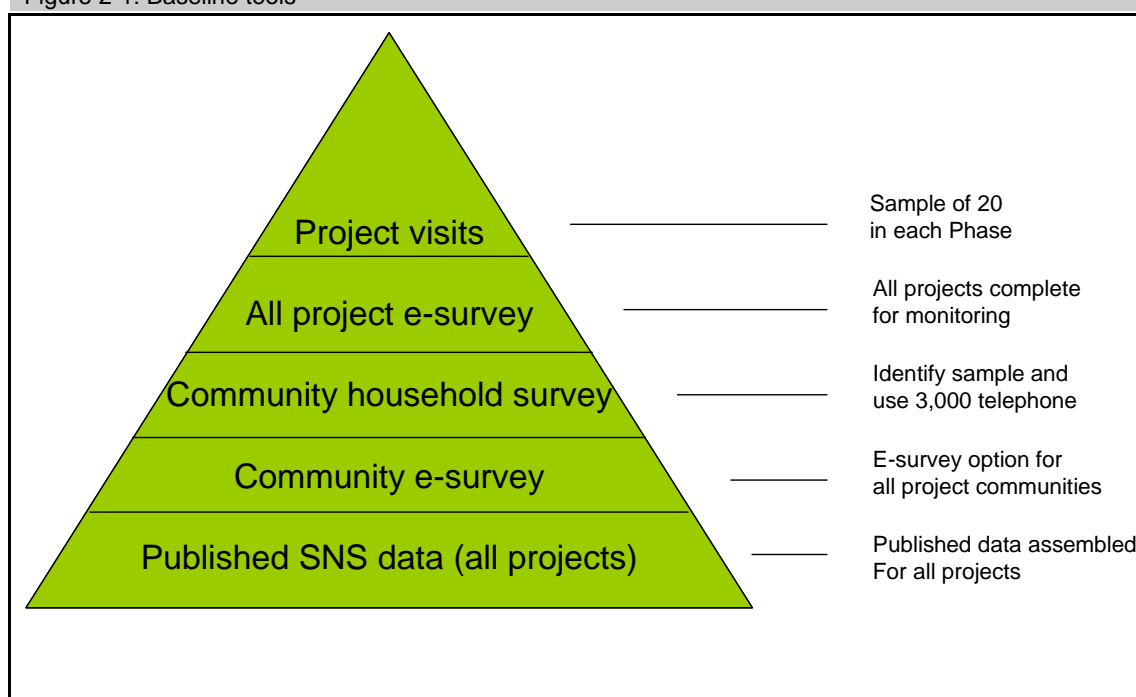
Source: SQW GCA proposal

Published data

2.26   The most important source is the Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics[2]. This is how the Scottish Government disseminates the range of small area statistics including information on health, education, poverty, unemployment, housing, population, crime and social/community issues

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[1] http://www.sqw.co.uk/nme/downloads/NM%20GPN%201%20-%20Baselines%20(final).pdf
[2] http://www.sns.gov.uk/

at the data zone level and above. Data zones have a population of between 500 and 1,000 households which would closely match the immediate communities within which projects are supported. For larger projects ward level data would be more appropriate.

2.27   We propose to identify a set of appropriate indicators from these sources and draw out the data for all the projects supported. This could be done before full approval is given and could help in decisions about which projects to support.

2.28   The examples in Table 2-1 give a flavour of the data that can now being produced and mapped using a GIS system. While there are some very useful measures, some of the data will still be a bit dated and it is stronger on the social rather than the environmental indicators. This will not replace the need for specific household surveys, but it provides a good context within which to set each of the supported projects.

Table 2-1: Examples of baseline social and economic data available at data zone level				
Title	Data zone	Multi Member Wards	Scottish Parliamentary	Community Health Partnership
Number of SIMD crimes per 10,000 of the population: 2004	216		240	
Percentage of populations aged 16-24 claiming Jobseekers Allowance: 2005Q04	0	1.9	1.6	2.3
Percentage of total population who are income deprived: 2005	2.9	7.7	6.3	7.3
Percentage of population aged 60 and over claiming guaranteed pension credits: 2005Q04	5.2	12.5	12.9	13.5
Total number of pupils in secondary schools: 2006	56	706	5585	16151
Emergency hospital admissions - both sexes - aged 65 and over - rate per 100000 population: 2005	10,169	23,131	22,303	21,730
Estimated percentage of population prescribed drugs for anxiety, depression or psychosis: 2004	5.02	5.03	5.58	5.77
Hospital admissions for alcohol misuse - rate per 100000 population: 2001-2004	348.43	426.04	357.96	369.82
Percentage of dwellings in Council Tax band A: 2006	2.72	10.34	15.5	
House sales, mean price: 2006	132,783	106,095	155,140	
Education, Skills and Training Deprivation Decile: 2006	9			
Geographic Access to Services Deprivation Decile: 2006	7			

Source: Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics

2.29   Another useful source will be the Scottish Household Survey. This is only appropriate for analysis at local authority level, but by using the same questions in our household survey it should be possible to provide comparators.

2.30   Environmental indicators will be more difficult to source from published data. Our preference would be to use a project survey to provide monitoring of the activities that will

impact on the environment and form indicators from this – e.g. areas of land improved, kms of paths, reduction in carbon emissions, energy savings, species protected.

Community e-survey

2.31   The household survey would also be made available on-line and projects will be asked to encourage community residents to complete it. It is not possible to cover all communities with a telephone survey and this method provides the tools for projects to develop their own monitoring data. While we would set up the on-line version, it would be up to project leaders and communities to encourage completion and the data will be available to them to use as well as for the evaluation baseline.

Household telephone survey (3000 each in Phases 1 and 3)

2.32   The exact structure of the household survey will depend on the pattern of projects supported. There are several options including web-based questionnaires, postal forms and telephone interviews. We suggest that a combination of these is used to give both good coverage of the projects supported and depth in a smaller number of case examples.

2.33   The first part of the questionnaire would ask a set of generic questions that would provide a baseline of perceptions that could be related to the Scottish Household survey as a benchmark. For example there are questions that can be analysed at a local authority level, these include:

- thinking now about the neighbourhood you live in, how would you rate it as a place to live?

- what aspects of this immediate neighbourhood, if any do you particularly like? e.g. scores are for area well maintained, good public transport, safe area/low crime, good outlook/view, quiet/peaceful, convenient shop/other amenities etc.

- what aspects of this immediate neighbourhood, if any do you particularly dislike? e.g. problems with dogs, unsafe area/crime, alcohol abuse, nowhere for children to play, young people hanging about/nothing for young people to do etc.

- how common would you say the following things are in this neighbourhood? e.g. Noisy neighbours or regular loud parties, vandalism, graffiti or other deliberate damage to property, rubbish or litter lying around, neighbour disputes etc.

