

Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme

Rutherglen Project Town

What We're Hearing in our Communities

A qualitative report on the findings from stakeholder conversations and a review of engagement documentation



Introduction

This report presents the findings to date of the Community Link Lead working on the Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme in Rutherglen. It reviews previous qualitative data or formal community engagement and gathers insights from conversations with community organisations and local stakeholders to identify key priorities around place within the town. It adds qualitative, narrative and experiential data to the Programme's understanding of inequality, place and wellbeing in Rutherglen and provides a sense check of the quantitative findings within the Rutherglen data profile developed for the Shaping Places for Wellbeing programme.

Key themes and priorities emerging from this review review and stakeholder engagement include:

- The role of carers emerging as a priority for the Health Improvement Team and for community groups.
- The impact of living close to vacant, derelict and contaminated land.
- The impact of the cost of living crisis on people's mental health and wellbeing.
- Lower cancer screening rates but higher prevalence of cancer in some neighbourhoods within Rutherglen.
- The importance placed on meaningful consultation and engagement along with good communication at every level.
- The value of place in bringing people together to address local issues and share information.

Whilst outlining key findings, this report also details the processes the Community Link Lead undertook and provides further information on the key topics captured in this [summary infographic](#).



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Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme

Shaping Places for Wellbeing is a 3-year programme, running until March 2024, being delivered by Public Health Scotland (PHS) and the Improvement Service (IS) jointly with local authorities and NHS local boards. The programme has funding from The Health Foundation and Scottish Government. The ambition of the Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme is to:

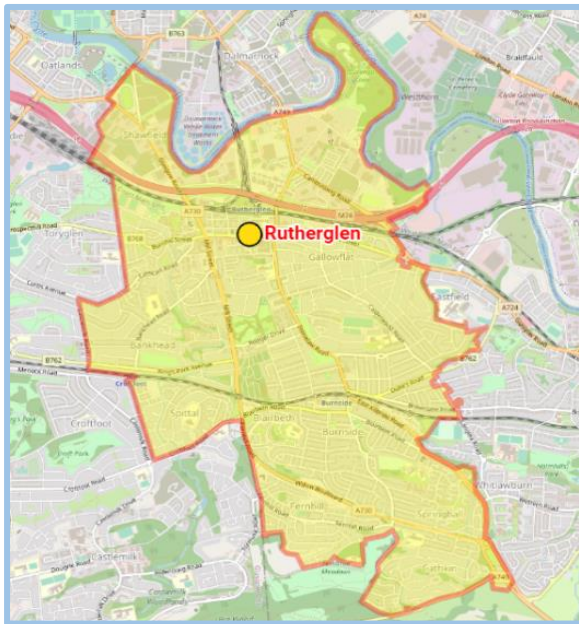
Improve Scotland’s wellbeing by reducing the significant inequality in the health of its people while addressing the health of our planet.



The programme is supporting seven ‘Project Towns’: Alloa, Ayr, Dunoon, Clydebank, Rutherglen, Fraserburgh and Dalkeith. Each Project Town has a Steering Group made up of local authority and local health board representatives to provide oversight and direction. In each Project Town there is a Project Lead and Community Link Lead.

The role of the Rutherglen Community Link Lead is to facilitate connection between the community/third sector and the Programme, acting as a crucial bridge between being informed by data on health and wellbeing and a citizen focus on understanding the community’s needs and aspirations.

Rutherglen



Rutherglen is a town in the South Lanarkshire Council area bordering with Glasgow City Council and home to approximately 34,000 people. Shaping Places for Wellbeing has been working in Rutherglen since August 2022. Since then, the Programme has undertaken [4 Place and Wellbeing Assessments](#) – South Lanarkshire Economic Strategy; South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2; Burnhill Neighbourhood Plan; and the Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan.

With support from our partners at Public Health Scotland Local Intelligence System Team (LIST), the Programme set out to use quantitative data as a starting point to understand the perspectives of the groups most impacted by inequality and what they need from their place. This data profile has identified five significant inequalities facing some groups in the local area. These are:

- Life expectancy variances across neighbourhoods.
- Children living in poverty.
- Alcohol-related hospitalisations.
- People receiving out of work benefits.
- Proximity to derelict sites.

Approach

This report, and [accompanying infographic](#), aim to bring to life the above data. Taking a qualitative approach, we hope to understand Rutherglen residents' experience of place.

