







# 2019

# Community Links Report

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# **INTRODUCTON**

East Renfrewshire Council held four workshops to gain the views of the Community. Consultations were held between January and March 2019. The outcome was to understand people's sense of place, space and transport/travel behaviours. These workshops were supporting phase 2 of East Renfrewshire Council's Community Links PLUS bid for the A77 and A727 road corridors. The Community Links Plus project is in connection with Sustrans Scotland.

The workshops and online surveys aimed to develop plans to improve the quality of public realm and sustainable transport options for local communities. Evidence collected will also be used to support future Town Centre Framework development, which will be progressed 2019/20. The Communities Team at ERC worked alongside the Environmental Department to organise and facilitate four engagement workshops in the linking corridor towns of Thornliebank, Newton Mearns, Clarkston and Giffnock. The purpose was to engage with communities to understand their behaviours relating to transport and travel and what influenced their needs and wants.

## WHAT IS PLACE STANDARD?

The workshops used the Place Standard toolkit to gain understanding of how people rate their communities and what is working well and what is not. The Place Standard toolkit assesses the quality of the communities and in particular how communities felt about travel routes and transportation options around the linking corridors. Understanding the existing and potential strengths of a place can help us make good decisions and allow us to target resources to where they are needed most. This approach can deliver better results over the long term. An online consultation was also undertaken for those who could not attend the workshops. The Place Standard was established to bring together, recommendations from two existing projects - Good Places, Better Health (an initiative on health and the environment) and Creating Places (a policy on architecture and place). It was jointly developed by NHS Health Scotland, Architecture and Design Scotland and the Scottish Government with advisory input from Glasgow City Council and was launched in December 2015.

The Place Standard will help to ensure that all places in Scotland nurture the wellbeing of the people within them – it provides a unique opportunity to integrate health considerations into wider policy areas, driving action to reduce health inequalities by focusing on place. It is intended that the Place Standard will support communities and the public and private sectors to work together to deliver high quality, sustainable places. The Place Standard Tool identifies 14 themes around which structured consultation can be developed. A specific aim of the Place Standard is to maximise the contribution of place based action to reducing inequalities across Scotland. It is anticipated that the tool will support collaborative working by providing a framework for structured conversations to occur, and allow participants to consider what action might be taken and to identify where their priorities lie. It should enable the physical, social and environmental quality of a place to be evaluated in a structured way, but also, importantly, it aims to initiate positive conversations and collaborations between key groups and to identify areas where quality can be improved. The wheel is rated by participants on the scale from 1 to 7 with 1 being 'there is a lot of room for improvement' and 7 recorded as 'very little room for improvement'.





Newton Mearns, Clarkston, Thornliebank and Giffnock are all towns within East Renfrewshire. The linking roads A77 and A727 are classified as Principle Road Corridors and act as important strategic routes in the area.

# <u>METHOLOGY</u>

#### APPROACH TO ENGAGEMENT

It was decided that to gain better overall results there should be four separate workshops and online surveys. This was to allow direct engagement with key stakeholders in the linking towns. This was also an opportunity to compare and contrast results.

A number of engagement methods were used:

- Web based consultation (online survey)
- Community engagement workshops

Engagement workshops were used as a way to target key stakeholders and support the community to have their say in what is working in their community and what has room for improvement.

I booked and organised venues and spaces that are widely known and accessible to the community, for the community. This was to ensure resident felt comfortable to attend and willing to participate in a venue within their own community. The consultations took place in council libraries and community halls.

In addition to targeted engagement, the opportunity to participate in the Place Standard exercise through attendance at community workshops or web based consultation, was heavily promoted to the local communities through the council website, social media and the local press. Flyers and posters were also distributed around the Newton Mearns, Clarkston, Thornliebank and Giffnock areas.





#### **PARTICIPANTS**

Stakeholder mapping was carried out and participants were invited to attend workshops based on information from council directories, council database and known interests of the community.

