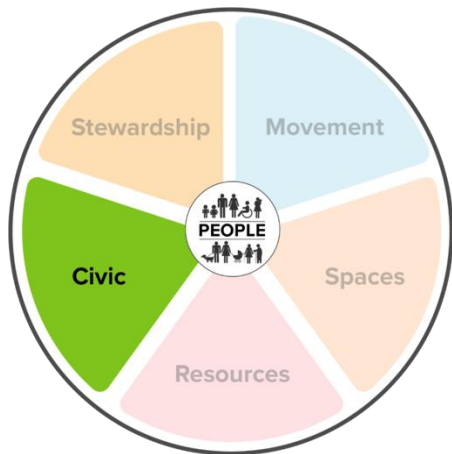


Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme

Identity and Belonging: Impact on Clydebank's Community



Identity and belonging can have a positive impact on people when:

- Everyone can benefit from a place that has a positive identity, culture and history, where people feel like they belong and are able to participate and interact positively with others.

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

The evidence tells us¹:



A feeling of belonging to a community is associated positively with mental health.



A sense of belonging to a community is associated with an improved quality of life.



Sense of belonging encourages community activity and provides a sense of purpose.



Attachment to a place is associated with good-quality and well-designed public spaces.



Attachment to a place is associated with how welcoming a place is and its aesthetics.



If people are involved in designing and maintaining the places they live, this builds a sense of ownership.



If there is something distinctive about a place then residents identify with it.



Social connections help residents to feel part of the community and provide them with a sense of belonging.

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

Indicators for Identity and Belonging in West Dunbartonshire²

Percentage of adults rating their neighbourhood as a 'very or fairly good' place to live (2019)

- 85% of adults in West Dunbartonshire
- 94% of adults in Scotland
- 78% of adults living in the 20% most deprived areas in West Dunbartonshire
- 85% of adults living in the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland

Percentage of people in the Scottish Household Survey agreeing with statements about their neighbourhood strengths (2019)

Neighbourhood strength statements	West Dunbartonshire	Scotland
This is a neighbourhood where people are kind to each other.	76%	83%
This is a neighbourhood where people can be trusted.	47%	79%
There are welcoming places and opportunities to meet new people.	39%	52%
There are places where people can meet up and socialise.	44%	57%
This is a neighbourhood where people from different backgrounds get on well together.	63%	69%
This is a neighbourhood where local people take action to improve their neighbourhood.	45%	58%

**58% of adults living in the 20% most deprived areas in West Dunbartonshire agree with the statement that
'This is a neighbourhood where people can be trusted'.
(2019)**

Strength of feeling of belonging to their community amongst adults (%) (2019)

	West Dunbartonshire	Scotland
Very Strongly	45%	35%
Fairly Strongly	34%	43%
Not Very Strongly	10%	15%
Not At All Strongly	11%	6%

In West Dunbartonshire **51% of men** have a **'very strong' feeling of belonging** to their local community, compared to **39% of women**. (2019)

In West Dunbartonshire **91% of people living in the 40% most deprived areas** have a **'very strong' feeling of belonging** to their local community in comparison to **60% of adults living in the 40% most deprived areas** across Scotland. (2019)

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

History and culture

Clydebank having a strong sense of identity was often referred to in local discussions, with many suggesting this stems from the town's industrial history and identity. Whilst there's widespread recognition that many people have a pride in Clydebank's history, reference was also made to a sense of loss and sadness associated with deindustrialization and the negative impact of this on the local area.

It was acknowledged that a visual reminder of the sense of pride and identity is provided by the Titan Crane, River Clyde, some original town centre buildings and new buildings reflecting the importance of shipbuilding and the town's industrial past.

However, local groups and organisations highlighted that whilst there's much to

recognise and acknowledge, these landmarks are accompanied by a run down town centre, lack of employment opportunities and high levels of poverty. They suggest this undermines the sense of pride and provides a constant reminder to what has been lost and a growing sense of despair.

The importance of looking forward to opportunities for Clydebank was highlighted to ensure that the town's industrial past and associated pride can be celebrated alongside hope and future opportunities for local people to positively interact with both the town centre and one another.

“ Anger and sadness takes the shine off any remaining pride, especially for the older generation who see very little hope or local opportunities for future generations. (Local group member) ”

Connecting to support and sharing information with others

It was also suggested in local conversations that it is local people or 'Bankies' that are at the core of a strong and positive sense of identity and belonging, with this often extending to people originating from Clydebank but no longer living there.

Reference was made to both local groups and online communities within Clydebank, actively connecting to support one another as members of the Clydebank community. Sharing information on employment, transport, service provision and housing is a key part of this, as is sharing stories and photos on Clydebank's history and memories of growing up.

Volunteering and the third sector

It was widely recognised that connected communities is an important part of 'identity and belonging', with the local third sector having a particularly important role to play in this. In addition to providing activities and services that bring people together, often tackling loneliness, the third sector has an important role in supporting volunteers.

Local groups highlighted that volunteering provides a sense of belonging and purpose for many individuals, with it helping to make connections with people in the group and the local community.

Welcoming people to Clydebank

There was recognition that it is also important to consider how people settling in the area can develop a sense of belonging to their local community. In particular, reference was made to Syrian resettlement and the efforts from West Dunbartonshire Council's Resettlement Team and local community groups such as Moments of Freedom to establish a sense of belonging for New Scots.

The local Clydesider magazine was often referenced as a great example of a local third sector organisation encouraging sharing and promoting positive local stories and information that encourages others to connect with one another.

“ People are aware of how tough it is just now and don't want to see others miss out. If they can help someone else by passing on an all day bus ticket, sharing a job ad or returning an important lost item, they will. (Local charity worker) ”

“ Until I started volunteering, to be honest, I felt largely invisible. It's so easy to go through life just getting by, not really connecting or participating. But volunteering changed that for me. It took a while and a lot of support but I now feel I am not just part of my community again but contributing to my community for the first time. (Local volunteer) ”

“ It's important to have safe, welcoming community spaces where people can go to connect with each other and the wider community. Sense of belonging is a huge part of community integration – and it needs to be supported and resourced.” (Moments of Freedom Group) ”

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