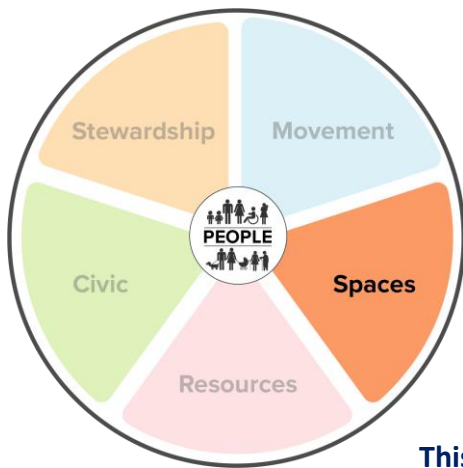


Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme

Streets and Spaces: Rutherglen Town



Streets and spaces can have a positive impact on people when everyone can access:

- Buildings, streets and public spaces that create an attractive place to use, enjoy and interact with others.
- Streets and spaces that are well-connected, well-designed and maintained, providing multiple functions and amenities to meet the varying needs of different population groups.

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

The evidence tells us¹:



Walkable neighbourhoods have the potential to increase physical activity and social interactions.



Mental wellbeing and quality of life is higher if residents perceive their neighbourhood, including buildings, as attractive.



Green spaces need to be easily accessible on foot, by bike or affordable public transport.



Inadequate or poor spaces can lead to reduced social interactions.



Navigable streets and spaces allow people to move around easily, safely and access facilities and services.



Intergenerational connection and sharing of resources, including sharing community assets, can strengthen communities.



Vacant and derelict land can negatively impact on health.



Partnerships in place-keeping which involve communities can bring benefits that individual partners cannot achieve alone.

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

Considerations on Streets and Spaces in South Lanarkshire & Rutherglen

Population living within 500 metres of a derelict site (2022)

- 20% in South Lanarkshire (6% decrease since 2019)
- 33% in Rutherglen (3% decrease since 2019)
- 95% in Burnhill and Bankhead North; and 81% in Farme Cross and Gallowflat North

Across Scotland, 28% of the population lives within 500 metres of a derelict site. In deprived communities, which also have the worst health outcomes, that increases to 55%. Addressing urban dereliction could play a major role in reducing health inequalities and improving wellbeing.

The effect of clustering (where groups of neglected sites are located in a concentrated geographic area) and physical condition – i.e. sites that are in a neglected state – were also factors that were found to exacerbate the harmful effects of vacant and derelict land on communities.

20 Minute Neighbourhoods (2021)

What services/facilities are available within 20 minutes of households. Places where everyone can meet most of their daily needs within a short walk, wheel or cycle of their home.

Table: % of households within 20 minutes of each service or facility

Services / facilities	South Lanarkshire	Rutherglen
Primary healthcare	38%	40%
Pharmacy	56%	79%
Healthy food retail	55%	51%
Accessible public open space	92%	98%
Public transport	95%	99%
High frequency public transport	56%	95%
Primary school	76%	89%
Financial	83%	99%
Recreation and sports facilities	87%	98%
Social and cultural	78%	97%
Eating establishments	62%	85%
Superfast broadband	96%	99%

1. Data Sources: https://scotland.shinyapps.io/ScotPHO_profiles_tool/; [The Scottish Living Locally Data Portal \(SLLDP\) \(arccgis.com\)](#); [Scottish Land Commission - Transforming Scotland's Approach to Vacant and Derelict Land](#)

What we heard from a range of communities, organisations and practitioners in Rutherglen in 2023

Quality rather than quantity of open spaces

There are large areas of free and open spaces within Rutherglen, including green spaces. However, in some areas, the quality rather than quantity of spaces is the issue. Contaminated land, vacant and derelict sites and the impact on mental health is raised. The emphasis placed on vacant and derelict land places Rutherglen in a unique position within the Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme as the only Project Town where it is recognised as a key inequality.

A 2019 report by the Scottish Land Commission found that “derelict sites can have a detrimental impact on a community’s health, environment, economy and social cohesion.” An “adverse physical environment” has been linked to Scotland's excess mortality.

“There is an abundance of green space but it is the quality of it that is the problem.”
(Local resident)

Town centre connectivity

Conversations with groups generally indicated positivity around connectivity to the town centre, including services and amenities and local transport connectivity.

Connectivity to transport links could be improved in some communities with the maintenance of paths to access services and addressing some safety concerns that includes parking on pavements and anti-social behaviour.

Concerns were raised around low level lighting, the underpass leading to the Main Street and lack of maintenance on some access routes.

Suggestions on how the appearance of the town centre could be improved included:

- Maintenance of footpaths and pavements
- Improved lighting
- Addressing littering and dog fouling
- Developing initiatives around vacant and derelict land.
- Traffic reduction and calming measures

Community empowerment

Local groups and organisations want to play a central role in addressing concerns over streets and spaces and take a responsibility in bring people together to make decisions that impact on them locally.

There is noted frustration at some decisions being made on streets and spaces without proper consultation that results in a lack of local ‘buy in’ to any programmes.

A strong history of community-led development and action exists and influence over decision making is strong in particular areas of Rutherglen. People report that they value meaningful engagement and want to support the improvement of local spaces.

An example of this local pride in streets and spaces is highlighted by Burnhill Youth Activists Group in their project to tackle fly tipping in the Burnhill area.

“Now it's time to stop and take action and all do our part. Let's make Burnhill free of fly tipping and take pride in the area we come from.”
(Burnhill Youth Activist Group member)

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