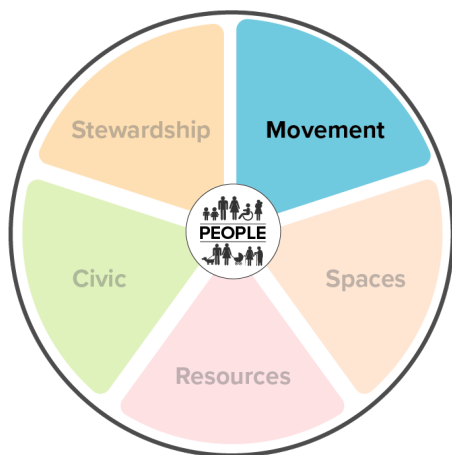


Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme

Active Travel: Impact on Clydebank's Community












Active travel can have a positive impact on people when:

- Everyone can easily move around using good-quality, accessible, well-maintained and safe segregated wheeling, walking and cycling routes and access secure bike parking.
- Everyone can 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.

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

Active travel simply means making journeys in physically active ways - like walking, wheeling (using a wheelchair or mobility aid), cycling or scootering.

The evidence tells us¹:

 <p>Active travel can improve health by increasing physical activity, weight loss and reducing obesity.</p>	 <p>Active travel is associated with reduced risk of death.</p>
 <p>Active travel can increase social interactions.</p>	 <p>Active travel is associated with improving mental health.</p>
 <p>Active travel can minimise harms to health by reducing motorised traffic.</p>	 <p>Safety is a key barrier to increasing active travel amongst women.</p>
 <p>Walking/cycling to school helps children achieve a healthy weight, with the benefit being greater for children in deprived areas.</p>	 <p>1/3 of Scotland's households don't own or have access to a car. This increases to 1/2 of households in deprived areas.</p>
 <p>Active travel can provide benefits to local economies.</p>	 <p>There is increased public support for investment in walking and cycling, particularly amongst people on low incomes.</p>

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

Active Travel rates in West Dunbartonshire²

8th lowest local authority for active travel to work across Scotland in 2018/19.

Active travel to work is currently at its **lowest point** in the past 10 years.

6th lowest local authority for active travel to school across Scotland in 2022/23.

Over the past 10 years, there has been a **general decrease** in active travel to school.

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

Getting around Clydebank

There's a disconnect between much of Clydebank and the town centre, with many of the streets and spaces not being well connected or adequately signposted.

With high levels of poverty and low car ownership, much of Clydebank's population is dependent on public transport, especially buses.

The availability of public transport has an impact on active travel, and the availability of active travel has an impact on the use of public transport.

For people on low incomes, active travel and affordable public transport provide access to essential services and support, plus employment, training and volunteering opportunities.

“ *There's an increase in people not having enough money to buy food or pay bills, so money for travel isn't even a consideration. Lots of people now miss out on important support and services as they can't afford to get to them and that's just how it is. (Local charity worker)* ”

Active travel to work and school

There is a low uptake of 'cycle to work' schemes supported by employers. Based on local conversations, suggested reasons for this include:

- concerns about safety and the lack of segregated cycle lanes
- the cost of bikes and safety equipment being a barrier
- employees not living locally & distance from home to work being too far to cycle
- a lack of secure and safe parking for bikes

Active travel engagement and training within schools is valued but has been inconsistent largely due to capacity and budget issues.

Lack of time was often mentioned as a reason for not walking to work or school, with people referring to pressures of work and family and caring responsibilities.

Safety concerns for cycling were also highlighted. The lack of safe routes and absence of segregated cycle lanes from many parts of Clydebank is a concern.

“ *I've had a couple of near misses from cars, the Council need to build segregated cycle lanes. (Live Well Forum member)* ”



My friend walks my children to school and back on her days off. It has been great as the kids enjoy the walk and I save time and petrol.” (West Dunbartonshire Council employee)



Knowledge and confidence around active travel

A lack of knowledge on safe routes is affecting people’s confidence on where they can safely walk or wheel about their local area.

In response to this and recognising the physical and mental health benefits of walking, there’s been a growth in local walking groups and resources available to a range of people with different needs within the community.

Poorly maintained pathways, uncertainty about the state of paths and lack of lighting was also highlighted as discouraging active travel, particularly for older people, people using wheelchairs & mobility aids and people with young children.



Our group walks for leisure and on the way, it builds confidence and skills as they plan their route. It’s a gentle opportunity to get these vulnerable adults talking, sharing stories and helping each other out. (Walking Group for vulnerable adults facilitator)



Having the walking group go on a ‘safe route’ for me has been great as I wouldn’t feel confident on my scooter on paths I’m not sure about. (Live Well Forum member)



Collaboration and communication on active travel

From speaking with local stakeholders, we learned about a wide range of initiatives, activities and campaigns supporting active travel in Clydebank and beyond in West Dunbartonshire. This includes walking groups, access to bikes, employer cycle to work schemes, Operation Close Pass campaign and websites with useful information.

However, there’s a lack of awareness of what’s available amongst local people. It was suggested that improved communication between organisations and more awareness raising with the general public is needed.



There’s lots of interest amongst local partners to collaborate and increase rates of active travel by bringing together existing and new developments, whilst acknowledging that other key partners have an important role to play in improving local active travel infrastructure. (Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme Clydebank Project Lead)



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