

Scottish Government Planning Guidance: Local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods



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Introduction

This guidance supports the application of Policy 15, Local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods as set out in the fourth [National Planning Framework](#) (NPF4).

Background

NPF4 sets out a clear commitment to think differently about our places, applying the Place Principle and delivering the [National Performance Framework](#). The complex challenges we face - from the climate and nature crises, to poverty, disadvantage, and stark health inequalities – require a joined-up and collaborative approach to deliver positive outcomes for people and the environment. NPF4 puts climate and nature at the forefront, tackling long-standing challenges and inequalities, and leading the transition to stronger, greener, fairer, and healthier communities across Scotland. NPF4 supports the delivery of liveable places where we can live better, healthier lives. It names ‘local living’ as one of six [spatial principles](#) by which we should plan our places.

[NPF4 policy 15](#) sets out the policy requirements to support the delivery of local living. This guidance is intended to provide further detail to support the implementation of the policy, with a focus on informing development planning and development management processes.

What is local living?

Local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods can help to deliver the healthy, sustainable, and resilient places required to support a good quality of life and balance our environmental impact.

Local living

Local living provides people with the opportunity to meet the majority of their daily needs within a reasonable distance of their home.

It is centred on supporting people to ‘live well locally’.

20 minute neighbourhoods

The 20 minute neighbourhood concept is one of many ways to support local living.

The 20 minute neighbourhood concept aims to provide access to the majority of daily needs within a 20 minute walk, wheel, or cycle from home.

It is an approach likely to be more readily achievable in urban places, towns, villages, and cities. It is designed to be applied flexibly, in response to local circumstances.

The timeframe of 20 minutes is derived from research¹ undertaken in the fields of health and wellbeing, urban design and planning which explores the associations between walking and local destinations, and the ease of access to local services, infrastructure and community spaces when travelling by foot. This is based on a walk of approximately 10 minutes to any destination(s) and a 10-minute return journey. It is not a prescriptive approach, and the 20 minute travel time is not fixed, nor is it about creating boundaries or restricting people.

Many existing places already support local living or operate as 20 minute neighbourhoods. Some may require change to improve their liveability, or to maintain it into the future. Placemaking is incremental, it can take a while to build a thriving and vibrant place that effectively supports local living as places evolve and their communities and their needs change over time. New places and developments should be designed with local living at their heart.

No one organisation or group can alone provide the facilities and services and connections needed to enable local living. To enable local living, collaboration is needed across many organisations, agencies, groups, and with communities.

Effective community engagement at the start of a process and throughout, is core to these approaches. This will lead to better democratic participation, better services, and improved outcomes for communities, as set out in the key guiding principles of the [National Standards for Community Engagement](#).

Local living can also contribute to meeting the United Nations [Sustainable Development Goals \(UNSDGs\)](#), which include themes around inequality, climate, health and wellbeing, and economy.

¹ **Rodriguez-Lopez et al (2017)**. The Threshold Distance Associated with Walking From Home To School. (Accessed February 2023). **Gunn et al (2016)**. Identifying destination distances that support walking trips in local neighborhoods. (Accessed February 2023). **Badland et al (2014)**. Urban liveability: Emerging lessons from Australia for exploring the potential for indicators to measure the social determinants of health. (Accessed February 2023)

See, for example: Rodriguez-Lopez, C. et al (2017). The threshold distance associated with walking from home to school. *Health Education & Behavior*, 44:6, pp. 857-866. doi: 10.1177/1090198116688429 (accessed February 2023); Gunn, L. D. et al (2017). Identifying destination distances that support walking trips in local neighborhoods. *Journal of Transport & Health*, 5, pp. 133-141. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jth.2016.08.009> (accessed February 2023); Badland, H. et al (2014). Urban liveability: emerging lessons from Australia for exploring the potential for indicators to measure the social determinants of health. *Social Science & Medicine*, 111, pp. 64-73. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2014.04.003> (accessed February 2023).

= Streb, M. (2022). Walkable neighbourhoods: building in the right places to reduce car dependency. Retrieved from: <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/media/10520/walkable-neighbourhoods-report.pdf#:~:text=When%20journeys%20are%20short%20enough%2C%20most%20people%20walk.,willing%20to%20walk%20to%20meet%20their%20daily%20needs> (accessed December 2023).

Structure and how to use this document

The guidance is intended to assist and support planning authorities, communities, businesses, and others who have key roles in helping to deliver local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods.

- **planning authorities:** It is expected to be of particular relevance to planning authorities in the preparation of Local Development Plans (LDPs) and to support decision making in planning. Planning authorities are expected to consider how the guidance can be applied in a proportionate and place-based way, and to use their judgement in deciding which components of the advice are relevant to their processes
- **community planning partnerships:** To support community planning partners/public sector organisations working together to plan and deliver public services in local authority areas, through locality plans and local outcome improvement plans
- **community groups and councils/third sector business:** The guidance is also intended to support understanding of local living for organisations engaged in the planning system and in initiatives such as local place plans
- **development proposers:** Those involved in the preparation of development proposals and planning applications such as: client organisations, housing, health, education and infrastructure providers and funders, developers, commercial and retail businesses, designers, and planners

This guidance sets out:

PART 1 – why local living

The benefits and context for local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods. This will be useful for all readers.

PART 2 – what local living looks like

The key considerations for local living in a Scottish context. This section explains the use of the Local Living Framework as a consistent structure with suggested considerations for communities, applicants, and planning officials to consider the daily needs of a place. It will be particularly useful for planning authorities in preparing the LDP and considering development proposals.

PART 3 – ways to support local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods

This will be useful for all readers but is of particular importance for those leading or participating in the LDP process, preparing a local place plan, or other community-led plan.

PART 4 – case studies

In this part of the guidance, a range of case studies are presented, showing how place-based interventions are supporting the implementation of local living across a variety of scales and geographic locations.

Part 1 - why local living

Key outcomes

We live in diverse geographies, from islands to coasts, rural areas, towns, and cities. Our diverse places - their landscapes and local settings, their infrastructure, services and facilities, and the local community - shape how we live day to day. This will affect our health, wellbeing, and impact on the planet.

Places with high quality housing, supportive local infrastructure, services, employment, education, and sustainable travel options, can help to break cycles of disadvantage and poverty, promote healthy lifestyles, and support physical, social, and mental health and wellbeing. They can also help support thriving local economies and community wealth building.

Good place design and management will strengthen local ability to manage environmental and other emerging challenges and to protect the environment. Research undertaken by ClimateXChange² tells us that in Scotland, 20 minute neighbourhoods could support positive outcomes around:

- climate actions
- health inequalities
- local economy
- liveability and quality of life



Fig. 1 Outcomes of a 20 minute neighbourhood: Climatexchange Report (source: O’Gorman & Dillon-Robinson (2021))

² O’Gorman, S. and Dillon-Robinson, R. (2021). 20 Minute Neighbourhoods in a Scottish Context. Retrieved from <https://www.climatexchange.org.uk/media/5395/cxc-20-minute-neighbourhoods-in-a-scottish-context-march-2021.pdf> (accessed December 2023).

Climate action

Local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods can help our built environment to respond to the climate and nature crises and can play an important role in balancing our relationship with nature and the environment. Providing good quality opportunities to walk, wheel, cycle, or travel by sustainable means, to the places we need to access most regularly, can help to reduce the reliance on private car use. This can help to cut emissions, improve air quality, and encourage the repurposing of land to create greenspace which is good for our wellbeing as well as being good for nature and biodiversity.

Local living can also support opportunities for community food growing and local enterprises, reducing the carbon and environmental footprint of the food we eat and the goods we buy, and increasing the resilience of our supply chains.

Local living approaches increase opportunities for re-using and adapting existing buildings and places. The integration of blue and green infrastructure in our new and existing places will help communities to better manage the effects of climate change and extreme weather on communities and assist with nature restoration and biodiversity enhancement.

Re-using existing buildings can form part of a whole lifecycle emissions approach to development, avoids emissions from building new, and makes use of the embodied energy already within the building materials. Improving the energy efficiency of existing buildings reduces the emissions created by them now and into the future.

Reduced health inequalities

The World Health Organisation³ definition of health is 'a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity'. The places where people live, work and play can create and nurture, or be harmful to, health and are a key part of the wider environmental influences on health, at an individual and community level.

Health inequalities⁴ are the unjust and avoidable differences in people's health across social groups and between different population groups. The fundamental causes of inequalities are the unequal distribution of power, income, and wealth. These inequalities can then influence the wider environment in which people live and work, and in turn shape their individual experiences and health.

Physical, social, and mental health and wellbeing can be supported by planning for local living. Having easy access to the services and support needed in our daily lives such as good homes, education, childcare, access to a variety of healthy and affordable food, feeling safe, having

³ World Health Organization (n.d.) Constitution of the World Health Organization. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/about/governance/constitution> (accessed 18 July 2023).

⁴ Public Health Scotland (2021). What are health inequalities? Retrieved from <https://www.healthscotland.scot/health-inequalities/what-are-health-inequalities> (accessed 18 July 2023).

community cohesion, and protection from exposure to environmental harms such as pollution, flooding, excess heat or cold are some of the aspects of local living that impact on health inequalities. In addition, access to attractive, green, nature rich places impacts on health outcomes: encouraging people to meet, be active, play, and get around by walking, wheeling, and cycling.

Research⁵ has evidenced that when addressing health inequalities, it is important to understand whether amenities and facilities meet the needs of the local population in a way that is accessible to them. Part 2 and 3 of this guidance aims to assist the consideration of this.

Improved local economy

Active and vibrant local centres are important not only in the services and facilities that they provide to the community, but also in terms of the employment and training opportunities that they offer. Places that are designed for local living can help to focus activity in local centres, providing important footfall and helping to sustain existing business as well as encouraging new enterprise and community wealth building. Approaches to local living seek to redevelop brownfield, vacant and derelict land, helping to bring land back into permanent or temporary productive use, encouraging investment in our communities.

Improved liveability and quality of life

Having local access to the things we need most regularly supports a positive quality of life for people in their local areas. Our connection with our places goes beyond the physical environment, forming part of our identity.

Places that are well designed feel welcoming and can encourage everyone to interact more with their surroundings and with each other. Providing the conditions for a good quality of life can help to combat social isolation and loneliness, delivering outcomes at social, environmental, and economic levels.

⁵ Olsen, J. R. et al (2022). Nationwide equity assessment of the 20-min neighbourhood in the Scottish context: a socio-spatial proximity analysis of residential locations. *Social Science & Medicine*, 315:115502. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2022.115502>

The policy context for local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods

The policy framework for local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods is complex and interlinked. Setting the policy context is essential to promote change in how we bring spatial and community planning together to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for the population.

The [National Performance Framework](#), the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals \(UNSDGs\)](#) and NPF4 all recognise that the places where we live and spend our time have a direct impact on health and wellbeing, quality of life and environmental balance.

NPF4 sets out a series of spatial principles for Scotland towards 2045: Just Transition, Local Living, Compact Urban Growth, Rebalanced Development, and Rural Revitalisation. These spatial principles support the planning and delivery of 'Sustainable Places', 'Liveable Places', and 'Productive Places'.

Creating places that support local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods will play an important role in contributing to national and global sustainability outcomes.

National Planning Framework 4

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) sets a clear policy agenda throughout the document that encourages local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods. Although delivering local living requires wide consideration of NPF4 principles and policies, specific intent and outcomes of the policy are set out in NPF Policy 15, as follows:

Policy Intent:

- to encourage, promote and facilitate the application of the Place Principle and create connected and compact neighbourhoods where people can meet the majority of their daily needs within a reasonable distance of their home, preferably by walking, wheeling, cycling, or using sustainable transport options

Policy Outcomes:

- places are planned to improve local living in a way that reflects local circumstances
- a network of high-quality, accessible, mixed-use neighbourhoods which support health and wellbeing, reduce inequalities, and are resilient to the effects of climate change
- new and existing communities are planned together with homes and the key local infrastructure including schools, community centres, local shops, greenspaces, health and social care, digital, and sustainable transport links

The delivery of NPF4 is supported by a wider programme of planning reform that will contribute towards local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods. The principles of local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods are also embedded in a range of wider Scottish Government policy initiatives including Housing to 2040, Town Centre Action Plan, Getting the Right Change - A Retail Strategy for Scotland and NTS2 National Transport Strategy.

Design, quality, and place - The six qualities of successful places

[Creating Places](#) is Scottish Government policy statement on architecture and place, setting out the comprehensive value good design can deliver. The policy statement promotes good design and placemaking through the principles of context, identity and character and sets out the six qualities of successful places as guiding principles.

The six qualities of successful places are set out as:

- healthy
- pleasant
- connected
- distinctive
- sustainable
- adaptable

Details on delivering the six qualities of successful places are set out in [Annex D of NPF4](#).

Public service reform

Public services touch on many aspects of everyday life – including health, social care, education, early years, community justice, enterprise, and skills – and play a crucial role in ensuring people's wellbeing. Integration, collaboration, and a shift towards prevention are key elements of the public service reform agenda. The long term and holistic approach of good placemaking and local living provides planning with an opportunity to support public service reform and improve outcomes for communities.

To achieve this, collaborative working across and between all sectors is required.

Place context

Creating the conditions for local living requires a holistic focus on understanding and creating good places that support healthy, sustainable lifestyles, not simply on the development and allocation of land.

Our places are individual and unique with their own history, assets, characteristics, and identity. They comprise diverse communities with unique characteristics, challenges, and aspirations. The context of each place is central to designing and delivering interventions that support local living. This means understanding the needs, aspirations, and interests of the community as well as the physical, social, cultural, and economic context.

Thinking about the interrelationships between these elements, and how local people perceive them, is central to developing a coherent framework to deliver successful local living.

The Place Principle

The [Place Principle](#) provides the overarching basis for place-based working, by encouraging a participative approach to planning places, services, infrastructure, land uses, and buildings. It encourages collaborative partnership working with a range of stakeholders, including local communities and community groups, businesses, transport providers, healthcare, and education providers, and across local authority structures.

A wide range of stakeholders and agencies likely to be involved in the process of preparing LDPs is provided in the Scottish Government's [Local Development Planning Guidance](#), and may be a helpful reference.

What does the Place Principle say?

Place is where people, location and resources combine to create a sense of identity and purpose and is at the heart of addressing the needs and realising the full potential of communities. Places are shaped by the way resources, services and assets are directed and used by the people who live in and invest in them.

A more joined-up, collaborative, and participative approach to services, land, and buildings, across all sectors within a place, enables better outcomes for everyone and increased opportunities for people and communities to shape their own lives.

The principle requests that:

All those responsible for providing services and looking after assets in a place need to work and plan together, and with local communities, to improve the lives of people, support inclusive and sustainable economic growth and create more successful places.

Community engagement

Engaging with communities is integral to the Place Principle and vital for delivery of local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods that support quality of life. The [National Standards for Community Engagement](#) are good-practice principles designed to improve and guide the process of community engagement. Furthermore, collaborative working between key local partners such as spatial planning, community planning, health and social care, third sector may also offer opportunities to share and streamline community engagement, or to draw on existing consultation findings. Each partner has a role in the delivery of local living and should be working to the Place Principle.

