Local Government and Communities Committee

Community Wellbeing: Your Priorities

Introduction

This paper sets out the background and key themes from the Committee’s scoping work on community wellbeing, both online using a digital discussion tool, and in community sessions. These themes will be used to inform future work by the committee on supporting community wellbeing.

Background

At the Committee’s work planning day on 6 March 2019, picking up on themes raised in its discussions, the Committee identified a range of themes that could be explored as part of a major inquiry including —

- The financial impact to councils of intergenerational poverty (and the life chances of people living in intergenerational poverty);
- The role of councils in advancing the wellbeing of their communities;
- The extent to which councils are investing in, and improving the public health of communities (i.e. by applying early intervention and preventative spend principles);
- How joint working is operating in practice, including community planning partnerships and Integration Authorities.

On 20 March 2019 the Committee agreed to use digital engagement as a means to scope potential work on community wellbeing. In effect, this would be an opportunity to gather key themes from the public on how they view community wellbeing, who the ‘key players’ are, and areas where there are opportunities for improvement. Following preparation work, the Committee agreed on 6 November to launch an exercise using a tool called YourPriorities.

YourPriorities

The YourPriorities tool, which allows users to add ideas about what matters to them, and to rate other people’s ideas as well as adding points for and against these ideas (and rating these points), was recommended by the Committee Engagement Unit (CEU) and SPICe. Using this approach will allow the Committee to not only crowdsource themes to influence enquiry scoping, but to get a sense of sentiment and priorities around these themes.

A publicly open exercise on YourPriorities launched on Thursday 14 November and ran until Wednesday 22 January. Six prompt questions with videos recorded by the
Committee were used to help stimulate discussion, along with a video introduction by the Convenor.

In total—

- 634 people took part by giving ideas, making comments, or voting on and rating ideas or comments.
- Over 220 ideas were generated.
- There were over 400 discussion points made.

Community sessions

In addition to running the online discussion, 5 community sessions, involving 65 people were undertaken by the Community Outreach Team. The themes emerging in these were very much in line with those emerging from YourPriorities. A note on these sessions is included as an annex to this paper.

Themes

SPICe completed a thematic analysis of the discussion which took place in YourPriorities. The data was considered based on a ranking of popularity – essentially, by looking at the ideas which received the most “thumbs up” votes.

A number of themes which came up fell outside the remit of the Local Government and Communities Committee. These tended to fall primarily within the broad subject areas of health and education, but also touched on climate, as well as a number of reserved matters such as benefits. Local transport was a notable theme. Although this does not fall directly in the Committee’s remit, it is noted that comments on this area tended to relate heavily to local services and planning decisions, so points have been included.

A note on themes occurring which were outside the Committee’s remit features after key themes.

The key themes which fall largely within the Committee’s remit are detailed below—

Community environment

The most popular ideas focussed on people being able to use the space and community around them to improve their wellbeing. This included a desire to have spaces which encouraged physical activity and being outdoors.

People wanted to see specific types of community-focused, and generally community-led, facilities and services in their areas. These included –

- Food-based community spaces and services, like community cafes, community kitchens where people could prepare food together, and community orchards and allotments.
- Community forests and green spaces.
• **Community centres** and facilities, with services like tool libraries, and local organisations and clubs.
• Opportunities for **volunteering, participation and befriending**.
• Initiatives which focus on the **arts**, and community-based **media**.
• **Community shops**.
• Places where people can come together, such as **churches and forums**.
• An emphasis on the **heritage** of communities and where they are based.
• Good **local transport**, and good **wheelchair access**, to encourage all people to use spaces and services.

One anonymous user summed the need for community facilities up-

“Strong communities are those supported by good local facilities. Everyone should have access to community facilities (like leisure centres, museums and libraries) within walking/cycling distance of their homes. These places provide a focus for the community, an affordable place to go and meet people within the local area. Each facility also delivers either physical or mental health benefits. When we provide a safe environment for people to meet, people of all ages make connections and this strengthens their sense of being part of the community. It may be the 21st century but people still need places to meet face to face in order to avoid feelings of isolation and loneliness. Those face to face connections are what lead to community wellbeing.”

**Inclusiveness** was an overarching theme – people want to see neighbours supporting each other, and to bridge generational divides so that younger and older people are included and supported. **Supporting carers, homeless people, those with mental health or addiction problems, and those in poverty** was often mentioned, and there was in interest in finding ways to **tackle isolation**. Setting up buddy schemes was one suggestion.