- how strongly do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements…

  - if I was alone and needed help, I could rely on one of my friends/relatives in this neighbourhood to help me

  - if my home was empty, I could count on one of my friend/relatives in this neighbourhood to keep an eye on my home

  - I feel I could turn to friends/relatives in this neighbourhood for advice or support

- thinking back over the last 12 months have you given up any time to help any clubs, charities, campaigns or organisations. I mean in an unpaid capacity.

2.34   Using these questions (and others in the SHS) at a neighbourhood level would give a direct comparison with the Local Authority results. Other questions that have been included before include "contact with relatives/friends/neighbours in past fortnight and "involvement in local community".

2.35   We propose that a web-based survey is hosted by SQW and that links to the questionnaires are promoted by the supported projects. This could be done in a number of forms within each community. The questionnaire would be divided into two sections.

2.36   The second part of the questionnaire would ask about the impact of the project and its development. These questions might cover:

- has the supported project increased your participation with others in the community

- how often do you use or visit the facilities supported

- has the project contributed to other social benefits e.g. more active children, education, access for specific groups etc.

2.37   The household survey would be carried out as part of the baseline in the first year and then used again as new projects start. The survey would be repeated in Phase 3 to measure changes.

Project leader/manager e-survey

2.38   The second strand of the baseline which would encompass all supported projects would be an e-survey to capture activities, progress, issues, levered investment, users and community engagement. This would be designed as a short questionnaire e-mailed to all projects annually during the evaluation (and potentially after it) to monitor project development over time. It will build to a valuable database if projects can be encouraged to respond. We have allocated a modest amount of time to this and we would hope that the delivery partners can part of their funding arrangements. It would not replicate the current monitoring requirements.

Project case visits

2.39   The final strand of the measurement approach is a series of project visits. We have budgeted for 20 within each phase. These are likely to be the bigger projects where most of the investment has been made. We know from the SLF evaluation how valuable these are in helping to understand the issues that projects face and in identifying ways in which the programme can be improved.

Table 2-2: Summary of main data collection tools

	Published data analysis	Household telephone survey/ community e-survey	Project leader survey	Project cases
Core purpose	**Condition baseline**	**Impacts and attribution**	**Direct activities**	**Qualitative feedback**
Outputs	Provide baseline data on a set of criteria relating to the social, economic and environmental conditions within the area before and after the GCA investment	The household survey will provide data specifically related to the impact of the project. Part of the survey would collect social, economic and environmental conditions; a second part would ask specifically about the project impact	An electronic survey of all the project leaders/managers will be carried out. This will provide monitoring data on their activities progress and their own evidence of levels of engagement, participation and use of assets.	A sample of 20 projects each year will be interviewed. These will be with the project leader/manager and where possible with other representations of the project Trust. The evidence will back up the project survey and provide more qualitative information about the process and the support that has been received.
Coverage	The main source of data will be the SNS which brings together a range of different data sources. Different data is available at different geographical levels, the smallest being data zones of 500 – 1000 households.	There will be two routes to this; the first will be based on a total of 6,000 telephone interviews to be carried out by TNS over the period of the study The second will be to set up a web-based questionnaire. Individual projects would be asked to encourage members of the community to complete these – potentially at several points during the study.	All projects would be included in this and it would be undertaken each year.	A selection of 20 projects would be made following discussion with GCA and BIG teams. We would also discuss whether these should include SLF projects and whether the same ones should be revisited each year.
Scale/timing	Data would be produced for all projects as a baseline over the period and presented as a table	We suggest that 3,000 interviews would be carried out in each of the first and third Phases. This would mean 3,000 as a baseline and 3,000 follow up The same process would be carried out with the web-survey, where projects would be encouraged to use the tool as a baseline and revisit it in Phase 3.	Would cover all projects each year	20 new projects in the first phase, 20 projects split between baseline and follow up in the second Phase and 20 follow up in the third Phase

Source: SQW GCA survey details

4. Demonstrate your capacity and ability to undertake the evaluation on a Scotland-wide basis

2.40   The project team would be directed and managed from Edinburgh. The consultants on the team are all based in Scotland and work predominantly on projects around Scotland, including numerous assignments in remote areas of the Highlands and Islands as well as regeneration projects within the urban centres. The SLF evaluation included visits to some of Scotland's most remote communities such as Knoydart and North Ronaldsay. Our work on social inclusion in Glasgow involved monitoring projects in urban communities with major social and economic challenges such as Drumchapel, Castlemilk and Easterhouse. We know the logistics involved in reaching communities throughout Scotland.

2.41   Related to capacity is our preference to have a relatively small project team. Larger teams, where responsibility is divided and roles are packaged up, is less likely to provide the same level of commitment, communication and flexibility than a smaller team can offer.

5. Demonstrate your experience of undertaking longer-term evaluations and the use of indicators to measure social and other impacts over time

2.42   Our prime example is the Neighbourhood Management Evaluation because it encompasses both a long time frame a complex structure and makes good use of baseline measurement and monitoring primarily around social indicators. It includes regular household surveys carried out by MORI/NOP, coupled with project visits. We have been reappointed twice to continue with this work and the research has produced a range of reports that have influenced policy and approach. The work on baselines and indicators has led to the development of guidance for communities to carry out their own monitoring.

2.43   Examples of other long term evaluations are set out in our project experience. We would highlight:

Summary of relevant experience

Table 2-3: Project experience highlighting community development work, baselining and long term		
Client	**Year**	**Project**
Big Lottery Fund	2003-06	**Evaluation of Scottish Land Fund**
Scottish Executive	2006-07	**Evaluation of Quality of Life Fund**
Highlands & Islands Enterprise	2005-06	**Evaluation of Highlands & Islands Community Land Unit (CLU)**
Neighbourhood Renewal Unit, (DCLG)	2005-2008	**Neighbourhood Management - National Evaluation and Programme Support**
Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (ODPM), Home Office and Cabinet Office	2004-05	**The Role of Communities in Improving Mainstream Services in Deprived Areas**
Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust	2006-07	**Evaluation of the Gigha Community Buy-Out**
Scottish Executive	2001 – 2004	**Evaluation of All Age Guidance and Social Inclusion**

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Client	Year	Project
Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (DCLG)	2002-2008	**New Deal for Communities National Evaluation**
New Opportunities Fund	2003-2005	**Activities for Young People – National Evaluation**
Big Lottery Fund (Previously New Opportunities Fund)	2004-2007	**Evaluation of the Transforming Your Space (TYS) Programme**
Big Lottery Fund	2005- 2007	**Evaluation of the New Opportunities for Qualilty Childcare Programme (NOQC) Scotland**
Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (ODPM), Home Office and Cabinet Office	2004-2005	**The Role of Communities in Improving Mainstream Services in Deprived Areas**
Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (ODPM) & Sport England	2003-2004	**The Role of Sport in Neighbourhood Renewal**

Source: SQW

14. Demonstrated a record of producing high quality research reports to support policy and practice development.

2.44   We believe that all our studies are high quality research reports and that to varying degrees influence policy and practice development. Many of these reports are published and details area available on our web site. Some of our publications this year are shown below. Many more are published internally by clients. Much of this research has underpinned policy developments in a number of fields. In fact SQW's work has been used to support cases to the Treasury's Comprehensive Spending review this year.