Purpose

This Community Link Leads were tasked to:

- Connect with community organisations to understand the needs of the demographics most impacted by key inequalities to experience the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes.
- Undertake a review of existing qualitative data to identify key priorities around place, for the demographic most impacted.
- Support ongoing qualitative and quantitative data gathering related to key inequalities to identify demographics most impacted. Connect with community organisations to sense check this data.
- Promote understanding of the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes amongst local organisations.

The narrative and experiential data gathered through this exercise has been valuable. It must be understood though that the Community Link Lead took an informal approach that prioritised building relationships with community stakeholders. This exercise does not constitute qualitative research, nor is it a piece of community consultation. It is hoped that this report may act as a starting point for teams taking a place-based approach to working in Rutherglen to think about their communities' needs and assets. Further, more focussed, research, consultation or engagement would be necessary.

Methods

A variety of methods have been used to carry out this review including desk-based research, assessing local reports identified by local stakeholders, conversations with local people and groups, along with more formal place-based assessments and engagement processes.

Desk-based research

Google search conducted for previous reports and existing qualitative data/formal engagement processes to identify key priorities around place. Findings were largely limited to smaller area neighbourhood plans or to wider South Lanarkshire area with mention (sometimes limited) to the Rutherglen area. Searches included, but not exhaustive, “Rutherglen Neighbourhood Survey”; “Rutherglen Poverty and health”; “Rutherglen planning”; and “[insert Rutherglen neighbourhood] local plan”.



Reports identified or provided by local stakeholders

Members of the Rutherglen Shaping Places for Wellbeing Steering group and community groups including Healthy 'n Happy, the Rutherglen Health Improvement Team, Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire (VASLan) and Burnhill Action Group were asked for any relevant information, reports and surveys/engagement they were aware of to conduct a qualitative review on. Responses received provided links to neighbourhood plans and strategic commissioning plans.

Conversations with local groups and stakeholders

The most effective method of data gathering has been through conversations and informal ‘interviews’ with local people and organisations sharing information about the quantitative data and providing evidence to support that data whilst raising additional questions. This has also provided an opportunity to share further about the Shaping Places for Wellbeing programme with approximately 37 groups. Conversations were often with representatives from organisations or practitioners working locally. They were able to share an overall picture of the collective experience of the people these organisations/practitioners worked with. Some individuals could offer perspective both in their organisational capacity and as a resident.

Individuals and groups have been asked what their priorities are for Rutherglen which has raised interesting ideas around carers, cancer screening, land use, communication and engagement. The groups have been identified through local knowledge and through the [Locator](#) tool provided by VASLan.

Formal place-based assessments and engagement

A number of Place and Wellbeing Assessments have been carried out on plans and strategies specific to or affecting Rutherglen including the Burnhill Neighbourhood Plan, South Lanarkshire Council's Local Development Plan (Vision and Strategy), South Lanarkshire Council's Economic Strategy and the Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan. In the context of Burnhill Neighbourhood Plan this included supporting a series of community engagement events with a family hub and with young people prior to a wider neighbourhood survey process.

Mapping of data

To identify multi-factors relating to places within Rutherglen and to further identify areas of inequality a series of maps were developed using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and shared with community groups and statutory organisations to help identify themes and support planning, including around the Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan. Some of these maps include:

[Rutherglen Younger and Older Population](#)

[Shaping Places for Wellbeing Towns and SIMD20](#)

[Rutherglen Alcohol-related Hospital Admissions Over National Rate by Data Zone](#)

[Rutherglen Drug-related Hospital Admissions Over National Rate by Data Zone](#)

[Rutherglen Prescriptions for Anxiety, Depression or Psychosis by Data Zone](#)

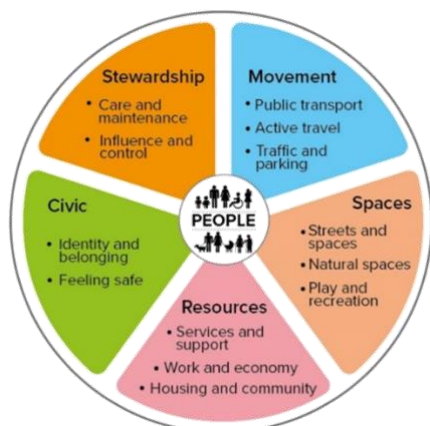
[Rutherglen NEET Population \(16-19\) by Data Zone](#)

[Burnhill & Bankhead North Mini Profile](#)

Future review and engagement methods

Following on from the methods adopted above options are being considered for future engagement to enhance this further including linking in with a number of other groups and making the data profile more accessible to a wider range of groups and supporting understanding and use of this to make a difference locally.