**Community wealth and investment**, both in communities themselves and the third-sector services that support them, was mentioned. It was suggested that investment should be linked to high-level national objectives.

The overriding sense of the discussion was that the answer to the Committee’s question about “What is community wellbeing” is that “community IS wellbeing”.

Some statement on this theme include –

“Fruit trees could be planted anywhere, not just orchards, those using foodbanks could benefit from free fruit, children could learn where fruit comes from, and it helps the environment, it's a win win!!”

“Many of the aspects in the place standard can be provided for communities by encouraging allotments. Local government has a role in providing land. The community empowerment act and the secondary legislation if applied by local government will help a lot. Research evidence on how far the legislation is being applied by local government to accrue the benefits allotments to communities.”
“We have become so isolated within communities, we’re becoming shut off from human interaction as well as the positive wellbeing benefits of being outside. We need to get out of our homes, enjoy the outdoors AND make contact with others within our communities. Get involved with initiatives such as litter picks, community gardens, green gyms, etc. be involved. It vastly improves our own wellbeing, and can have a positive impact on the wellbeing of the wider community, including environmental, wildlife and nature positives”.

“Local shops – family shops. Delivery days are buzzing with everyone attending, fish days, meat days, Friday is newsletter day. These provide an opportunity for people to get meet others, a shared experience, a connection. An opportunity to build relationships with neighbours and others in the community. Especially for people who are on their own, but it is appreciated by all. Something you don’t get from a supermarket.”

“Communities could have a shared space where they can come together and be a community. I manage a care home and we have great community links but there’s always room for improvement and we will keep looking for ways of doing this. One idea we had was to consult with the local council to develop a nearby area of land into a large communal space for all ages to enjoy. Make the area useable for toddlers to older people, with play areas, safe pathways throughout, raised planters, plenty of seating and a large communal barbeque area right in the middle of it. It wouldn’t take much to make it beautiful and inviting and safe. The community could even be involved in building it.”

Council services and governance

A lesser theme in evidence was the services that local authorities provided directly. These ideas and comments fell for the majority within the planning and housing sphere. A separate section on planning has been included. That said, leisure and cultural services such as sports facilities and museums were mentioned as being important to maintaining wellbeing, and it was suggested that sports facilities should be made free for use by children. Sanitation was a theme which gained a lot of support.

Some ideas touched on how the responsibilities of local authorities might be changed. These included making parks provision a statutory responsibility, and including a community benefit clause within the procurement process.

Investment in prevention services, such as services for young people and community centres, was supported, as was increased childcare and home visits provision. Food banks were also discussed.

There was some debate on potential decentralisation of powers, both in terms of handing further powers to local authorities, and devolving powers down to a community council level. On the latter, participants showed some disagreement on the value and role of community councils, and it was suggested that greater scrutiny of community councils was needed.
Funding was mentioned in terms of council services, but was not a key theme, which might suggest that many participants were thinking primarily of the importance of services, as opposed to the barriers to providing them. The most liked funding-related idea called for consistent funding of services, with certain towns being seen as receiving less funding than others.

Statements include –

“Museum services are under significant pressure, with celebrated venues across the country closing their doors and uncertainty surrounding their collections. As well as being custodians of our cultural heritage, museums are an invaluable community asset, where people can come together to learn, be inspired and thrive. We must do all we can to support this incredible sector and ensure that current and future generations can benefit from their work in supporting community wellbeing.”

“Currently community councils are places for people to complain about an issue, these could be revolutionised to be idea hubs for our communities. We need to sell them and their benefits better”.

“Funding for groups/councils. Due to the government cuts of austerity councils have less money to spend on disability funding and so having less opportunities to get support/respite can be really stressful for parents/carers/kids suffer. I attended a group for mums with a creche that built my self confidence but when they lost funding I couldn’t go. It was very therapeutic, you could do arts & crafts, learn mindfulness & life coaching & make yourself a coffee & have a chat & not feel so alone.”

Planning, housing and climate change

Planning came up often, largely indirectly by people talking about the needs for certain facilities in their local area, such as shops and parks. Many of these suggestions linked strongly to issues around climate change and sustainability, and though only a few submissions mentioned it using formal language, there was a general theme of the importance of place-making and local place planning.

The importance of infrastructure for new housing developments was raised, as was a need for affordable housing, in both rural and urban areas. Within housing, there was a desired for shared indoor space and rent controls, but there were also concerns about overcrowding, with people saying there should be fewer student homes and restrictions on short-terms lets.