- Viewpoint: Carbon Reduction - Obligation and Opportunity - *Aug 2007*

- Westminster population research 2007 - *Jul 2007*

- Integration of parish plans into the wider systems of local government - 2007

- Participatory Budgeting *June 2007*

- Evaluation of the Welland Strategic Alignment Project *Jun 2007*

- Review of Provision for Land-based Studies – July 2007

- The Costs and Benefits of Independent Living - *Apr 2007*

- Skills Needs Analysis - Stage 1 - Scotland – April 2007

- Study of the Role of Foundation Degrees in Wales

- Evaluation of the Scottish Innovative Actions Programme 2004 - 2006

- Interim Evaluation of the Coalfield Regeneration Programmes - 2007

- Independent Review of the Higher Education Policy Institute - 2007

- Digital State of the Region - *Jan 2007*

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- Impact of quality-related (QR) funding for research in English higher education - institutions - 2007

- Next Generation Broadband in Scotland - 2007

- Evaluation of North Nottinghamshire & North Derbyshire SRB - 2007

3: Approach and work plan

Proposed approach

3.1 Although the assignment will be conducted over three phases it is helpful to take an overview of the evaluation structure. This is shown in simple terms in Figure 3-1. The diagram shows how the programme level (GCA) objectives and delivery relate to a set of supported projects. These in turn are assessed using a combination of baseline and survey data. The results over time build to give project level outcomes that relate to social, economic and environmental effects. Together, the projects are expected to deliver against GCA's objectives around stronger communities and better services. The results can be compared with the original rationale for the Programme.

Figure 3-1
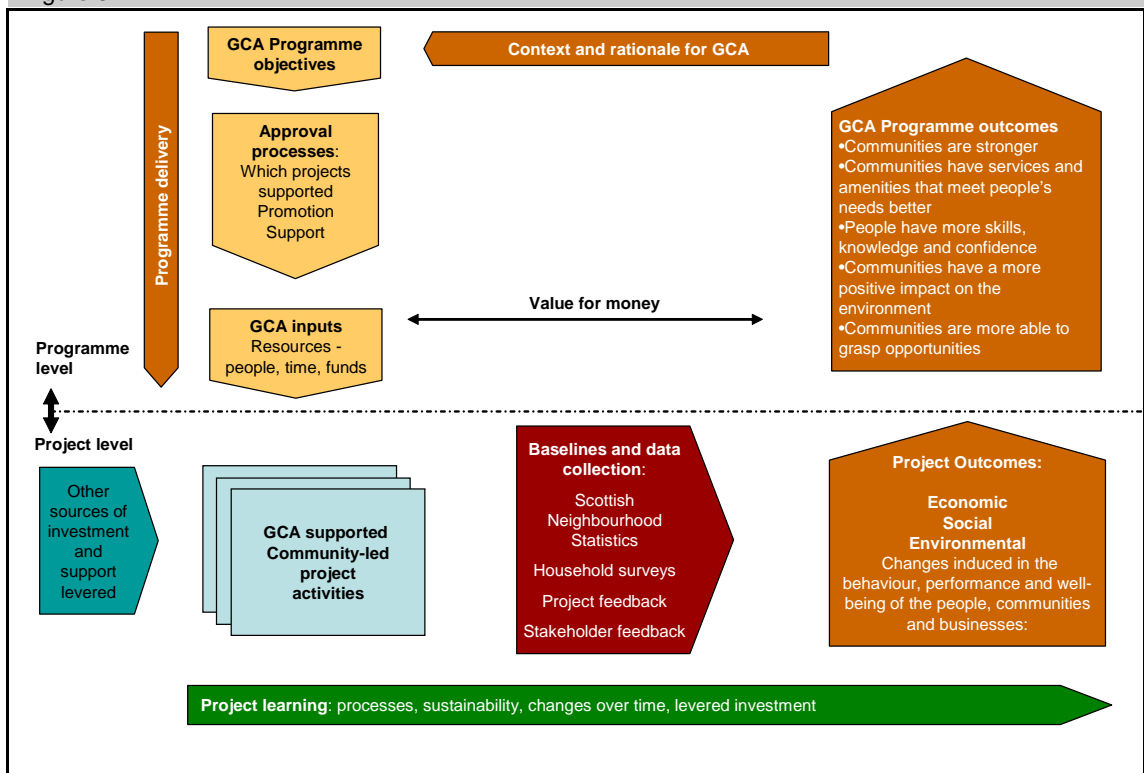
Source: SQW

3.2 Because the work is to be spread over five or six years, there is an opportunity to set up a baseline in order to measure changes and determine whether these can be attributed to the investment. It is important to remember that any changes in the baseline are not necessarily anything to do with the intervention. This is why the project plan includes both measures of *conditions* and *project impacts*.

Project Plan

3.3 We have broken the project plan down into the three phases described in the brief

- Phase 1 – Nov 2007 – March 2009

- Phase 2 – April 2009 – March 2011

- Phase 3 – April 2011 – April 2012.

7. Demonstrate a clear and realistic project plan, showing the tasks for each stage of the Evaluation and the roles and responsibilities of each member of the team

3.4 The brief asks that details of the first phase are set out in detail with an outline of the subsequent phases. The following sets out the main tasks for Phase 1.

Phase 1 Plan

Task 1 Project initiation and set up

3.5 The study inception meeting is an important first step in agreeing the approach and methodology, identifying contacts, data, timescales and understanding the types of investments that have been made. Following the inception it is common practice to produce a scoping report that amends or refines some of the work plan in this proposal. We have included a day for each of the team members to meet the steering group and get the work underway. - *All team to attend led by project director*

Task 2 Project meetings and management

3.6 We have included time for a quarterly project meetings (half day for each) and two days for project management. This is likely to be fairly tight and assumes that there is sufficient time against each of the tasks to cover its management. The project plan and inputs is very clear on the responsibilities of each of the team and although tightly budgeted, this should be sufficient. – *Attended by project director and manager*

Task 3 Literature and background review (initially and monitoring throughout the Phase)

3.7 An initial review of background material and academic work to identify specific areas for the research and evidence that could be tested as part of the evaluation. There will also be an ongoing role to keep up to date with the Fund and its investments. We have budgeted for four days throughout Phase 1 of the project which reflects a fairly light touch. – *Carried out by consultants and manager with guidance from project director*

Task 4 Design of research materials

3.8 The first phase includes the design of a number of questionnaires or pro-formas. This is a critical part of the work and much of the success of the study will hinge on getting it right. The core elements are:

- project leader/manager questionnaire for all projects

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- project visit aide-memoire for interviews

- community e-survey form

- household telephone questionnaire.

