

Rutherglen and Cambuslang Town Centre Strategies Place and Wellbeing Assessment Report

June 2023



About the report

This is a report of a Place and Wellbeing Assessment held in June 2023 to support the development of the new Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan. There is currently no Action Plan for Rutherglen Town Centre. The session considered the Strategy and Action Plan for the neighbouring town of Cambuslang to inform thoughts and recommendations on delivery of the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes in the Rutherglen plan.

We know that the places we create impact on those who live, work and relax in them and can have a positive or negative influence on their health and wellbeing. The process applied during the workshop takes a place-based approach considering the consequences of our actions on creating a place that has a positive impact for those who live, work and relax there.

Participants were asked to use their knowledge and expertise to consider how the Cambuslang Town Centre Strategy is likely to impact on creating a place that enables wellbeing. Using the data gathered by Public Health Scotland's Local Intelligence Support Team (LIST), as part of the Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme, discussions also considered population groups highlighted in this data as being impacted by inequality. This included:

- People in those areas of Rutherglen experiencing lower average life expectancy (see data below).
- Children living in poverty.
- People experiencing issues with alcohol use.
- People receiving out of work benefits.
- People living in proximity to vacant and derelict land.

This report begins with a Report Summary detailing the key themes emerging from the assessment process. This is followed by a summary of the plan under consideration; key health inequalities data which has emerged; information about the Shaping Places programme and the assessment process; and details of participants in this assessment session. The remainder of the report outlines the discussions that took place and shares some recommendations to enhance the plan's contribution to health and wellbeing. Included alongside these is relevant evidence and research papers that shaped the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes and the impact of each feature on people.



Report Summary

The Cambuslang Town Centre Strategy contributes to delivering and supporting many of the aspects of a place that enable the wellbeing of those who live, work and relax in Cambuslang and the wider South Lanarkshire Council area. The review of the Cambuslang Town Centre Strategy is an opportunity to broaden the contribution of place to both overall wellbeing and to reduce inequality in some communities when preparing a similar plan for Rutherglen.

The following broad themes were identified:

Aligning with other strategies and plans

The Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan aligns with a variety of South Lanarkshire strategies and plans as well as national priorities and ambitions. The Plan has an opportunity to hook into these other pieces of work and highlight that the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes and overall ambitions for Rutherglen town centre cannot be delivered in isolation. The more specific the Plan is about what support is required, and from which plans, the greater upfront clarity it will give on the collaborative work required to deliver both the Outcomes and overall ambitions.

Working with the local community and local partners

The assessment session highlighted the need to work with a range of partners, particularly the local community, in order to deliver a thriving town centre that meets the needs of different population groups. There is already a wide variety of positive work happening in Rutherglen and across South Lanarkshire and the Plan provides an opportunity to highlight this.

Data and intelligence

There are several areas in which more data and intelligence would support with development and delivery of the Town Centre Action Plan, including transport, environment, local economy and housing. Public engagement and consultation during development of the Plan is an opportunity to support this data and intelligence gathering.



Summary of Town Centre Action Plan, links with Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme Context and Participants

Summary of background of the Town Centre Action Plan

The Cambuslang Town Centre Strategy was published by South Lanarkshire Council (SLC) in 2019 and developed through 2018/19 with the local community in Cambuslang. Working with Cambuslang Community Council and town centre partners, the strategy seeks to “support and coordinate action aimed at revitalising Cambuslang town centre ... promoting additional vibrancy and vitality within the town centre and supporting its sustainable future.” SLC commissioned a ‘Your Town Audit’ (YTA), conducted by Scotland’s Towns Partnership and EKOS, which was completed in May 2018 and provides a comprehensive audit of Cambuslang.

The strategy’s Vision for Cambuslang is of an attractive, commercially successful, community focussed, welcoming town centre which generates a sense of civic pride in its citizens. The vision for Cambuslang town centre seeks to build on local strengths to create:

- an attractive, safe and welcoming town centre providing a focal point for all sectors and age groups of the community to connect.
- a successful Main Street that meets the needs of the community it serves.
- a town that remembers and retains its heritage as the oldest village in Scotland with industrial heritage.

The Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan will be developed in 2023. An initial draft is expected to go to South Lanarkshire Council’s Communities and Enterprise Committee over the summer before going out for public consultation and engagement. The Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan will build on existing South Lanarkshire town centre work while also aligning with new national approaches and priorities such as National Planning Framework 4, 20-minute neighbourhoods and Community Wealth Building.

Links to Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme

In line with the Place Principle the Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme ambition is to improve Scotland’s wellbeing by reducing the significant inequality in the health of its people. The Programme objective focusses on the evidenced impact that the places where we live, work and relax have on our health and wellbeing. This impact can be positive or negative and this Programme aims to ensure these unintended consequences are fully considered when we make decisions about a place.



All of the evidenced features that a place needs to exhibit for it to have a positive impact on health and wellbeing are set out in the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes. Our objective is to support delivery of these outcomes. A process used for doing so is a Place and Wellbeing Assessment. This paper is the output of one of these assessments.