People called for pedestrian spaces, footpaths and better cycling networks, and better charging networks for electric vehicles, and for better enforcement of residents-only parking areas to dissuade commuters from parking in residential areas near workplaces and train stations. Traffic-calming measures such as reduced speed limits were also a popular theme.

Participants wanted to see planning decisions which encouraged renewables (such as onshore wind farm developments), supported biodiversity, and led to re-wilding where possible. There were also calls for councils to stop the development of new
retail space and find ways to **encourage the use of vacant buildings** instead, especially in town centres.

**Statements include –**

“Everywhere they are building houses and bringing more people but without the services catching up. Roads can manage so many cars and overloading them brings problems, pollution, noise... there are not enough school places, gp surgeries, nhs dentists, pot holes everywhere, poverty, drug related crime... why not catch up with services first?”

“In Edinburgh the housing situation is dire, with children across the city living in damp, cold and overcrowded conditions. It is impossible to imagine these children and their parents building on their wellbeing when they are being forced to go home to unsuitable housing.”

“My community in central Edinburgh is rapidly losing residents as flats are sold of to people using them for full-time airbnb or other short term lets. We are losing positive connections and relationships with the people who live around us as increasing rents push neighbours out.”

“Would be good to have a clear statement about how we navigate local to national. Local is great for ideas and for people feeling involved but we have to be honest that most people don’t contribute and if they do they are more likely to be directly sectional. The challenge of climate change is to inspire communities to go beyond what is in their short term immediate interest e.g I’ve often internally complained about sherif hall roundabout but I know saving me 10 mins is not a priority...”.

**Other themes outside the Committee’s remit**

As noted, there were some strong emerging themes which either fell outside of the Committee’s remit entirely, or might be more appropriately addressed to other subject committees.

**Transport**

Many transport issues noted could be said to connect to local government responsibilities and have been mentioned above, but in the interest of giving a comprehensive overview, the following transport issues were mentioned –

- Bus services, both in the context of rural setting and community transport.
- Cycleways, and bike storage and lock-up facilities.
- Traffic-free zones and times.
- Reduction of haulage vehicles passing through rural villages.
- EU infrastructure.

**Statements include –**
“Proving funding for more community transport is one of the very simple things that the Scottish Government could do which would make a huge difference to people in communities immediately.”

“Too much emphasis is on urban transport, tackling rural transport would not only alleviate some of the urban issues but would improve Scotland’s connectivity and future health as a nation.”

“Connection and good transport is essential for healthy communities. It is vital for people to move around to access services, but also to feel connected. Our dial a bus service is overloaded. It is a great service but we need more of it. This is essential for people without private transport, older people, younger people and people on lower incomes.”

“A network of segregated urban cycle paths will reduce motor traffic, enable healthier life choices, provide a significantly safer space for active travel for all.”

**Health**

Again, some health aspects have been mentioned such as community support for those with mental health needed, but key themes were –

- “Green” prescribing, i.e. prescribing physical and outdoor activity.
- Mental health support, and whether this should or should not be provided with a reliance on third-sector support.
- Better access to and provision of GP appointments.
- Community-based counselling.
- Better rural GP provision.
- Trauma-informed care.

Statements include –

“Through the Green Health Prescriptions we introduced a tool GPs and other healthcare staff can use to effectively sign-post patients to free local outdoor physical activity. This saves time and participating in any of our activities has a positive long-term impact on the patients health. This is a cost effective way to boost community health and wellbeing.”

“Access to mental health services is increasingly important however I think the 3rd sector has a key role to play and they can often be more responsive and creative than statutory services who can get embroiled in bureaucracy and systems The problem is 3rd sector funding is often tenuous and hand to mouth so recognise the immense contribution of 3rd sector and fund them properly.”

**Education**

Many participants felt that supporting children was key to long-term community wellbeing, and as a result many comments were focused on education and childcare –
• More classroom assistants and community education workers.
• Teaching kindness in the curriculum.
• Concerns around schools closures.
• ‘Healthy Kidz’ programmes focused on healthy nutrition and activity.
• Deferrals for 4-year-olds.
• Free school meals and breakfast clubs.
• Older people reading to children in primary schools.
• Education in media literacy.
• Better special needs provision, with a focus on social interaction.
• Childcare designed to meet local needs.
• There were some calls for better Gaelic provision, with participants using Gaelic in the tool, though some participants opposed this.