Mapping themes against the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes



The Place and Wellbeing Outcomes provide a set of outcomes for all stakeholders to work towards for the places they live, work, learn or relax in. The 13 Outcomes fall into five overarching themes, as illustrated left. More information and context can be found in [this briefing paper](#).

The Place and Wellbeing Outcomes were used to frame conversations, and to interpret and capture the things we heard. An example of this process was mapping the priorities identified in a previous Burnhill Neighbourhood

Plan to the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes and developing a short report summary to support future plans around place.



The **Movement** outcome is represented strongly in a largely positive way, with people reflecting on the good public transport links within Rutherglen and local amenities, with frequent services and a range of options from the Main Street. Connectivity to transport links could also be improved in some communities with the maintenance of paths to access services and addressing some safety concerns. Reference to the Main Street often focuses on the volume of traffic but also on positive factors such as vibrancy and the lack of closed or ‘boarded up’ shops and store fronts.

Due to the location of Rutherglen as a town in South Lanarkshire but close to Glasgow City, appointments for health care services could be within both Glasgow City and South Lanarkshire, raising comments around the frequency and travel time of transport links particularly to those health care services within South Lanarkshire.



Spaces and the use of and quality of land and buildings is raised frequently within communities. Open spaces and green spaces have been described as being high in quantity but of poor quality – including dog fouling, fly tipping, derelict and contaminated land. The priority given to land use and the proximity to derelict sites for a significant proportion of the population makes Rutherglen unique within the Project Towns.



There is a feeling that there could be more **Resources** in the area with some services that support carers, as an example, not restarting following the pandemic. Resources relating to employability and financial wellbeing is also mentioned.

The recently published disposal list of buildings by South Lanarkshire Council shows three buildings impacting residents in Rutherglen are set for disposal and with ongoing Church of Scotland developments there is the potential for church closures over the next five years – affecting the availability of indoor spaces in the community.



A strong sense of belonging in relation to **Civic** comes through in conversations both locally and in organisations with reference made to the upcoming 900 years as a Royal Burgh.

Reference to feeling safe has been linked to open spaces with comments around low level lighting, underpasses and anti-social behaviour mentioned.



With regards **Stewardship**, people have expressed a desire to be involved in shaping the decisions that affect their lives and community. People not only want to be heard but want to be involved in bringing services and people around a table to look at how inequalities can be tackled. A lack of consultation about land developments is also raised as causing frustrations and anger within some communities.

Rutherglen has a long history of community involvement and participation which has allowed the Shaping Places for Wellbeing programme to engage with a number of established groups. In this time, communication and valuing engagement have been frequently raised by community groups. Being able to bring people together in a room from different departments of the council has been valued highly. Links have also been made between organisations/people which may have a potential impact going forward (e.g. Health Improvement Team and Town Centre Action Plan).

There is a feeling that community empowerment can be achieved and enhanced through bringing people and services together and through joint working, with community groups taking the lead in bringing organisation organisations together to be listened to.

This report is not an exhaustive representation of the topics raised, but those raised by multiple stakeholders across sectors and thus suggest a more collective, shared experience of place. It is a snapshot of what we've heard from communities between December 2022 and November 2023.

We understand that it can be challenging to gather feedback from community groups and residents on some Place and Wellbeing Outcomes (e.g. active travel), or on themes around planet and climate change, when people's priorities are things like food or fuel poverty. We need to recognise these as barriers to engagement with some topics rather than assuming that people are satisfied.

Sources and conversations

Existing community engagement/consultation reports

A total of 14 pieces of formal consultation/engagement were reviewed, some with a specific focus on Rutherglen and neighbourhood within the locality, whilst other were more focused on South Lanarkshire as a whole but with specific reference to Rutherglen. These existing community engagement and consultation reports reviewed are outlined in Appendix i.

Community Organisations and Stakeholder Conversations

Ideas outlined in this report were formed from over 40 conversations involving 70+ individuals. Most of these were one-to-one facilitated by the Community Link Lead, but also include group discussions the Community Link Lead was part of.

Below is a list of groups/organisations the Community Link Lead has spoken to. This is not an exhaustive list, allowing individual contributions to conversations to remain anonymous. In several cases, the Community Link Lead had conversations with multiple teams/projects from the same organisation but the organisation is only listed once below. The Community Link Lead sense-checked back to groups that what was captured accurately reflected their thoughts.