A Place and Wellbeing Assessment involves a workshop pulling together expertise and perspectives from attendees to consider a plan, policy or decisions impact on delivering a place that enables wellbeing. It asks attendees to consider each of the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes with a lens on who is experiencing the most significant impact from inequality in that place.

Inequalities data

To get a better understanding about inequalities in the Project Towns, Public Health Scotland's Local Intelligence Support Team (LIST) has been gathering data. This data will be used during the Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme to highlight the people within each town who are being impacted most by poor health and wellbeing.

As well as having focused discussions on each of the five Place and Wellbeing Outcomes, the Place and Wellbeing Assessment also aims to place emphasis on the key groups/areas highlighted in the data in order to ensure strategic decision making considers the impact on those experiencing inequalities.

The LIST data for Rutherglen has highlighted five key areas of focus. These are:

Life Expectancy

- High Crosshill life expectancy is over a decade longer than Shawfield and Clincarthill (85.5 > 74.0 for Females, 81.5 > 71.0 for Males).

Children in Poverty

- Over 20% of children in Spittal, Shawfield and Clincarthill, Bankhead South and Burnhill and Bankhead North are living in poverty. This compares to 15% in South Lanarkshire and 15.5% in Scotland.



Alcohol Hospitalisations

- Rate of Alcohol Admissions for 5 Intermediate Zones are over twice Scotland (621 per 100,000) and South Lanarkshire (667 per 100,000). These are Burnside and Springhill, Farme Cross and Gallowflat North, Fernhill and Cathkin, Shawfield and Clincarthill and Spittal.

Out of Work Benefits

- Over 25% of population receiving **out of work benefits** in Burnhill and Bankhead (28.4%), Spittal (26.8%), Shawfield and Clincarthill (26.1%) and Fernhill and Cathkin (25.3%), compared to South Lanarkshire at 17% and Scotland at 15.8%.

Proximity to derelict sites

- 95% of population in Burnhill and Bankhead live within 500m of a derelict site. This drops to 81% in Farme Cross and Gallowflat North, 72% in Shawfield and Clincarthill. Estimated that 1/3 of Rutherglen population live within 500m of a derelict site.



Participants

Kirsten Allan, Sustainable Development Officer, South Lanarkshire Council

Susan Beattie (chair), Shaping Places for Wellbeing Project Lead Ayr, Improvement Service

Irene Beautyman, Lead of Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme, Improvement Service and Public Health Scotland

Justine Docherty, Project Development Officer, South Lanarkshire Council

Victoria Eccles, Project Development Officer, South Lanarkshire Council

Ruth Hart, Shaping Places for Wellbeing Project Lead Rutherglen, Improvement Service

Lauren Love, Planning and Policy Officer, South Lanarkshire Council

Eilidh Mackintosh (note taker), Planning for Place Project Officer, Improvement Service

Ann McLaughlin, Senior Health Improvement Manager, South Lanarkshire Health & Social Care Partnership

Aileen Murray, Community Planning Adviser, South Lanarkshire Council

Iain Ross, Project Manager, South Lanarkshire Council

Andrew Whittet, Shaping Places for Wellbeing Community Link Lead, Improvement Service



Outline of Discussion and Recommendations by Place and Wellbeing Outcome

Movement

Active Travel

Everyone can:

- easily move around using good-quality, accessible, well-maintained and safe segregated wheeling, walking and cycling routes and access secure bike parking.
- wheel, walk and cycle through routes that connect homes, destinations and public transport, are segregated from, and prioritised above, motorised traffic and are part of a local green network.

Evidence and research:

- Active travel has the potential to improve health by increasing physical activity, weight loss and reducing obesity.¹
- Active travel can increase social interactions.²
- Active travel has the potential to provide benefits to local economies.³
- Active travel has been associated with reduced risk for all-cause mortality and improvements in mental health.⁴

¹ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

² [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

³ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

⁴ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)



Summary of discussion:

The group agreed that council focus on active travel has increased significantly since the Cambuslang plan was published in 2019. The Cambuslang community interest in active travel, and involvement in activity such as developing cycle routes with the community council, was noted by the group as a positive from the Cambuslang plan under this outcome. It was agreed that further engagement with local people and groups in Rutherglen to gauge interest and priorities around active travel would be useful. The issue of affordability of bicycles, repairs etc. was raised as a barrier to cycling for those on lower incomes. The Biketown project run by Healthy n Happy was discussed as positive example of a Rutherglen active travel initiative supporting local people and working to remove this barrier. The local cycling app used in Cambuslang was noted, and it was agreed that it would be positive if this also covers Rutherglen.

It would be useful to link in with council colleagues on the scope of existing active travel work planned for Rutherglen. The latest Active Travel Study for Rutherglen & Cambuslang was mentioned as a starting point for information. The excellent opportunities for connected cycle routes and many public transport links in Rutherglen were noted.

