

Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme

# Ayr Project Town

## Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy

### Place and Wellbeing Assessment Report



## About this report

This is a report of a Place & Wellbeing Assessment held in September 2022 to support the review of the current South Ayrshire Council's Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy 2019-2024, which was adopted in June 2019. The climate change policy landscape has continued to evolve at pace with clear actions and targets for public bodies to be achieved. As a result, the current South Ayrshire Council strategy is undergoing a review which this Place and Wellbeing Assessment aims to support.

Evidence shows that the places we create impact the behaviour of those who live, work and relax in them. The different features that make up a place have a positive or negative influence on their contribution to addressing climate change and their health and wellbeing. The process applied during the workshop takes a place-based approach reviewing the impact of the Strategy on each of these place features and considering opportunities to impact positively on place within the Strategy review. These place features are the Place and Wellbeing Outcomes that are the anchor for the Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme.

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 living in Ayr North
- People living in poverty, including a focus on child poverty
- People with addiction issues
- Individuals aged 15-44 in the most deprived areas

This paper begins with a Report Summary of the key findings from the session. It highlights where the review of the Strategy could consider its impact on place to enable a positive influence on people's contribution to addressing climate change and improving their health and wellbeing.

It then includes a short summary of the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy review, how this session links to the Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme and lists those participating.

The remainder of the report outlines the discussions that took place including any recommended considerations for inclusion in the Strategy review and implementation. To assist understanding of how each Place and Wellbeing Outcome supports the wellbeing of both people and planet, we also include relevant evidence and research under each outcome.

## Report Summary

The Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy addresses climate change and sustainable development. In doing this it also contributes to delivering and supporting many of the aspects of place that also enable the wellbeing of those who live, work and relax in Ayr and South Ayrshire. The Review of the Strategy is an opportunity for a collaborative approach that broadens its contribution to place and its impact on other priorities on overall wellbeing and to reducing inequality in some communities. In addition to the Review, how it is implemented also requires careful consideration.



The following broad themes were identified:

1. A collaborative whole Council approach is required to successfully review and implement the Strategy. Clarify the intention to take a place-based approach and include specific reference to the opportunities highlighted in this paper to collaborate on implementation of that approach that maximise use of limited resources.
2. Outline in greater detail all the features of place and their evidenced impact on how each delivers the behaviour change required for communities to make sustainable choices about how they move around. Include how this enables the wellbeing of both people and planet and takes account of those experiencing economic and health inequality.
3. Clarify the expectations around Place in the next iteration of the action plan and how services can act to achieve positive outcomes by considering how their decisions, plans and strategies impact on a place and thus on the wellbeing of people and planet.
4. Include support for approaches within other services decisions, plans and strategies that shape new and existing places and work with those responsible for delivering them to support implementation.
5. Include particular emphasis on the need to link action to deliver active travel routes and reliable and affordable public transport to reduce traffic on the roads and reliance on cars.

## Summary of the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy Review, links with Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme Context and Participants

### Summary of the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy Review

#### **Strategy Background**

The South Ayrshire Council's Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy was drafted in 2018-19 and adopted in June 2019. The scope of the strategy is wide and high level, covering all aspects of climate change and sustainable development, with actions delivered across all the services of the council often then delivered through other council strategies and plans. The strategy from the outset has sought to address both the organisational emissions and impacts of the council as well as area wide and regional emissions and sustainability action areas, delivering multiple outcomes including health and prosperity. However, much has changed within the Climate Change Policy landscape since this strategy was written which has led to a review.

This period has also included the pandemic and the associated emergency response which has had both positive and negative impacts in relation to climate change and sustainability but has demonstrated our ability to respond at pace to an emergency. The cost of living crisis and implications related to Brexit and the war in Ukraine also pose additional challenges going forward. Green recovery and just transition are now prominent key themes that must be included in the organisational strategic approach.



South Ayrshire Council have identified several areas to consider and be reflected in the Strategy review. These include:

- Considering each action through several lenses to optimise delivery of outcomes for example, climate justice and just transition, mitigation, adaption, green recovery, biodiversity and ecological recovery, health and wellbeing, community wealth building, place agenda
- Ensuring links to the Edinburgh biodiversity and Glasgow food declarations, and the new National Biodiversity Strategy
- The reduction in km travelled target linked to commuting and how this can be linked to achieving the 20-minute neighbourhood ambition

This Place and Wellbeing Assessment supports a place-based approach to the review of the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy.