Burnhill Action Group	NHS South Lanarkshire HSCP Health Improvement Team (Rutherglen)	South Lanarkshire Council Health and Social Care Partnership (Planning)
Burnhill Action Group (Wellbeing Hub)	Outcome Leads Group	South Lanarkshire Council Community Engagement Team
Burnhill Youth Activist Group	Rutherglen Friendship Group	South Lanarkshire Council, Sustainable Communities
Chatty Crafters	Rutherglen West & Wardlawhill Church Drop-in Café	The Beacons
Clyde Gateway	SCCAN	Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire (VASLan)
Clyde Gateway - Supporting Families Project	South Lanarkshire Council Housing	
South Lanarkshire Council Community Planning Partnership Co-production Group	South Lanarkshire Alcohol & Drug Partnership (ADP)	
Enable		
GoAhead Group		
Grow73		
Healthy 'n Happy		
Lanarkshire Carers		

Emerging Themes

The stakeholders spoken with generally agreed that the inequality groups identified by the quantitative process were an accurate representation of issues in Rutherglen and were keen to explore the reasons for these inequalities along with recommendations for how they can be addressed. In many cases the themes emerging are interlinked and impact on each other such as the links between poverty and ill-health and the financial impact of caring and impact on mental health. Many of these themes are shared across each of the project towns of Shaping Places for Wellbeing but within the town of Rutherglen there are also unique findings including the population living close to derelict and contaminated land. Conversations with local people provided some interesting insights around this and other themes.

Intersectionality is “a metaphor for understanding the ways that multiple forms of inequality or disadvantage sometimes compound themselves and create obstacles that often are not understood among conventional ways of thinking.” Although intersectionality is not a word that is used in everyday language, many conversations alluded to this.

For example, consider someone (fictional) from an ethnic minority with an insecure tenancy living in Rutherglen who is an unpaid carer, has a zero hours contract and experiences depression. The way these multiple identities and disadvantages intersect and compound is complex, and would likely result in significant inequality and reduced health and wellbeing.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Mental health and wellbeing is at the core of many conversations and links to many other themes raised such as addictions, financial inclusion, carers and child poverty. There are clear links between poverty, the cost of living crisis and mental health and wellbeing in Rutherglen. Conversations have often focused on a need for more preventative approaches for tackling the issue (Grow73, Healthy ‘n Happy, Burnhill Action Group). There is a feeling that there is a lack of appropriate services that can make a real and lasting difference.

The impact of place on mental health is also raised in relation to poor quality housing, fly tipping and poor-quality outdoor spaces. In the case of Burnhill, the Burnhill Youth Activist Group have taken the issue of fly tipping on to make a difference in the community and have a positive impact on mental health

How this links to the data profile: Asides from data showing the high level of prescriptions for anxiety, depression and psychosis there is limited quantitative information available, as yet, for this issue. Within the Burnhill Neighbourhood Plan 2019 they request increased mental health service and more local groups to address health issues but ‘health improvements’ was not a top priority at that point in time.

Caring responsibilities

Supporting carers emerges as a priority for the Health Improvement Team in Rutherglen and also emerges as an issue for other groups. Questions are raised about what is important in terms of place for carers and people being cared for. Consideration has also been given to people with dementia and autism about how place and spaces can be developed to be more inclusive. In discussions around carers the topic of resources and services is raised with concern over groups and projects not restarting following the pandemic – groups that provided much needed support for people with caring responsibilities and groups that also provided respite for carers.

How this links to the data profile: The topic of carers supports the data where 8 out of 9 neighbourhoods in Rutherglen have a carers allowance rate above the Scottish average rate. Spittal is almost double the national rate and Burnhill & Bankhead North and Fernhill & Cathkin are similar.

Cancer rates and screening

An issue identified within the local community is of higher cancer rates whilst lower uptake of cancer screening programmes is also identified by the Health Improvement Team working in Rutherglen. In Burnhill in particular they have started to identify some of the reasons for this lower uptake – not living at registered addresses, access to medical services. In relation to the higher rates of cancer there have been conversations on the ‘reasons’ for this with poverty, environment and perceived links to contaminated land all being raised as potential contributing factors. With the latter there being no concrete evidence but perceptions are still there within the local community.

How this links to the data profile: Cancer death rates above the national average in 7 out of 9 intermediate zones in Rutherglen. Farme Cross and Gallowflat North has the highest deaths from cancer rate in Rutherglen and one of the lowest uptakes of bowel cancer screening using the data.