The huge importance of access routes for those walking or wheeling in and out of the town centre was discussed. Connectivity of the town centre to surrounding areas is essential, and enhancing links from neighbouring communities to Rutherglen town centre's excellent public transport connections would be beneficial. The underpasses connecting the town centre to the neighbouring Burnhill area were given as an example of access routes potentially negatively affecting connectivity because of concerns about safety. It was noted as part of this discussion that access to a car will differ between population groups. While the town centre has fixed boundaries it is important for the plan to acknowledge its impact on surrounding areas and allow some flexibility for work to reflect this.

The Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan should make reference to existing work and strategies, such as Active Travel, Neighbourhood Planning and Community Wealth Building work, acknowledging that this plan cannot do everything but forms part of a suite of work that will positively impact the town centre and Rutherglen. The benefit of including unmet need in the plan was also noted: while there may be something the plan or South Lanarkshire Council cannot immediately address, inclusion in the plan could support others to take it forward e.g. providing evidence to secure further funding.

The group discussed whether air quality influences active travel uptake in Rutherglen. Linking with Environmental Health colleagues on ongoing air quality monitoring work would provide useful information.



Recommendations to consider:

- Public engagement for the Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan to include a focus on active travel in order to gauge local interests and priorities.
- Link with Roads and Active Travel colleagues during development of the Plan on existing Rutherglen work, and acknowledge in the Plan where appropriate.
- Reference the importance of town centre connectivity to surrounding areas in the Plan.
- Include contribution of improvements to access routes in and out of town centre and to public transport in the Plan's actions.
- Link with existing Neighbourhood Planning work to involve communities in any improvements to access routes in and out of the town centre, and address perceived safety issues relating to the underpasses.
- Highlight the importance of other relevant work and strategies supporting the Plan to deliver a thriving town centre e.g. Neighbourhood Planning, Active Travel and Community Wealth Building.
- Link with Environmental Health colleagues during development of the Plan on existing air quality work, for example the air quality story map "The air that we breathe".

Public Transport

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

Evidence and research:

- Public transport use has the potential to improve access to services and facilities and connect communities.⁵
- Public transport has the potential to reduce carbon emissions.⁶

⁵ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

⁶ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)



- Public transport has the potential to encourage active travel.⁷
- Certain groups in the population are disproportionately affected by the lack of available and affordable public transport.⁸

Summary of discussion:

The focus on public transport and community involvement in improving public transport in the Cambuslang plan was acknowledged as a positive by the group. The Community Rail Partnership mentioned in the Cambuslang Strategy also covers Rutherglen, and it was agreed that engaging during development of the Rutherglen plan would be useful.

Rutherglen's town centre public transport links were acknowledged as a positive, however it was agreed that this varies depending on destination: connectivity to Glasgow and more broadly north to south is very good, but other journeys can be disjointed and travel times are significantly increased.

The group discussed whether local public transport is meeting everyone's needs and going where people want and need it to go. Examples were given of issues in accessing health care and social opportunities for groups including disabled people. It was agreed that public engagement for the Rutherglen plan would be a good opportunity to gather further information. It was also agreed that engagement with transport colleagues and linking the plan in with existing work is important.

The link back to air quality and public transport's impact on this was made. The possibility of linking with Strathclyde Partnership for Transport and bus partners about the introduction of e-buses in Rutherglen was discussed. It was noted that Greater Glasgow's bus fleet is gradually being replaced with e-buses and that some areas are already covered entirely by e-buses. It was agreed that more information on the Rutherglen context for this would be useful.

Recommendations to consider:

- Engage with local people and groups, including the Community Rail Partnership, on public transport issues and priorities during development of the Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan. Link with Community Engagement Team colleagues and their ongoing work to support this.

⁷ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

⁸ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)



- Link with Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, transport colleagues and other relevant partners during development of the Plan to progress delivery of this outcome and reference ongoing work where appropriate.
- Link with Strathclyde Partnership for Transport and any other relevant partners for further information on upgrading of Rutherglen’s bus fleet to e-buses to support improved air quality in Rutherglen town centre.
- Link with NHS Lanarkshire colleagues on their existing work to improve public transport and community transport access to healthcare.
- As in Active Travel above, make reference in the Plan to the importance of access routes to public transport such as Rutherglen train station.

Traffic and parking

Everyone can benefit from:

- reducing traffic and traffic speeds in the community.
- traffic management and design, where traffic and car parking do not dominate or prevent other uses of space and car parking is prioritised for those who don’t have other options.