Fig. 2 graphic of National Standards for Community Engagement: The 7 Standards



Rural and Island context

In rural and island areas, distances and densities mean flexibility and innovative approaches are required to support living well locally. It is possible to support local living through planning for connected, attractive, sustainable places that respect the character and context of rural settings.

Fig. 3 illustration of rural and island communities connecting through a networked approach to support local living



Where populations and services are distributed more widely, a networked approach can support local living within settlements. It is important to consider the relationships between settlements as well as the individual place. Local hubs with good transport links and improved digital infrastructure and connectivity can provide local employment opportunities, support remote and home working and technology-enabled or remote services, helping to reduce the need for rural communities to travel longer distances and the associated costs, time, and environmental impact.

Joined-up planning and development design approaches that provide sustainable access to the majority of the daily needs for a wider community can help to support quality of life in rural and island communities. It can also increase opportunities for business, provide well-connected housing, enhance local character, and reduce transport costs. Local input and participation will be important in shaping what local living looks like in rural and island areas, supporting finding the right solutions that offer climate conscious and sustainable approaches.

Across rural and island areas, there are many examples of projects supporting local living principles. This study, [Living Well Locally, 20 Minute Communities in the Highlands and Islands](#), commissioned by HITRANS looks at what a 20 minute neighbourhood could be like in a rural and island context. It considers what would need to happen for a rural settlement to become a 20 minute community.

Urban contexts

While most of Scotland is rural, the majority of the Scottish population lives in areas that are considered urban in nature. The principles of local living, in particular the 20 minute neighbourhood approach, may be more easily achievable where there are generally higher population densities like those found in urban areas.

Fig. 4 illustration of a city environment as a 20 minute neighbourhood supporting local living



Smaller scale settlements may have their own local centres and strategies to support local living. However, they may also benefit from access to larger urban areas, providing additional specialised services and large-scale infrastructure.

Fig. 5 illustration of a town environment as a 20 minute neighbourhood, supporting local living



Fig. 6 illustration of a small town or village environment as a 20 minute neighbourhood supporting local living



In addition, a settlement in one place may rely on a centre or the services that are located within a neighbouring local authority boundary. Consideration of local context and behaviour may highlight the need to plan across boundaries to work together as part of a larger network, providing access to specialised services across communities while benefiting from access to large scale infrastructure such as hospitals, universities, transport interchanges and cultural offerings found in cities.

The [Town Centre First principle](#) is complemented by local living and 20 minute neighbourhood approaches. Living locally can contribute to strengthening local economies, increasing local population, and encouraging footfall, all of which improves the vibrancy and vitality of town centres.

Infrastructure for local living

Transport infrastructure, the locations of new housing developments, and anchor institutions⁶ are key components in planning for local living. Transport infrastructure, including active travel and public transport, operates at national, regional, and local scales.

Infrastructure models where services are centralised or shared can create efficiencies, but there can also be unintended consequences on communities fulfilling their daily and wider needs in a sustainable way. Decision making around the locations and models of services, such as those for education, healthcare, leisure, community infrastructure, and housing can help to underpin local living.

Local living requires consideration to be given to the wider implications of decisions around the location of anchor institutions on our town, city, and neighbourhood centres. This may include the ability of the community to travel sustainably and actively to a destination, and any impacts on health and wellbeing, equalities, community cohesion and interaction. It may also include consideration of any unintended and/or adverse impacts of locating anchor institutions and housing on sites that are remote from centres of activity or that are severed from the nearby community by existing or planned infrastructure.

A sound understanding of planned and future transport investment at all scales is crucial in informing decisions about locations of housing, other key infrastructure and anchor institutions that support local living, in line with [NPF4 Policy 18](#) - Infrastructure first.

LDP preparation requires consistent, early engagement and collaboration between relevant stakeholders, across sectors and with local authority client departments. Information about the infrastructure first approach and local development planning can be found in the [Local Development Planning Guidance](#).

By applying local living principles to decisions about service provision, adverse impacts can be minimised. One method of assessing the impacts of development on a place is illustrated in the Improvement Service's [Rapid Scoping Assessment](#) that considers the impacts of the North Shore Development Framework on the wellbeing of those who live, work, play and learn in Ardrossan.

⁶ Anchor institutions are those that are rooted in place and bring about multiple benefits for a community, and they are recognised as contributing to community wealth building and the delivery of a wellbeing economy for Scotland.

Part 2 – what local living looks like

Local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods

Part 2 of this guidance supports the consideration of local living in a Scottish context. The aim of local living is to provide everyone with local, sustainable, and equitable access to the key facilities and services required daily.

NPF4 emphasises ‘local liveability’. Scotland’s urban and rural geographies and communities are diverse. They will require flexible approaches to achieving local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods. Local communities are best placed to determine what works for them based on their specific context and must be involved from the outset.

The distances covered in a 20 minute round trip can vary based on multiple conditions and factors. The quality of the walking environment, individual and community circumstances, age, ability, location, and topography are all contributory factors in the distance people are willing or able to travel by walking, wheeling, or cycling to access services.

The 20 minute timeframe is an approximate guide and does not rigidly define or limit local living in any context. It serves as a useful gauge for reasonable access and distances to services within a neighbourhood - or within a network of connected neighbourhoods or settlements - to enable people to enjoy a good quality of life.

Daily needs and the Local Living Framework

Local living aims to provide people with the opportunity to meet the majority of their daily needs within a reasonable distance of their home.

Daily needs can be defined in terms of the services, amenities and facilities required for daily living. How people’s daily needs are met in dispersed, rural and island communities, small towns, or larger towns, or cities, is likely to look quite different depending on the context. Some core daily needs are universal, such as the need to access good quality work, affordable and healthy food, sustainable transport, education, training, and health and social care services, to participate in leisure and cultural activities, spend time outdoors, and access local shops, irrespective of the settlement size and location. However, the extent and type of access required will vary depending on the particular needs of communities and groups within them.

The **quality** of the services, amenities and facilities and the community experience in accessing them is as important as the **quantity** available. This underlines the importance of community engagement, and the gathering of qualitative data to support decision making. Part 3 of the

guidance provides further details on both qualitative and quantitative information that can be used to better understand what a place might need to support local living.

Planning or designing for local living should begin with engaging with the community to find out what their daily needs are, what their place is like currently, what works well, and what they would need or want to change in the future.

Taking a community-led, place-based approach involves dealing with complexity and the [Place Based Framework](#) provides a mechanism to support collaborative and contextual working. It recognises that to achieve real change we must tackle multiple issues together and provides a consistent approach to help support positive impact and multiple benefits.

Local Living Framework

The Local Living Framework has been developed to provide a consistent structure to consider how local living is, or can be, supported in a place.

The framework is structured around 14 themes, within 5 overarching categories of Movement, Space, Resources, Civic and Stewardship. Each theme is supported by a set of key considerations designed to highlight the issues that should be considered in order to help support local living.

The categories and themes in the framework are interlinked and how they are considered may vary dependent on the context and characteristics of a place. The framework can help form the basis for engagement, analysis and planning and design work to deliver local living.

The application of the Local Living Framework can also be supported by the use of the [Place Standard](#) tool and the [Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)⁷ which are inter-related resources structured around the same 14 themes and based on evidence⁸ around how place impacts on health and wellbeing.

⁷ The Place and Wellbeing Outcomes - developed by the Place and Wellbeing Collaborative. Retrieved from: <https://www.improvementservice.org.uk/products-and-services/consultancy-and-support/planning-for-place-programme/place-and-wellbeing-outcomes> (accessed December 2023)

⁸ Public Health Scotland (2022), "Evidence behind the Place Standard Tool and Place and Wellbeing Outcomes". Retrieved from <https://www.publichealthscotland.scot/publications/evidence-behind-place-standard-tool-and-place-and-wellbeing-outcomes/evidence-behind-place-standard-tool-and-place-and-wellbeing-outcomes/> (accessed December 2023).

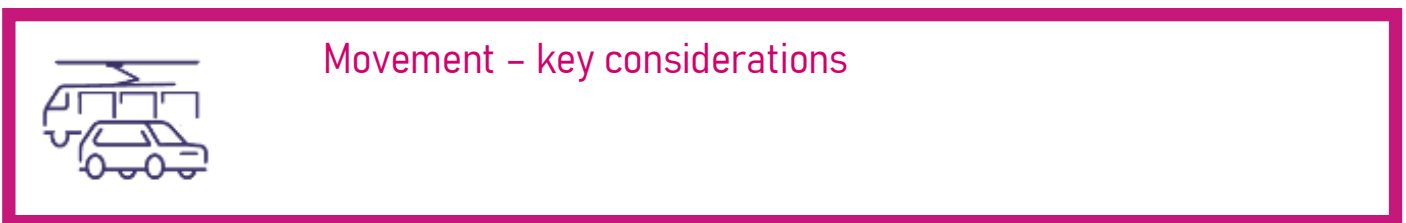
Fig. 7 diagram showing the Local Living Framework, which aligns with the [Place Standard tool](#) and the [Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#).



Key considerations for local living: using the Local Living Framework

The Local Living Framework is designed for early conversations about what is needed to support our daily lives. It has 5 main categories, each of which brings together several inter-related place and wellbeing themes to help a holistic consideration of their importance for local living.

The considerations noted below are illustrative rather than exhaustive and may be helpful to generate initial thinking and discussion about local living that can then be developed with the use of the Place Standard tool.



Considering the incorporation of quality local infrastructure for fulfilling daily needs should be part of all place planning and design processes at the earliest design stage. The walking, wheeling, and cycling environment can support local living and can ensure safety and good accessibility are at its heart. Well-designed infrastructure is important in encouraging individuals to travel sustainably, this includes the design and integration of appropriate parking measures that are evidenced⁹ to reduce car reliance in a way that is equitable. Engagement with local people can ensure accessibility and mobility is prioritised in a way that it makes moving around safe and inclusive, taking account of local context and need.

It is particularly important to consider and address the transport needs of diverse groups, including those with protected characteristics at the earliest stage, to ensure safety and accessibility, and that measures do not promote inequity. Access to services digitally or remotely may reduce the need to travel and widen access even where there isn't the population density to necessarily support local provision. It is important to consider the balance of digital service provision against the value of in-person access, the social and economic impacts, and quality of experience for communities.

⁹ Rye. T. Burns, J. Whitefield, A. Oxley-Glenister, K. Pinkard, J. Ansons Consulting Ltd, (Aug 2023). Reducing car use through parking policies: an evidence review Retrieved from <https://www.climatechange.org.uk/projects/reducing-car-use-through-parking-policies-an-evidence-review/> (accessed January 2024). DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7488/era/3776>

Moving around



The ability to walk, wheel and cycle in convenient, safe, and inclusive ways is central to delivering local living and the Scottish Government's national target to reduce car kilometres by 20% by 2030.

Aspects to consider include:

- convenient access to safe and pleasant walking and cycling routes (local and national routes) that are accessible for all to use, are overlooked and well-lit, connecting to the places people want and need to go
- the availability and quality of multiple access points, good connections to key routes, local services and facilities and green spaces
- provision of cycle parking and storage, and other active travel infrastructure
- creating and/or supporting active building frontages and edges and vibrant streetscapes that incorporate green infrastructure and support biodiversity
- clutter-free and accessible routes with design approaches that consider the availability and location of outdoor seating, desire lines, clear signage, and opportunities for enclosure, shelter, and shade

Public transport



Efficient, affordable, and integrated public transport can provide people with important access to daily needs and to other destinations and activities further afield.

Aspects to consider include:

- meeting the public transport needs of the community: convenience, efficiency, and quality
- the location and design of public transport stops that are inclusive, well integrated within the setting, sensitively designed and conveniently situated
- opportunities to support efficient and convenient interchange between local and regional public transport and active travel
- sustainable travel options, including the integration of community transport schemes, mobility hubs, Mobility As A Service (MAAS) schemes operating Connected and Autonomous Vehicles (CAVs), (when available), car share/trip share schemes and shared transport as an alternative for public transport in rural and island contexts and to reduce private vehicle reliance

Traffic and parking



Reducing the dominance of vehicles and traffic on communities can help to deliver local living and prioritise pedestrian movement and safety.

Aspects to consider include:

- promotion of modal shift through low/no car developments in built up accessible areas, mobility hubs, car reduction schemes and traffic management measures, and pedestrianised areas
- level and layout of parking that is sensitively designed to integrate with surroundings, prioritise care needs, and facilitates inclusive accessibility, delivery, uplifts and loading
- interventions that are evidenced to be effective in reducing car use

- electric vehicle parking and charging infrastructure located and designed to facilitate and promote sustainable travel, for example close to mobility hubs



Spaces – key considerations

Our places, spaces and streets are important elements of local living and provide the structural and visual character of a place. Buildings, landmarks, greenery, views, and natural landscape and spaces can help to create attractive places that are important to quality of life and encourage investment through the creation of a positive sense of place. Such assets are part of our heritage. They give us connection with a place and our culture, a sense of belonging, which contributes to our local identity distinctiveness that can encourage investment, growth, and prosperity.

Opportunities for connections with nature, and for play and recreation outdoors, are important for people of all ages and are fundamental in supporting children’s physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development.

Streets and spaces



Streets and spaces that are designed for all users, are attractive and multifunctional can help deliver local living, support social, civic, and economic activity, address climate needs and contribute to sustainability and improving biodiversity.

Aspects to consider include:

- creating vibrant, attractive, and accessible streets that relate to human scale and local context and character
- creating streetscapes that are distinctive with design features and local landmarks and key views that help people to navigate and orientate themselves
- integrating multifunctional design including incorporating nature-based elements such as street trees, swales, and raingardens
- providing access to local squares, parks and spaces that support community activity, take advantage of location and orientation, and provide shelter
- incorporating spaces for community food growing and allotments
- maintenance of spaces and areas to prevent or combat anti-social behaviour and encourage activity and positive identity

Natural space



Access to good quality natural space provides a wide range of benefits for wellbeing and the environment and is a central aspect of delivering local living.

Aspects to consider include:

- providing inclusive access to attractive, nature rich routes, parks and open spaces and our natural landscape for movement, recreation, and play

- supporting biodiversity protection, restoration, and enhancement and nature-based solutions
- incorporating nature-rich blue/green spaces, providing habitat for wildlife and pollination
- supporting existing natural features and forms, ecosystems, and biodiversity, incorporating allotments and growing spaces, including community food growing

Play and recreation



Local access for all community members to safe, accessible, and attractive play and recreation opportunities is essential to support local living. Local areas for play and recreation should be easy to access in a safe manner, such as being located away from busy traffic routes, and to provide safe crossing where necessary to support children's ability to play outdoors more readily.

Aspects to consider include:

- safe and inclusive access to sports, culture, art, and leisure activities, for all ages
- supporting the ability of children and young people to readily spend time outdoors through both formal and informal opportunities to play and socialise



Resources – key considerations

Local access to the resources in the form of facilities and services, work and local economy, housing, community support and opportunities for social interactions is essential to support local living. The range of services supporting local living is best informed by the specific context and the daily needs identified with the local community. Population density and easy access generates footfall, supporting the long term viability of facilities and services. Greater engagement may be required between partners in rural communities, where the availability of services and extent of local infrastructure may be dispersed or require creative and collaborative solutions.