Financial wellbeing and cost of living crisis

In the latest neighbourhood plan and through community engagement in Burnhill it was clear that financial wellbeing is emerging as one of the top priorities, moving from 9th to one of the top three priorities in three years. This has been referred to by each group and organisation met with and how it is linked to poverty, health, participation and opportunity. Amongst the groups engaged with there is a feeling that financial wellbeing is more prominent now as it is affecting everyone and people are more willing to talk about its impact. There is a recognition too of the need for more resources locally to support people at this time.

How this links to the data profile: The population in Rutherglen that are income deprived and the working age population employment deprived are higher than South Lanarkshire and Scotland rates as are recipients of Universal Credit.

Shared Learning

As well as the emerging themes in each town there has also been shared learning across the project towns. The Community Link leads have been meeting regularly to capture this learning, understand it and share it within the context of the wider programme. Much of the focus on this shared learning is around how groups see positive engagement and ways of working.

Communities value joint working and partnership approaches, with the importance communities taking a lead role in bringing people together.

“We hadn’t had such a range of partners come together like that before to discuss our community and our priorities for the area. The report from the session was great to read and will be really useful for things like funding applications.” (Lizzy McDonald, Burnhill Action Group member)

Communities want strong and clear communication from and between all stakeholders, with an emphasis placed on two-way communication and transparency. Inaccessible language can have an impact on people’s capacity to engage with consultation processes, etc.

Trust in formal/statutory services has been lost for both individuals and community stakeholders. Partnership working, transparent communication and collective decision making would help build this.

Stakeholders value information sharing across organisations – e.g. shared learning and best practice; data sharing and support.

Communities are seeking quality community engagement that goes beyond traditional consultation towards coproduction, cocreation and codesign approaches.

*“A lack of communication or consultation leads to a lack of community buy-in”
(Burnhill resident)*

The Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme and other ‘neutral’ organisations have been valued in our Project Towns for bringing people together.

Short-term funding has a significant negative impact on third sector projects and place-based working.

Next Steps

The findings of this report are being used to inform Place and Wellbeing Assessments of a range of plans and strategies for Rutherglen, and to determine how Shaping Places for Wellbeing can support implementation of their recommendations. Stakeholder conversations are an ongoing part of the Community Link Lead's work and we continue to review new data and explore opportunities to facilitate data sharing and collaboration as raised by the stakeholders contributing to this work.

This report will be reviewed in February 2024.

Appendix i

Existing community engagement/consultation reports

Piece of work/organisation	Date(s)	Key relevant findings/considerations
<p><i>Our Place, Our Plan, Burnhill</i> Burnhill Neighbourhood Plan and Plan survey – consultation</p> <p>Burnhill</p>	2019/2023	<p>A good example of effective engagement with strong results and participation levels. Priorities listed in 2019 very different to those listed currently under a review of the neighbourhood plan. What was the top priority in 2019 (More leisure and social opportunities) has been replaced by Better financial wellbeing, which was 9th out of 10 in 2019.</p> <p>Key themes emerging from the 2019 plan were more activities for all local people, more community events and improvements to the physical environment along with housing improvements.</p> <p>Thoughts – developing increased opportunity for people to share their thoughts on priorities that may not be included in the options provided. As an example, one priority was separated out to form a stand-alone priority of ‘housing’ in the most recent neighbourhood plan.</p>
<p><i>Our Place, Our Plan, Fernhill</i> Fernhill Neighbourhood Plan and Plan survey – consultation</p> <p>Fernhill</p>	November 2020 – March 2022	<p>Another example of good engagement that was done through an asset map of the community being produced to highlight the work already ongoing within the community; a number of meetings with local residents and representatives from key organisations in the area to design the engagement; a community survey delivered door to door which covered all households within the Fernhill area with paper copy of the survey delivered to every house in Fernhill with a drop box located in the local shop to collect completed surveys; and interviews with young people from schools. The top priorities emerged as More leisure and social opportunities, Stronger and better communities and play park and sports park improvements.</p>