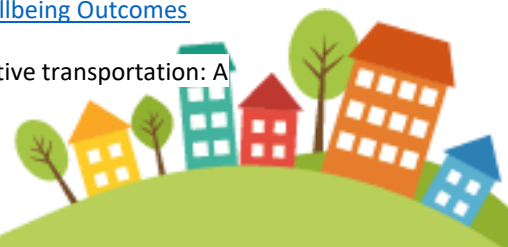
Evidence and research:

- People in deprived areas can be exposed to higher levels of air and noise pollution and certain groups of the population can be more adversely affected by poorer air quality.⁹
- Cars can help people to access services and communities.¹⁰
- Motorised transport has the potential to reduce levels of physical activity and social interactions.¹¹

⁹ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

¹⁰ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

¹¹ Mueller N, Rojas-Rueda D, Cole-Hunter T, et al. Health impact assessment of active transportation: A systematic review. *Preventative Medicine* 2015;76:103–114



- One third of Scotland’s households do not own a car and this increases to half the households in deprived areas.¹²

Summary of discussion:

As in the Cambuslang plan, parking within Rutherglen town centre was acknowledged as an issue. Strong partnership with the Cambuslang Community was noted as a positive. The development of the Park & Ride in Cambuslang was agreed to be beneficial and the benefits of improving Park & Ride access in Rutherglen were discussed. The current Park & Ride facilities were felt to be small and potentially creating a barrier to increased use of public transport and active travel. The group discussed whether development of the plan affords an opportunity to look at the existing capacity and potential to improve this. The need to link with private sector partners for further discussion on parking was raised, for example the local shopping centre and the possibility of linking with Park & Ride provision.

The new Low Emission Zone in Glasgow was discussed and whether this will impact on traffic management and parking within Rutherglen. It was suggested that the report on the impact of the M74 on town centre traffic could provide an example of a traffic system management process.

It was agreed that further information on traffic flow in Rutherglen town centre would be useful to have during development of the Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan. The Scottish Government ask to reduce car miles by 20% by 2030 was raised, and the group discussed how town centre work can support transport colleagues with this. A gradual approach to traffic flow measures would be beneficial such as lowering traffic speeds in the town centre. Vehicle speed has a health impact and it was noted that we are currently in a transitional stage as more people move to hybrid or electric vehicles. The example of carbon emission-based parking charges used in Lambeth and elsewhere was given, but the group acknowledged potential unequal impacts on certain groups of this approach for example those on lower incomes who are more likely to have older cars.

Recommendations to consider:

- Engage with local people and groups during development of the Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan to understand local issues and priorities around this outcome.
- Explore existing Park & Ride capacity in Rutherglen, impacts on use of public transport and active travel, and any potential to increase this during development of the Plan.

¹² Scottish Household Survey, 2018



- Link with colleagues in Roads and any other relevant teams for further information on current traffic flow and management opportunities in Rutherglen town centre during development of the Plan.
- Link with colleagues in Roads on how best the town centre work can support their target of reducing car use by 20% by 2030. Consider traffic flow measures to support this ask as part of the Plan's actions.
- Gather further examples on the impacts of creative ways of influencing policy changes to support carbon reduction, for example reducing traffic speeds and Low Emission Zone alternatives, during development of the Plan.

Space

Streets and spaces

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.

Evidence and research:

- Experts hypothesise that streets that are connected can create walkable neighbourhoods. Walkable neighbourhoods have the potential to increase physical activity and social interactions.¹³
- Attractive neighbourhoods can improve mental wellbeing.¹⁴
- Inadequate or poor public spaces can lead to reduced social interactions.¹⁵

¹³ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

¹⁴ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

¹⁵ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)



- Experts hypothesise that navigable streets and spaces will allow people to move around easily, safely and access facilities and services.¹⁶
- Vacant and derelict land can negatively impact on health.¹⁷

Summary of discussion:

The focus on good quality streets and spaces in the Cambuslang plan was acknowledged as a positive under this outcome, and something to take forward into the Rutherglen plan. Rutherglen's town centre streetscape was agreed to have many good points: Main Street is wide and pavements and surfaces were landscaped in recent years and still look attractive. The group questioned however whether people use the space as a thoroughfare or an intentional destination to stop, enjoy and interact. The need for more spaces allowing for this such as public benches and café seating was acknowledged. The impact of air pollution and traffic speed/noise was raised and the suggestion made that lowering traffic speeds would positively impact on people's desire to stop and spend time outdoors in the town centre.

Commercial waste and recycling within Rutherglen town centre was discussed. Cambuslang is the site of a pilot for a new litter strategy and commercial waste management approaches, and it was agreed that information on any potential applications for Rutherglen would be useful. The potential for more recycling opportunities within the town centre was raised.

Positive town centre examples were discussed such as Larkhall in South Lanarkshire and it was acknowledged that there are many good UK and international examples on which to draw. Creating town centre streets and spaces which understand and meet the needs of different groups such as those with dementia, disabled people and carers is a priority. There is an opportunity to link in with Community Planning work on an "Age Friendly South Lanarkshire" and many useful examples of creating accessible, inclusive spaces such as Dementia Friendly Prestwick in South Ayrshire. Supporting carers is a local Health Improvement locality plan priority, and Shaping Places for Wellbeing community engagement has raised the suggestion of creating a quiet space for those with different sensory needs in the town centre.