Age Breakdown Online survey	
Under 16	1
25 - 34	9
35 - 44	29
45 - 54	25
55 - 64	11
65 - 74	6

\*Breakdown of the online survey shows the majority of participants taking part were aged between 35-54.

Area Breakdown	
Clarkston	43
Giffnock	26
Newton Mearns	19
Thornliebank	8

\*The area with most overall participants was Clarkston

Overall:

- <u>97 COMMUNITY MEMBERS PARTICIPATED IN TOTAL</u>
- <u>15 WORKSHOP TOTAL</u>
- <u>82 ONLINE TOTAL</u>

#### APPROACH TO ANALYSIS

The responses that were collected through the online engagement and the three workshops were combined and analysed. The online engagement produced quantitative information that was combined to produce an average score for each theme, which allowed for comparisons to be made between the different experiences of residents in each of the four areas. The comments made through the online surveys were analysed and comments were chosen that captured the key issues that residents raised. These comments were used to augment the scores that were given to each theme.

The workshops provided both quantitative and qualitative information. The recorded scores agreed at the workshops for each theme were merged with the online responses, with the workshop scores being given a weighting of the number of attendees at that workshop. The comments made at the workshops were recorded and provided additional information to identify what the Priorities for Action for each area should be.



# Giffnock – Place Standards wheel ratings

\*6 workshop participants

#### To Summarise Giffnock community engagement

Streets and Spaces, Natural Space, Facilities and Amenities, Work and local economy, Identity and belonging and Care and Maintenance were all scored high.

Influence and Control and Traffic and Parking were rated low by Giffnock community members.

#### **Outcomes – Priorities for Action**

Traffic and Parking need to be addressed as parking in the town centre is troublesome. School traffic is a cause for concern in terms of keeping pedestrians and road users safe. Influence and Control rated low due to community members feeling they have no voice or are not being listened to in regard to council planning proposals.

## Clarkston – Place Standards wheel ratings



\*4 workshop participants

#### To Summarise Clarkston community engagement

Feeling safe, Influence and Control, Care and Maintenance and Identity and belonging were rated highest by the Clarkston community.

Moving around, Public Transport and Streets and Spaces were rated with a low score.

#### **Outcomes – Priorities for Action**

Safety issues around cycle routes. Visual impairment needs to be considered. Traffic congestion needs addressed in Town Centre. Poor local transport links need looked at. Public transport could do with being more reliable. Families in the community feel there is nothing to do. Litter problem should be tackled.

# Thornliebank – Place Standards wheel ratings



\*5 workshop participants

#### To Summarise Thornliebank community engagement

Traffic and Parking, Play and Recreation, Work and Local economy and Facilities and Amenities were rated low by Thornliebank community members.

A high score was given to Social interaction.

#### **Outcomes – Priorities for Action**

Thornliebank residents feel positive about social contact as they are aware of the community coming together especially through the Church and Participatory Budget event. Thornliebank results show there is an issue with parking on Main Street and this is deterring people from stopping in the area. This is then subsequently having a negative effect on local businesses. The bus service is unreliable and many participants stated they would rather take their car to get around. Lack of sports facilities for young people highlighted, High Park should be made into a welcoming community space. More diversity is needed for shops in the Town Centre.



#### **GIFFNOCK ONLINE RESULTS - 21 PARTICIPANTS**

- Online results show a high score for Public Transport. Giffnock residents' state there is fantastic links to the City Centre.
- Facilities and Amenities received a high rating due to Giffnock having "great" facilities and resources. Schools, libraries and supermarkets had lots of positive feedback.
- Residents stated they feel "very safe" in their community.
- Low scores to Traffic and parking and Influence and sense of control relate to the community feeling the traffic at peak times can be very busy and dangerous. Parking in Fenwick Road can be very challenging. Parking at Train station is taken up by commuters. Parking wardens and restrictions are problematic.
- Community members had strong views around the council not listening to the residents or being open and transparent regarding proposed planning for Huntly Park and Braidbar Quarry.