3.9 All the forms will be designed by SQW and discussed with the steering group and potentially the Practioners' Panel before being implemented. We have a lot of experience in designing questionnaires, both for community development projects and other evaluation studies. Our experience of major baselining work for the DCLG will provide useful experience as will analysis of other sources. Even so, every project is different and there is no model that can be adopted simply from elsewhere. The result should be a combination of good practice from elsewhere and new thinking relating specifically to the context of GCA.

3.10 The suite of questionnaires should all link together, using similar questions and wording wherever possible. The key is to identify a small number of core questions that cover the main indicators an can be included in all versions of the questionnaires.

3.11 A sub-task will be to identify and discuss with the steering group the sample that should be used for each. We suggest that this is done after an initial survey of all projects to identify their characteristics and suitability. – *Led by project director and supported by manager and consultant*

Task 4 Data collection and fieldwork

3.12 This is the core of the work and covers a number of sub tasks - *the work will be led by the project director, although much of the data assembly and field work would be undertaken by the project manager and consultant. The telephone survey will be carried out by TNS and their contract overseen by the project manager*

a) Assembling the published data baseline

- We would develop published data baseline using Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics at an appropriate level for all supported projects. The examples earlier show what can be used. There may be other local sources that can be used. If appropriate we can also carry out mapping using our GIS system to show graphically how communities perform against various indicators.

b) Project leader survey (all projects)

- In Phase 1, and subsequent phases we propose an electronic survey of all the project leaders to build up a complete database of the projects, their objectives, communities and measure use of the assets. This would be based on a simple project questionnaire e-mailed to all the project leaders or managers. This would be carried out each year to monitor project development. This should be taken in advance of identifying the samples for household surveys and project visits

c) Household Telephone Survey (3000 in Phase 1)

- This will be conducted by TNS and form a community baseline in the first phase. A further 3,000 would be carried out in Phase 3. We would recommend that the sample around each project is kept around 150, which would allow 20 projects to be covered. These would be selected with the steering group to a cover a range of the major investments.

d) Community e-survey

- The household questionnaire will also be made available electronically on the web-site. Each project will be able to use a generic version of this. Project leaders will be encouraged to get members of the community to complete it to build up a baseline for their specific project. Not all projects will use it, but it provides a way of extending the coverage of the household baseline without the cost of telephone interviews – *Admin support from SQW's IT team will contribute to implementing this*

e) Sample project interviews (20 in each Phase)

- Within the first phase, and through a rolling programme over the period of the evaluation, a sample of the key projects will be interviewed either face to face or by telephone. These interviews will include the project leader/manager, community representative and, where appropriate other stakeholders supporting the project. We have budgeted for 20 in the first Phase. These will be a mixture of longitudinal studies, where the same project would be visited, perhaps every second year, and new projects that start up

Task 6 Data analysis and interpretation

3.13   With a number of strands to bring together and development of the baseline in the first Phase, this will be a substantial task. The data collected by the surveys will be stored electronically and analysed using Excel and/or SPSS depending on the nature of the analysis. The results will be summarised and presented when as available throughout the first Phase, at quarterly meetings and update reports. The final Phase one report will bring all the data on baselines, from each of the strands, together to provide a robust basis for measuring progress. Commentary will identify the main indicators and the issues that the analysis draws out. Developing a concise format and possibly, a series of graphics would help presentationally. – *The overall shape of the analysis and its emphasis will be guided by the project director and analysis carried out by the rest of the team. TNS will provide SPSS/Excel tables from their interviews for SQW analysis*

Task 7 Report writing and report production

3.14   Within Phase 1 there will a number of written outputs including a scoping report after the inception meeting, short monthly updates, an interim report, perhaps at the halfway point, and a final Phase 1 report.

3.15   SQW produces a high standard of written output reflected in the many published studies. The reports would be in an appropriate format, both electronic and hard copies and can be adapted where necessary. In relation to the baselines and quantitative data we are keen that this is summarised as effectively as possible and we would seek to be innovative in how this data is presented. For example, presenting economic, social and environmental indicator scores as a "balanced scorecard". This can be discussed with the steering group and will develop as the project progresses.

3.16   We have attached our Quality Assurance procedures in Annex [**NBSQW**]. As important is the team's commitment and engagement to the project. We believe that the smaller team will allow us all to become far more engaged in the work than a larger consortium. – *This will be led by the project director and written jointly with the project manager*

Task 8 Dissemination/learning events including Practitioners Panel (initial set up and then annual events)

3.17   The Practitioners' Panel would include a number of project leaders and potentially others engaged in the sector. Methodology, questionnaires and methods of analysis would be discussed with the panel. There would be ongoing contact with the panel throughout the study as well as a major event. The purpose of this strand would be to:

- disseminate the work and results from the evaluation

- provide a forum for discussion among project leaders and other stakeholders in the sector

- discuss approaches to evaluation, review materials and analysis

- set up evaluation support web-site.

3.18   The second element in this strand is the setting up an evaluation web-site (as has been done for the Neighbourhood Management Evaluation (see www.sqw.co.uk/reports/). This would have updates from the project and also potentially host the baseline questionnaires and results. – *Led by project director with support from manager*

Task 8 Stakeholder consultations

3.19   At a Programme level we would also suggest a number of consultations with other partners and stakeholders working in complementary areas of community support. These interviews will provide a broader perspective on the Fund, its development and its performance. It is important for the evaluation that it is not too restricted in its focus. We have budgeted for a small number (5 or 6) of these interviews in the first phase. We would discuss with the Steering Group which organisations it would be appropriate to interview. – *Carried out by project director and manager*

Phase 2 and 3

3.20   Both Phase 2 and 3 would follow the same structure as Phase 1 with the exception of the inception meetings and the telephone survey. This reduces the costs significantly in the

middle year allowing more resources to be allocated to the baseline and final phase of the work.

Phases overview

3.21   The proposed approach is fairly complex because the baseline work is not necessarily a one-off. Nor would there be a single appropriate time to measure change. There should be a rolling element to the work, although the majority would be in the first phase with projects revisited in the third phase. Table 3-1 shows how the tasks will fall across the three proposed Phases of the work.