Innovations in digital technology and science are shaping how services are designed in our communities to enhance service accessibility. Digital services can complement physical service provision, especially in rural and island communities, but should be considered alongside the vital wellbeing benefits of face-to-face interactions. A thorough and detailed understanding of the existing facilities, amenities and infrastructure, homes¹⁰ and current and future needs is required to

¹⁰ The Scottish Government's strategy, [Housing to 2040](#) sets out a vision for housing in Scotland to 2040 and a route map to get there.

develop an appropriate approach to supporting local living through new development and regeneration. The extent of the area that a local centre can serve should be considered through mapping and qualitative analysis, identifying people's needs and considering accessibility. Collaborative working across local authority boundaries may be needed for centres that serve or cross more than one authority area to identify where new centres may be needed.

Incorporating a community wealth building approach can help to deliver jobs, business growth, community-owned assets, and shorter supply chains. This can create greater resilience and support net zero ambitions through harnessing the economic leverage of anchor institutions.

Support and services



Local living requires communities to be able to access a mix of uses, services and facilities to meet their daily needs. Concentrating services in centres following the [Town Centre First](#) approach will help viability, especially the business viability of shops, cafes, pubs or restaurants and service industry.

Aspects to consider include:

- the range and type of services needed to support members of the community of all ages and abilities, including education, health and social care facilities, places of worship, sport, leisure, and cultural activity
- lifetime support and the ability to age in place
- variety and mix of uses and quality of services
- utilities and innovative energy solutions, repair, waste, and recycling
- access to healthy food

Work & local economy



A vibrant local economy will bring inward investments, encourage people to spend locally and support sustainable employment and long-term prosperity of the local community.

There may be opportunities for supporting local enterprise and/or enabling community-owned assets through community wealth building and through harnessing the economic leverage of anchor institutions to help deliver services and jobs and shorten supply chains. This can support local living, create greater resilience locally and help deliver net zero ambitions.

Aspects to consider include: opportunities to support and develop an active local economy

- quality of employment particularly for women and those with caring responsibilities
- training opportunities and access to education and life-long learning
- workspaces and working from home, community enterprise, the third sector
- supporting local businesses and entrepreneurship

Housing & community



The connection with, and proximity to, existing communities, services and amenities, local centres, energy, and transport infrastructure is a critical determinant in achieving successful local living.

A variety of types, sizes, and tenures can ensure people can be supported to remain in their local community as circumstances change throughout their lives. In cities, towns and villages where there are existing services and infrastructure, efforts should be made to maximise opportunities for people to live in or close to the centres, taking the [Town Centre First](#) approach. This may be achieved through repurposing and retrofitting existing built properties or building new in vacant or gap sites.

Aspects to consider include:

- density of development to support local services and activity
- quality, well-designed, and adaptable homes offering a range of tenures, types, and sizes of homes to support changing life circumstances
- relationship with the local area including proximity to schools, community centres, local shops, greenspaces and health and social care services
- community assets and shared resources, provision of communal facilities, energy, and sustainability

Social interaction



Good social networks and opportunities for formal and informal social interaction to take place can provide support for people in their everyday lives and their wellbeing and can help to build community resilience and a sense of belonging. Importantly, living in a supportive and inclusive community may benefit vulnerable population groups including those with disabilities, older people, and those with lower incomes, and can be an important factor in reducing inequalities.

Aspects to consider include:

- a range and variety of accessible indoor and outdoor social spaces, informal and formal spaces that can support opportunities for social interaction
- community facilities and spaces to support local clubs, groups, organisations, and communal activities
- hospitality venues, restaurants, cafes, squares, and civic areas
- supporting increased accessibility with the incorporation of outdoor seating, picnic benches and other street furniture in considered locations



Civic – key considerations

Civic activities involve local people coming together, both formally and informally, to engage in community activities in their local area and/or around common interests. The identity of a community or neighbourhood is intrinsically linked to civic activity within that area as well as social, and cultural, connections.

Traditionally, local, village, town or city centres are where the civic, commercial, and cultural activities are located. Centres are a natural focus of civic life and of 20 minute neighbourhoods,

providing communities with an identifiable location to access the goods, services, and recreational opportunities they need for everyday living.

Civic identity, including a sense of pride for a place is complex and can be influenced by a number of physical factors that planning and design can help to foster. Consideration should be given to protecting/enhancing local culture, natural and built heritage, existing pattern of building blocks, streets, open spaces, and landscape character.

Identity and belonging



Buildings, streets, landmarks, squares and our natural features, greenspaces, and landscapes tell the stories of our past, tether us to our places and help give us a sense of identity and belonging. Interventions aimed at improving the local environment, can also help to reinforce and develop community cohesion, and neighbourliness, nurturing community wellbeing, to stimulate community activities and support local living.

Aspects to consider include:

- landscape, topography, natural and green spaces
- significance and importance of natural and built assets as features within a community
- culture, heritage, landmarks, gateways, legibility, perception
- design codes, local architectural styles, distinctiveness

Feeling safe



Movement, activity, and engagement in places requires the community to feel safe and secure. Perception of safety is related to a wide variety of factors including building and landscape design, the effects of vehicle traffic, lighting, visibility and the presence of other people, anti-social behaviour, and derelict or vacant areas. The quality of the immediate environment can play an important role in ensuring that places feel safe.

Aspects to consider include:

- passive surveillance/opportunities for areas to be overlooked. Ground floor uses of buildings for homes and commercial properties contribute to feeling welcome and safe
- reactivation of derelict spaces and care, repair, and regular maintenance
- the design and specification of boundaries and landscaping to support feelings of safety through strong connections between buildings and public spaces
- re-purposing of existing underused buildings, buildings at risk, spaces or landmarks can help preserve the local identity and character of a place and improve feelings of safety and ease for communities
- designing and planning for extreme weather and climate-related concerns to help with the fostering of trust and feeling safe within a community

Stewardship – key considerations



Places are more likely to work well when communities are engaged and can participate in, and influence decision making, when they have control and can continuously influence change and future improvements.

Social isolation and a lack of support can be a major cause of stress, particularly for those living on low incomes, and for those with children, and impacts on older people too. For people living in difficult or chaotic circumstances, where they may feel they have little control or influence over their lives, the effects of living with stress for long periods of time can have an adverse, and often significant, impact on their wellbeing. Some population groups may be particularly marginalised, and it is often those who experience barriers to engaging with public services that would benefit most from participation in decision-making.

All sectors are encouraged to work together to ensure places are cared for and are well maintained making them more sustainable in the long term. This can help build a positive image and sense of place, and feelings of trust between sectors, making them attractive for investment and improving local living for all.

Care and maintenance



Addressing the climate emergency and nature crises requires us to ensure that existing assets (our buildings, streets, and spaces) are maintained and capitalised on, mitigating adverse environmental impacts, and waste. Well maintained streets and buildings and the development of vacant and derelict land can influence residents' satisfaction, perceptions of safety, contributes to overall wellbeing and encourages future investment.

How well a place is looked after can also have a significant impact on supporting social connections and neighbourliness within communities. Poor maintenance can create negative perceptions of a place, damage community resilience and lead to the erosion of physical, and social assets.

Aspects to consider include:

- management, care, repair, and maintenance
- responsibilities and rights, communication channels
- fitness for purpose, quality and longevity, procurement, and operational costs
- planning for and mitigating the climate emergency and weather events

Influence and sense of control



Participating and contributing to decision making processes increases trust and security within a community. Reaching out to those seldom-heard groups of local population through innovative engagement in place-based activity can capture the important knowledge and views of diverse groups and those with protected characteristics and help guide processes that are truly inclusive and most likely to be effective. Supporting communities experiencing social and economic deprivation is important in reducing inequalities and eliminating discrimination.

Aspects to consider include:

- consultation, democratic participation, engagement methods, building capacity and supporting the community to engage in local processes, access funding and deliver change in their local areas
- community activity and ownership
- long-term management and ongoing improvement

Other tools and resources

Other tools that can be used to support thinking and discussion about local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods, include;

- [Place Based Framework](#) - a framework for considering place based investment
- [Understanding Scotland's Places](#) – a tool that can help communities better understand the towns they live and work in
- [Reducing car use for a healthier, fairer, and greener Scotland](#) - the Scottish Government is working towards an ambitious national target to reduce car kilometres by 20% by 2030, with means to achieve this detailed in the route map
- [Town Toolkit](#) - developed by Scotland's Towns Partnership, as a source of information and inspiration for anyone who wants to make their town centre better
- [Talking About Heritage](#) guidance – prepared by Historic Environment Scotland to support communities as they research, identify and gain recognition for the heritage they care about. It includes a section on local place plans and other ways of sharing information about and celebrating locally important heritage
- [20 Minute Neighbourhoods in the Highlands and Islands](#) – commissioned by HITRANS and Sustrans, explores what 20 minute neighbourhoods could look like in a rural and island context
- [Place Value Wiki](#) - an online resource, developed by the Place Alliance, holds the evidence to help understand the impacts of place on a range of outcomes. It can help to make the case for investing in the quality of place
- [Young Placechangers Toolkit](#) - developed by Greenspace Scotland and Youth Scotland, aims to inspire, engage, and empower young people to engage with their places and help influence the local decision-making process

Part 3 – ways to support local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods

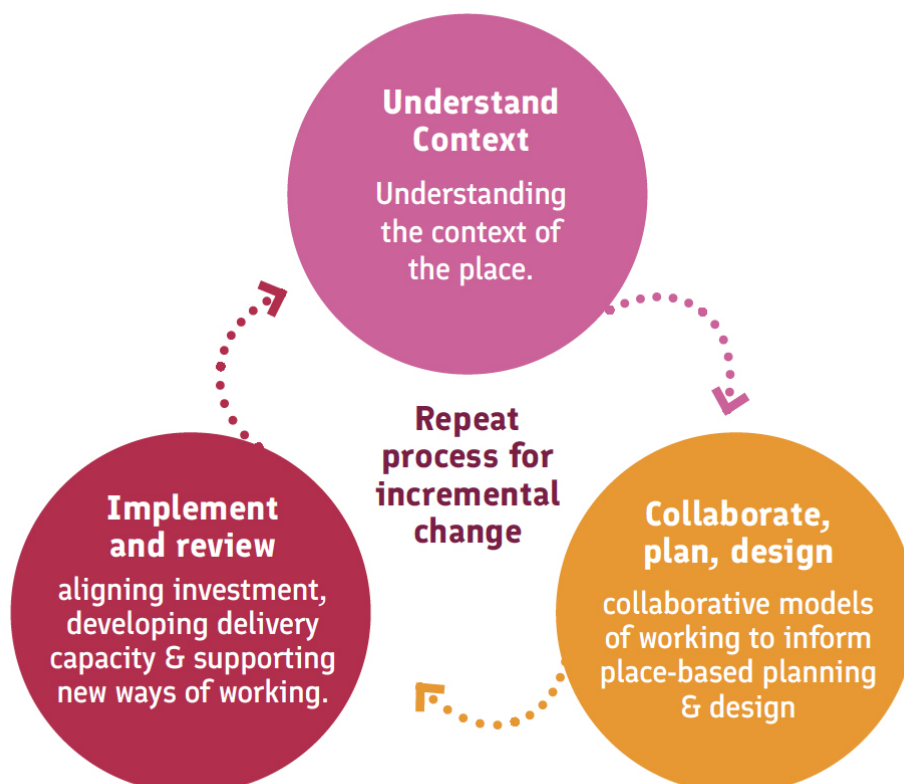
Structuring the approach

In delivering local living, whether through the planning system or more broadly, three key steps are recommended:

1. **understand context** - understanding the context of the place through the use of quantitative and qualitative information
2. **collaborate, plan, design** - developing collaborative models of working to inform place based planning and design processes
3. **implement and review** - aligning investment, developing delivery capacity, and supporting new ways of working

Delivering local living will most often be part of an incremental approach aimed at achieving a long-term vision for a place. Good places evolve over time and the above steps may be repeated as part of an ongoing, iterative process.

Fig 8 steps for a structured approach to local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods



Understand context

To improve, develop and change a place, or in the design and delivery of new places, gaining a thorough understanding of the context is the starting point.

This can be developed through the study of the unique circumstances and characteristics of a place, including but not limited to:

- the settlement patterns
- the density and scale
- connectedness or remoteness
- population increase or decline
- historical, natural, physical, and social assets
- existing resources, services, and facilities
- where gaps are and improvements needed
- any changes that are planned

Much of this information is gathered as part of the LDP process. Planning authorities are required to prepare an [Evidence Report](#) that forms the foundations of the LDP, its quality and effectiveness. The Local Development Planning Guidance details the process and legislative requirements, including expectations around engagement to inform the evidence report, with a step-by-step guide and evidence tables prepared for each policy area, including local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods.

Once gathered, this information can be used to develop proposals at different levels that support local living, including informing:

- the preparation of LDPs
- the development of strategic briefs for masterplans
- the project briefs for individual development proposals

Data can help us to understand the context of our places. Both quantitative and qualitative data will be useful, so that local views can be considered alongside mapping, statistics, and numbers. This is more likely to allow inequalities issues to be highlighted and considered.

This guidance suggests the use of digital mapping, GIS, and the Place Standard tool but a variety of other tools can be used. These include multiple data sources that can be layered and cross referenced to offer valuable information about a place, enhancing the range and depth of information and furthering understanding of community perspectives.

The following types of data can be utilised to build the picture of a place and in the measure of progress:

Quantitative data

Quantitative data gathering in relation to local living is a way of identifying and mapping what already exists to meet people's daily needs sustainably by assessing existing, previous, and future land uses, transport connections and patterns of behaviour. This often involves spatial mapping and digital resources such as GIS ([Geographic Information Systems](#)) and includes:



- whether there is provision of facilities, services, and amenities required for daily life
- whether they can be accessed within reasonable distance using active and sustainable travel modes, and at times that are convenient

Some of the facilities, services, and amenities will be buildings or places that people visit and can therefore be located precisely using GIS mapping, for example, schools, play parks, allotments, food shops, and GP surgeries. Other quantitative data important to consider in delivering local living includes:

- access to **work**: local employment opportunities can take many forms including working for locally based businesses and industries, working from home, utilising local office and workshop space, co-working space, and business support functions
- access to **housing**: the availability of a range of housing mix, including different sizes, types, and tenures in an area is an important consideration for supporting local living. Good data on existing housing stock, housing needs and demands supports planning in the delivery of good quality housing of appropriate types, and at appropriate scales and densities. In rural and island areas, ensuring access to housing can help tackle rural depopulation, and enable people to remain in their community as they grow older
- access to **digital services**: with digital technology advancement, the provision of services using digital methods and means is increasing and becoming increasingly vital in supporting remote/home working and wider businesses. Whilst digital service provision has benefits for communities and service providers, it can also exclude some people. It is therefore important to think about not only what service provision is available digitally but who has access and how this affects access to opportunities or reinforces inequalities
- access to **transport and connectivity**: mapping can provide data on the location, type, and frequency of sustainable transport options, walking, wheeling, and cycling distances to key destinations, and patterns of car use. It is a good way to support analysis on transport provision and connectivity of a place within and outwards to adjoining places, and can help to identify gaps in connections, or plan future transport links
- access to, and quantity of, **green and blue infrastructure, open space and play opportunities, recreation, and sport facilities**: Open space strategy and play sufficiency assessment work undertaken by planning authorities is likely to provide useful data in relation to these matters
- Consideration of **climate risks**, particularly flooding: mapping can be used to fully inform how our places could evolve over time in response to the changing climate, and the risk this poses at a local scale
- Population **health** including physical activity, life expectancy; weight, cardiovascular and respiratory-related diseases, and mental health

Digital mapping can also be used alongside other datasets such as [Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation](#) (SIMD), [Census data](#) and many other national and local spatial datasets to form a more holistic understanding of the context of a place.