¹⁶ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

¹⁷ <https://www.landcommission.gov.scot/our-work/housing-development/vacant-and-derelict-land-taskforce>



Recommendations to consider:

- Engage with local people and groups during development of the Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan to find out more about people's use of the space: do people choose to spend time there or are they passing through, and the reasons behind this.
- As in Active Travel above, link with Environmental Health colleagues for further information on air quality work in Rutherglen.
- Commit to exploring further opportunities for recycling in the town centre, and include any relevant information and examples from the Cambuslang litter strategy and commercial waste management pilot in the Plan.
- Commit to creating a Dementia Friendly town centre within the Plan, and gather relevant case studies and information on the benefits and approaches for doing this.
- Link with Community Planning colleagues on their work on "Age Friendly South Lanarkshire" during development of the Plan and include relevant hooks and support.
- Commit to creating an accessible town centre in the Plan for those with autism, different sensory requirements and impairments, and carers. Explore creation of a quiet space/room within the town centre as part of this commitment.

Natural Space

Everyone can:

- access good-quality natural spaces that support biodiversity and are well-connected, well-designed, safe, and maintained, providing multiple functions and amenities to meet the varying needs of different population groups.
- be protected from environmental hazards including air/water/soil pollution or the risk of flooding.
- access community food growing opportunities and prime quality agricultural land is protected.



Evidence and research:

- Natural spaces can provide a sense of character and distinctiveness to a place. Natural spaces can encourage social interactions and a sense of community and belonging.¹⁸
- There are likely to be wider environmental benefits to increasing natural spaces, which are likely to protect population health.¹⁹
- Access to and use of natural spaces varies across different income groups.²⁰
- Natural spaces can help maintain a healthy immune system.²¹
- Natural spaces can provide mental health benefits.²²
- Urban green and open spaces contribute to public health and wellbeing, particularly mental health and wellbeing.²³

Summary of discussion:

The group agreed that Rutherglen town centre would benefit from greening. This would support an aesthetically pleasing town centre space and help to mitigate the urban heat islands in the town centre. Good connectivity to existing green and blue spaces outside the town centre was also agreed to be important for example to neighbouring Cuningar Loop and the new allotments being created there. A desire to promote micro greening and food growing opportunities in the town centre itself was raised. The group discussed repurposing existing vacant & derelict sites and gap sites for greening and food growing: there was interest in testing something similar to Glasgow's Stalled Spaces scheme in Rutherglen, and the former swimming baths on Greenhill Road was noted as a potential site within the town centre. It was noted that there are several churches with outdoor space in or close to the town centre who may wish to be involved as well as Rutherglen Library on Main Street.

Greening not only on Main Street but across the town centre was agreed to be important. Many potential links to support this were suggested including the Clyde Climate Forest

¹⁸ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

¹⁹ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

²⁰ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

²¹ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

²² [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

²³ [Environmental and Human Health - The contribution of green and open space in public health and wellbeing.](#)



work, Clyde Gateway work, local community groups such as Grow73 and local schools. Working with local organisations and people on greening could support a sense of ownership and community. Funding to develop and maintain green space was acknowledged as a barrier but including greening as an ambition in the Rutherglen plan was felt to be a way to support potential funding applications and bids. Links with the Community Planning Partnership's new Community Wishlist were highlighted: suppliers could potentially cover costs of greening or provide trees & plants for groups. The Trees for Streets app was also suggested as a way for communities to take ownership of greening with council support.

Actively improving local biodiversity is important. Supporting bees and pollinators, and prioritising local seeds and trees and heat resistant plants were all mentioned. Linking with Biodiversity and Agriculture officers for further information would be useful, and the Rutherglen plan has an opportunity to link in with South Lanarkshire's new Climate and Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan. Further information on the impact of noise and light pollution on local biodiversity was also requested.

Recommendations to consider:

- Commit to town centre greening as part of the Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan to support reduction of heat islands, improve air quality and biodiversity, and support sense of community.
- Explore opportunities for implementation to include in the Plan e.g. tree planting through links to Clyde Climate forest and a Rutherglen "Stalled Spaces" scheme.
- Highlight in the Plan the importance of connectivity to green and blue spaces around the town centre.
- Commit to creating further opportunities for community food growing in the town centre in the Plan e.g. through the "Stalled Spaces" idea above.
- Link with local organisations, businesses and community groups on natural space during public engagement for the Plan to gather local ideas and priorities.
- Explore funding and support for communities to take ownership of greening during implementation of the Plan e.g. the Community Wishlist.
- Link with Biodiversity and Agricultural colleagues for further information on improving biodiversity during development of the Plan and include relevant opportunities..
- Make reference in the Plan to South Lanarkshire's Climate and Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan.



Play and recreation

Everyone can access a range of high quality, safe, well-maintained, accessible places with opportunities for play and recreation to meet the varying needs of different population groups and the community itself.