Table 3-1: Summary of work plan			
Phase 1	**Phase 1**	**Phase 2**	**Phase 3**
1. Project initiation and set up	✔		
2. Project management and mtgs.	✔	✔	✔
3. Review/scanning (literature/policy)	✔	✔	✔
4. Design of research materials	✔	✔	✔
5. Data collection and fieldwork			
Published data collection	✔	✔	✔
Project leader survey (all)	✔	✔	✔
Household telephone survey (3000)	✔		
Community e-survey	✔	✔	✔
Project visits (20)	✔	✔	✔
6. Data analysis/interpretation	✔	✔	✔
7. Report writing and production	✔	✔	✔
8. Dissemination/learning events	✔	✔	✔
Practioner's panel			
Evaluation web-site			
9. Stakeholder consultations	✔	✔	✔

Source:SQW

6. Demonstrate how your proposed design and methods are well-developed, appropriate and meet the aims and objectives of the evaluation

3.22   The design and methods breakdown into four elements: published baseline, household survey and project leader interviews. The other tasks are around setting up the web-site, the Practioners' panel, analysis and reporting.

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Table 3-2: Approach and evaluation objectives	
Phase 1 Objectives	**Evaluation activities**
To establish baseline indicators around social, economic, environmental and population issues and to collect data on projects.	• Published data and household survey will provide measures at appropriate level • Telephone survey of 3,000 households will provide both context and specific data in relation to social and economic indicators • Project leader survey will provide baseline on activities and direct levels of participation, environmental indicators and direct employment and income • Baselines for projects not covered by the survey will have access to web-based e-survey tool to collect local data.
To identify key factors in the process of communities initially identifying the issue and moving into acquisition and ownership.	• This will be qualitative feedback from: • Project leader survey • Project visits each year including interviews with community reps and stakeholders
To evaluate the effectiveness of the delivery contract against the contract specification and views of stakeholders.	• Based on individual project feedback and from programme level consultations
Phase 2 Objectives	
To measure progress against baseline indicators	• Revisit published data (specifically around social conditions) • Second wave of household surveys cover in context and project impact (or possibly covered in Phase 3) • Community e-survey completion results • Quantitative data from project leader survey and project visits for key projects
To assess the social, economic and environmental impacts of funded projects	• Based on evidence from the above, relating specifically to social, economic and environmental measures • **Social measures** from published data and household and community surveys (e.g. satisfaction with locality as a place to live, access to services, community engagement) • **Economic measures** primarily from household surveys, project leader survey and project visits (e.g. jobs supported directly, new businesses, training) • **Environmental measurement**, mainly from household survey, project leaders data (land improved, public realm works, wildlife protection)
To analyse the process of communities establishing and maintaining community ownership	• Qualitative feedback from: • Annual project leader survey • Sample interviews with projects, community reps and stakeholders
To evaluate the effectiveness of the delivery contract against the contract specification and views of stakeholders.	• Based on individual project feedback and from programme level consultations
Phase 3 Objectives	
To measure progress against baseline indicators	• As Phase 2 (but second wave of telephone survey could be in either Phase 2 or 3 or split), revisit published data and second wave of household surveys • Feedback from project leader, community rep and stakeholder interviews
To analyse the issues involved in sustaining community ownership	• A combination of the baseline and indicator analysis project leader interviews, desk research and the Practioners' Panel discussions.

Phase 1 Objectives	Evaluation activities
	sources
To assess the social, economic and environmental impacts of funded projects	• A combination of the baseline and indicator analysis project leader interviews, stakeholder consultation and and Practioners' Panel discussions

Source: SQW

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4: Project team

4.1   The project team would be based in Edinburgh, providing good public transport access to Glasgow and main towns and cities in Scotland[3]. SQW has a policy of the using public transport where possible.

4.2   The team would be directed by Bruce Macdonald, managed by Sheila Sim with consultancy support from Laura Henderson and John Nolan. Admin support would be provided through Kate Threadgould. The telephone survey would be sub-contracted to TNS (also through their Edinburgh office). Details of the team and their experience are set out below.

Team profile

8. Demonstrate that your team members have the full range of research and technical skills and experience required of the Evaluation

4.3   SQW Consulting (www.sqw.co.uk) is a leading economic development consultancy. Founded in 1983, it employs c. 80 staff in offices in Cambridge (our HQ), Edinburgh, Leeds, London and Manchester. It is an Investor in People and deploys a tried and tested Quality Policy in all its assignments. The team has been chosen on the basis of their detailed knowledge of the economic, social and political background of GCA and the stakeholders involved.

Project director – responsible for the overall delivery of the contract. This includes quality assurance, liaison with the client, reporting and presentations, guiding the project manager, ensuring that deadlines are met, methodology and research tools design, consultation, analysis and overview of the project

Personal information has been redacted

Project manager – responsible for managing the operational side of the project, liaison with the client, co-ordination of survey work, data gathering and analysis, project interviews, managing consultant staff, sub-contract with TNS and co-ordinating Practitioners' Panel

4.4   *Personal information has been redacted*

Consultants – provide support to the Director and Project Manager. Role includes literature review, survey work, project interviews, data gathering and analysis, project interviews

4.5   *Personal information has been redacted*

4.6

4.7   Together the team offer considerable experience in a number areas that are critical to this evaluation:

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[3] SQW has a policy of the using public transport where possible.

- *knowledge and understanding of relevant policy agendas in Scotland* - spanning rural development; social justice; skills and learning; business creation and development; community engagement, etc

- *knowledge of the voluntary/community sector* - both from previous assignments conducted by SQW and from the prior career experience of members of our Study Team

- *specific expertise on the development of community assets* – particularly through our evaluations of the Scottish Land Fund and Transforming Your Space for BIG, evaluation of the Community Land Unit for Highlands & Islands Enterprise, and evaluation of the Isle of Gigha Community Buy-Out for the Gigha Heritage Trust

- *knowledge and understanding of the issues involved in community-led regeneration* – from our work across the UK, not least our long-term, large scale evaluation of Neighbourhood Management initiatives across England, we recognise the benefits of community-led development and are aware of the challenges that can be faced by local groups

- *significant experience of undertaking economic and social impact studies* – the firm specialises in the measurement of economic and social impacts across different policy areas. These include diverse subjects such as baselining Scottish tourism, assessing the impact of inward investment, the economic and social benefits of community ownership, the economic benefits of cycling, the social and economic benefits of no-frills air routes, and of events such as the Ryder Cup, G8 Summit, Rugby World Cup, etc.

4.8   **TNS System Three** would carry out the household telephone survey. Their team is made up of highly skilled researchers from academic, public sector and commercial backgrounds who combine advanced qualitative and quantitative skills. We are highly experienced in conducting major national social surveys and policy evaluation. TNS combines the benefits of a team dedicated to servicing clients in Scotland with the resources and investment of a large research organisation. In particular, for this research we have a large, dedicated computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) resource. In order to ensure efficient and effective project management, TNS follows a documented set of procedures which exceed the requirements of both MRQSA BS7911 and ISO 9001:2000 – the market research industry standards.