Statements include –

“This is about getting it right for every child. Having seen the difference in my January born child having an extra year in Nursery it has been amazing. Removing the funding worry will allow parents to really focus on their children and make the right decision for them. It will also improve attainment and allow kids to develop at a pace that is right for them.”

“Closure of schools has a huge impact on communities that is much bigger than just about education. For example look at the reasons why a school might be declining, in Shetland we have schools in areas where families cannot access family housing.”

Reserved and wider issues

A number of themes were around wider matters of governance, issues around other Scottish Government policy, or simply around reserved matters. These included –

• Calls for a universal basic income, and concerns about the benefits system (in particular the carers allowance).
• Support for a Good Food Nation Bill.
• Calls for the centralisation of services to end.
• The re-introduction of Town Councils with devolved decision-making powers.
• Investment in employment.
• Greater council accountability.
• Concerns around the climate emergency.
• Concerns about pesticide use.
• Community work sentencing.
• An end to the use of nuclear power.

Statements include –

“The centralisation of services, local government, police etc is sucking the life out of rural Scotland. That means that the number of jobs decreases and therefore people have to leave their home areas, especially the younger generation. This in turn means that there is decreased demand for local shops, hotels etc causing a spiral of decline. The other consequence of this
policy is that people converge on cities that are already under strain in terms of service and housing provision.”

“Communities are not the buildings, nor the geographical location: they are the people. As the social fabric degrades, so does the community. Allow communities to make their own decisions so people feel empowered (or can stop counter-productive decisions) to ensure the people who are affected by decisions can make the decisions. Give us back our communities.”

Ailsa Burn-Murdoch
SPICe Research
04 September 2020

Note: Committee briefing papers are provided by SPICe for the use of Scottish Parliament committees and clerking staff. They provide focused information or respond to specific questions or areas of interest to committees and are not intended to offer comprehensive coverage of a subject area.

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Annex - Community Sessions

Summary

Five community sessions were undertaken by the Community Outreach Team to engage members of the public who were unlikely to participate in a digital or other public consultation. **65 members** of the public **aged from 5 to 95** engaged through our work in during November and January 2020. Sessions were held in Lerwick, Kirkwall, Springburn, Leith and Dumbiedykes.

The outcomes from each session can be broadly grouped into themes:

- **Community facilities** – schools, community centres, shops, services, housing, cheap cafés, greenspaces, access to jobs, training etc.
- **Support** – childcare, foodbanks, jobs, isolation, mental health, homelessness
- **Funding** – short term and inconsistent funding for projects and lack of.
- **Planning** – superstores and housing, green spaces.
- **Community empowerment** – feeling disenfranchised, remote from decision making, powerless to volunteering and participation.

This is outlined more fully below and full transcripts are on the [Community Wellbeing: What Matters to You? digital site](#).

Audience Engagement

Community outreach engagement sought to hear views from a range of people within the groups below:

- Island and rural communities
- Older people
- People with learning and or physical disabilities
- Young people
- People who are socially and/or economically excluded

**Community sessions** were adapted to suit the audience and the context. This ranged from workshops and ‘conversations’, to playing bowls and making ‘community wellbeing bunting’ with children and families as part of a community fun day. We partnered with third sector organisations and local groups to identify appropriate clubs and communities.
Community Sessions

1. **Shetland Community Session**, 19 November with [Voluntary Action Shetland](#). This was supported by Shetland Third Sector Interface. **3 people** attended a workshop, staff from Voluntary Action Shetland and Shetland Befrienders.

2. **Orkney Adult Befriending Games Group**, 28 November, the Guide Hut, Kirkwall. This was supported by [Orkney Voluntary Action](#) and Orkney Third Sector Interface. **11 people** participated – a mix of mainly older people and volunteers. We attended their weekly games session, played bowls and had a ‘conversation’ about community wellbeing. Orkney Voluntary Action raised our attention to the [Enhancing Wellbeing within our Island partnership project](#).

3. **North Glasgow Challengers** – (a name the group gave themselves for the session), 16 January, The Ron Davey Centre, Springburn. Supported by the [Tenant Participation Advisory Service](#) and [ng homes](#). **14 people** took part in a workshop. They were NG Homes volunteers and members of: Chancers Community Group – Possilpark Pitstops Graduates, Young Peoples Futures, Springburn Regeneration Forum, Afghan United.