It is important to remember to apply the 20 minute journey time proportionately according to local context and circumstances. Some communities will be more suited to a closer application of the 20 minute journey time than others. What matters more is identifying appropriate options alongside local people for enabling local liveability by improving convenience and sustainable access.

The realities of longer travel times and distances in rural and island locations, and expectations of accessibility, may differ from more densely populated areas. Digital mapping can be useful in

providing various scenarios to help inform and engage communities about access to daily needs and support local living.

Qualitative data

Qualitative data includes gathering the views of the local community, businesses, and service providers in an area. This can provide an important picture of the experience of people living within an area and their views on the quality of the local environment and accessibility of local facilities, services, and amenities. Tools such as the [Place Standard](#) and other community engagement processes are particularly important and useful in helping to harness qualitative data, and to capture the picture of lived experience in a place.

Qualitative research into previous land uses on vacant or proposed sites can enhance the understanding of the history of a place, including past uses with any historical or cultural significance related to the heritage of a place. It can help with managing expectations for a site based on the possible condition of the land, helping to inform site briefs, masterplanning, development planning and design references.

When considering local living, it is important not only to capture information on the range, diversity, and access to daily needs within an area, but also to understand how good they are, including the extent to which services meet local needs and the experience involved in accessing them.

For example:

- there may be shops, but are they affordable and providing for daily needs?
- Services and facilities may be accessible, but are the routes to them safe and attractive? Does the quality of the environment encourage people to walk, wheel, or cycle?
- are services inclusive and accessible to all members of the community? Are the services of a quality that meets the needs of the community? Are there hidden barriers that prevent some people accessing their needs?
- are the active travel routes from proposed or existing communities to anchor institutions, services or amenities severed by railway lines, the trunk road network, motorways, or other features; natural, planned, or existing. How does this impact local living principles?
- how well can places manage the effects of climate change and how readily can communities recover from extreme weather events, particularly in areas experiencing deprivation?
- has remote and flexible working helped to support local services, local enterprise, and community organisations?
- are some population groups in the community experiencing isolation or feeling well-integrated?

Qualitative information can help assess how well people's daily needs are met. Qualitative data may be more complex to gather, but it can draw out crucial information about the things in a place that are important and are contributing to the ability of a community to live well locally. Issues such as sense of pride, identity and belonging, history and culture, community aspirations, feeling safe, and having opportunities to participate effectively in community life and decision making are all important considerations in supporting local living.

Qualitative information from previous community engagement

Many communities are likely to have participated in or undertaken their own community engagement relating to the future of their places. This might be through:

- community action plans
- locality plans and other community planning exercises
- local place plans
- LDP consultations
- regeneration plans such as town centre action plans, area masterplans and community-led design processes such as charrettes
- community development initiatives
- pre-application consultation of major development proposals
- Place Standard conversations

The outputs from previous engagement exercises like these can form a helpful starting point for gathering qualitative information on the general quality of local living including people's access to daily needs, thus minimising duplication of effort and cost, and demonstrating to the community that their previous engagement was productive.

The Place Standard tool can be used to explore in more depth issues raised through previous engagement exercises or to gather and review qualitative data and information completed by individuals online or through conversations in facilitated workshops.

Qualitative data and information gathered through these sources is an essential complement to the quantitative data to create a good understanding of the place and support evidence-led, joined-up planning and design processes. This is crucial to the successful delivery of places that support local living.

Collaborate, plan, design - informed decision making and integrated processes



Collaboration

Responsibility for meeting the daily needs of people in a place they live, work or play does not fit neatly within one service, department, or sector. Local living requires input from a broad range of stakeholders and cross-sector commitment to collaborative working, maximising the use of the following:

- applying the [Place Principle](#), eradicating silo working, aligning investment, developing delivery capacity and resources
- undertaking meaningful community engagement and participation that aligns with the [National Standards for Community Engagement](#), to understand and shape local priorities to deliver the benefits of local living
- building an overall vision, across sectors, between local communities, local authorities, community planning partners, businesses, service providers, relevant organisations, and public sector partners, including key agencies
- embracing partnership working as a route to generating better decisions, which can help avoid unintended consequences and make effective use of limited resources
- considering long term planning for funding, maintenance and management and the role of social enterprises and local organisations to ensure decision making around funding is representative of the wider and long-term local living ambitions of the community, particularly, where funding has a short timescale spend demand

By aligning the strategies and plans of stakeholders and ensuring that place is fully embedded, this can help create a consistent approach across local plans.

Collaborative working across sectors, organisations and local authority departments during plan and design stages can also maximise opportunities for coordinating and combining investment to improve outcomes through locational choices within a plan, for example:

- climate adaptation work in a place may provide opportunities to improve active travel or deliver multifunctional greenspace and biodiversity benefits
- the location of new public buildings such as schools or local authority offices may support town centre regeneration and increase footfall for local businesses
- the clustering and concentrating of services by adjacency or co-location may reduce overall travel distances, costs, and times in accessing services, as well as delivering capital cost efficiency
- the appropriate location and density of new housing closer to existing infrastructure to improve the viability of local centres, utilising local services as well as meeting local housing needs

Particular techniques and approaches may need to be used to enable people to participate effectively in engagement activity. Careful planning and considerations given to venue choice, engagement methodology, appropriate digital support etc, will help to ensure engagement events are as inclusive as possible for everyone, including people with protected characteristics.

The [Place Standard tool Inclusive Communication Toolkit](#) and [Children's and Young People's versions](#) are designed to support inclusion and can be used to facilitate discussions about place with different population groups.

Community Learning and Development teams within local authorities already have strong links with the community within a place. Taking a corporate approach, local authorities should make use of the knowledge, experience, and contacts with groups that Community Learning and Development teams will already have to enable community level collaboration. This may also help identification of funding opportunities for community groups and can build their knowledge about the planning system.

Plan

LDPs are a fundamental tool for embedding local living and 20 minute neighbourhood principles in our places. Policy 15 of NPF4 sets out an expectation for LDPs to support local living, including 20 minute neighbourhoods within settlements.

Planning authorities are ideally placed to gather the quantitative and qualitative data that is essential to plan and deliver places that support quality local living as part of the Evidence Gathering stage of local development planning process. Such quantitative and qualitative data should be referenced by the Evidence Report, providing a sound baseline to inform the onward preparation of the LDP, thus helping to focus investment on the delivery of infrastructure, buildings and services that support sustainable places and healthy communities. This information can then help to inform the development of the appropriate spatial strategy and associated allocations of land for development, at the [Proposed Plan](#) stage.

In developing the proposed plan, options and alternatives could be used to explore how best to achieve local living in a way that responds appropriately to the context and characteristics of the plan area.

Proposal Design

LDPs should provide clear expectations for design and quality of place, taking account of the local context, characteristics, and connectivity of the area.

At masterplan and development planning level, alongside the principles of NPF4 including local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods, development proposals should be prepared in line with LDP expectations for the area. Masterplans and design proposals for individual developments should also be prepared, as appropriate, with reference to Scottish Government's [Creating Places](#) policy statement.

Development proposals should be designed with consideration of the impacts on local living overall and take action to address negative impacts that may otherwise happen.

To assist this, development proposers should be prepared to demonstrate how local living can be supported, how proposals respond to context including the existing settlement pattern, and the level and quality of interconnectivity of the proposed development with the surrounding area. [NPF4 Policy 15](#) also sets out a list of considerations to help establish this, but it is recognised that their relevance will vary between applications and contexts.

Over time, local living will be embedded within LDPs, providing a further steer on expectations for proposals.

Local place plans

The principles of local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods will be important considerations in community-led placemaking initiatives including preparing [local place plans](#).

The introduction of local place plans into the planning system is intended to further empower communities across Scotland to take a proactive role in influencing the decisions about their places.

Local place plans are a way for communities to achieve change in their local area by proactively feeding into development planning. Local place plans can help to communicate community aspirations for local living and means of achieving it in the local context. Planning authorities must take registered local place plans into account when preparing the LDP.

Leadership

Strong and well-informed leadership for local living will help to drive the vision for a place and the aspirations of its community to deliver improved liveability and long-term wellbeing and resilience. As evidenced in many of the recent examples of successful roll out of similar approaches across the world and detailed within the aforementioned [ClimateXChange](#) research on 20 Minute Neighbourhoods in a Scottish Context.¹¹

¹¹ O’Gorman and Dillon-Robinson (2021). 20 Minute Neighbourhoods in a Scottish Context.

Implement and Review

Implement

As well as understanding context and planning accordingly, delivering local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods involves coordination across investment plans, opportunities, and organisations.

The Scottish Government has aligned its relevant policies towards supporting local living in policy areas such as Planning, Regeneration, Housing, Sustainable Transport, Community Empowerment, Climate Change, and their strategies and investment programmes that support local delivery.

Different organisations and sectors have knowledge, skills, expertise, resource, and capacity that others may not have. Some organisations, such as local authorities or regulatory bodies, also have specific statutory powers, responsibilities, or regulatory roles with regards to operation and maintenance of services and facilities.

The effective implementation is for all partners and stakeholders to come together, pool their resources, and discharge their respective responsibilities. They can work collectively to deliver the necessary services and facilities for the place and run them efficiently to support local community to live well locally. The implementation of local living provides opportunities to support community wealth building. Everyone involved in making decisions about a place should ensure that actions are informed by considering the wider impacts and capturing co-benefits.

Review

Review of data about local living may be triggered by:

- LDP preparation cycles
- significant changes in the local context
- social, economic, or environmental factors
- changes to key infrastructure provision

Review of the data will help understanding of where further action is required and allows listening and responding to feedback. Review involves revisiting and updating the assessment of context and quantitative and qualitative data, as well as taking into account emerging community plans and activity. It may mean a proportionate revisiting of the Local Living Framework (as set out in part 2 of this guidance) where it is appropriate to do so.

At planning application stage, a review may be necessary to consider whether there are any significant changes in local context as a result of a proposal. This presents opportunity to assess the need to enhance services to support local living and meet any increased demand or mitigate any negative impacts of the proposal.

For service providers it is important to ensure there is an effective review and feedback framework in order to maintain services and where necessary to adjust to meet changing needs of the community over time. The community and community organisations are central to that feedback and review given their local knowledge, insights, and relationships on the ground. It is always helpful if type and quality of provision form part of ongoing the discussion between providers and users.



Monitoring

The Local Living Framework can assist with monitoring processes for the LDP, in particular for information about the characteristics of the area. More detail on monitoring LDPs can be found in the [Local Development Planning Guidance](#).

Whether a good standard of local living has been achieved is something to be determined locally with the people in the place. The Local Living Framework can be used to initiate fresh discussions locally about the qualities of their place which can be supported by onward discussion in more detail using the Place Standard tool and other engagement tools and methods. Revisiting these conversations with communities over time may identify where positive aspects about their place have been maintained and weaker aspects strengthened, or further actions are required to better support local living.

Part 4 – case studies

This part of the document presents a range of case studies on how place-based interventions are being implemented across Scotland, supporting local living across a variety of geographies.

Aberdeenshire: building a network of urban and rural 20 minute neighbourhoods

Settlement range: City, urban, and rural.

Key initiatives: facilitating 'living well locally' across diverse settlement patterns.

Key challenges: rural depopulation, high levels of reliance on private car, and quality of facilities.

Strategies employed: GIS data - national combined with local, reviewing existing strategies and plans, the Place Standard tool, Academy Towns and Smart Clachans, the Place Principle.

260,000 people live in Aberdeenshire, in different types of communities from the rural towns/villages such as those in the Cairngorms National Park, coastal communities such as Peterhead and Fraserburgh, and the suburb towns of Aberdeen such as Westhill and Portlethen.

How do you tackle the challenge of facilitating local living across such diverse communities?

The local authority's response is strategic, purposeful and data driven. It aims to create an overall Place Strategy for Aberdeenshire to provide a 'living local' place framework for all individual communities, however large or small their place.

The starting point is data. Aberdeenshire already has a dataset developed, the [Rural Facilities Monitor](#), that has been used since 1981 to audit essential daily facilities such as shops, schools and surgeries across the local authority area. This is being expanded and updated to incorporate other daily needs and used to create GIS-based individual settlement profiles that will be publicly available. This will enable local communities throughout Aberdeenshire to access essential data for producing local place plans which implement the 'living well locally' agenda and tackle other policy objectives such as stemming rural depopulation.

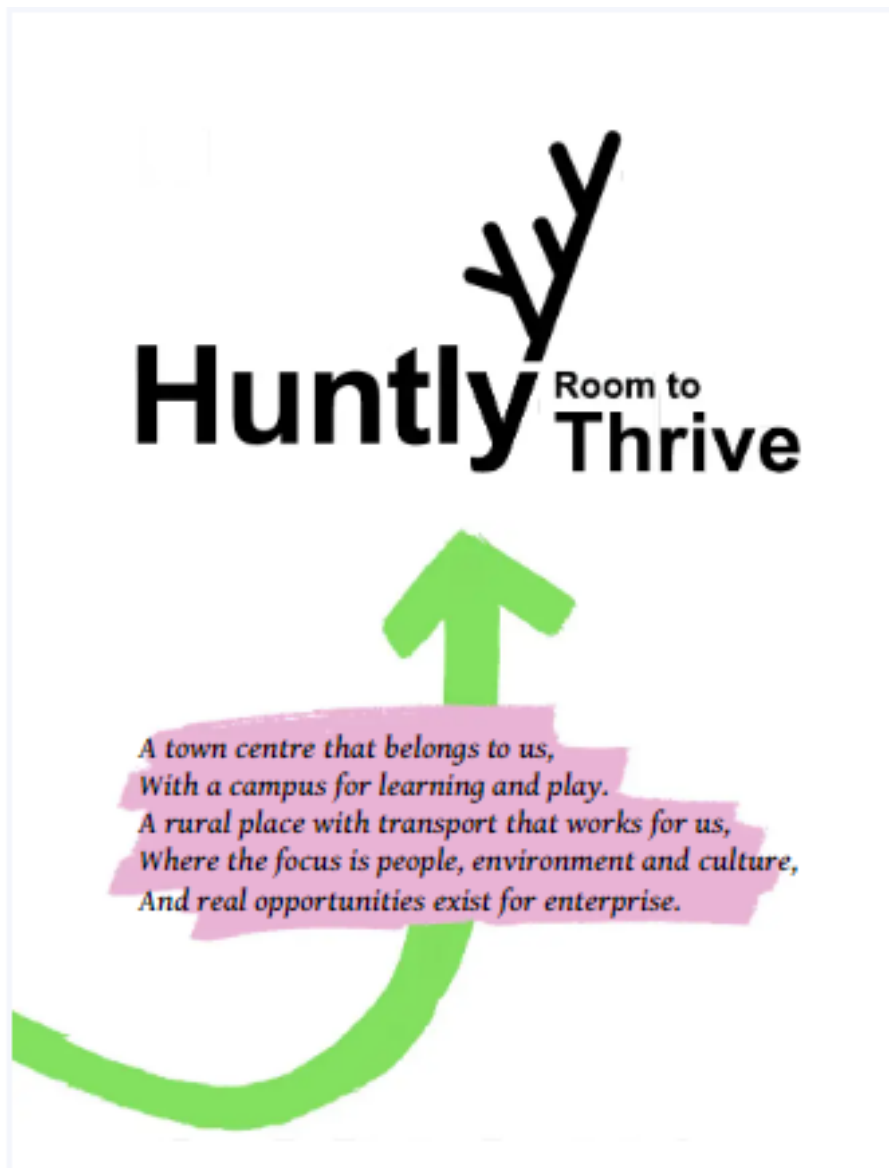
In considering data for local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods, one of the major challenges is how to measure the quality of facilities, like shops or active travel routes, rather than simply whether they exist or not – because that can make the difference between whether people have access to healthy rather than poor quality food, or safe and attractive active travel options rather than poor quality routes.