### [Links to Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme and reflections on the session](#)

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 focused 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 well-being 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 session 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, the 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.

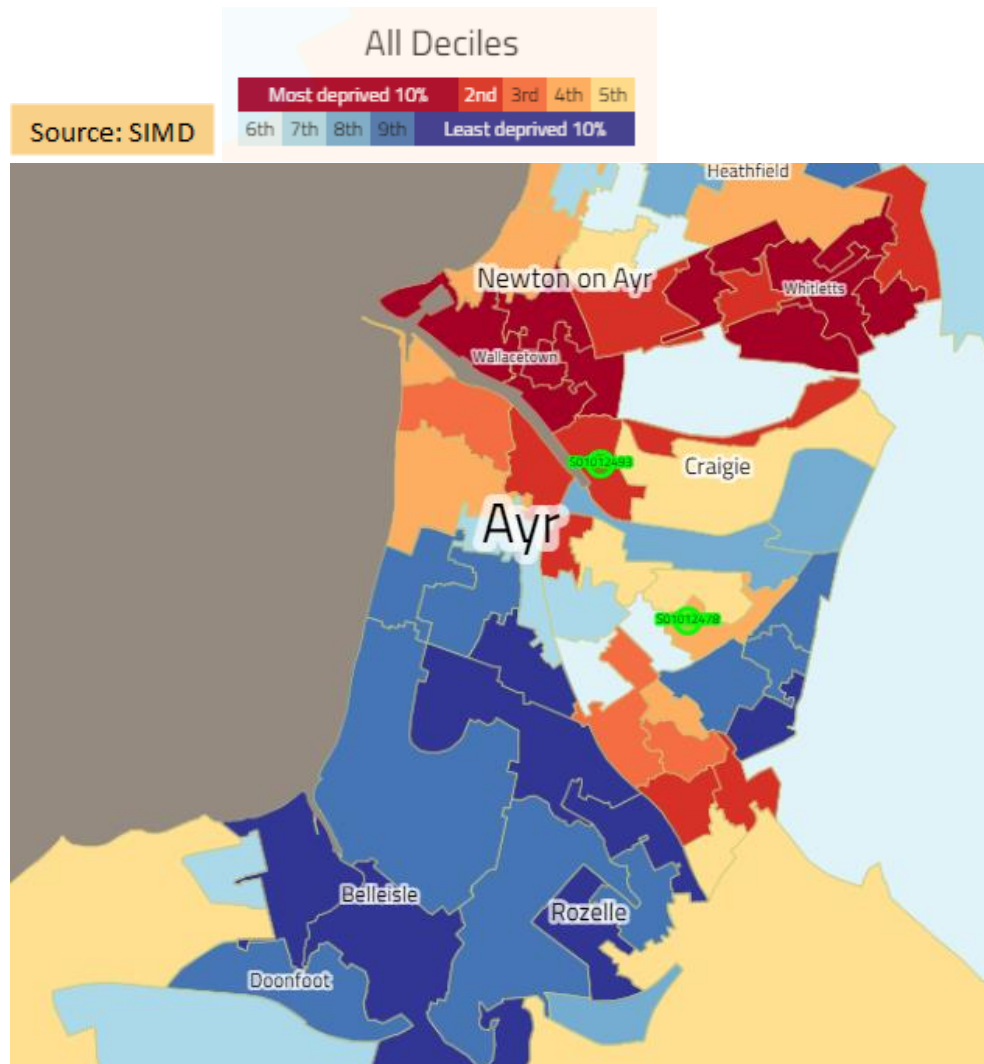
As well as having focused discussions on each of the five Place and Wellbeing Outcomes, the Place and Wellbeing Assessment also aims to place emphasis on the key groups/areas highlighted in the data in order to ensure strategic decision making considers the impact on those experiencing inequalities.

The LIST data for Ayr has highlighted four key areas of focus. These are:

- People living in Ayr North
- People living in poverty, including a focus on child poverty
- People with addiction issues
- Individuals aged 15-44 in the most deprived areas



It is clear, from the data, that there is a stark divide between the North and South of the town, with higher levels of deprivation being experienced in Ayr North compared to Ayr South. The map below shows the areas of deprivation in Ayr, with the dark red being most deprived ones and dark blue least deprived. Ayr North has 11 SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) 2020 zones in decile 1 i.e. the top most 10% deprived areas in Scotland. People living in this area are living less of their life in good health and dying younger than neighbouring areas and South Ayrshire.