#### **CLARKSTON ONLINE RESULTS - 39 PARTICIPANTS**



- Online results scored Influence and Control, Moving around and Traffic and Parking low on the rating wheel. Residents commented that the streets are so traffic congested you cannot move around easily by foot or cycling. Cycle lanes were said to be "virtually non- existent" and cyclists are put off as roads are too busy and unsafe to cycle on. Streets and pathways are too narrow and need maintenance. There were positive comments about walking routes although there is mention of need for a pedestrian crossing at the toll roundabout.
- Traffic and Parking comments state parking in Clarkston is a "disgrace". The upper carpark at the shops should be free. Commuters are said to take all the available spaces at Clarkston Halls. There is an accessibility issues with cars parking on the pavement. Residents and shop owners are suffering because of all the parking issues Clarkston have.
- Community members feel they have little or no say when it comes to contributing to decisions which affect them and their community. This was highlighted in the survey with mention of the Busby Playing field consultations where residents felt they ultimately had no say in plans for their community. Sense of control is something a large percentage of residents feel they lack and state the council do not listen to them. Many participants suggested a Clarkston Community Council would be beneficial for the area.
- Housing and Community scored well online, residents feel there are nice housing options in the area although there needs to more affordable housing and maybe rent to buy schemes to enable first time buyers to get on the property ladder.
- Feeling safe rated high due to members of the community generally feeling "very safe" They also mentioned there are not many instances of crime to be heard of in the area.

#### **NEWTON MEARNS ONLINE RESULTS - 19 PARTICIPANTS**



- Online results scored Influence and sense of control and Public Transport low on the rating wheel. Many residents feel negatively about the restrictions to The Avenue car park. School traffic causes problems with traffic flow and parking, but this is something participants of the survey say they expect. Another pedestrian crossing on the Ayr road is needed as they are so far apart. Public Transport in Newton Mearns is not meeting the needs of the community. Better bus links are needed locally and there is a need for an express bus going to the city centre. Patterton train station was stated as not being accessible to all parts of Newton Mearns as it is far away. Community members say they would rather drive than rely on public transport that they commented is unreliable and is too expensive.
- Community members feel they have little or no say when it comes to contributing to decisions which affect them and their community. Sense of control is something a large percentage of residents feel they lack and state the council do not listen to them.
- Community members feel the town is losing its countryside because of new housing developments and this will put pressure on Newton Mearns resources and facilities.
- There needs to more affordable housing in the area.
- Feeling safe rated high due to members of the community stating it has always been a relatively safe place to live and there is a noticeable police presence which promotes feeling safe and secure.
- Moving around scored well as residents feel they have good walking routes and cycle paths. Ayr road A77
  was mentioned as having a good cycle lane. St.Cadocs Wood path has been beneficial to the Crookfur
  resident and pupils in particular.

#### THORNLIEBANK ONLINE RESULTS - 3 PARTICIPANTS



- Natural space, Public Transport, and Facilities and amenities scored high from the Thornliebank Community members.
- Public Transport is frequent and has direct links to the city centre. Train Station useful for local links and Glasgow Town.
- Natural space scored positive from the survey; community members are grateful of Rouken Glen Park on the doorstep and hope that some use will be made of the green space at High Park in Woodfarm.
- Facilities and amenities scored well due to the good schools in the area, use of public library and community hall. It was noted there could be more for young people to do.
- Care and maintenance and Influence and control scored poorly. Vandalism, dog fouling and littering have been an issue for the area. Buildings and footpaths could also do with some repair maintenance.
- Influence and control rated low due to community members feeling there is no real voice to implement change in Thornliebank. Being inclusive and a strong community council were mentioned as a solution.

# **Online Responses**



Online responses highlighted some interesting comparison results when compared and contrast against each area.