4.9   TNS UK Ltd (of which TSN System Three forms a part) and/or its employees are members of the following recognised market research bodies:

- ESOMAR – European Society of Opinion and Marketing Research

- MRS – Market Research Society Partner Member

- SRA – Social Research Association

- IQCS – Interviewer Quality Control Scheme

- MRQSA – Market Research Quality Standards Association

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4.10   All divisions within TNS adhere to the ICC/ESOMAR International Code of Marketing and Social Research Practice. In addition, within the UK, all researchers are bound by the Market Research Society (MRS) Code of Conduct (revised 2005), which governs professional conduct in research and is intended to provide protection for participants. Social researchers in TNS System Three adhere to ethical guidelines set out by the Social Research Association (SRA).

4.11   TNS social team has carried out a number of relevant surveys including the Community Confidence in the Highlands and Islands survey; waves 1 and 2 and work to measure Community Confidence in the Initiative at the Edge areas. These surveys developed a methodology for measuring the concept of 'community confidence', examining economic and social measures.

4.12   TNS also worked with SQW on the three year evaluation of the All Age Guidance and Social Inclusion for the Scottish Executive which developed indicators for individuals progress towards employability.

Resourcing

9. Demonstrate your capacity and availability of resources to carry out the Evaluation within the timescale, or, if working in partnership, how each organisation has the capacity to fulfil its role and ensure you define the roles for each partner

4.13   The work will be carried out by SQW Consulting employees and TNS. SQW Consulting employs around 80 consultants in five offices across the UK. None of the team currently have significant work commitments that would impact on the timescale of this evaluation. Most projects are for tow or three months and the work for this assignment would be timetabled and committed for the first phase following an inception meeting. The firm is sufficiently robust - it has been growing steadily over the past five years and plans further growth of its consulting services as part of the SQW Group over the next five. We also have sufficient depth to cover changes to the work programme or the team. For example, Alan Brazewell is an Associate Director based in Edinburgh who has led many community development studies in Scotland and manages part of the Neighbourhood Management Evaluation. John Nolan is a consultant who carried out the Quality of Life evaluation for the Scottish Executive. There are other staff with appropriate experience in our other offices who could be drawn into the team if necessary.

4.14   TNS are one of the largest market research companies in the world. We have worked with them on a number of major assignments including an evaluation of All Age Guidance and Social Inclusion Funding for the Scottish Executive, over a three year period. TNS's social team have carried out major surveys throughout the UK, for example.

4.15   The team is relatively small which we think will make it easier to manage and help build up experience and learning. SQW will be responsible for the overall delivery of the work. TNS will be subcontracted to carry out household telephone interviews and produce the data in Excel or SPSS formats for analysis. This will be agreed in a standard sub-contracting letter produced by SQW.

4.16   Given the timescale, the depth of resources available, the small team and the partnership experience of SQW and TNS, there should be no concern around capacity, availability or partnering arrangements

Project management

10. Demonstrate effective arrangements for project management, team support, quality assurance and delivery of Evaluation outputs

4.17   ████████████ is an experienced project manager, having worked with SQW for 13 years on evaluation projects. He has directed a number of important and high profile studies, including long term projects. He led the Scottish Land Fund Evaluation over three years and is directing BIG's Childcare Evaluation, also over three years. He managed the Evaluation of All Age Guidance and Social Inclusion Fund for the Scottish Executive which also ran for three years. All these projects have met their deadlines. The team has been chosen for their experience working on similar BIG evaluations. ████ is managing the Transforming Your Space evaluation for BIG and also works on the Neighbourhood Management Evaluation. ████████████ carried out much of the fieldwork for the Scottish Land Fund study and for the Community Land Unit evaluation for Highlands and Islands Enterprise. ████████ managed the Scottish Executive evaluation of the Quality of Life Fund. In addition, the team has admin support from ████████████ who assists in setting up interviews, co-ordinating e-surveys and would manage the proposed evaluation web-site. The Group has dedicated HR and finance professionals in Oxford and Cambridge.

4.18   A relatively small team, simple sub-contract arrangements management and a clear research plan will make co-ordination of the work and communication with the client straightforward. Our experience of working with BIG has involved regular contact which has helped deliver successful outcomes. SQW has a Quality Assurance Policy, which is attached. This sets out our approach and procedures. As described above, we have ensured that there is depth within the organisation to provide continuity if any member of the team leaves. Papers and files are held centrally and meeting notes are typed up and stored electronically. All project materials will be held in Edinburgh, clearly identified. Any confidential materials will be kept in locked files.

Dissemination

11. Demonstrate well-considered plans for dissemination of the Evaluation findings

4.19   The brief asks that a report be provided each year, summarising the results of the evaluation. In addition there will be project meetings and regular update reports. We have two additional dissemination mechanisms to propose.

- The first is a Practioners' Panel – this would comprise a subset of project leaders/managers and potentially other stakeholders and academics interested in the evaluation. This forum would meet once a year for an event, but would be in e-mail contact throughout the duration of the work. The event would have three purposes:

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> ➢   it would allow feedback and discussion of results as they become available from the baseline and evaluation

> ➢   it would provide a forum for wider discussion about supported projects, how they are proceeding and how the Programme can help

> ➢   it would act as a mini-network for projects to exchange ideas

> ➢   it would be a sounding board for developing tools, indicators, questionnaires and approaches for the evaluation itself.

- The second additional form of dissemination is the proposal for an evaluation web-site to be hosted by SQW. This would act as a single source for reporting progress and feedback findings to projects and those that take part. Reports, methodology papers, survey results and possibly guidance could all be posted on the site. It would have contact details and would be updated throughout the evaluation.

4.20   These would be in addition to the more traditional production of reports and presentations throughout the study.

12. Demonstrate distinctive elements or a creative approach in your proposal or otherwise add value to the delivery of the evaluation

4.21   The development of the Practioners' Panel – fulfils a number of purposes, not just for the evaluation, but also in supporting a network of project leaders. The proposed evaluation web-site is also a new idea to improve dissemination and communication with projects and stakeholders. The evaluation will make good use of the developing Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics within small areas with opportunities to map specific variables.

4.22   The household survey methodology will supplement a standard telephone survey approach with an e-survey, which will be hosted by SQW and responses encouraged from communities engaged in all the supported projects.

4.23   Social indicators will be developed to link with questions and scoring used in the Scottish Household Survey to provide direct comparisons. Environmental indicators will be based directly on the impact of projects, but where they impact on carbon emissions, we would produce an estimate of these changes.

14. Demonstrate your record of producing high quality of research reports to support policy and practice development

4.24   The Table below provides examples of high quality research projects that we think are relevant. We have included a number of long term evaluation projects. More details are available in the attached Annex and many of the published reports are available for download at http://www.sqw.co.uk/publications.