Despite being only approximately 2.5 miles apart, on average, the life expectancy of a man born in Ayr North Harbour, Wallacetown and Newton South area is 14 years less than his counterpart in Alloway & Doonfoot area, and a woman is 13 years lower.



## Participants

Irene Beautyman, Place & Wellbeing Partnership Lead at the Improvement Service & Public Health Scotland
Tom Burns, Service Lead Asset Management and Community Asset Transfer, South Ayrshire Council
Alison Clayton, Communications Officer Energy Agency
Gavin Cockburn, Service Lead- Educational Support Services, South Ayrshire Council
Kenny Dalrymple, Service Lead- Neighbourhood Services, South Ayrshire Council
Claire Graham, Climate Change Officer, Sustainable Development, South Ayrshire Council
Matthew Gunn, student placement, Sustainable Development South Ayrshire Council
Neil Grant, Senior Officer- Energy, Energy Management, South Ayrshire Council
James Hall, Primary Strategy Placemaking, South Ayrshire Council
Morton Houston, Service Lead, Trading Standards & Environmental Health, South Ayrshire Council
Craig Iles, Service Lead Planning and Building Standards, South Ayrshire Council
Lorna Jarvie, Co-ordinator Sustainability and Fleet, South Ayrshire Council
Judi Kilgallon, Climate Change Project Manager, Improvement Service
David Manson, Ayrshire Roads Alliance
Liz Marquis, Director Energy Agency
Susan McCardie, Community Planning Partnership Facilitator, South Ayrshire Council
Kevin Mullen, Service Lead ICT, South Ayrshire Council
Lesley Reid, Health Improvement Lead, Public Health NHS Ayrshire & Arran
Susan Rintoul, Shaping Places for Wellbeing Project Officer
Steven Simpson, Procurement, South Ayrshire Council
Nicola Tomkinson, Shaping Places for Wellbeing Project Lead (Ayr)
Sheila Tyeson, Planning and Performance, SA Health and Social Care Partnership

## Outline of discussion and recommendations by Place & 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 been associated with reduced risk for all-cause mortality and improvements in mental health.<sup>1</sup>
- Active travel has the potential to minimise health harms by reducing motorised traffic.<sup>2</sup>
- Active travel could lead to increased exposure to air pollutants or more accidents, but the health benefits of active travel, for example from physical activity, outweighed the risks caused by air pollution or accidents.<sup>3</sup>
- Active travel has the potential to provide benefits to local economies.<sup>4</sup>
- Safety is a key barrier to increasing women's use of active travel.<sup>5</sup>

### **Summary of discussion:**

The group highlighted that there are references to active travel within the current Strategy but there were opportunities to consider additional detail to improve clarity about how these Place and Wellbeing Outcomes would be delivered. For example, clarity on active travel within the broader theme of movement and considering how the Ayrshire Roads Alliance Active Travel Strategy links to this review. Strengthening collaboration between teams and organisations to take forward both strategies to allow them to support and complement each other's work.

Green recovery was also a theme highlighted that can support delivery of the Movement Outcome. During the pandemic the reduction in cars was positive for many reasons including the benefit to health and wellbeing of people and planet. Achieving a reduction in cars through green recovery can also create a level playing field with regards to accessing services and amenities across communities and towns, thus contributing to addressing inequalities and supporting a 'just' transition on climate change.

### **Recommendations to consider:**

- There is an opportunity to provide clarity on the balance between a strategic approach to active travel and practical interventions that enable people to access and move around in through wheeling, walking or cycling.
- Include a clear explanation of what Active Travel is and what it means in practice, linking in the broader theme of movement and highlighting links to the Ayrshire Roads Alliance Active Travel Strategy.
- Set out a more collaborative approach to active travel through the review involving a range of partners (including Community Planning Partners) who contribute to the actions and support some of the challenges. Include creating a targeted partnership action plan to accompany the Strategy Review.
- Highlight the evidenced links between active travel and health and wellbeing. Including how improving infrastructure to support active travel impacts both physical and mental wellbeing. Include that it can also tackle isolation and loneliness through opportunities for increased social interaction.
- Clarify the intention to take place-based approach and include reference to the opportunities to collaborate on implementation of that approach. A suggested example was the work of the Ayrshire Roads Alliance and opportunities for aligning policy and implementation with the Active Travel Strategy.
- Take cognisance of the new national target to reduce car kilometres by 20% by 2030 and include how the review will support the national ambition.
- Include the Education Department's focus on reducing car traffic at schools by encouraging and supporting children and young people to walk, cycle or wheel to school and consider active travel routes when planning new build schools.