- Public Transport scored higher with Giffnock and Thornliebank residents whilst Newton Mearns and Clarkston did not score this over a 4.
- Natural space ranked highest in Thornliebank online results but this is not consistent with the workshop results from Thornliebank marking a lower rating of 3.
- Clarkston and Giffnock noted a need for improvement when looking at Traffic and Parking in their communities.
- Giffnock ranked feeling safe as their highest score.
- Clarkston and Newton Mearns failed to score any of the 14 sections in the wheel over a 5 when results were merged.
- All four of the towns assessed had a score of fewer than 4 when rating how they felt about Influence and sense of control.
- Identity and belonging, work and economy, housing and community and play and recreation all seem to have a similar rating across the four areas.



Merging the results from the workshops and the online surveys changed the shape of the results.

- Thornliebank rating of Public transport, Traffic and Parking and Natural space dropped when averaged with the workshop results.
- Giffnock ranked good overall although traffic and parking and Influence and control still scored poorly.
- Newton Mearns peaked with the highest score for moving around in the overall results.
- Newton Mearns also had an overall low score for public transport and influence and control.
- Clarkston was consistent with the online results and the workshop results proving there was still a lot of room for improvement when looking at moving around, traffic and parking and work and economy.
- Social interaction and Influence and sense of control scored better when the workshop results were taken into consideration.
- Housing and community proved to be the most similarly ranked overall with scores between 4 and 5.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Key outcomes identified from this community engagement has shown using The Place Standard Toolkit a fantastic way to enhance understanding and knowledge of how community members are feeling about the area they live in. Working through the 14 sections allows for indepth discussion about the topic in question. Many residents were looking for an outlet to have these discussions and the workshops and Place Standard Tool enabled these to be structured and informitive. The rating of the wheel was a good way to highlight what was working and what may need improvement, as many participants had never thought about scoring their community.

Another significant outcome was the vast difference to some of the online results compared to the engagement workshops. We can see an example of this on pages 8 and 11 when the community members at the workshop scored Influence and sense of control with the top rating of 7 but when comparing that to how the online participants percieved Influence and sense of control they marked this significantly lower at 3. This is shown across the scoring when comparing workshop results and online results. This is evidence that people attending the workshops have a 'more engaged experience'. In allowing them to freely discuss their needs and aspirations there was a more positive outcome shown in the results. An example of this is shown on page 23 in the Appendix C were member from the Thornliebank workshop state, "community workshops helpful and positive" in relation to Infuence and sense of control.

It could be argued community members accessing the online surveys may be rushed or without much consideration to how they are scoring.

Going forward we would be inclined to use The Place Starard Toolkit for future engagement purposes as this is empowering communities to have discussion but can allow for a structed base to aid that discussion.

# **Appendices**

#### Appendix A

#### **Giffnock Workshop Comments**

#### Moving Around:

- Concerns over cycle routes being useless when vehicles blocking routes
- Signage not efficient
- Walking in the area is generally positive although seating needed esp. for elderly
- Eastwood toll system dangerous for cyclists and pedestrians

#### Public Transport:

- Cycle storage could be better
- Disabled access ok at Giffnock train station but not at Williamwood TS
- Very good transport links into the City Centre
- No direct public transport link to Health Centre
- Not very good links to get around the rest of East Renfrewshire

#### Traffic & Parking

- Not enough calming measures in place
- Car spaces in car parks aren't big enough
- Pedestrian crossing not great as you wait a while and have limited time to cross
- Local business are affected due to poor town centre parking
- School traffic can be very dangerous

#### Streets & Spaces

- Positive about streets and space they have as a community
- Lucky to live in an area with greenery
- Pleasant place to live and visit
- Flower boxes would be nice for main street

#### Natural Space

- Community anxious of the unknown
- Aware of proposed change to the natural space in the area (Quarry land and Huntley Park)
- Unhappy if plans go ahead

#### Play & Recreation:

- Facilities available to the community but room for improvement
- Not safe for children to play out in the street due to traffic and parking

#### Facilities & amenities

- Lots of church groups
- Good library
- Need for a community group or organisation
- Talk of Community Hub

#### Work & Local Economy

- Good for students/apprentices
- Youth employment is positive
- Possible commuter community
- Family owned/ran business mentioned

#### Housing & community

- Due to prices first time buyers find it hard to buy in the area
- Need more affordable housing for the young and elderly
- Some good sheltered housing in area

#### Social Contact

- Nice feeling of community as a whole but divided between different groups, organisations, cultures etc.
- Community could benefit from a community hub
- There is a divide in social contact

#### Identity & belonging

- Mostly aware of things going on within the community
- Positive identity
- Good sense of community and belonging although need a collective body to oversee things.