4. **Dumbiedykes Funday**, 17 January 2020 at the Braidwood Community Centre, Dumbiedykes. We joined Dumbiedykes Networking Group (40 local
organisations coming together under ‘health promotions’) and were asked to offer a fun activity as residents felt over consulted. We brought arts and crafts for residents to make ‘community wellbeing bunting. 21 local people mainly children, families and a few older people participated.

5. YMCA Edinburgh Women’s Group, 21 January 2020 at the Acorn Centre Leith. Women ranging from early 20’s to early 90’s, from a wide range of cultures and backgrounds some of whom face personal challenges including loneliness, poverty, physical and mental health issues, relationship difficulties, addiction, stress and low self-esteem. 16 women participated in the session.

Outreach engagement sought to explore the questions on the Community Wellbeing: What Matters to You? digital platform.

1. What is your community?
2. What do you think ‘community wellbeing is?
3. How do you know your community has good wellbeing?
4. Who is responsible for encouraging good wellbeing?
5. Breaking the Cycle of Poverty
6. And scoping for New Ideas

General Views Expressed

Rural and island sessions highlighted the informal networks of shops, cafés and clubs that rely on volunteers and provide a shared connection, feelings of safety and trust. Dependency on transport infrastructure and the connection between provision of housing, transport, schools and other services that make the difference between a community surviving or thriving.

Urban themes highlighted the benefits of groups, clubs and the need for places, activities and support, and the conflicting pressures on services, housing, students, transport, planning conflicts between community and business needs.

Universal themes came out around jobs, childcare, housing, loneliness and isolation, mental health, greenspaces, safety, local decision making, a lack of agency, alongside a willingness to volunteer and participate.
1. **What is Your Community?**

We heard that people think of **community** as being about **place and people**. They described community as a sense of neighbourliness, belonging, connectedness and trust. People described the social and community activities they undertake and the places they meet: shops, café, schools, church, library, sport, gala days, social clubs, work, community groups, food banks, outdoor/green garden space, kids groups for example.

- ‘People coming together to celebrate life and share concerns.’ North Glasgow Challengers.
- ‘friends, family and school, community centres’ Dumbiedykes Funday.
- ‘Like the community centre, because they do really fun stuff, and they are nice and they will help you if you are lost’ Dumbiedykes Funday.

2. **What do you think ‘community wellbeing’ is?**

**In Shetland** we heard that people think **community wellbeing** is the network of informal and voluntary community things that happen every day throughout Shetland. **Community café’s**, **‘Sunday teas’ Bills van – the mobile shop, youth clubs**. The way people **volunteer** to make things happen that give **people support, connection and a social occasion**. Intergenerational, inclusive, regular, informal, participative.

- ‘A vibrant community with active, full participation, community spirit, neighbourliness.’ North Glasgow Challengers
- ‘Green spaces, fresh air, walking.’ North Glasgow Challengers
- ‘We need community space’ Dumbiedykes Funday
- Opportunities for families, childcare jobs and housing. Dumbiedykes Funday
- ‘My neighbour cuts my grass and I do his flowerbeds’ YMCA Edinburgh Women’s Group

3. **How would you know your community has good wellbeing?**

We heard from people in **Dumbiedykes what they feel that their community needs for good wellbeing**. People said the area needs more local services, shops (the only local shop is a Tesco Metro), transport, community spaces, and support for children and families, childcare and activities, less drugs. Communication about what is available. Better housing provision, opportunities for people and consideration of the impact of students.
4. Who is responsible for good wellbeing?

A clear theme across all community groups was around collective responsibility and a frustration about getting their voice heard. A frustration at short term funding for third-sector and charity projects. People are keen to volunteer, participate, support and help others but felt there was a lack of long-term infrastructure and support.

- ‘We don’t feel that we are listened to’ Orkney Befriending Games Group
- ‘Invest time and support to help communities help themselves’, North Glasgow Challengers.
- ‘Listening to ‘all’ voices on important issues’, YMCA Women’s Group.
- ‘Community means respecting and helping each other’, YMCA Women’s group.
- ‘Supporting the community to build themselves’. Shetland community session.
- ‘Access to local services, the local shop is closed and the serenity café’. Dumbiedykes Funday.

5. Breaking the cycle of poverty

People expressed that access to local long term services is needed.

- ‘there is food poverty and holiday hunger. Poverty is hidden in Shetland but it is still persistent. The cost of living in Shetland is high. Underemployment and housing are a problem’. And that ‘there are high levels of in work poverty’. Shetland Community Session.