## Public Transport

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

### Evidence and Research

- Certain groups in the population are disproportionately affected by the lack of available and affordable public transport.<sup>6</sup>
- Public transport has the potential to reduce carbon emissions.<sup>7</sup>
- Public transport has the potential to encourage active travel.<sup>8</sup>
- Public transport has the potential to improve access to services and facilities and connect communities.<sup>9</sup>

### Summary of discussion:

The group felt the review was an opportunity to more fully address achieving this outcome. Everyone having access to a sustainable, affordable and reliable public transport service is important but comes with challenges. This includes limited access to public transport for those living in rural areas and the impact on inequalities. Rural communities have limited access to services (e.g. health services) and amenities (e.g. access to affordable food), forcing them to travel to main towns. This is time consuming and expensive for these communities and often resulting in using a car, through necessity. Need to highlight these issues within the strategy. It was also emphasised that achieving this outcome requires a multi-agency approach across all partners, therefore the strategy should reflect this. It was noted that the review could reflect the importance of a combination of quality active travel and public transport routes to provide a seamless journey in order to achieve targets. This could include consideration on any actions the council and partners can take to achieve a transport service that supports people to move around in a sustainable manner.

### Recommendations to consider:

- Broadening the scope of strategy review to include wider partners and reflect the need for a collaborative approach to achieve the sustainability and climate change ambitions in South Ayrshire. Where appropriate, identify targeted multi-agency work to be implemented with partners.
- There is a need for a combination of active travel and an improved public transport service to achieve the reduction in car kilometres target. Investigate opportunities to influence and work with local transport providers to deliver a service that supports a sustainable transport hierarchy.
- The need to include, in the review, the specific challenges for rural communities and the need for better accessible transport services.
- Reflect the 20-minute neighbourhood ambition and the role of the next Local Development Plan (LDP3), which links to the National Planning Framework (NPF4) as a means to move towards achieving this Movement Outcome.
- Investigate the financial barriers to public transport provision in new housing developments.
- Investigate potential to undertake a feasibility study on community transport provision with Community Planning Partners.
- Opportunity to create links with local College and University to improve transport links from rural areas.





## 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:

- 71% of all households have access to a car. 49% of households own/have access to at least one car in the most deprived areas and this rises to 87% in the least deprived.<sup>10</sup>
- Motorised transport has the potential to increase air and noise pollution and greenhouse gases.<sup>11</sup>
- The volume and speed of traffic and long commutes can be detrimental to health.<sup>12</sup>
- Motorised transport can increase risk of accidental injury and disrupt communities.<sup>13</sup>
- Motorised transport has the potential to reduce levels of physical activity and social interactions.<sup>14</sup>

### Summary of discussion:

The group agreed that the review created an opportunity to highlight Traffic and Parking as a key outcome. The review should place emphasis on the importance of this theme to attain council support to drive forward the reduction of traffic and parking across the region but specifically in town centres. Need to consider providing alternative options to encourage movement where there is a reduction in parking to support the required behaviour change.

All three Outcomes above are important and the review could emphasise the link between the need for and importance of having segregated active travel routes and reliable and affordable public transport to reduce traffic on the roads and reliance on cars.

### Recommendations to consider:

- Clarify that traffic and parking is linked with delivering the Movement and Public Transport Outcomes. Highlight the health benefits of reducing car usage and the experiences of population groups identified as being most impacted by inequality.
- Where there is reference to Electric Vehicles, the just transition approach should be reflected. Include the fact that those experiencing the highest level of deprivation are unlikely to be able to afford an Electric Vehicle.
- Prioritise the Council travel hierarchy and provide leadership in recognition of its importance, raising awareness of importance and benefits from adhering to this hierarchy. Reference approaches to increase South Ayrshire Council's active travel facilities across the estate.
- Highlight the importance of reliable and affordable public transport links in new housing developments, to give people choice and encourage less reliance on cars.
- Support how the Planning Department utilises the maximum parking standards in new developments, highlighting that the use of this criterion to minimise parking can support behaviour change towards using other forms of transport.
- Investigate the role of appropriately increased housing density in reducing walking distance to public transport and services as a contributor to reduce traffic levels.