Fig. 9 image taken from presentation given to SURF People and Practice Network by Aberdeenshire Council, representing a study of proximity of services and accessibility which was undertaken. [PowerPoint Presentation \(surf.scot\)](#)



The Place Standard was already being used in Aberdeenshire, to gather qualitative data before 20 minute neighbourhoods were proposed in draft NPF4. For example, Huntly Town Team [used the Place Standard](#) in 2021 to inform an update of their [Room To Thrive](#) town strategy.

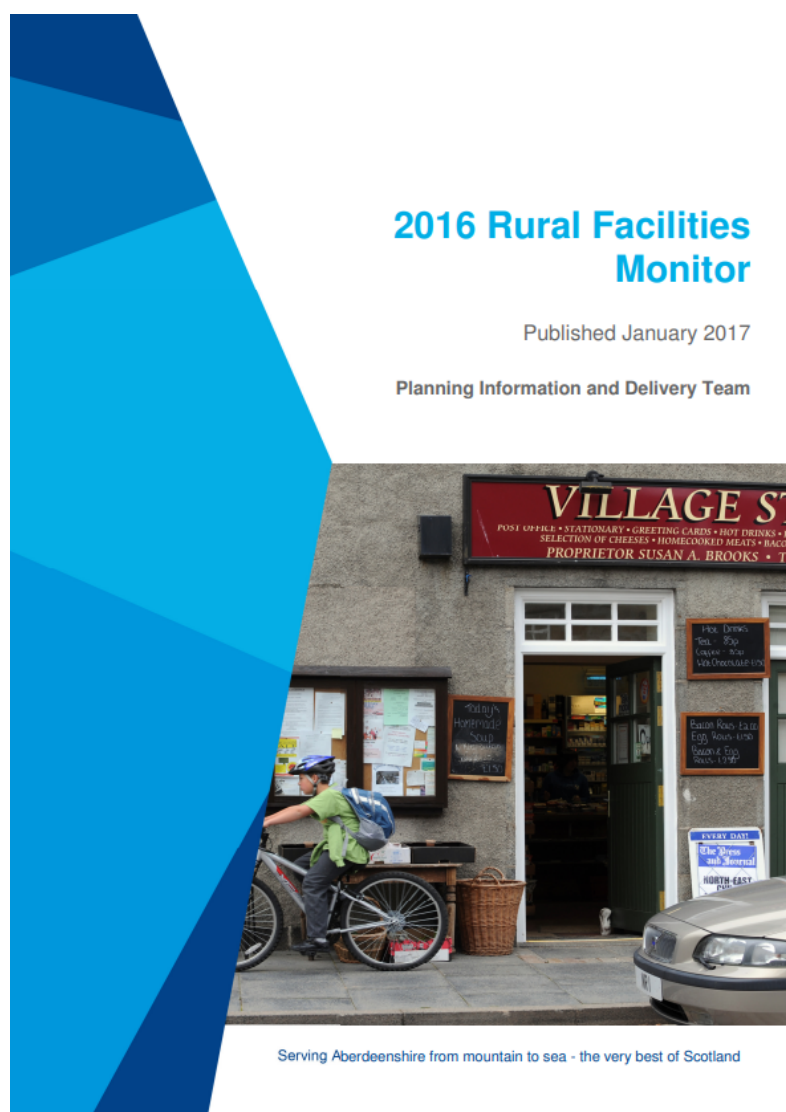
Fig. 10 front cover of [Huntly: Room to Thrive Strategy](#)



In 2021, the local authority began the ambitious task of applying living local principles in Aberdeenshire's largest settlement, Peterhead. Whilst the precise details should vary with each town, certain common tasks are being worked through in Peterhead:

- gathering and analysing the quantitative and qualitative evidence base, through desktop research and community engagement
- auditing the range of strategies and plans that already exist from children's services, police, fire and rescue, to planning policy, and community-led action plans
- mapping existing projects and proposals
- identifying gaps, barriers, and opportunities in 'living well locally'

Fig. 11 front cover of Aberdeenshire Council's 2016 [Rural Facilities Monitor](#)



The focus is of course to enable long term collaborative action and delivery of living local principles across the town, over a 15 to 20 year period, in line with the [Place Principle](#). It will also test and establish a model for other Aberdeenshire towns to use and adapt.

Ultimately the aim is to align all policy, investment, and service delivery (not only planning and land use) to deliver local living and 20 minute neighbourhood principles so that all action around poverty, inequality, learning, healthcare, and climate change is co-ordinated through the lens of Living Well Locally.

For more information on Aberdeenshire's approach, see [this 2022 presentation](#) to the [Surf People in Place Practice Network](#).

Fig. 12 Peterhead town centre shopping areas with a blend of independent shops and national retailers



Edinburgh: embedding 20 minute neighbourhoods as a new approach to service delivery and regeneration

Settlement range: City.

Key initiatives: 20 minute neighbourhood strategy, developed to embed working to the Place Principle for improved outcomes.

Key challenges: improving outcomes city-wide, empowering collaboration and participation in the definition, design, and delivery of public services, designing green and people-focused local centres, improving mobility city-wide.

Strategies employed: rapid scoping assessment, Place Principle - stronger partnership working including to combat loneliness and isolation, GIS data, creation of strategy and vision, use of Place Standard tool, community engagement activities, local place plans, town centre first principle, creation of multi-purpose hubs, brownfield site regeneration, reimagining service delivery, active travel principle.

The City of Edinburgh Council approved its initial 20 minute neighbourhood strategy in June 2021, updated in August 2023 - [20 minute neighbourhoods – The City of Edinburgh Council](#). The strategy outlines how the local authority is working to provide people with access to services and facilities to meet most daily needs within a 20 minute walk or wheel of their homes. This approach will support the development of connected neighbourhoods across the city that are healthier, greener, more vibrant, and inclusive. This is a new approach for the city which aims to deliver more sustainable places, improve public services, and build on the local sense of community across the city. Helping to inform the strategy, a [Rapid Scoping Assessment](#) was organised jointly by the [Improvement Service](#), [Scottish Health and Inequalities Impact Assessment Network](#), and the Spatial Planning for Health and Wellbeing Collaborative Group¹², comparing the traditional approaches for local development planning to a 20 minute neighbourhood approach in Edinburgh.

Delivery of the strategy is seen as a long-term endeavour. Every neighbourhood in Edinburgh has its own unique set of circumstances, which means that places need to be considered individually. For some neighbourhoods, improvements will be incremental and delivered through a long-term and ongoing process of change. For other neighbourhoods there will be opportunities to

¹² The Spatial Planning for Health and Wellbeing Collaborative Group – now the [Place and Wellbeing Collaborative](#) - involves public health and planning practitioners and organisations who are working to embed place, health and wellbeing themes, expertise and evidence into spatial planning policy including NPF4, the Scottish Government ambition for 20 minute neighbourhoods, and regulations for health assessments of national and major developments.

accelerate progress. This will require all parts of the local authority and partners to embed the 20 minute neighbourhood concept within their day-to-day activity and investment decisions.

To support the new way of working, the local authority has established:

- a 20 minute neighbourhood Board comprising key representatives from different services, which acts as a dedicated forum for discussion and collaboration
- a dedicated multi-disciplinary 20 minute neighbourhood programme team, encompassing skills and knowledge in urban design, planning, transport, property, and communications. The team's role is to implement parts of the strategy, support other local authority services to embed 20 minute principles into projects, and make sure that investment and development considerations take account of the strategy

Fig. 13 the 20 minute neighbourhood concept in Edinburgh – access to key services by walking or wheeling – example of possible services within a neighbourhood ([Public Pack](#))[Agenda Document for Culture and Communities Committee, 10/08/2023 10:00 \(edinburgh.gov.uk\)](#)



Funding to support the implementation of the strategy has included the Scottish Government [Place Based Investment Programme](#) with projects aligned to priority areas of focus. These are town centres, areas that have a lower score on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) and more rural areas.

Work is initially focussing on the city's local town centres (in support of the [town centre first principle](#)), which are often in high density areas and provide many of the essential facilities and

services that people need easy access to. The local authority is currently exploring town centre improvement projects in Dalry and Portobello.

Further work is addressing areas where need is greatest, whether that is due to deprivation or poor connectivity, or where there are opportunities to capitalise on work that is already planned. These include new school investments with wider community uses in Liberton and Currie. The development of a local place plan in Wester Hailes (see separate case study) has also been supported.

20 minute neighbourhood principles are also being embedded in local authority-led regeneration work in areas such as Craigmillar, Granton, Pennywell, and Muirhouse, and on the development of key brownfield sites across the city. The affordable housing element of regeneration is part of the local authority's ambitious programme to deliver 20,000 affordable homes in the city over a decade. Updates on these and other projects can be found [here](#).

The [Granton Waterfront](#) regeneration, for example, will deliver a new coastal town with an ambitious 20 minute neighbourhood vision over the next 10-15 years. This regeneration will deliver around 3,500 new net zero carbon homes (over 35% of them affordable), a primary school and health centre, commercial, creative, community space, and a new coastal park.

New active travel and public transport infrastructure will be created throughout the regeneration area, including new cycle paths and a mobility hub. The project will create new employment opportunities, meaning residents of this fast-growing area will be able to access work locally, while partner organisations will deliver substantial new cultural and educational assets over the regeneration timeframe.

Fig 14 Western Villages development at Granton Waterfront, Edinburgh



Similarly, [regeneration in Pennywell](#) has delivered a new school, medical centre, retail centre, improved public realm and new homes. A new Community Hub at Macmillan Square will feature an early years centre, a library, skills hub, affordable homes, and an expanded North Edinburgh Arts facility.

Fig 15 City of Edinburgh Council, Intergenerational development Powderhall, Edinburgh



The hub will include dedicated space for young people, an expanded café, and shared atrium. All staff operating from the space will follow a ‘No Wrong Door’ approach to make sure citizens can access relevant services in the space or be signposted where necessary.

Meanwhile for Edinburgh’s Powderhall regeneration, a former waste transfer station was originally proposed as an open market sale to a volume housebuilder but evolved into the local authority taking forward a major mixed-use regeneration project. The regeneration will now deliver 260 new homes (35% affordable, compared to the city’s 25% target), a nursery, older people’s housing, commercial units, artist’s studios, and community space.

Stewarton, East Ayrshire: using 20 minute neighbourhood principles to help inform a local development framework

Settlement range: accessible small town

Key initiatives: utilising 20 minute neighbourhood thinking, using context and place-based collaborative approaches to inform decision making.

Key challenges: growth of town vs infrastructure capacity, compact growth and town centre, housing site release, infrastructure first approach to health and education capacity.

Strategies employed: Place Principle working (Key Agencies Group (KAG), communities and local authority working together), infrastructure first, Active Travel, use of qualitative and quantitative data, GIS data, national combined with local, reviewing existing strategies and plans, community engagement, Place Standard with climate lens.

Stewarton lies between Kilmarnock (10km) and Glasgow (40km). Due to the rail link and its proximity to Glasgow, the town has been steadily growing in recent decades from about 6,500 residents in 2001 to an estimated 7,700 residents in 2020.

As the town grows, and more housing sites are released, there will be increasing pressures on the existing infrastructure such as roads, water, drainage, education, health and social care, and recreation and leisure. In line with the Place Principle, the local authority has been working with the [Key Agencies Group \(KAG\)](#), with support from [Architecture and Design Scotland](#), to understand how to address these constraints.

20 minute neighbourhood principles were used as a guiding framework for gathering both quantitative and qualitative information about Stewarton. Quantitative data was mapped using GIS and analysed to explore key considerations such as facilities and services, open space, connectivity, and walkability. This information began to identify more clearly the constraints and emerging opportunities.

Qualitative data was gathered, piloting use of the [place standard with a climate lens](#) through community workshops which prompted conversations around mitigation and adaptation actions that could happen in Stewarton to help address the climate and biodiversity crises. A 'living local' survey was then carried out to gain further insights into walking distance thresholds, frequency of using services, and the quality of routes to move around. The evidence from the survey and workshop, community aspirations, and speaking to relevant local authority services and agencies, helped develop an understanding of the quality of place and people's experiences in Stewarton.

Combining the use of data, mapping, community engagement, and cross-departmental involvement, has helped to foster a whole-place collaborative approach for Stewarton to be adopted in line with the [Place Principle](#). Support was then provided by consultants who were commissioned by the local authority to aid the preparation of a new [local development framework for Stewarton](#) building on the early support from KAG and Architecture and Design Scotland. The Framework will be used by development proposers, development management officers, and in preparing and assessing of planning applications for the town.

The framework also contains a [placemaking map and a shared action plan](#) that encompass improvements to the walking and cycling network, public realm, open space, affordable housing and homes for older people, and much more besides.

The framework document and the support from Architecture and Design Scotland have led to further conversations around future investment in the town, which are then helping to develop place-based evidence that will inform important decisions at a whole-town scale across the local authority services.

Fundamentally, this collaborative approach has allowed the local authority to take an infrastructure first approach to land use planning and investment decisions, through the lens of 20 minute neighbourhoods and living well locally. The process is ongoing; however, this type of approach has allowed a greater emphasis to be placed on the importance of collaborative working to embrace and deliver radical change to tackle and adapt to climate change, restore biodiversity, improve health and wellbeing, reduce inequalities, and build a wellbeing economy. Considerations are now being explored around matters such as the right locations for future developments and investment decisions, including housing, health, and education facilities.

Fig 16 Stewarton Placemaking map



Lessons learned from the process include:

- the value of pairing digital mapping analysis with the lived experience of life on the ground, for example to produce combined data not only walking and cycling journey times but also accounting for the quality of place along the journey
- the challenge of implementing and retrofitting 20 minute neighbourhood principles into existing settlements and infrastructure should not be underestimated
- the 20 minute neighbourhood principles are a new concept to many. This presents challenges towards institutional decision making and will require collaborative working to realise delivery and implementation
- when multiple organisations are asked to commit and co-ordinate their activities, in line with the Place Principle, issues will arise around timing of budgets and delivery therefore a whole-place collaborative approach is needed

Wester Hailes, Edinburgh: community and local authority collaboration

Settlement range: large urban.

Key initiatives: collaborative working to tackle strategic and local thinking around 20 minute neighbourhoods.