<p>Our Place, Our Plan Springhall and Whitlawburn Neighbourhood Plan and Plan survey – consultation Springhall & Whitlawburn</p>	<p>2017-2018</p>	<p>Slightly older neighbourhood plan and pre-Covid so priorities may have changed. A positive approach from this model was identifying community assets in the process which found: A community resource centre; A bespoke youth base; A community centre with integrated library; 1 standalone nursery and 1 in a school setting; 2 primary schools and 1 secondary school; 3 MUGA's (Multi use games arenas); 2 play areas and access to 2 public parks; 2 community gardens; A state of the art recreational space with integrated community growing facility; 1 Food Co-op; Plus a wide range of community groups and organisations that positively contribute to the wellbeing of individuals and the wider community.</p> <p>The top three priorities for the area were more leisure, recreational and social opportunities followed by stronger and better communities and housing improvements.</p> <p>Thoughts - in September 2021 the Community Safety Group reconvened in response to concerns about an increase in anti-social behaviour, bringing together residents, headteachers, police, youth service providers and staff from voluntary sector groups and organisations and elected members.</p>
<p>South Lanarkshire Community Plan (2022 – 2032) Community Plan</p>	<p>2021</p>	<p>South Lanarkshire Community Planning Partnership asked communities to tell them what is important to them and from these conversations a new Community Participation Model was created. In 2021, over 3,300 people answered their survey about what matters to them, and they had conversations with 27 different groups to find out more. Seventeen communities have their own action plan and are acting to improve the lives of everyone in their place. Looking at all these plans together, the top five areas that communities want to improve are: Taking action to create more activities for people of all ages; Taking action to make better use of community centres and other buildings; Taking action so that it is easier to get around and visit other areas; Taking action to make places look better; and Taking action to make communities safer.</p>
<p>South Lanarkshire Food Growing Strategy</p>	<p>2019</p>	<p>The Food Growing Strategy 2020-25 was approved in December 2020 and outlines how the council intend to work towards increasing food growing provision as well as how they will identify available land to develop allotment sites and land suitable</p>

South Lanarkshire Food Growing Strategy		<p>for alternative food growing purposes such as raised beds, community growing or un-serviced plots. Based on current waiting lists the highest demand is in Rutherglen, Cambuslang and East Kilbride. A list of food growing opportunities and initiatives in Rutherglen are provided.</p>
<p>Local Police Plan 2020 – 2023</p> <p>2020</p> <p>Local Police Plan</p>		<p>The current Local Police Plan for North and South Lanarkshire expires on 31 March 2023 and the new plan for 2023-26 closed for consultation on 12th February 2023 which may provide an opportunity for Shaping Places for Wellbeing to engage with.</p> <p>The report provides some quantitative information relating to poverty and deprivation for Rutherglen including at a Community Area Level 23.9% of the 20% most deprived areas in South Lanarkshire are in the Hamilton area; 18.2% in Rutherglen; 14.8% in Cambuslang; and 11.4% in Blantyre.</p>
<p>M74 Community Engagement Report</p> <p>2016</p> <p>M74 Community Engagement Report</p>		<p>A study on the impact of the M74 motorway on surrounding communities that emerged through engagement with local residents in Rutherglen and other communities. Much of the engagement was done in 2016 and whilst slightly outdated it still provides a good basis for the impact the M74 has had such as perceived increased traffic. In particular, some discussion focused on issues surrounding social justice and adverse respiratory health effects. A thorough academic review of the impact through engagement that raises some interesting findings.</p> <p>Thoughts – follow up on health impact, potentially with air quality through SCCAN and traffic hotspots area mapping.</p>
<p>South Lanarkshire’s Local Child Poverty Action Report</p> <p>2020</p> <p>Child Poverty Action Plan</p>		<p>With financial wellbeing emerging as one of the top priorities in Burnhill this report provides some interesting detail for progress towards tackling child poverty. Whilst not so much focused on the qualitative and/or engagement nature of research it has been included for this aspect. It also states that as part of the GP Community Link Worker programme, NHS Lanarkshire has commissioned a Financial Wellbeing Advice (FWA) service, delivered through South Lanarkshire Council’s Money Matters and the Hamilton, Rutherglen, Clydesdale and East Kilbride Citizen Advice Bureaus. During the first full year of operation, there were 597 referrals made to the Financial</p>

		Wellbeing Advisors, with around £305,202 in financial gains secured for the families/individuals referred.
Rutherglen and Cambuslang Area Active Travel Network Plan Active Travel Network Plan	2019	<p>A 2019 report looking at a variety of factor affective active travel in Rutherglen and Cambuslang including what are the main barriers to walking and cycling in Rutherglen and Cambuslang and what measures in place would encourage people to walk and cycle.</p> <p>Thoughts – a small sample completed the survey but some of the quotes and information contained within it is useful to consider as Rutherglen is generally considered to be well served by public transport.</p>