Evidence and research:

- Experts hypothesise that play and recreation is beneficial for the health of adults and children through the encouragement of physical activity and social interactions.²⁴
- There are health benefits of undertaking play and recreation in outdoor environments, particularly in natural spaces. There are specific benefits for children such as the development of motor skills, understanding risk and environmental awareness.²⁵
- Undertaking play or recreation in natural spaces and accessing them through active travel has benefits for the environment.²⁶
- Perceptions of poor design, quality and safety can lead to children and young people not using the play and recreation spaces.²⁷

Summary of discussion:

The group agreed that there are limited opportunities for play in the town centre, and limited accessible play opportunities. Good connectivity to other existing play areas is therefore important. It is a priority for any play and recreation spaces to meet the needs of different groups including disabled people and carers (see also Streets and Spaces above). Informal, unstructured play areas could provide accessible, low maintenance spaces and also support the greening ambition (see Natural Spaces above) e.g. sensory gardens, accessible seating and structures made from natural materials. Rutherglen has good examples to draw on such as Fernbrae Meadows. The differing needs of older girls and boys

²⁴ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

²⁵ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

²⁶ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

²⁷ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)



from recreation space was also flagged: evidence suggests that girls want space to “chill and chat” rather than do activities.

Recommendations to consider:

- Highlight the contribution of this play and recreation outcome in the Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan and link to ambitions on greening and accessible spaces for all.
- Highlight within the Plan the importance of town centre connectivity to other areas.
- Highlight positive local examples of informal, unstructured and green play and recreation spaces in the Plan such as Fernbrae Meadows.
- Explore the requirements of different population groups during public engagement for the Plan.

Resources

Services and support

Everyone can access:

- health enhancing, accessible, affordable and well-maintained services, facilities and amenities. These are informed by community engagement, responsive to the needs and priorities of all local people.
- a range of spaces and opportunities for communities to meet indoors and outdoors.
- information and resources necessary for an included life in a range of digital and non-digital formats.

Evidence and research:

- People need local facilities and services to live and enjoy healthy, independent lives.²⁸

²⁸ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)



- Services and support can provide people with a sense of belonging to the community.²⁹
- Facilities and services need to be affordable.³⁰
- Accessibility to services can be exacerbated by poor transport links and safety of the wider neighbourhood.³¹
- Access to facilities, services and communities can also help to increase social interactions and inaccessibility can affect certain groups disproportionately.³²

Summary of discussion:

A lack of affordable indoor spaces for community use was acknowledged as an issue in Rutherglen. Repurposing existing spaces rather than creating new spaces from scratch was agreed to be the route to tackling this issue. The example of business hubs developed in Hamilton and elsewhere by taking space in existing facilities was given: engagement with local businesses and space owners is important to support this.

Spaces for young people to socialise and take part in activities is a priority. The example of Planet Youth work, based on the Icelandic Model, was shared from other Shaping Places for Wellbeing towns. The work aims to prevent young people from engaging in alcohol and substance use through taking part regularly in activities outside of school. If we do not have appropriate spaces we cannot provide activities vital to young people's development and lose the opportunity for prevention of harmful behaviours. It was agreed that while tackling alcohol and substance use is important it is also important to provide activities meeting all young people's needs to promote mental wellbeing and social opportunities. There are good youth club facilities close to Rutherglen town centre and it was felt that more could be done to encourage young people from across Rutherglen to access these. The importance of a range of play opportunities was acknowledged e.g. football might not interest everyone (see also Play and Recreation above).

The stigma and negative perceptions young people can face when using public spaces and facilities was raised. Engagement with young people on Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan is a priority although barriers to engagement were discussed. It was noted that young

²⁹ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

³⁰ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

³¹ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

³² [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)



people are engaging positively with climate change work across South Lanarkshire and suggested that this could provide a hook into talking about the town centre. Many positive examples of local groups engaging young people in Rutherglen were also shared and could be a starting point for engagement on the Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan.

Promoting Rutherglen as a 20-minute neighbourhood hub was highlighted. South Lanarkshire Council covers a range of geographies including large, urban towns and more rural settlements in their domain. Rutherglen does already meet many requirements of a 20-minute neighbourhood and meeting the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes was acknowledged as a way to achieve delivery of this ambition.

Wi-Fi provision in town centres was discussed. It was noted that demand for free Wi-Fi varies by town, and that uptake has fallen with increased smartphone use but that access to free Wi-Fi could disproportionately impact certain population groups. Exploring revenue-generating opportunities of Wi-Fi provision was suggested.

Recommendations to consider:

- Engage with local people, groups and businesses during development of the Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan to assess local priorities and opportunities for creating more affordable community space. Gather relevant examples of successful approaches to doing this e.g. business hub space in Hamilton.
- Highlight within the Plan the importance of access to affordable community spaces and the role of these spaces in prevention of poor health and wellbeing outcomes, particularly for young people.
- Link with council colleagues and 3rd sector groups already engaging young people in Rutherglen during the development of the Plan.
- Highlight Rutherglen town centre as a 20-minute neighbourhood hub within the Plan.
- Engage with local people, groups and businesses on the impact of and demand for free Wi-Fi in the town centre during development of the Plan.



Work and economy

Everyone benefits equally from a local economy that provides:

- essential goods & services produced or procured locally
- good quality paid and unpaid work
- access to assets such as wealth & capital and the resources that enable people to participate in the economy such as good health and education
- a balanced value ascribed across sectors such as female dominated sectors and the non-monetary economy
- the resources that enable people to participate in the economy such as good health and education.