Key challenges: capacity and resources for local place planning, combining the long term regeneration programme with local place planning aspirations, timing, and complex funding streams. Confidence building through early action projects.

Strategies employed: Place Principle working - communities and local authority working together, local place plan, Place Standard tool, early action project identification, community-led regeneration, community ownership, community hubs.

Wester Hailes, on the western edge of Edinburgh, was initially constructed in the early 1970s with extensive redevelopment in the 1990s and 2000s. In around 2019, two new initiatives began: the local community began to prepare a local place plan, and the local authority embarked on a 10–15-year regeneration programme. Both initiatives shared a common goal: to create a model 20 minute neighbourhood.

The two pieces of work support each other, each tackling different aspects of the 20 minute neighbourhood concept.

The [community-led local place plan](#) focuses on community aspirations. Using the Place Standard as a tool for discussion helped the local place plan to identify what the community can do for itself, and what they would like others to do. There are dozens of actionable projects in the local place plan which will help make a 20 minute neighbourhood a reality for Wester Hailes residents, from projects for community hubs, play spaces and paths, to strategies for work, learning, food, and health and wellbeing.

Those initiatives complement the [local authority-led regeneration programme](#), which includes investment in housing, transport, greenspaces, schools, and health centres. ‘Early action’ projects include a new high school, housing, and cycle links.

To make sure the two processes mutually supported each other, the community and the local authority needed to work together in tandem. That isn’t always easy when funding comes from different sources. So, during 2020-21, when the community was struggling with capacity and resources to complete the local place plan, the local authority helped secure [Place Based Investment Programme](#) funding to pay for professional facilitation and support to complete the local place plan. That made sure that the local authority’s investments – with an established spend programme and funding deadlines – did not run ahead of the local place plan process, which would have meant that the local authority-led programme might have focused on the wrong things or lacked community support.

Fig 17 image from the Wester Hailes [local place plan](#) showing a satellite aerial image of the area. Wester Hailes Community Trust, Urban Pioneers (Landscape Architects) with Dress for the Weather (Architects)

Wester Hailes - A Local Place Plan 2.0



20 minute neighbourhood principles are being embedded into both the regeneration masterplan and the local place plan. Although Wester Hailes already has many of the features that you would expect in a 20 minute neighbourhood, there was a specific deficiency that was laid bare during the COVID pandemic: the lack of indoor community spaces where local people and groups can meet and socialise. So, as part of the collaboration, three community hubs are now proposed. The delivery of each is being led by a community organisation.

Fig 18 image taken from the Wester Hailes [local place plan](#) by the Wester Hailes Community Trust, UrbanPioneers (Landscape Architects) with Dress for the Weather (Architects). Image shows an overview of existing studies undertaken in Wester Hailes which were given consideration in the development of the proposed [local place plan](#).



Fig 19 image of extract from the Wester Hailes [local place plan](#), Wester Hailes Community Trust, Urban Pioneers (Landscape Architects) with Dress for the Weather (Architects). Image shows Spatial Proposed Projects for the development or use of land.

- (9) Work & Local Economy Strategy *
- (11) Path Routes ↔
- (12) Neighbourhood Connection Improvements
- (13) Canal Improvements
- (14) Greenspace Improvements ↔
- (15) Housing
- (16) Local Centre
- (17) WHEC/ High School
- (18) Canal Footbridge
- (19) Re-Parking
- (20) Physical Improvements - Neighbourhoods
- (22) Clovenstone Amateur Boxing Club
- (23) Calders Community Hub
- (24) Central Community Hub - Canal Site
- (25) Greenway Community Hub
- (26) WHALE Arts
- (28) Food Pantry
- (32) Outdoor Play Spaces
- (33) Sports/ Activity Pitches & Spaces

Non-Spatial Proposed Projects:

- (1) Adult Engagement Strategy *
- (2) Youth Engagement Strategy *
- (3) CEC Housing Management Strategy *
- (4) Open & Greenspace Management Strategy *
- (5) Arts & Culture Strategy *
- (6) Food Strategy *
- (7) Health & Wellbeing Strategy *
- (8) Learning Strategy *
- (10) Ageing in Place *
- (21) Co-ordinated Management of Community Facilities & Services *
- (27) Seating *
- (29) Greenspace Community Factoring Service *
- (30) Open Access Indoor Spaces *
- (31) Open Access Outdoor Spaces *
- (34) Virtual Community Hub & Notice boards *
- (35) Capacity building of Wester Hailes Community Trust *
- (36) Reestablish Community Council *

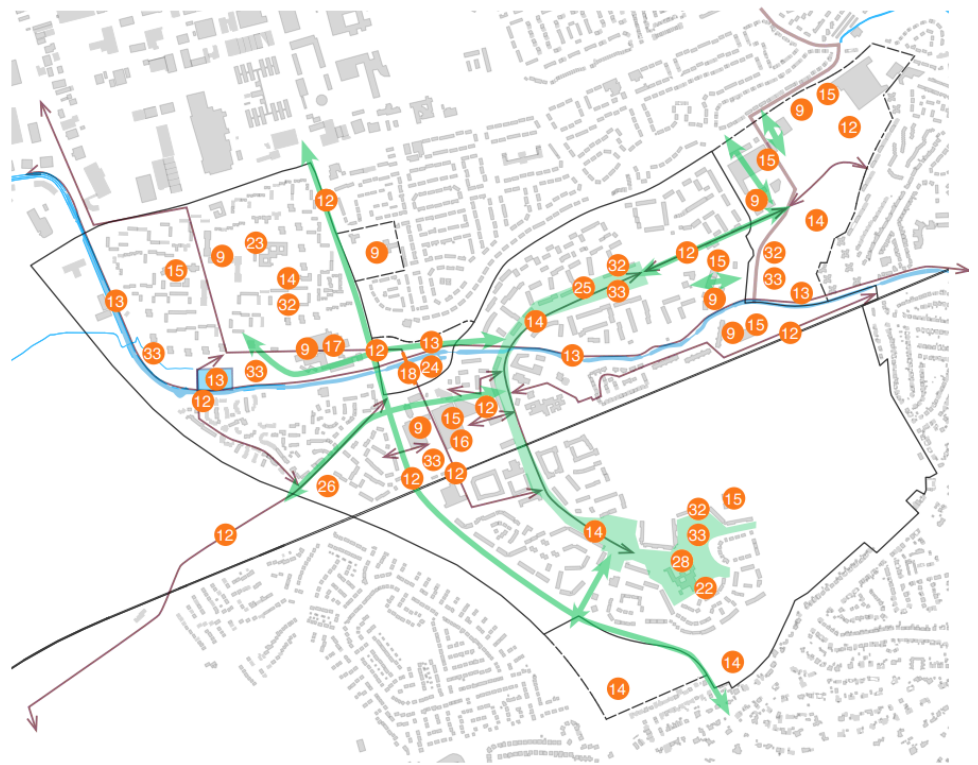
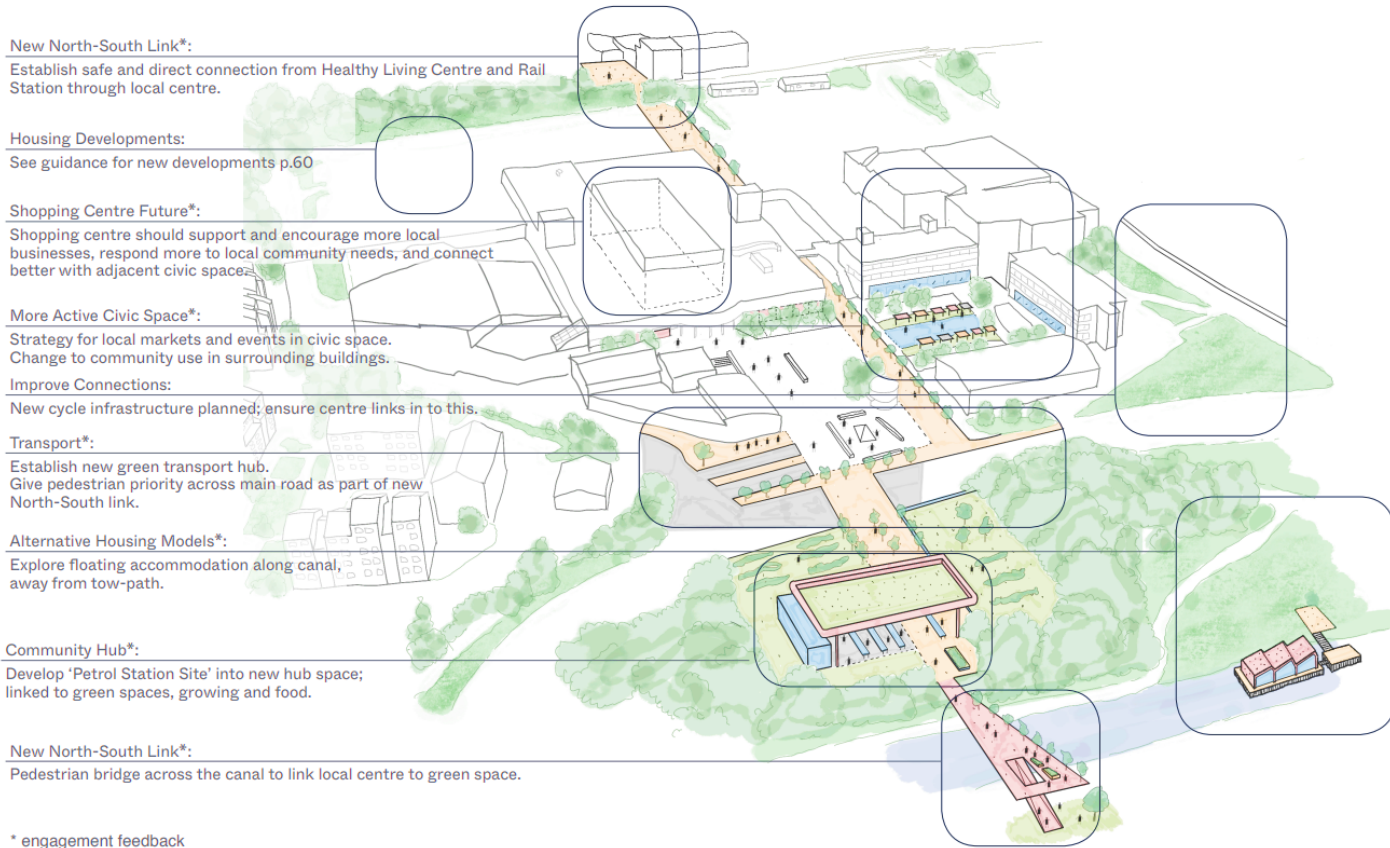


Fig 20 extract from the Wester Hailes [local place plan](#) by Wester Hailes Community Trust, Urban Pioneers (Landscape Architects) with Dress for the Weather (Architects). Extract showing Delivery/Action plan including the types of projects being considered, their relevance to the overall vision, the timescales involved, and the key stakeholders involved.

Project	Vision	Time-scale	Local Stakeholders/ Activism
Community Facilities & Services			
(27) Seating	Coming together, Children & Young People, Ageing Well, Health & wellbeing, Community Empowerment	Short-Medium-term	Prospect Community Housing, SCOREscotland, Wester Hailes Growing Communities - Growing Youth
(28) Food Pantry	Coming together, Children & Young People, Ageing Well, Health & wellbeing	Short-Medium-term	Health Agency, WHGC
(29) Greenspace Community Factoring Service	Coming together, Children & Young People, Ageing Well, Health & wellbeing, Community Empowerment	Short-term	Prospect Community Housing, Wester Hailes Growing Communities
(30) Open Access Indoor Spaces	Coming Together, Children & Young People, Ageing Well, Health & Wellbeing, Community Empowerment	Medium-Long-term	Bridge 8 Hub, Calders Residents Association, Calders Regeneration Trust, CEC lifelong learning staff, The Wee Haven Youth Project, Clovenstone Amateur Boxing Club, Clovenstone CC, Health Agency, Kurdish Community Centre, Starcatchers, St Nicholas Parish Church, Holy Trinity Church, Wester Hailes Baptist Church, WHGC, WHCT, Wester Hailes Library, WHALE Arts
(31) Open Access Outdoor Spaces	Coming Together, Children & Young People, Ageing Well, Health & Wellbeing, Community Empowerment	Medium-Long-term	Bridge 8 Hub, Calders Residents Association, Calders Regeneration Trust, Clovenstone CC, Health Agency, Starcatchers, WHGC, WHCT, WHALE Arts
(32) Outdoor Play Spaces	Coming Together, Children & Young People, Ageing Well, Health & Wellbeing, Community Empowerment	Medium-Long-term	About Youth, Prospect Community Housing, Starcatchers, Wester Hailes Growing Communities, Wester Hailes Community Trust
(33) Sport/ Activity Pitches & Spaces	Coming Together, Children & Young People, Ageing Well, Health & Wellbeing, Community Empowerment	Medium-Long-term	About Youth, CEC lifelong learning staff, The Wee Haven Youth Project, GoBeyond, Prospect Community Housing, Wester Hailes Growing Communities, Wester Hailes Community Trust, WHALE Arts
(34) Virtual Community Hub & Notice Boards	Coming Together, Community Empowerment	Medium-Long-term	Local residents, Wester Hailes Community Trust, WHALE Arts

Fig 21 Extract from the Wester Hailes [local place plan](#), Wester Hailes Community Trust, Urban Pioneers (Landscape Architects) with Dress for the Weather (Architects). Extract shows engagement feedback illustration showing the locations of possible interventions suggested by the engagement process including for example new connections, housing, shopping, active civic spaces, transport infrastructure.



Drymen, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park: piloting 'living well locally' in a rural community

Settlement range: accessible rural

Key initiatives: planning and delivering local living/20 minute neighbourhood through local place plans for improved outcomes.

Key challenges: movement, reimagining mobility for rural areas through active travel, exploring priorities within village and working with neighbouring villages and towns as network, improving access to essential services beyond walking distance, managing tourism.

Strategies employed: Place Principle working, communities and local authority working together and identifying collaborative partnerships. Place Standard tool and community engagement to form qualitative data, physical onsite assessment of place, mobility through active travel, local place plan.

Creating 20 minute neighbourhoods in a rural area creates distinct challenges. Where community facilities are inevitably more dispersed and population density lower, how is it practically possible to enable everyone to be within a 20 minute walk, wheel, or cycle of all their daily needs?