5: Section 2 Annex 2 (schedule of charges)

Information in this section has been redacted and removed under Section 43 Commercial Interests

6: Section 3 (Contact details)

Part IV

Hard copies of signed letters provided in tender

Bidder's Details

	Company Details	
1.	**Registered Company Name:**	
	SQW Consulting	
2.	**Company Registration Number:**	
	1701564	
3.	**Address(s):**	
	Enterprise House	
	Vision Park	
	Histon	
	Cambridge	
	CB24 9ZR	
4.	**Tele:** 01223 209400	
5.	**Fax:** 01223 209401	
6.	**Email:**	
7.	**Main Operational address for the service:**	
	48 Melville Street	
	Edinburgh	
	EH3 7HF	
8.	**Address for all contractual correspondence –**	
	As register Company address	
9.	**Address for all service management correspondence**	
	Operational address	
10.	**Contacts:**	
	a. Responsible Person for the Contract	
	Bruce Macdonald	
	Tele: 0131 209400	
	Fax: 01223 209401	
	Mobile:	
	Email: *bmacdonald@sqw.co.uk*	
	b. Responsible Person for the Service:	
	As above	
11.	**VAT registration Number (if applicable)**	
	GB844286704	
12.	**Payment Details**	
	Personal information has been removed	

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Annex A: Quality Assurance Policy

SQW's quality policy aims to provide the highest standards of professional work, in order to achieve in full the objectives agreed with clients. Our practice is to specify the content of the work, and the form in which the results will be presented. A Project Director or Team Leader ('Project Leader') is designated for all assignments.

Quality assurance

The nominated Project Leader will be responsible for maintaining quality standards and supervising the work of project team members to meet the standards of rigour, clarity and style required by the client.

If issues related to quality and progress are raised, and the client is not satisfied with the response of the Project Leader, these concerns should be addressed to the relevant SQW Office Manager, or to the firm's Managing Director at our head office in Cambridge. A review will then be undertaken, and every effort made to agree with the client the remedial actions needed, and ensure delivery to the highest quality standards.

Content of work

The specification of work to be carried out in a project will be defined in a detailed workplan which will include an estimate of overall cost, an itemised budget, details of the contributions which would be made by each team member and the expected deliverables. The workplan will usually include a schedule for project review meetings.

This workplan will be agreed with the client at an inception meeting at the start of the project, to ensure that all areas of the work are fully understood and agreed. Any modifications will be agreed with the client, and confirmed by e-mail/in writing.

Project team

The team for a project will be defined by the Project Leader, and will be specified in the proposal/project plan. This would be subject to agreement by the client. Any variation in the team membership would be subject to agreement by the client.

Project teams will be selected on the basis of ability to carry out the work. The company is committed to knowledge development, and to ensuring that individuals have the skills to deliver their responsibilities. SQW attained the Investors in People standard in 1999, 2002 and this was re-examined and affirmed in February 2005.

Project management

In addition to the Project Leader, a Project Manager may be designated, who will have responsibility for day to day client liaison, and for ensuring that the specific tasks are

completed to defined standards and to schedule. If no Project Manager is designated, the Project Leader will perform this role.

Progress will be reviewed regularly against the schedule. Notes will be kept of relevant meetings, and team members informed by e-mail of progress, emerging issues and proposed actions. Actions will be allocated to specific team members.

Throughout the project, the Project Leader will supervise the project and provide guidance in relation to:

> surveys, results, analysis, evidence and conclusions
>
> progress against schedule
>
> the quality of written materials and other outputs

Surveys and questionnaires

The proposed sample of individuals and organisations to be surveyed will be agreed with the client in advance of any survey activity.

Where written questionnaires are proposed, the draft questionnaire will be agreed in advance with the client and, where appropriate, piloted with a representative sample of the target respondents.

Where telephone or face to face interviews are proposed, draft aide memoirs will be prepared and, as appropriate, agreed in advance with the client. Only specified staff will take part in face to face or telephone interview work.

The analysis of completed questionnaires or survey responses will be carried out by members of the designated project team.

Analysis

The Project Leader is responsible for ensuring that survey information is analysed effectively and that any conclusions drawn are supportable by the data. In particular this requires:

> sufficient coverage of potential information sources or respondents
>
> traceability of information to specific sources
>
> the use of proven and robust procedures for analysis
>
> adequate procedures for verification of calculations or checking samples of work to ensure validity
>
> the internal consistency of any reports and other materials.

Reports and deliverables

The Project Leader will be responsible for ensuring that reports and any other deliverables meet the quality and style requirements and are submitted to the client on time. He/she will read all written submissions to ensure their quality and style meet the required standards.

All reports and textual material will be prepared in Microsoft Word for Windows format.

Interaction with the clients

The main contact with the client on day to day issues will be the Project Manager and/or Project Leader. One or both will attend all client meetings

Sub-contractors and other suppliers

No subcontracting will take place without the agreement of the clients.

Confidentiality

Members of project teams will be required to respect the confidentiality of client specific information, and where necessary the Project Leader and team members will be prepared to sign a Confidentiality Undertaking. The Project Leader will be responsible for ensuring that Project Team members are fully aware of the confidentiality requirements of work for the client.

No press announcements or publicity material referring to work for the client will be made without their prior written approval.

Where the confidentiality of survey respondents or interviewees has been promised, survey data which includes information identifying respondents will not be passed to the client in disaggregated form.

SQW is registered under the Data Protection Act 1984.

Security

Provision will be made, where required by the client, for all materials pertaining to an inquiry to be kept in a single secure place.

Documents with security classifications requiring secure storage such as Restricted or Confidential will be stored in locked cabinets and will be accessible only to those members of staff (and their immediate secretarial staff) working on the specific project.

Documents with client security classifications will be returned to the client or shredded at the end of the project.