Evidence and research:

- Experts hypothesise that if a place is lively and vibrant it can provide work opportunities and will encourage people to visit the area.³³
- Work is beneficial for health if it is 'good' work. 'Good' work is defined as work which improves income, job security, does not increase employee's risk of illness or injury, or does not negatively impact mental health.³⁴
- Low-quality work is defined as the opposite of 'good' work.³⁵
- Low-quality work has been associated with poor health and the longer someone is in low-quality work, the worse the health outcomes.³⁶
- There are inequalities in terms of people being able to access 'good' work, training and volunteering. Certain groups in the population are more likely to be unemployed.³⁷

³³ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

³⁴ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

³⁵ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

³⁶ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

³⁷ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)



- Volunteering has been associated with improved self-rated health, mental health, life satisfaction and wellbeing, and decreased depression and mortality.³⁸
- Volunteering can help increase feelings of self-esteem and provide a sense of purpose.³⁹

Summary of discussion:

Rutherglen Main Street was noted to be unusual in having very few vacant units, and a range of banks and types of businesses: these were all agreed to be positives. It was suggested that more information on the local economy would be useful including increased knowledge of local businesses and data on the non-monetary economy. Links with the Federation of Small Businesses and the potential for planning colleagues to carry out retail health checks were highlighted as ways to support this.

South Lanarkshire's Community Wealth Building Strategy and Social Enterprise Strategy were mentioned and it was agreed to be vital to link the town centre work in with these so that initiatives and policies support each other. There is a range of work going on in these areas that will support a thriving town centre. The important role of the council and health board as the biggest employers in South Lanarkshire was also noted.

Recommendations to consider:

- Link with relevant council colleagues, the Federation of Small Businesses and other relevant local partners to map and understand the needs of the local business base and local economy during development of the Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan.
- Highlight links to the Community Wealth Building and Social Enterprise strategies in the Plan, both will support the Plan to deliver a thriving town centre.

³⁸ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

³⁹ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)



Housing and community

Everyone has access to:

- a home that is affordable, energy efficient, high quality and provides access to private outdoor space.
- a variety of housing types, sizes and tenancies to meet the needs of the community. And of a sufficient density to sustain existing or future local facilities, services and amenities.
- a home that is designed and built to meet need and demand, is adaptable to changing needs and includes accessible/wheelchair standard housing.
- new homes that are located and designed to provide high levels of climate resilience and use sustainable materials and construction methods.
- homes that are designed to promote community cohesion.

Evidence and research:

- Housing should be located close enough to enable residents to easily access facilities and services including employment, social networks and transport.⁴⁰
- Satisfaction with housing can lead to improved mental health.⁴¹
- Certain groups of the population can sometimes find it difficult to access good quality affordable housing, which meets their needs.⁴²
- Provision of good quality affordable housing is associated with improved physical and mental health outcomes including quality of life.⁴³

Summary of discussion:

It was agreed that understanding the mixture of dwellings and tenure types and poverty levels in the town centre would be useful in supporting this outcome. Further information on energy efficiency of homes and any potential to decarbonise was also noted as important.

⁴⁰ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

⁴¹ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

⁴² [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

⁴³ www.health.org.uk/publications/reports/the-marmot-review-10-years-on



Town Centre living is a national priority. There is the opportunity to link with South Lanarkshire's ongoing Town Centre Visioning work aiming to develop a model of how this might look in practice.

Recommendations to consider:

- Link with Housing and other relevant council colleagues during development of the Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan to build understanding of housing types and tenures and poverty levels within the town centre.
- Link with Housing and Climate & Sustainability colleagues during development of the Plan to build understanding of energy efficiency of town centre housing stock and explore any potential to support decarbonisation.
- Highlight within the Plan links to the national priority around town centre living and South Lanarkshire's ongoing town centre visioning work.

Civic

Identity and belonging

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.

Evidence and research:

- A sense or feeling of belonging to a community is associated positively with mental health, and an improved quality of life.⁴⁴
- If people are involved in helping to design and maintain the places they live in, this can build a sense of ownership, belonging and attachment.⁴⁵
- Sense of belonging and neighbourliness can encourage community activities and provide a sense of purpose.⁴⁶
- Attachment to place can be associated with good-quality and well-designed public spaces, how welcoming a place is and its aesthetics.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

⁴⁵ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

⁴⁶ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

⁴⁷ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)



- Landmarks or something distinctive about the neighbourhood can also help to create a sense of place and belonging, which is beneficial for health.⁴⁸

Summary of discussion:

Rutherglen's strong sense of identity and local people's pride in their town and history were noted as huge positives under this outcome. 2026 sees the 900th anniversary of Rutherglen as a Royal Burgh and it was agreed that the Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan should have a standalone section acknowledging the importance of this milestone and council support for activity around it. The suggestion was made that any community activity on greening the town centre could link in with this significant milestone (see Natural Spaces above).