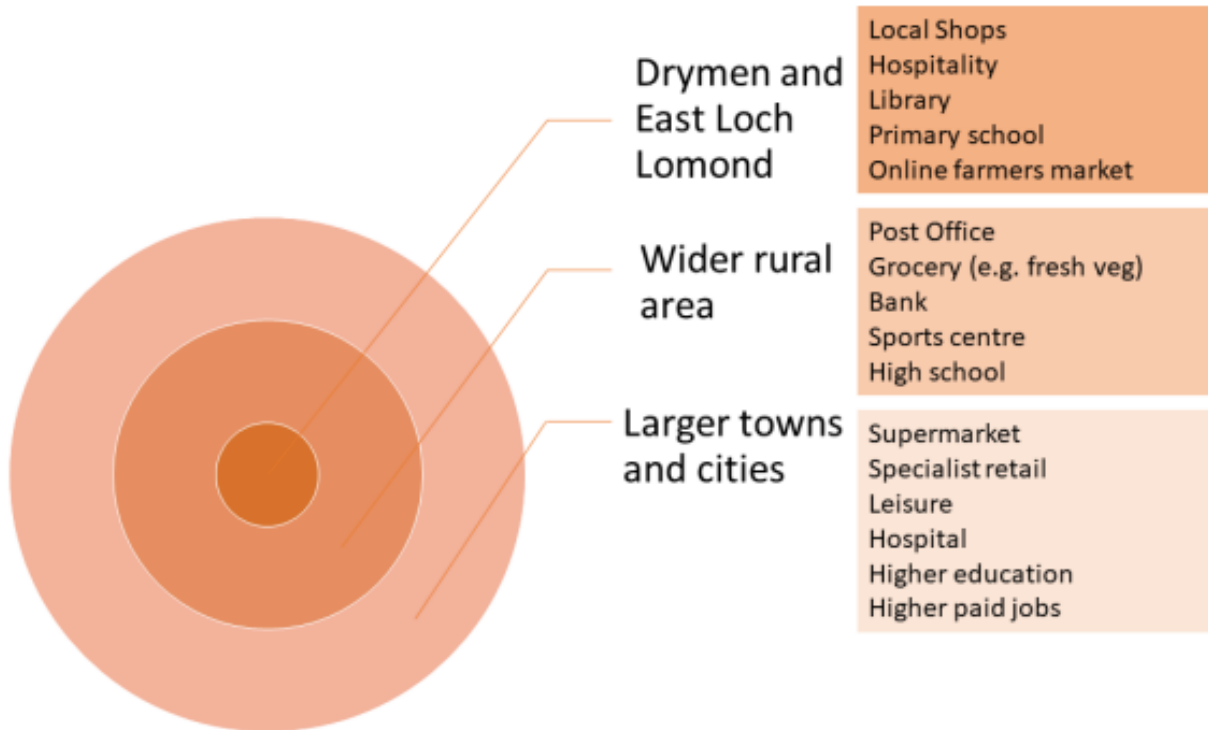
This was the starting point for a pilot project in the village of Drymen and the neighbouring villages along the east of Loch Lomond, where the National Park funded a pilot through their Green Recovery Fund to look at how 20 minute neighbourhoods might work for rural communities. They appointed Forth Environment Link to deliver the pilot.

The pilot scheme was an opportunity to test the Place Standard as a tool for community engagement on 20 minute neighbourhoods. This enabled the community to consider and record not only whether its daily needs were satisfied, but also qualitative data about how well those daily needs were met. The work also wanted to examine how rural villages share services and are connected, and how the needs and impacts of tourism were managed and supported. To do this, the engagement and baseline information looked beyond just the village boundary and involved joint working with other neighbouring communities.

The work also explored how the concept could be collaboratively planned and delivered through the medium of a [local place plan](#). It produced valuable insights into how rural local place plans can use the principles of local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods to:

- explore the priorities within a village and with neighbouring villages and towns,
- how to improve access to essential services that feel beyond a reasonable walking distance
- the reimagining of mobility for a wider rural area where there are shared users of services and a shared need for access

Fig 22 extract from [Living Well Locally: Vision and Route Map](#) considering ways that rural communities can work together to achieve ambitions around local living principles and improve quality of life. Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority, Forth Environment Link, Drymen Community Council Development Trust, and Drymen Community Council






The pilot produced a community vision for how people can meet their daily needs locally in Drymen and the surrounding villages. More information can be seen in this report published in 2022 by the National Park Authority which was renamed to reflect the circumstances of the place: [Living Well Locally: Vision and Route Map](#).

[Separate research](#) commissioned by HITRANS at the same time investigated how 20 minute communities might be made workable across a variety of challenging rural and island contexts.

Fig 23 extract from [Living Well Locally: Vision and Route Map](#) showing some of the objectives proposed by communities summarised around the theme of movement. Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority, Forth Environment Link, Drymen Community Council Development Trust, and Drymen Community Council



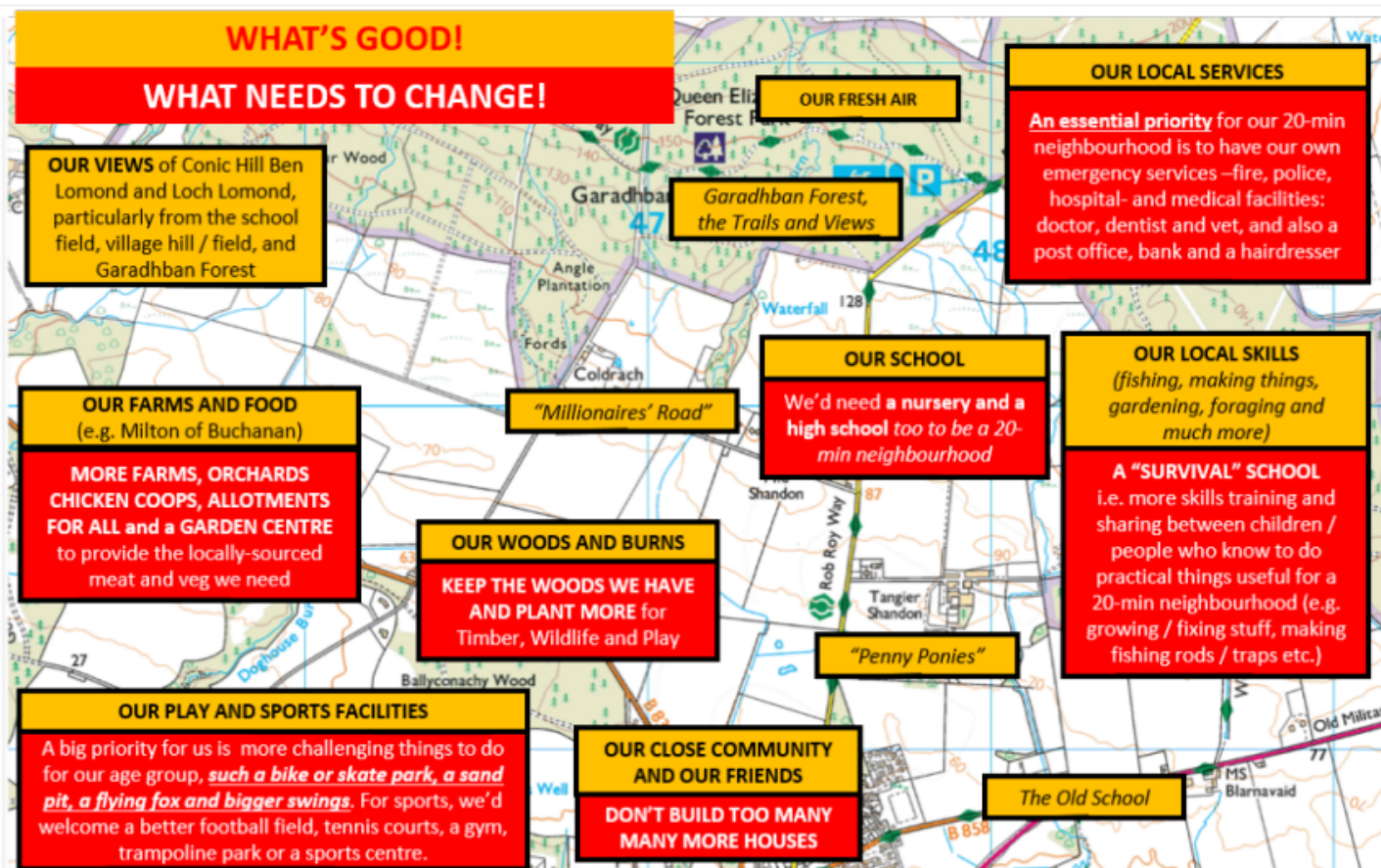
Movement

	What	Where
 Active Travel	Shared-use paths segregated from the road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Through and between villages - Croftamie (& Cycle route 7) to Milton of Buchanan via Buchanan estate entrance) - Completion of the partial off-road cycle route between Buchanan Castle and Balmaha - Balmaha to Drymen - Dymen to Balfron High school - Balloch, Killearn, Gartmore, & Aberfoyle, Buchlyvie
	Paths cleared of vegetation and levelled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Croftamie and around Village square - Stirling Road - Between Balmaha and Drymen
	Paths Widened	Around Village square
	Footpaths	From bus stop on Balmaha Rd (opposite Gartness Rd) Helping navigate blind corner to the square
 Public Transport	Bike friendly buses	In general, to link active travel with onward destinations including railway station and cities.
	Shuttle buses between villages	Between local villages (hop on-hop off)
	Bus to cities	Stirling, Glasgow
	Bus / DRT extension to Balloch timed with Glasgow train	Balloch railway, Bank, post office,
	Bus / DRT extension to Forth Valley Royal Infirmary	Larbert
	Direct Response Transport (DRT) shuttle buses	Whole area
	School bus	Villages-Drymen-Balfron
	Community car share scheme	Drymen
	Open rail station in Croftamie	Croftamie - Glasgow
 Pedestrians	Pedestrian zones	Village centre or fully around the square
	Safe crossings	Square to Stirling Rd and Gartmore Road

Potential solutions included broadening the focus from walking, wheeling, and cycling to other sustainable travel modes such as community transport, treating 20 minutes as a guide time rather than an absolute, and embracing established technological solutions to delivering services and goods, such as online services and drone deliveries of prescriptions and post.

The rich data and recommendations provided through the HITRANS Study, in addition to the outcomes of an active travel survey and further consultations in the village, helped ensure that many views contributed to the development of their Drymen Local Place Plan 2023-32.

Fig 24 extract from mapping exercise showing 'what's good' and 'what needs to change' in the established through community engagement. Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority, Forth Environment Link, Drymen Community Council Development Trust, and Drymen Community Council



Shetland: 20 minute neighbourhoods as the basis for joined-up planning and transport policy

Settlement range: rural and island settlements – demonstrates local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods are about good planning and collaboration.

Key initiatives: new approach proposed within the Main Issues Report.

Key challenges: application of the 20 minute metric, reliance on private car use, decentralising services.

Strategies employed: town centre and settlement enhancement approach, rural locality hubs, local living/20 minute neighbourhood thinking.

Shetland LDP [Main Issues Report](#), published in 2022, proposes a new approach to enhancing town centre and settlement retail areas across Shetland. The preferred option put forward in the Main Issues Report is for 20 minute neighbourhoods to form the basis of a new concept of rural locality hubs or service hubs, such as Brae, Scalloway and Baltasound, for example.

These locality hubs, and preferred areas for future growth, were identified through the lens of 20 minute neighbourhoods.

Fig 25 and 26 images from [Shetland Main Issues Report 2022](#)



The Main Issues Report highlights that, in the Shetland context, being able to meet daily needs within a 20 minute walk of your home should not be applied too rigidly.

Many of Shetland's more rural communities have established retail centres and services that could not be reached by walking within 20 minutes from homes on the edge of, or outside, more loosely scattered settlements.

The intention is that the next LDP will recognise that access to service hubs by Shetland's less well-connected communities is undertaken primarily by car. However, by continuing to focus development and services on locality hubs, reliance on travelling into Lerwick for basic retail services can be reduced – in line with 20 minute neighbourhood principles. The Main Issues Report suggests that these principles should form the basis of assessing new developments to help implement this approach.

The Main Issues Report explains that locality hubs play an important role in the provision of business and retail services across Shetland's many communities: the local shop, for example, often plays a vital economic and social role in community life.

Fig 27 and 28 images of Shetland taken from [Shetland active travel strategy](#)



The settlement of Brae, on North Mainland, is an example of a Locality Hub. It contains a wide range of education, leisure, healthcare, and retail services which serve not only the population of Brae but the wider North Mainland locality too. It is also a significant employment hub for North Mainland. People can make one car or public transport journey to Brae to access a number of services in close proximity to each other and not available within their community, rather than have to travel 40km south to Lerwick.

The 20 minute neighbourhood approach outlined in the Main Issues Report seeks to consolidate and enhance Brae's nature as a locality hub by strengthening its vitality and viability. LDP2 will also support the continued development of public transport networks and active travel measures that enable easy access to and within Shetland's many service hubs. This reflects a co-ordinated approach to land use and transport planning, with [Shetland active travel strategy](#) also taking a 20 minute neighbourhood approach to focus on improving accessibility of local destinations.

Fig 29 extract from [Shetland active travel strategy](#) that looks at auditing walking and cycling routes from settlements to local services and amenities and measures to make them more attractive and accessible to all.

Shetland Active Travel Strategy 2021 - 2026

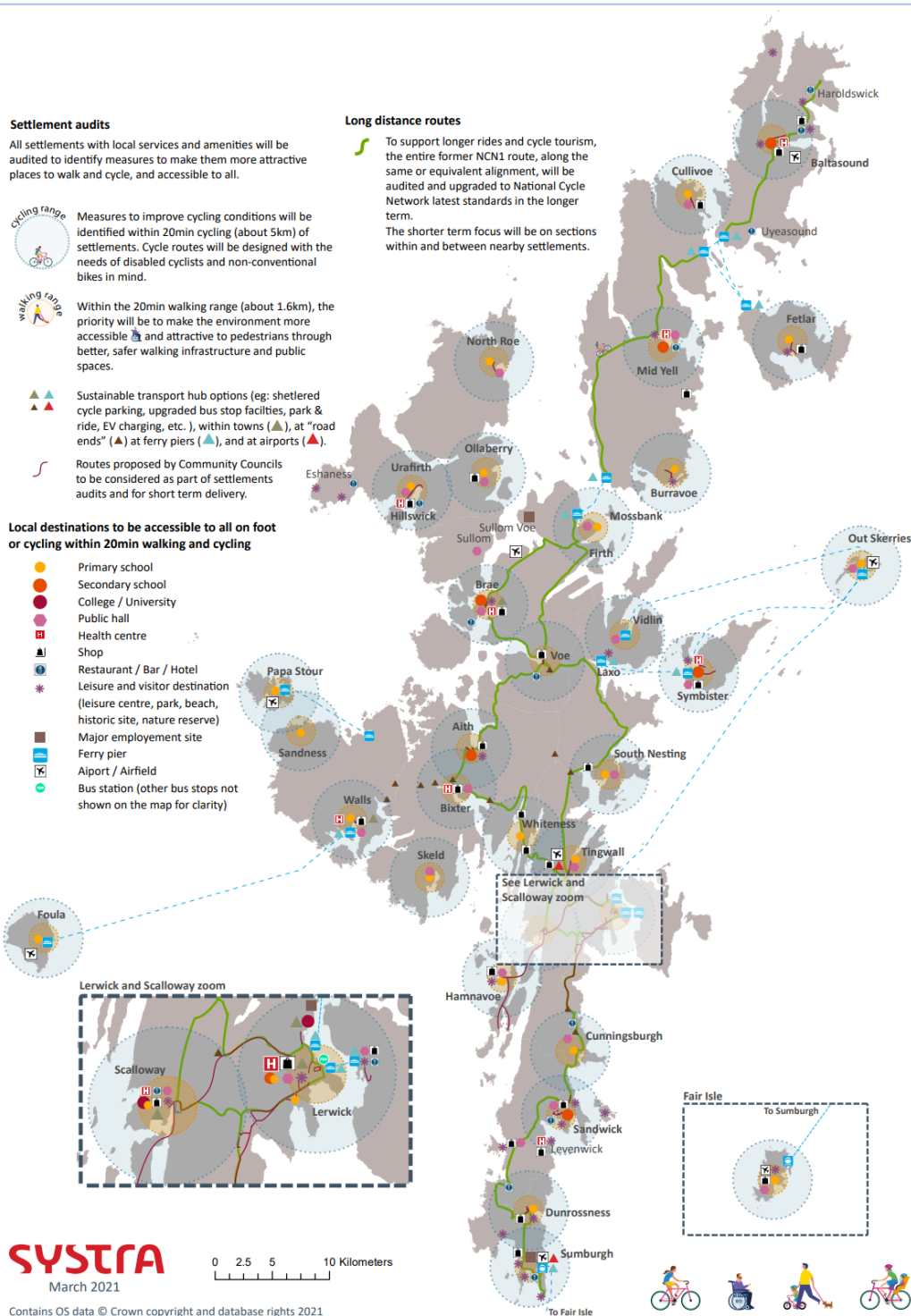


Fig 30 extract from [Shetland active travel strategy](#) outlining the national vision and strategies to support and promote active travel



Let's Get Scotland Walking: The National Walking Strategy

The National Walking Strategy, developed in 2014, sets out clear ambitions for increasing the proportion of short journeys completed by walking, including trips to/from school. The vision is for "a Scotland where everyone benefits from walking as part of their everyday journeys, enjoys walking in the outdoors and where places are well designed to encourage walking."