## 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:

- Streets, which are connected, enable walkable neighbourhoods. Walkable neighbourhoods increase physical activity and social interactions.<sup>15</sup>
- Inadequate or poor spaces can lead to reduced social interactions.<sup>16</sup>

### Summary of discussion:

It was highlighted by the group that the original Strategy contained 'hooks' in relation to the concept of place and placemaking. However, the group felt that the review offers a chance to provide more detail about actions and the departments responsible for the implementation. As well as being reflected in the review, added clarity could also be provided in the next iteration of the action plan. The group believed that taking part in this Place and Wellbeing Assessment process has started to clarify the impact of place and how all services can consider how their decisions can achieve positive outcomes that assist delivery of this review. The next Action Plan can also link opportunities for improvement that would have a positive impact on the planet.

The planning department can ensure new developments take streets and spaces into consideration but importantly the review should address existing streets and open spaces.

### Recommendations to consider:

- Outline in greater detail the impact of placemaking and streets and spaces on health, wellbeing and planet. Link with the town centre Placemaking Strategies and other related work e.g. Accessible Ayr within the strategy review to highlight collaborative opportunities to ensure sustainability and climate change is embedded in placemaking.
- Highlight the continued importance across planning applications for new housing developments or retail spaces in the context of the wider 'place' and impact on people.
- Outline commitment to work with partners and communities identifying current streets and areas of open space that require improvement, access funding streams, and help create better useable and enjoyable spaces, in particular focussing on the areas experiencing highest levels of deprivation.

### 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

- Children who grow up with greener surroundings are 55% less likely to develop a mental disorder later in life.<sup>17</sup>
- There are wider environmental benefits to increasing natural space which can protect population health.<sup>18</sup>
- Natural spaces can encourage social interactions and the development of stronger or more cohesive communities and can provide a sense of community and belonging.<sup>19</sup>
- The type, size, quantity, quality, accessibility and proximity of natural spaces to where people live can influence whether infrastructures and spaces are used.<sup>20</sup>

## Summary of discussion:

The group agreed that the current strategy referred well to natural space. However, there could be a stronger emphasis considering both the natural environment and biodiversity aspects, and the built environment and streets and spaces within the strategy. The impact on wellbeing as well as encouraging people to move around and through nature was raised as being important to highlight within the strategy. Improving spaces can encourage social connection and interaction, which positively effects physical and mental wellbeing as well as reducing social isolation and loneliness and increasing a sense of identify and belonging. The need for quality spaces within areas of deprivation was also emphasised. If people do not have a car or reliable public transport to access, the benefit from these spaces is then of more importance and more emphasis should be placed on ensuring these spaces are available in these neighbourhoods.

It was suggested that there are opportunities to create well designed naturalised spaces e.g., use of wildflower meadows and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and highlight the benefits of such features for planet and individual and collective wellbeing through education, such as signage and other means.

## Recommendations to consider:

- Highlight the evidenced importance of spaces in encouraging social connections and the associated benefits to health and wellbeing.
- Outline the Council direction and highlight the links across services, teams and departments in delivering this Natural Space Outcome.
- The review offers an opportunity to highlight the potential to use the school estate as a means to increase access to green and natural space for local communities.
- Consider a strategic approach to increase the quality, maintenance, and accessibility of green spaces, specifically in areas of deprivation.
- Prioritise the creation of well designed natural spaces boosting biodiversity.

## 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

- Children can have health benefits such as developing motor skills, understanding risk and environmental awareness when undertaking play and recreation in outdoor environments, especially in natural spaces.<sup>21</sup>
- Undertaking play or recreation in natural spaces and accessing them through active travel has benefits for the environment.<sup>22</sup>



### Summary of discussion:

The group reflected that there has been significant investment on play and recreation recently which has focused on traditional play parks but also had some elements of natural play. There are many related strategies that influence this outcome, which should be reflected in the review. This should include being able to access play and recreation by active travel given the benefits to both reducing car usage and improve it physical and mental health.

Planning colleagues also outlined the links to and requirements for play and recreation that can be influenced through the Local Development Plan. Challenges to ensure these spaces are safe, well-designed and well used were discussed. Acknowledgement was also given to consideration of the needs of various groups, for example the different requirements that teenage girls and boys may need from a space for play and recreation.

