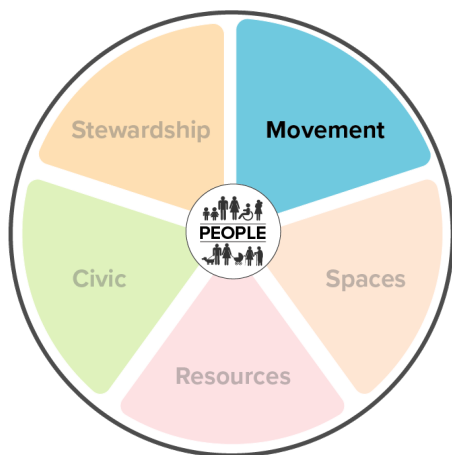


Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme

Public Transport: Impact on Clydebank's Community



Public transport can have a positive impact on people when:

Everyone has access to a sustainable, affordable, accessible, available, appropriate, and safe public transport service.

This is why it is one of Scotland's Place & Wellbeing Outcomes.

Public Transport involves buses and trains running on fixed routes and charging set fares.

The evidence tells us¹:

Public transport can encourage active travel.

Public transport accompanied by active travel is linked with increased physical activity and reduced obesity.

Public transport is linked with improved mental wellbeing.

Public transport can reduce carbon emissions.

Public transport can improve access to services and facilities and connect communities.

If public transport or active travel routes are not well maintained or do not feel safe, then they are unlikely to be used.

Certain groups are disproportionately affected by the lack of available and affordable public transport.

Certain groups such as women, students and older people are likely to be at higher risk of transport poverty.

1. Source: [Evidence Behind Place Standard Tool & Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

What we are seeing from the data² and what we heard from a range of communities, organisations and practitioners in Clydebank in 2023.

Dependence on public transport

A third of Scotland's households don't own or have access to a car. This increases to half of households in deprived areas. With high levels of poverty and deprivation across Clydebank, much of the population is dependent on public transport, especially buses.

33% of all households in West Dunbartonshire have **no access to a car**. (2019)

63% of households in socially rented housing have **no access to a car**. (2019)

West Dunbartonshire has the 3rd highest % bus journeys to work in Scotland. (2021)

86% of West Dunbartonshire Citizens Panel feel that public transport is '**very important**' for a quality of life within the built environment. (2023)

83% of Clydebank's population live in areas that are well served by bus accessibility (availability and frequency of bus service) and are above the national average (2019). The population identified as being less well served by bus accessibility include those living in parts of Whitecrook, Drumry, Dalmuir, Radnor Park & Duntocher.

Cost is a barrier to use

Affordable public transport is crucial for people on low incomes to access essential services and employment. However, for people on the lowest incomes, the cost of public transport is no longer affordable, with some people now unable to travel within or out with Clydebank to access to services and support.

“ People in Clydebank are much less likely to have access to a car. Along with affordability, other aspects of public transport, such as fares and trying to juggle work, childcare, etc, it puts a lot of stress onto parents. (Community Group Volunteer) ”

The cost of both bus and rail fares, especially all-day tickets, are considered too expensive and unaffordable for people on low incomes. There's also concern that public transport doesn't provide value for money and that fares are often unfair.

“ We have appointment cancellations due to patients being unable to walk to the Clydebank Health and Care Centre or afford a bus fare. (GP based in Clydebank) ”

1. Data sources: [SHS Data Explorer](#); statistics.gov.scot [Bus Availability](#); [Travel to Work](#); [Concessionary Travel](#); [FOI request](#); West Dunbartonshire Council Citizens Panel Survey (Spring 2023).



Why is fare on a bus from Mountblow to Whitecrook, the same as a fare from Mountblow into Glasgow City Centre? (Local group member)



Concessionary fare and travel discount schemes are welcomed and recognised as crucial for people on low incomes to access public transport. Increasing awareness of eligibility and the advantages of these schemes is considered vital to increase uptake. However, concerns remain for people on low incomes not eligible for concessionary travel benefits.



There is a large reliability on buses for those with concessionary fares. It is simply too expensive to travel without concessionary passes for those on pensions or unable to work. (Disability Support Worker)



My son uses his free concession card all the time to get to college, work and town. It has saved me a fortune in bus fares! (Womens' Group member)



78.4% of young people (eligible under 22s) in West Dunbartonshire have claimed a free bus travel card. This is higher than the 68.3% rate for Scotland. (2022)

27,291 60 year plus and disabled concession users in West Dunbartonshire in 2022, with this steadily increasing over recent years.

86% of West Dunbartonshire Citizens Panel report that reduced cost public transport would help with their overall finances (2023).



Satisfaction with public transport

Although 77% of Adults in West Dunbartonshire are very or fairly satisfied with public transport in 2019, concerns around safety and connectivity were raised in local conversations.

Safety concerns

- Poor maintenance of pathways and streetlighting can make a short journey to or from a bus stop unsafe for people with mobility issues.
- Lack of signage from bus stops to key locations can contribute to a lack of confidence.
- Women feeling unsafe walking home from bus stops, especially at night.
- Feeling unsafe on public transport when there is anti-social behaviour.
- Accessibility of buses for people with mobility issues.

It is recognised that public transport may not be suitable for people with health and mobility issues. Local transport schemes exist to address this issue and enable people to access health services and other activities.

“ When I got off the bus, I thought it was the new Clydebank Health Centre I was walking towards, but it was actually a sheltered housing complex. I felt foolish and confused. (Healthy Pathways Group member) ”

“ I feel unsafe on public transport sometimes because there are people who are drunk and unpredictable. (Group participant, female) ”

Connectivity concerns

- Timetabling of bus services out with regular hours not meeting local employment needs.
- Infrequency of some route services resulting in long journey times for short distances.
- Lack of knowledge of public transport availability, particularly for bus connections.
- Lack of connectivity between public transport and active travel opportunities.

Current public transport provision doesn't accommodate everyone's employment needs, particularly early morning and late night. This is further complicated for people in employment with family and caring responsibilities, e.g. dropping off & picking up school children. This can result in having to find alternative means of transport that incurs additional, often unaffordable, costs to simply balance employment and family responsibilities.

“ I need to take either 2 or 3 buses to get from my home in Clydebank to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I have my concession card but the time they take and waiting on buses is exhausting. (Older Adult Group member) ”

“ I had to pay for driving lessons and then for a car. It's expensive but it's the only way that I can manage to get to work on time.' (Women's Group member) ”

The availability of both public transport and active travel impact on one another and achieving both outcomes would bring great benefit to the people of Clydebank. Find out more in the accompanying Active Travel: Impact on Clydebank's Community Briefing.

Visit the [website](#) for more information on [Clydebank Project Town activity](#). Follow us on X (Twitter) [@place4wellbeing](#) to keep up to date with our latest news and place-based resources.