Three strategic aims were identified:

- Create a culture of walking where everyone walks more often as part of their everyday travel and for recreation and well-being.
- Better quality walking environments with attractive, well designed and managed built and natural spaces for everyone.
- Enable easy, convenient and safe independent mobility for everyone.

Cycling Action Plan for Scotland

In 2013, the Scottish Government published its Cycling Action Plan for Scotland. Its vision is that: "By 2020, 10% of everyday journeys taken in Scotland will be by bike." It was last updated in 2017, maintaining the same vision. It sets out 19 actions to achieve this, under priority headings of:

- leadership and partnership;
- infrastructure, integration and road safety;
- promotion and behavioural change;
- resourcing; and
- monitoring and reporting.

An Active Travel Vision for Scotland

This document provides a long term vision (2030) for Scottish communities to be shaped around people, with walking and cycling the most popular choices for shorter, everyday journeys.

Its objectives include:

- better health and safer travel for all;
- reducing inequalities in access to jobs, services and leisure;
- cutting carbon emissions to tackle climate change and improve air quality;
- deliver liveable, more pleasant communities to increase feeling of connectedness; and
- support the delivery of sustainable economic growth.

The Active Travel Framework

The Active Travel Framework was published in February 2020 by Transport Scotland in collaboration with delivery partners and regional transport partnerships. It is described by Transport Scotland as "bring[ing] together the key policy approaches to improving the uptake of walking and cycling in Scotland for travel."

Policy responses to the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic

Following the initial, and ongoing, emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic, governments at all levels are developing longer term recovery, transition plans, strategies and policies to tackle the effects the pandemic is having on public health, the economy and society more widely. Current policies and strategies (transport, climate change, infrastructure investment, etc.) are also likely to be re-considered to take into account the changed reality.

In this context, the ATS will need to remain a flexible document, incorporating any local or national guidance, strategy or policy changes as they emerge.

Glossary

Please click on weblinks for further information.

Term or phrase	Definition
Active travel	Making journeys in physically active ways , including walking, wheeling, (using a wheelchair or mobility aid, pram, scooter), or cycling.
Anchor institutions	Anchor institutions are defined as large, locally rooted organisations whose long-term sustainability is tied to the wellbeing of the populations they serve. Hospitals , schools and universities, and local authorities are typical examples. Often non-profit making and frequently public sector, however they can also be large private, voluntary and community sector organisations that have a big stake in a local community. They can be large employers, particularly in our smaller towns, spend large amounts of money, own and manage land and assets and deliver public services, all of which will have a big impact on the local area. And, by consciously implementing measures that benefit their local community, they have the ability to reduce inequalities and further support the wellbeing economy.
Circular economy	A circular economy is one that is designed to reduce the demand for raw material in products - to encourage reuse, repair and manufacture by designing products and materials to last as long as possible; and to recycle waste and energy to maximise the value of any waste that is generated - in line with the waste hierarchy .
Community planning	<p>Community planning is about how public bodies work together, and with local communities, to design and deliver better services that make a real difference to people's lives. Partners work together to improve local services and to ensure that they meet the needs of local people, especially those who need the services most.</p> <p>They produce two types of plans to describe their local priorities: Local Outcomes Improvement Plans, and Locality Plans.</p>

<u>Community Planning Partnership</u>	<p>Community Planning Partnership (CPP) is the name given to all those services coming together to take part in community planning. There are 32 CPPs across Scotland, one for each local authority area. Each focuses on where partners' collective efforts and resources can add the most value to their local communities, with particular emphasis on reducing inequality.</p>
<u>Community transport</u>	<p>Providing flexible and accessible community-led solutions in response to unmet local transport needs. Using a range of transport options and operating for a social purpose rather than for profit, most are demand-responsive, taking people from door to door, but a growing number are scheduled services along fixed routes where conventional bus services aren't available.</p>
<u>Community wealth building</u>	<p>A people-centred approach to local economic development, which redirects wealth back into the local economy, and places control and benefits into the hands of local people.</p>
<u>Demand responsive transport</u>	<p>A flexible service that provides shared transport to users who specify their desired location and time of pick-up and drop-off.</p>
<u>Geographic Information System (GIS)</u>	<p>Software that blends the power of a map with the power of a database to create, manage and analyse information, particularly information about location.</p>

<p>Key Agency Groups (KAG)</p>	<p>The group comprises a number of public bodies and other organisations which play a role in supporting the delivery of great places in Scotland.</p> <p>Planning regulations define Key Agencies as:</p> <p>Scottish Natural Heritage Historic Environment Scotland The Scottish Environment Protection Agency Scottish Water Scottish Enterprise (only in its area of jurisdiction) Highland and Islands Enterprise (only in its area of jurisdiction) Regional Transport Partnerships (only in relevant areas of jurisdiction) Crofters Commission (only in crofting counties) NHS Health Boards</p> <p>While legislation cannot specify them individually, the following bodies should have the same level of involvement in the development plan process:</p> <p>Transport Scotland Scottish Forestry Marine Scotland Architecture and Design Scotland</p> <p>The group also works in partnership with a number of other organisations that support the planning system, including:</p> <p>COSLA British Geological Survey SportScotland Visit Scotland Improvement Service Planning Aid Scotland</p>
<p>Liveability</p>	<p>The degree to which a place is suitable or good for living in.</p>
<p>Local Development Plans (LDPs)</p>	<p>Local Development Plans (LDPs) set out how our local places will change into the future, including where development should and should not happen. They outline how services and facilities such as schools and travel will be provided, and they identify the places and buildings we value and want to protect. They are the main basis for all decisions on planning applications. LDPs should be place based, people-centred and delivery-focused, as outlined in the Local Development Planning Guidance.</p>
<p>Local outcomes improvement plans</p>	<p>One of the two types of plans produced by Community Planning Partnerships – with strong community participation - to describe their local priorities and planned improvements. Local Outcomes Improvement Plans (LOIPs) cover the whole local authority area.</p>

Local place plans	<p>Community-led plans setting out their proposals for the development and use of land and aspirations for its future development. Once completed and registered by the planning authority, they are to be taken into account in the preparation of the relevant LDP.</p>
Locality plans	<p>These are the other type of plan also produced by CPPs, and cover smaller areas within the CPP area. They usually focus on areas that will benefit most from improvement. Locality plans may also be produced for groups who share common interests or features, for example, young people leaving care or vulnerable adults. Each CPP will produce at least one Locality Plan, and some CPPs will produce many. There is no fixed number of locality plans which CPPs must produce, but they must as a minimum produce them for every smaller area in which the local community doesn't benefit from good outcomes which people elsewhere can enjoy. Locality planning aims to meet the needs and ambitions of local people, so the voices of local communities are especially important.</p>
Mobility hubs	<p>A recognisable place with an offer of different and connected transport modes supplemented with enhanced facilities and information features to both attract and benefit the traveller.</p>
National Performance Framework (NPF)	<p>The National Performance Framework is Scotland's way to localise the SDGs (see below). It provides a framework which measures Scotland's progress against the National Outcomes. It uses 'National Indicators' which give a measure of national wellbeing and include a range of economic, social and environmental indicators, with a focus on tackling inequalities.</p>
National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)	<p>Our national spatial strategy for Scotland, published 2023. It sets out spatial principles, regional priorities, national developments, and a comprehensive set of national planning policies for the whole of Scotland.</p>
National Standards for Community Engagement	<p>Good-practice guidelines designed to improve and guide the process of community engagement. Community engagement is a way to build and sustain relationships between public services and community groups – helping them both to understand and take action on the needs and issues that communities experience.</p>
Net zero	<p>Scotland has set a target to become 'Net Zero' by 2045. This means the amount of greenhouse gas emissions we put into the atmosphere and the amount we are able to take out will add up to zero.</p>
Participatory budgeting	<p>A democratic process in which citizens decide directly how to spend part of a public budget.</p>

Place and Wellbeing Outcomes	Based on the same evidence as the Place Standard tool , they provide a consistent and comprehensive focus for where place impacts on the wellbeing of people and planet. They match the key 20 minute neighbourhood features and fall under five overarching themes of movement, spaces, resources, civic, and stewardship.
Place based approaches	A person-centred, bottom-up approach used to meet the unique needs of a community in a place by working together to use the best available resources and collaborate to gain local knowledge and insight. By working collaboratively with the people who live and work locally, it aims to build a picture of the system from a local perspective, taking an asset-based approach that seeks to highlight the strengths, capacity, and knowledge of all those involved.
Place Based Framework	A common framework for considering place-based working. Provides a mechanism for how place based working can be implemented effectively, with the goal of making sure that efforts, investments, and resources are brought together for the greatest overall benefit.
Place Based Investment Programme	A programme to link and align all place-based funding initiatives to create a coherent approach to building resilient communities, addressing inequalities, and supporting an inclusive, wellbeing economy in local settings.
Place Principle	The overarching context for place-based working in Scotland, it asks all those responsible for providing services and looking after assets in a place to work and plan together, and with local communities, to improve the lives of people, support inclusive and sustainable economic growth and create more successful places.
Place Standard tool	A tool that used to assess the quality of a place. It provides a simple framework, based on the evidence about how place impacts on health and wellbeing, to structure conversations about a place.
Shared transport	Schemes such as car clubs and bike share where people can use a mode of transport without having to own it.
Spatial Principles	Six overarching spatial principles set out in NPF4, by which we will plan our future places in Scotland.
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs/UNSDGs)	The United Nations has set a series of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These are 'global goals' and targets that are part of an internationally agreed performance framework. All countries are aiming to achieve these goals by 2030. In Scotland, these are localised as the National Performance Framework (see above).

Sustainable travel hierarchy	<p>The National Transport Strategy 2 Sustainable Travel Hierarchy should be used in decision making by promoting walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport and shared transport options in preference to single occupancy private car use for the movement of people. The efficient and sustainable freight transport for the movement of goods, particularly the shift from road to rail should also be promoted.</p>
Town Centre Action Plan	<p>The Town Centre Action Plan 2 was published in April 2022 as the Joint Response to the Review of the Town Centre Action Plan. It was developed jointly by Scottish Government and COSLA to respond to the recommendations of A New Future for Scotland's Town Centres. It builds on and reaffirms the commitment to the Town Centre First principle approach and develops a refreshed vision for our towns and the means to achieve it.</p>
Town Centre First Principle	<p>The Town Centre First Principle asks that government, local authorities, the wider public sector, businesses and communities put the health of town centres at the heart of decision making. It seeks to deliver the best local outcomes, align policies, and target available resources to prioritise town centre sites, encouraging vibrancy, equality, and diversity.</p>

Annex A – Useful resources

Resource	Website link
Our Place website	https://www.ourplace.scot/
The Place Standard tool and additional resources	https://www.ourplace.scot/About-Place-Standard
The Place Standard tool – Design Version	https://www.ourplace.scot/place-standard-design-version
The Place Standard tool – Children and Young People’s versions	https://www.ourplace.scot/place-standard-tool-children-and-young-people
The Place Standard tool with Climate Lens	https://www.ourplace.scot/Place-Standard-Climate
The Place Standard tool inclusive communications toolkit	https://www.ourplace.scot/place-standard-tool-inclusive-communication-toolkit
Rural Scotland Key Facts 2021	https://www.gov.scot/publications/rural-scotland-key-facts-2021/
Planning for Place programme at the Improvement Service	Planning for Place Programme Improvement Service Planning for Place programme at the Improvement Service; supports local authorities apply the place principle and collaborate on place based approaches.
The Alliance Health and Social Care Academy	Exploring Scotland's 20-minute neighbourhoods The Alliance Health and Social Care Academy has worked closely with the Mobile Access Committee Scotland (MACS) and Disability Equality Scotland and with partners to publish a report on Scotland’s 20 minute neighbourhoods. This report examined the benefits and challenges of a 20 minute neighborhood through the lens of inclusivity, diversity, and accessibility.

Living Well Locally, 20 minute communities in the Highlands and Islands	20 Minute Neighbourhoods in the Highlands and Islands – commissioned by HITRANS and Sustrans, explores what 20 minute neighbourhoods could look like in a rural and island context.
Glasgow Liveable Neighbourhoods	Liveable Neighbourhoods - Glasgow City Council
Mobility Hubs	Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 https://www.sustain.ubc.ca/about/resources/identifying-best-practices-mobility-hubs Document > Mobility hubs guidance (como.org.uk)
Delivering the Place Principle in mixed-use development	Investing in our Place – Delivering the Place Principle in mixed-use development: Report commissioned by Scottish Enterprise (February 2023)
SURF (Scotland's Urban Regeneration Forum)	People in Place Practice Network - SURF
Understanding Scotland's Places	Understanding Scotland's Places – a tool that can help communities better understand the towns they live and work in.
SCDC – Scottish Community Development Centre	SCDC - We believe communities matter – Charity recognised as the national lead body for community development in Scotland.
Reducing car use for a healthier, fairer, and greener Scotland – Transport Scotland	reducing car use for a healthier, fairer, and greener Scotland - the Scottish Government is working towards an ambitious national target to reduce car kilometres by 20% by 2030, with means to achieve this detailed in the route map.
Town Toolkit	Town Toolkit - developed by Scotland's Towns Partnership, as a source of information and inspiration for anyone who wants to make their town centre better.
Talking About Heritage	Talking About Heritage guidance – prepared by Historic Environment Scotland to support communities as they research, identify and gain recognition for the heritage they care about. It includes a section on local place plans and other ways of sharing information about and celebrating locally important heritage.
Place Wiki	Place Value Wiki - an online resource, developed by the Place Alliance, holds the evidence to help understand the impacts of place on a range of outcomes. It can help to make the case for investing in the quality of place.
Young Placechangers Toolkit	Young Placechangers Toolkit - developed by Greenspace Scotland and Youth Scotland, aims to inspire, engage, and empower young people to engage with their places and help influence the local decision-making process.



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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at

The Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

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