### Recommendations to consider:

- Reference broader themes in relation to play and recreation and identify areas that require action. For example, Sustainability and Planning departments consider developer contributions for creating play areas in new developments.
- Highlight relevant strategies, areas of work and service budgets that support this outcome of Play and Recreation and how they link to sustainability and climate change e.g. Open Space Strategy, Physical Activity Strategy, Play Strategy, Natural Health App. Include importance of accessibility by active travel.

## 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

- Accessibility to services can be exacerbated by poor transport links and safety of wider environment.<sup>23</sup>

### Summary of discussion:

- The group focused discussion around the need to for strong partnership working to achieve this outcome, working towards a 20-minute neighbourhood approach where services and amenities are easily accessible for all. Current work that will contribute to the Services and Support Outcome includes Caring for Ayrshire, NHS Ayrshire & Arran's transformation programme which seeks to provide more services closer to people's homes. Likewise, the South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership are leading work that considers locality models that link with Community Planning and deliver accessible wellbeing services. In relation to indoor and outdoor spaces, the current fuel crisis means discussions were taking place to provide warm spaces for people who can't heat their home to access and connect with others.



**Recommendations to consider:**

- Include the importance of taking a partnership approach to achieve the 20-minute neighbourhood ambition with collaboration across many departments and organisations. Highlighting links to the relevant areas of work and strategies that support this outcome e.g. Caring for Ayrshire.
- Where a digital first approach is mentioned, refer to the provision of support required for those without means or ability to access services by digital technology to prevent widening inequalities.
- Acknowledge the specific challenges for those living in rural areas to access services and amenities, making links to the movement outcome. Investigate ways to collaborate on better transport links from rural areas to access jobs and services and support for everyday living and health and wellbeing through practical solutions including ways to reduce costs.

**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:**

- Unemployment can be harmful to health and the longer unemployed the worse the health outcomes.<sup>24</sup>
- Volunteering has been associated with improved self-rated health; mental health; decreased depression; decreased mortality, life satisfaction; and wellbeing. Volunteering can help with the undertaking of healthy behaviours such as physical activity.<sup>25</sup>
- People can find it necessary to purchase a car even when they cannot afford it, which leads to further debt.<sup>26</sup>

**Summary of discussion:**

The group highlighted some aspects of the current strategy that are linked to this outcome and discussed a variety of areas that could be supported further through the review. Due to COVID19, ambitions in relation to working from home had been reached timelier than expected. However, there are concerns about a backslide to office working. It was thought that the review provides the opportunity to outline benefits of working from home and ways to mitigate any unintended outcomes that may come from this way of working to people's health and wellbeing. The group also discussed the future of work and economy that they felt could be reflected better, ensuring that access is also considered. Access issues that were covered included digital inclusion and improving active travel routes and public transport.



### Recommendations to consider:

- Reflect on the changing environment for work and economy and the need to create smarter ways of working and opportunities for local people to be ready.
- Support the benefits of working from home (ie reduction in car journeys) and the mitigation of any negatives. Include solutions to ensure that the reduction of social aspects and active travel do not negatively impact on employee health, through increasing loneliness and reduced physical activity.
- Support employees to work from home by considering and referencing digital inclusion. Specifically, work with Employability Leads to highlighting the need to address skills gaps in workforce, create low cost/free opportunities for digital support and ensure the cost of broadband and equipment does not exclude people from the job market or push employees further into poverty.
- The review has the potential for South Ayrshire Council to show commitment to offering the right opportunities through jobs, apprenticeships, and training for everyone to have the right knowledge and skills for future green jobs e.g., technicians trained for renewable energy rather than gas.

### 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

- By creating energy efficient homes it can help with heating homes adequately and can therefore assist with reducing fuel and wider poverty, which has a positive impact on health.<sup>27</sup>
- Housing should be located close enough to enable people to access facilities, services and communities. This includes employment, social networks, active travel routes, public transport, schools, leisure and greenspace.<sup>28</sup>

### Summary of discussion:

The group felt that the current strategy focused on energy efficiency in relation to Council corporate properties rather than council housing. The review means that the contribution of all forms housing could be broadened to address aspects of this outcome. This includes the looking beyond a purely energy focus to consider the location of new housing and other buildings to reduce reliance on access by private car. Challenges come with improving existing properties as well as with the powers held by the Planning Department to support the right mix and density of housing in new developments. Planning can find it challenging to get Volume house builders to build a variety of house types. There could be some ways of linking to other strategies and considering ways to support the challenges in new and existing housing.