- ‘Invest time + support to help communities help themselves, e.g. physical, social, environmental, regeneration. Community breakfasts, community centres where people can go, volunteering- connecting people. Building skills: education, work, training. Expectations- from inside and outside. Challenges: apathetic communities on brink of mainstream services, low aspirations and lack of opportunities, acceptance of less. We lost our golf course, in other areas there would have been an outcry’. North Glasgow Challengers.

- ‘We need access to jobs, childcare, training, transport’. Dumbiedykes Funday.

6. Each group introduced New Ideas

Housing and homelessness was raised by all groups as a priority.

In Dumbiedykes and Springburn people raised the impact of students on local housing and for example recycling provision on the estate. YMCA Women's
group asked for **affordable housing** and again the impact of students. In Shetland and Orkney a lack of affordable housing impacted on the viability of small rural communities and islands without accommodation families can’t move in, schools close then businesses

- ‘The cost of housing and rental housing is so expensive….People cannot work and live, People are living in poverty, Young people cannot start their own life’. Shetland Community session

**Loneliness, isolation and mental health**

- ‘It is a big issue on our community for older and younger people’ Orkney Adult Befriending games Group.
- ‘Invest in mental health services and community safety’ Grassroots problems need to be tackled, bottom up. It’s what the community is asking for.’ North Glasgow Challengers.

**Transport** was raised by all groups urban and rural.

- ‘our dial-a-bus service is overloaded. It is vital for a people to be able to move around on a practical level to access services, but also to feel connected and to do things socially, such as the befriending group. The groups that depend on these services are potentially more vulnerable and excluded.’ Orkney Adult Befriending Games Group
- ‘People are isolated because they cannot get transport. Particularly elderly and young people who do not have private transport’. Shetland Community Session.

**Planning** was raised as impacting on community wellbeing

- ‘Community vs private, commercial development. Superstores take over and damage the main streets. Community spaces struggle to survive.’ North Glasgow Challengers
- **Greenspaces and parks**

In Shetland and Orkney people recognised the benefits of the access to them and in urban settings the lack of access. **North Glasgow Challengers** said there should be a ‘**Statutory obligation provide green spaces/parks** as it improves mental health and resilience’

- ‘Provide better playparks and places for children to go’ Dumbiedykes Funday
- ‘More greenspaces’ YMCA Edinburgh Women’s Group
Feeling safe and secure was raised by all groups.

In Shetland and Orkney a sign of good community wellbeing was feeling safe. **YMCA Women’s Group** asked for **activities for teenagers in local areas**. They identified feeling unsafe at times in their local communities and thought this might address some of the issues.

- ‘Teenagers need support and have nothing to do. It is impacting on their health and wellbeing. The result is impacting on wider society as we see more anti-social behaviour’, YMCA Edinburgh Women’s Group.

Closure of schools

- ‘Closure of schools has an impact on a whole community’. Shetland community session. The interconnection between housing, transport, schools, and the local economy.

Feedback

Outreach had very positive feedback from all workshops about the opportunity to feed into Committee business.

- *We thought that your activity was a fantastic contribution to the event. It was a creative way to consult with a community, who feel over-consulted, and the children and adults really enjoyed taking part. I think the warm welcome and friendly staff made it approachable and fun. I think that everyone who took part in the activity felt listened to and valued and that they had enjoyed a fun activity. We really appreciate the flexibility in approaching the consultation and the contribution to making the event a fun afternoon for all.*
  - Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust on behalf of Dumbiedykes Networking Partnership.

- *The feedback that we got was that people felt the discussions were interesting as were some of the themes - some of those attending did not previously know one another as they cut across Springburn and Possilpark and within different projects. They enjoyed taking part in group discussions with others and began to identify common areas. It did raise some questions with some in terms of community support to project and in particular time limited funding. One of the participants said of being part of a funded project: “It is like if someone gives you a dog to look after for six months and you get attached to it and then it is suddenly taken away. That is the way I felt when the project finished”. Others indicated that they hoped their views would make a difference and one other who has been involved in community for a long time said “It was positive discussions and we felt we were being listened to so I hope it is not just a tick boxing exercise”.*
North Glasgow Challengers – Chancers Community Group, Possilpark Pitstops, Young Peoples Futures, Springburn Regeneration Forum, Afghan United.

Kate Smith
Community Outreach Team
20 February 2020