Annex B: Curricula vitae

B.1   Curricula vitae are attached for the following team members:

Personal information has been removed

Annex C: SQW experience

Community development, baseline and evaluation experience		
Client	**Year**	**Project**
Big Lottery Fund	2003-06	**Evaluation of Scottish Land Fund** SQW was commissioned with Land Use Consultants to evaluate the impact of the Scottish Land Fund. The Land Fund provides funding for community groups to assess the feasibility of acquiring land, the purchase itself and technical support. The work which took place over three years looked at how these acquisitions impacted on communities in terms of the economic, social and environmental benefits. The study also looked at the sustainability of these outcomes and produced a number of case studies to demonstrate the benefits.
Scottish Executive	2006-07	**Evaluation of Quality of Life Fund** SQW carried out an evaluation of the Executive's £375m 'Quality of Life' Fund. The Fund has been distributed to all 32 local authorities under the two themes of improving the local environment and increasing opportunities for children and young people. The evaluation focused on the process and operation of the Fund and considered how this funding has contributed to the development of community planning and Local Outcome Agreements across Scotland.
Highlands & Islands Enterprise	2005-06	**Evaluation of Highlands & Islands Community Land Unit (CLU)** This evaluation was conducted in two phases: the first involved surveys and case studies of projects supported by CLU and a workshop with case officers; the second phase included consultations with contacts involved in land reform across Scotland. The output was a report that reviewed the progress and activities of the Unit and provided guidance for future development.
Neighbourhood Renewal Unit, (DCLG)	2005-2008	**Neighbourhood Management - National Evaluation and Programme Support** SQW is leading a national consortium in undertaking the National Evaluation of the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit's Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder Programme. Originally appointed in 2002, SQW and the team have been re-appointed until 2008 to work with all 35 Pathfinders. The team are delivering a long-term process and impact evaluation of the programme, which involves detailed fieldwork in all 35 areas, case studies, baseline analysis, household surveys (by GfK NOP and MORI) in all areas, action learning sets and capacity building. The team is also evaluating 7 neighbourhood management initiatives outside of the programme. Reports are published regularly, including good practice notes and case studies. The evaluation team includes GFA Consulting, the University of the West of England, CEA, European Institute for Urban Affairs, the Local Government Centre (University of Warwick), MORI and GfK NOP.
North Ayrshire Council	2004	**Local Evaluation of the Better Neighbourhood Services Fund (BNSF)** The Better Neighbourhood Services Fund is a Scottish Executive fund which supports local authorities in the drive to improve services within disadvantaged communities. North Ayrshire Council was one of 12 pilot areas where the implementation focus shifted from resources and service inputs to outputs and outcomes. The evaluation focused on the outcomes of the BNSF programme, the contribution of key stakeholders, partnership working and the linkage between national and local policy priorities.
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister	2005	**ODPM New Models of Neighbourhood Governance** SQW, in partnership with Liverpool John Moores University, LSE and the University of the West of England, were appointed by the Local and Regional Government Research Unit in the ODPM to develop exemplars of neighbourhood governance. SQW did this by examining the existing evidence of good practice in neighbourhood governance; identifying new case studies; and undertaking national consultations with key stakeholders.

Client	Year	Project
Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (ODPM), Home Office and Cabinet Office	2004-05	**The Role of Communities in Improving Mainstream Services in Deprived Areas** SQW headed a consortium to review the process by which public service delivery is improved in deprived areas, for a range of services, and the role that user or community involvement plays within this. The study comprised a review of evidence, a mapping of departmental and agency policies and programmes and 15 in-depth case studies of good practice from around England.
Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust	2006-07	**Evaluation of the Gigha Community Buy-Out** SQW was invited by the Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust to carry out an evaluation of the progress achieved by the community on Gigha since it bought the island five years previously. The evaluation assessed the extent of progress towards realisation of a sustainable economy and examined the role of the community itself in the regeneration of the island.
Scottish Executive	2001 – 2004	**Evaluation of All Age Guidance and Social Inclusion** SQW was commissioned by the Scottish Executive Education and Lifelong Learning Department (SEELLD) to lead a three-year national evaluation of all age guidance and inclusiveness projects. This was SEELLD's largest research contracts and SQW managed a consortium containing three other partners. The evaluation, containing a significant programme of primary research, a longitudinal element and case study programme, was of a formative nature. A dissemination strategy was developed, including a number of seminars with practitioners, to help embed emerging good practice into years 1 and 2 of the various projects.
Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (DCLG)	2002-2008	**New Deal for Communities National Evaluation** SQW has been re-appointed, as part of the national evaluation team, to continue the long-term evaluation of the NDC Programme, led by Sheffield Hallam University. SQW led the evaluation of two NDC Partnerships in the South East and three in London in the first stage of the evaluation. The work involves detailed research and interviews contributed to the 'evidence base' for what works in neighbourhood renewal.
New Opportunities Fund	2003-2005	**Activities for Young People – National Evaluation** SQW undertook a national evaluation of the Activities for Young People programme, across England, Wales and Northern Ireland over three years. The programme sought to involve, and promote the development of, thousands of young people through a wide range of activities. The work included a longitudinal study that tracked a cohort of participants in the activities and fieldwork across the UK.
Big Lottery Fund (Previously New Opportunities Fund)	2004-2007	**Evaluation of the Transforming Your Space (TYS) Programme** SQW was commissioned to undertake a three year evaluation of the Transforming Your Space (TYS) Programme across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The focus of this £46.5m programme is on enhancing quality of life for local communities, improving the appearance and amenities of local environments, and developing community assets.
Big Lottery Fund	2005-2007	**Evaluation of the New Opportunities for Quality Childcare Programme (NOQC) Scotland** The Big Lottery Fund commissioned SQW to undertake an ongoing evaluation of the New Opportunities for Quality Childcare Programme (NOQC) in Scotland, concluding in 2008. This £15.3m programme, launched in 2002, aimed to support the development of a vibrant, sustainable and good quality childcare sector. The programme was designed with three 'outcomes': improving the quality of new and existing childcare provision; increasing access to childcare for disadvantaged groups; and demonstrating a holistic approach by combining different activities in after-school care. Over the three years of the evaluation SQW will undertake a policy and literature review, data analysis and 12 longitudinal case studies

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Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (ODPM), Home Office and Cabinet Office	2004-2005	**The Role of Communities in Improving Mainstream Services in Deprived Areas** SQW headed a consortium to review the process by which public service delivery is improved in deprived areas, for a range of services, and the role that user or community involvement plays within this. The study comprised a review of evidence, a mapping of departmental and agency policies and programmes and 15 in-depth case studies of good practice from around England.
Highlands and Islands Enterprise	2001	**Assessment of the Social Economy of the Highlands and Islands. Evaluation of the Highlands and Islands Enterprise/SCVO Partnerships** SQW carried out an audit of the social economy in the Highlands and Islands. The audit analysis identified key growth sectors which enabled HIE and its partners to focus resources on areas of greatest return. Three case study areas were selected to help develop our analysis of the role of the social economy. The study also included an evaluation of the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations and HIE partnership to assess its impact upon rural areas.
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	2003	**Mid Term Evaluation of LEADER Plus** SQW worked with ADAS to carry out the Mid Term Evaluation of the LEADER + programme funded by the EC to assist in the development of disadvantaged rural areas through bottom-up local initiatives ranging from community to business development.
Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (ODPM) & Sport England	2003-2004	**The Role of Sport in Neighbourhood Renewal** SQW was appointed to review the nature and extent of links between sport and neighbourhood renewal in order to identify how sport can play a role in promoting a regeneration agenda. Case studies were undertaken in 7 regions, exploring issues at regional, local and neighbourhood levels. Best practice advice was produced and disseminated.

Source: SQW