Another area of discussion related to addressing the impact of rising temperatures on housing and health, which is a particular risk in some areas of deprivation due to housing type and lack of natural space to combat heat in built up areas. It was highlighted that there are numerous ways to drop urban temperature, create shade and make places look more attractive through good planting even where there is minimal space. In addition to heat there are other extreme weather events that need further consideration including storms, intense rainfall and flooding that can be alleviated by greening the environment.

It is important to use the space available appropriately while also considering the complexity of weather challenges. Again, the importance of working collaboratively was highlighted to ensure that this type of intervention does not have any negative unintended consequences. When work is taken forward collectively, challenges can be recognised before they become problems and positive outcomes for the planet, people and place can be achieved.

#### **Recommendations to consider:**

- Investigate including supporting evidence in the review in relation to creating the right density and type of houses that contribute to this outcome, supporting a mix of ages within communities and ability for people to age in place.
- Collaborate with those responsible for the Local Housing Strategy to consider how to influence existing housing stocks to achieve this outcome. For example, where existing housing stock requires upgrading for sustainability, consider the cost versus benefit to have a new type of housing in its place. Collaborate around this unique opportunity to address density and housing mix as well as improved access to open space.
- Investigate the need for greening the urban environment, particularly in areas of deprivation, in order to drop the urban temperature, create shade and make attractive for the community to use and connect. Emphasise on the need for collaborative working between Planning, Neighbourhood Services, Ayrshire Roads Alliance and Housing in order to implement successfully.
- Consider targeting whole geographical areas when making sustainable improvements to housing which can also have a positive impact on delivering other Place and Wellbeing Outcomes.
- Explore the role of the school estate as a potential hub for the community in providing a variety of opportunities including natural space, area for play and recreation and highlight good practice e.g. Newton Primary, Wallacetown.
- Link the Active Travel Strategy with delivering on the housing outcomes within the review to support the 20-minute neighbourhood ambition, where communities are linked to amenities and services through appropriate streets and active travel routes.
- Support Planning to achieve a greater variety of house types in new development by including evidence on the challenges for our ageing population wanting to downsize (and heat smaller homes) while staying in their local area.

## **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:**

- 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. <sup>29</sup>
- The physical attributes of a place including its design, quality and maintenance can influence perceptions and its reputation – negative perceptions can negatively impact on physical and mental health<sup>30</sup>
- A sense or feeling of belonging to a community is associated positively with mental health, and an improved quality of life.<sup>31</sup>
- Social isolation and fewer social interactions can be exacerbated by a poor physical environment<sup>18</sup>

### **Summary of discussion:**

- There was agreement from the group that the strategy review could consider bringing the concept of identity and belonging into sharper focus. Making clearer the links between the current aims that seek to connect people with nature through to the importance of identifying with local spaces. There are opportunities through culture and history that could be implemented to contribute to people being able to identify and feel that they belong as well as encouraging connection with the natural places in Ayr and across South Ayrshire. Both link to Outcomes around feeling safe and review could raise awareness of impact on encouraging active travel and social interaction.

Specific examples of using uplifting pieces of street art from other Scottish cities and towns were discussed, for example in Dundee the use of Desperate Dan public artwork. It was highlighted that there are opportunities to build on existing connections to Robert Burns and other figures across South Ayrshire towns. This would have the potential to have a support the Tourism economy but importantly can have a positive impact on the wellbeing on people and communities living in South Ayrshire. It was suggested that an action to support this was to revisit previous successful examples of partnership working and identify resources to take forward future opportunities jointly.

### **Recommendations to consider:**

- Support the role that connecting with nature has in fostering identity and belonging. Highlighting the benefits to health and wellbeing that both these aspects bring would also be beneficial.
- Identify opportunities for partnership working between Culture, Tourism and Events department and Special Projects to use arts-based approaches and street furniture to build community, social interaction and identity, building on existing work and increasing people's connection to both natural spaces and the build environment.
- Outline creative solutions that could support climate literacy and nurture identity and belonging such as working with local drama and theatre groups to convey key messages and highlight the importance of climate change.
- Link with local placemaking strategies to ensure it supports connecting people with nature and making best use of public realm in towns and spaces.
- Collaborate to improve to housing mix and the creation of more natural space encouraging people to come together to connect can also positively impact this outcome.
- Continue to refer to building the Provost School Footprint Challenge as a model to connect issues of sustainability and climate change with the local area, linking the ability to also impact on identity and belonging in the younger age group.
- Highlight the opportunities to impact across the Place and Wellbeing outcomes through partnership work linking nature, climate change, signage and art, recognising the importance of this kind of activity in fostering identity and belonging and encouraging care and maintenance of local area.