More frequent use of the town centre as an events space was discussed. The example of Landemer Day was shared which sees Main Street closed to traffic for the event, and potential to do this for more events throughout the year was raised.

Recommendations to consider:

- Include in the Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan a standalone section on the importance of the 900th anniversary of the Royal Burgh and council support for activity in 2026.
- Explore opportunities to increase use of the town centre as an events space during development of the Plan, for example allowing more temporary road closures to support town centre events. Link with Roads and other relevant council colleagues when exploring this.

Feeling safe

Everyone feels safe and secure in their own home and their local community taking account of the experience of different population groups.

⁴⁸ Design for social sustainability – a framework for creating thriving new communities. <https://youngfoundation.org/publications/design-for-social-sustainability/>



Evidence and research:

- Perceptions of a place feeling unsafe can lead to negative impacts on health, for example mental wellbeing, and can reduce outdoor activities.⁴⁹
- A place can be perceived as unsafe if there are a large number of speeding vehicles because of the potential impact of vehicles on health.⁵⁰
- Fear of crime, antisocial behaviour or crime itself can make places feel unsafe.⁵¹
- A lack of maintenance can lead to a place feeling unsafe.⁵²

Summary of discussion:

This outcome was discussed extensively under Movement, particularly in relation to access routes in and out of the town centre such as the underpasses (see Active Travel above).

Linking with Police Scotland on CCTV for the underpasses and local crime data was suggested. It was also noted that aesthetics of spaces have an impact on people's perceptions of safety and that there is scope to improve the appearance of access routes like the underpasses through improved lighting and community artwork e.g. murals.

Recommendations to consider:

- Link with Police Scotland during development of the Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan for further information on CCTV within the town centre and local crime data.
- Explore potential for improving the overall appearance of the underpasses through better lighting and community art projects such as murals during development of the Plan.

Stewardship

Care and maintenance

⁴⁹ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

⁵⁰ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

⁵¹ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

⁵² [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)



Everyone has access to:

- buildings, spaces and routes that are well cared for in a way that is responsive to the needs and priorities of local communities.
- good facilities for recycling and well organised refuse storage and collection.

Evidence and research:

- If a place is not well maintained this can lead to negative perceptions of a place, which can lead to investors disinvesting and people not wanting to go to that place.⁵³
- Poorly maintained neighbourhoods with high levels of incivilities can lead to lower levels of mental wellbeing and poor health.⁵⁴
- Vacant and derelict land can negatively impact on health.⁵⁵
- If places are regarded as not being maintained this can lead to perceptions of it being unsafe and reduced social capital.⁵⁶

Summary of discussion:

This outcome was also discussed under Spaces and Civic (see Streets and Spaces, Natural Spaces and Feeling Safe above). Maintenance of any greening and enhanced recycling opportunities within Rutherglen town centre were highlighted. It was agreed that working with communities on care and maintenance is vital: this creates a sense of community ownership which encourages people to maintain their local community. The High Backs community-led green space in Burnhill was highlighted as a positive example of this.

Recommendations to consider:

- Highlight the importance of working with local people and groups on care and maintenance in the Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan, and share any relevant examples or case studies of good practice.
- See also recommendations under Streets and Spaces, Natural Spaces and Feeling Safe.

⁵³ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

⁵⁴ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

⁵⁵ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

⁵⁶ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)



Influence and sense of control

Everyone is empowered to be involved a place in which:

- Local outcomes are improved by effective collaborations between communities, community organisations and public bodies.
- Decision making processes are designed to involve communities as equal partners.
- Community organisations co-produce local solutions to issues.
- Communities have increased influence over decisions.
- Democratic processes are developed to be accessible to all citizens.

Evidence and research:

- Empowerment can help to reduce isolation and can be beneficial for mental health and wellbeing.⁵⁷
- Sense of control can be beneficial for mental health and quality of life.⁵⁸
- A high sense of purpose has been associated with a reduced risk for all-cause mortality and cardiovascular events.⁵⁹

Summary of discussion:

The group discussed the extent to which local people and groups feel this outcome is met. Shaping Places for Wellbeing community engagement has been positive and has been able to build on extensive existing Community Planning Partnership and Neighbourhood Planning work. There are positive examples from this Neighbourhood Planning work of community groups influencing change.

It was agreed that working with community and 3rd sector partners is essential for a thriving town centre. Creating meaningful engagement rather than simply consulting was noted as important.

There is a huge amount of positive community-led work ongoing in Rutherglen: it was emphasised that this should be highlighted and celebrated in the Plan. It was also agreed

⁵⁷ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

⁵⁸ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

⁵⁹ [Public Health Scotland, Evidence behind Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)



that the voice of local people is successfully reflected in the Cambuslang Plan, and that doing the same in the Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan is a priority.

Recommendations to consider:

- Highlight the importance of working with communities in the Rutherglen Town Centre Action Plan and share positive examples of this from existing Rutherglen work e.g. Neighbourhood Planning work and local community activity.
- Link with Community Engagement Team colleagues and 3rd sector & community groups on existing work in Rutherglen during development of the Plan.