#### Feeling safe

- Good lightening on side streets
- High safety rating

#### Care & Maintenance

- Positive views all round regarding care and maintenance of buildings and spaces

#### Influence & Sense of Control

- Not enough public voice.
- Limited views are heard/listened to
- Strong views on not being listened to
- Limited opportunities to share opinions and be heard
- Limited access to public meetings

#### Appendix B

#### **Clarkston Workshop Comments**

#### Moving Around:

- Cycle routes not great safety issue
- Traffic congestion and bad manners is an issue for cyclists.
- Walking has improved
- Needs addressing for visually impaired

#### Public Transport:

- Public transport doesn't meet the needs of its community or visitors.
- Poor bus and train links for local routes.
- Public transport is unreliable
- Rubbish concession for trains
- Accessible taxis need to be more readily available
- Promote 'My Bus'

#### Traffic & Parking

- Park and ride at Health Centre taking up spaces
- Commuters seem to have priority over parking spaces
- Choose to go somewhere else for a coffee as no parking and likely to get a ticket
- Careless parking can become a hazard

#### Streets & Spaces

- There is a littering problem
- Nothing for families to do in the area
- Clarkston does not have quality public streets & spaces
- No (obvious) investment in streets and spaces ("no money being spent")
- Difficult to get around / no quality destinations
- Busy/congested & not much to do (shops etc) "not a place to hang about"
- Nice parks/greenspaces but unattractive streetscapes

#### Natural Space

- Linn Park is great but needs a good cycle track
- Overlee Park is nice to taken younger children
- General support needed to create better access links in natural spaces
- Good natural spaces, but could be more accessible (as above)
- "never that far away from greenspace"

#### Play & Recreation:

- Nothing to do unless you go to Overlee or Tinkers Park
- Rouken Glen great but usually have to drive there
- It is not always safe for children to play outdoors
- Local greenspaces valuable community assets
- General feeling that play/recreation lacking for youth
- "parents have to take children to these places [play/recreational facilities] by car"
- Good range of activities and facilities via schools- free or reasonably prices
- Concern over how inclusive play and recreation is in meeting the needs of 'everyone' in the community (ASN, FINANCIAL ISSUES, SOCIAL ISSUES)

#### Facilities & amenities

- Excellent schools
- Great library
- Clarkston needs a community hub
- Not helpful now the health centre has moved away
- Nothing seems to stay open late
- Bank has moved away- need to travel out of town to access a lot of facilities and amenities
- Expensive gym
- Supermarket is far away if you don't want to use the express supermarkets.

#### Work & Local Economy

- Most comments were that people tend to commute from Clarkston to their workplace which questions whether people are actively seeking employment away from their town.
- Jobs must have been lost due to closure and move of shops/bank/health centre
- Young people/students can possibly find work at the coffee shops and restaurants

#### Housing & community

- Housing in Clarkston is great and there have been no new builds or disruption to area
- No social housing at all and very limited help for disabled residents
- Prices can be ridiculously high

#### Social Contact

- Members of the community feel that their town centre is used as a linking corridor people pass by to access other areas.
- Loneliness is an issue around local residents, more so the older generation
- There needs to be more community groups or drop in events for the community
- Group cited example of "Market Place" at The Avenue as a good example of increasing opportunities for social contact
- More opportunities are needed for young workers, young parents etc. to meet and socialises

#### Identity & belonging

- Positive place to live, although at first can be daunting as can take a while to get to know people- more networking and community groups could tackle this
- Schooling and family life can bring people together
- Noted isolation is an issue for disabled families as very little understanding or support from immediate residents

#### Feeling safe

- Advantage of being part of the community in Clarkston is feeling safe, very little trouble is heard of.