## Feeling safe

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

### Evidence and Research:

- A lack of maintenance can lead to a place feeling unsafe.<sup>32</sup>
- Perceptions of place feeling unsafe can lead to negative impacts on health, for example mental wellbeing and can reduce outdoor activities<sup>33</sup>
- There can be personal safety issues for certain groups of the population when using public transport.<sup>34</sup>
- Some groups within the population can have limited access to safe and well-maintained environments<sup>35</sup>

### Summary of discussion:

There was agreement that the strategy review offers the opportunity to consider safety in relation to place and, in particular, to supporting increased active travel and public transport usage. There was interest around the notion of how natural surveillance could provide opportunities to increase feelings of safety through designing safer streets naturally. This can also contribute to the attractiveness of a place which provides people and communities greater sense of safety but also pride in their local area encouraging care and maintenance.

### Recommendations to consider:

- Ensure clarity on the researched contribution delivering on other Place and Wellbeing Outcomes, such as Movement, Public Transport, Streets and Spaces, on people feeling safer to move around without the use of a car.
- Link community climate change work with local buildings and places, which can also all contribute to connecting people with the local area and increase perceptions of safety.

## Stewardship

### Care and maintenance

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:

- Poorly maintained neighbourhoods with high levels of incivilities can lead to lower levels of mental wellbeing and poor health<sup>36</sup>
- Vacant and derelict land can negatively impact on health. <sup>37</sup>
- 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.<sup>38</sup>

### Summary of discussion:

Overall, it was agreed that there is potential through the strategy review to go into the aspects of the Care and Maintenance outcome in more detail. This included the impact of a well maintained place on feeling safe and encouraging people out of cars and using more active travel.



South Ayrshire Council Waste Strategy delivers on good facilities for recycling. In relation to Electric Vehicle charging points, there is a bigger vision for their future as technology changes and improves the main focus could be on home charging. Consideration should be given to how and where scarce resource is spent given the high cost of electric vehicles for many, particularly those experiencing deprivation. Investment in active travel can provide more positive outcomes to achieve the 'triple win' by addressing inequalities and improving health and wellbeing of people and planet.

**Recommendations to consider:**

- Embed clarity on the contribution of care and maintenance of our streets and spaces to impact behaviour change and the way people move about. There is potential to link this to the Movement Outcome by drawing attention to the ability to increase active travel and reduce car travel if the streets and pavements are well cared for. This is particularly important for those with mobility issues.
- Reference the Waste Strategy which aims to deliver good facilities for recycling and well organised refuse storage and collection.
- Support ongoing commitment to work with communities to identify opportunities for temporary food growing and other natural uses, where possible on derelict land to improve attractiveness of area and increase feelings of safety.

**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:**

- A sense of control can lead to more empowerment and a sense of purpose.<sup>39</sup>
- Empowerment can help to reduce isolation and can be beneficial for mental health and wellbeing.<sup>40</sup>
- People living in more socio-economic deprived areas felt less confident about being involved in decision-making compared to less deprived areas.<sup>41</sup>



**Summary of discussion:**

The group noted that the review offered the opportunity to encourage two-way dialogue with communities with regard to climate action. It was felt that climate literacy is a focus for improvement, to ensure communities understand the issues that affect the places they live, work and relax and are equipped with the right information and understanding to have informed conversations and influence decisions. Likewise, the provision of clarity in relation to the language and communication linked with sustainable development and climate change could help to achieve a shared understanding and improved collaboration. An example given was, having a shared understanding of the term's climate justice and 'just transition' as they relate to equality and ensuring everyone is supported with climate change without widening inequalities.

**Recommendations to consider:**

- Work with Thriving Communities to engage with communities in relation to climate change and the impacts to health, wellbeing and the places they live.
- Take cognisance of opportunities for Green Participatory Budgeting to support better engagement and build relationships.
- Look to increase climate literacy by linking climate change discussions into all aspects of local consultation and community engagement. Examples to embed this could include:
  - use of the Place Standard Tool with a Climate Lens used in engagement processes for South Ayrshire Council developments eg Place-making Strategies.
  - Link with Community Planning Partnership's Community Reference Group, which going forward aims to co-ordinate community engagement across localities.