#### Care & Maintenance

- Generally things are looked after well
- On occasion areas can look messy due to litter near the schools

#### Influence & Sense of Control

- Very positive feedback regarding influence and sense of control
- They are aware of a lot of community meetings that have taken place and the efforts to involve the residents.
- Suggestions were to have a community noticeboard or a monthly community magazine
- They hope to see more engagement with the community in the future.

#### Appendix C

#### **Thornliebank Workshop Comments**

#### Moving Around:

- Cycle route non-existent
- Robslee Road needs better lighting
- Pavements not complete
- Very narrow pavements off Main Street potential issue for wheel chair users/pushchairs

#### Public Transport:

- Bus service/timetable unreliable
- 29 bus service only an hour
- All day ticket is very expensive
- Train Stations is quite far out
- Would rather take car
- Can be on the bus for a long time even if only trying to get to Silverburn because of long routes.

#### Traffic & Parking

- Buses not fuel effective i.e. double decker buses with only one or two passengers (off-peak)
- Traffic held up because buses taking up the road space
- One way system should be other way around to allow more room for bus and pedestrians.
- Not enough parking on Main Street, this affects local businesses.
- Narrow footpath in some parts of Main Street
- Speed reduction would make Main Street safer
- Would like to have a village feel to the area as opposed to a 'cut through' linking town.

#### Streets & Spaces

- Litter problem- not enough public bins
- Bin lorries have difficulty accessing some areas at the back of Main Street
- Burst water pipe/leaks potential hazard
- Lost its attraction
- It needs to be more inviting
- The area lacks anything worth sticking about for
- Nothing inviting in the late evening or at night time
- Old public house could be something for the community if restored to a good standard.
- Thornliebank is the only East Renfrewshire town with no Christmas lights

#### Natural Space

- Rubbish natural space
- Limited access to high park
- Very low lighting in open area at Woodfarm pitches.
- No seating
- Unsafe feeling at night at Thornliebank Park
- Nothing has been done with the park since the Pavilion was taken away
- Neighbouring Rouken Glen Park and King George Park used by residents

#### Play & Recreation:

- Lack of football/sports facilities for young people
- The community should have access to play and recreation at High Park there is not even any seating or playground equipment
- Community hall/lets charged too high
- Need for a community Hub for the area

#### Facilities & amenities

- Too many fact food outlets
- No variety of shops/lack of diversity
- People can't always access shops due to parking issues
- Beneficial having post office and health centre in town centre

#### Work & Local Economy

- Lack of childcare providers
- Limit to local business growth due to high let rates
- Job centre is not local
- No recruitment agencies locally etc.
- If attraction is there people will stop but they have nothing to stop for at present

#### Housing & community

- Generally positive feeling about housing in the area
- Improvements needed for disabled housing
- Lack of one bed properties
- No option for rent to buy scheme
- No new builds

#### Social Contact

- Not a lot of opportunity to meet new people
- No outdoor space for people to meet unless a walking group
- Churches seem the most influential in terms of social interaction
- Bowling club inclusive
- Need groups to cater to older and younger community members

#### Identity & belonging

- The community lacks a knowledge of the history and heritage of their town
- There is a strong sense of identity and belonging within the older generations of the community.
- Negative views of the town from surrounding areas

#### Feeling safe

- Feeling safe at night is a concern
- Gangs of youngsters hang about with nothing to do
- Anti-social behaviour has been a problem
- Community members feel safe within their own home

#### Care & Maintenance

- No local residents association
- Issue with litter and bulk fly tipping behind Main Street
- Vandalism needs cleaned up
- Dog fouling is an issue
- Library a lovely building looked after well

#### Influence & Sense of Control

- Community workshop helpful and positive
- Participatory Budgeting event was good for the wider community
- The community feel they have some opportunities to express their views.