

Workshop discussion summary

This is a summary of the workshop organised by Glasgow Centre for Population Health that took place at the Calton Heritage and Learning Centre on the 29th November. It was designed to:

- Showcase seven community investigation projects carried out by participants on the Activate community development course
- Give course participants an opportunity to meet and talk with representatives of local organisations and community development workers
- Provide a space for discussion about:
 - How people feel about living in Glasgow
 - What people would like the future of Glasgow to be
 - What people feel similarly and differently about
 - What actions people think would improve life in Glasgow

We spent the first hour talking to the Activate course participants about their community investigation projects. They had set up stalls around the room that showcased their projects and were on hand to explain:

- Why they chose their project topic
- Where and how they gathered their information
- What conclusions they had come to and why

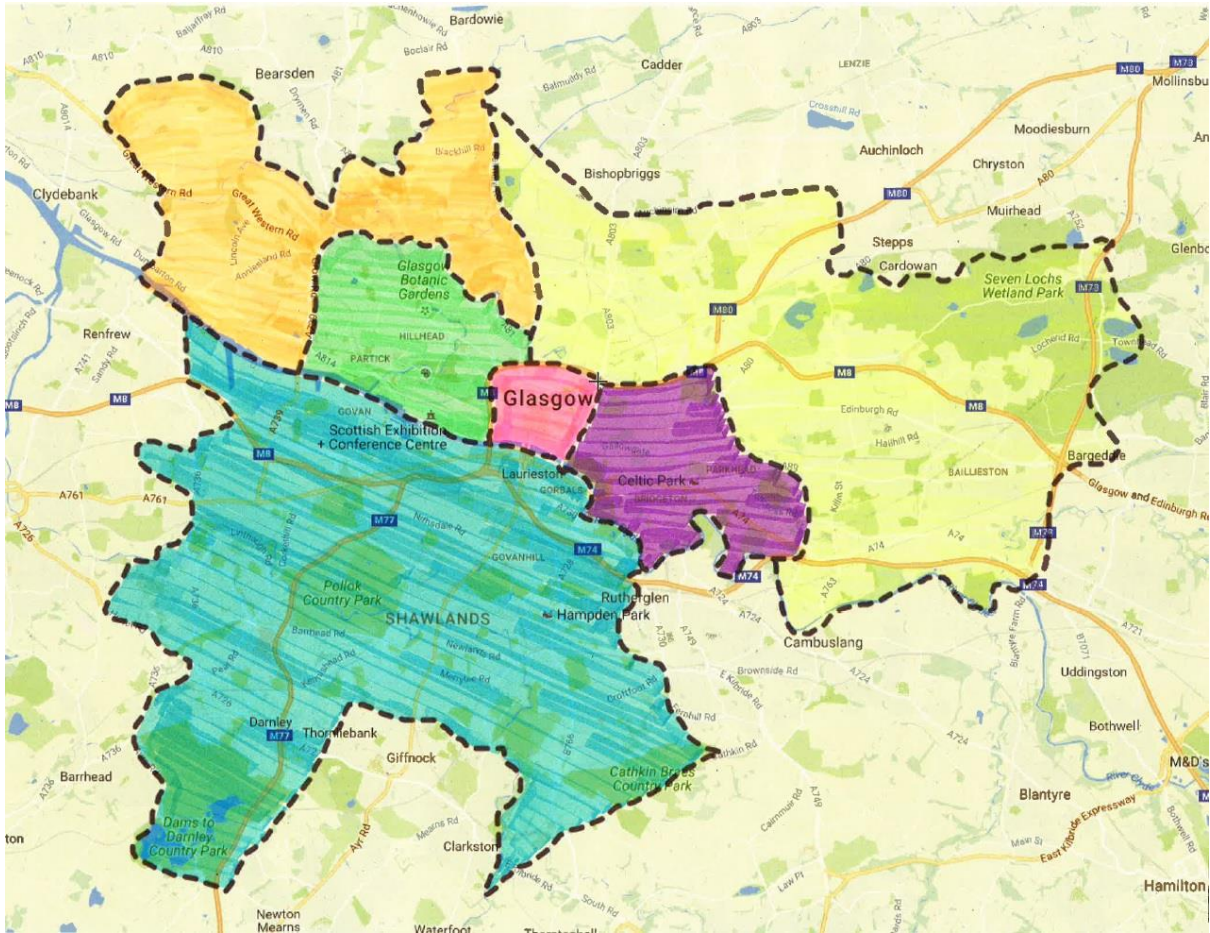
Their projects included:

- How can relationships between residents be built?
- What regeneration has happened and what have been the effects?
- How does having a job or not having a job affect quality of life?
- What social and community activities are offer and how do people find out about them?
- How can access to the social and community activities on offer be improved?
- How can the balance of power be restored for homeless people?
- Who holds power and how do we get access to them?

After this, we broke into groups based on which part of the city we were most familiar with (see map over). Each group was supported by a researcher from the Glasgow Centre for Population Health, who took notes during the discussion.

The groups worked through a series of discussion topics, including:

- What is it like to live in your part of the city?
- What does your part of the city score out of 7 as a place to live?
- What would your part of the city look like if it scored 7 out of 7 as a place to live?
- What would your part of the city look like if it scored your score +1 as a place to live?
- How are we going to get there?



We were encouraged to talk about where we felt differently from others in the group and why. We finished the day by each writing a card to ourselves describing what we had gotten out of the day. We also exchanged contact details with people we had met during the day and wanted to keep in touch with.

In total, 68 people attended the workshop, 20 of whom had completed the Activate course and were presenting their work on the day. A further 7 Glasgow Centre for Population Health staff helped to facilitate the discussions. Attendees came from a wide range of organisations, from local community-run groups, to Scotland-wide issue-based groups, to Glasgow Life, Glasgow City Council and the Health and Social Care Partnerships.

The feedback forms (completed by 30 people) showed that we most enjoyed getting to meet new people, make new connections and exchange ideas. The Activate course participants particularly enjoyed getting to show their work and have their issues heard.

The rest of this summary outlines the conversations from each of the discussion groups. It is organised around the different parts of the city that each group talked about. At the end there is a summary of the points raised overall and an outline of what will happen next with these discussions and with the research project as a whole.

Outer West

This group discussed Drumchapel, Knightswood, Anniesland, Scotstoun, Maryhill and Possil Park.

What it is like to live there?

- There's a sense of community and identity, although there was debate about whether this is a negative identity in some places, and whether some communities had been broken up by housing renewal (especially in Drumchapel)
- The quality and affordability of some housing is good, but there isn't enough of it
- The further north or west you go, the poorer the transport links tend to be, and Drumchapel is quite isolated
- There is some negativity around the potential to change for the better
- There are some excellent community spaces, but others are underused because people have little connection to them
- There is poverty and unemployment

What could it be like to live there?

- Strong relationships between neighbours based on tolerance, respect, kindness and the sharing of help and support
- Confidence and power among people to change things for the better
- A wide range of amenities, including free/affordable spaces to build relationships with neighbours, such as cafes and restaurants and shops
- A good reputation
- Good quality employment opportunities

Actions required to move forward:

- Grow confidence and self-belief
- Reduce stigma
- Communicate and build relationships between residents – this takes time
- Local people take control of investment so that it's in the most important things and is at an adequate level
- Design a physical environment that helps maintain relationships and control

Inner West

This group discussed Anderston, Finnieston, Hillhead and Kelvingrove.

What is it like to live there?

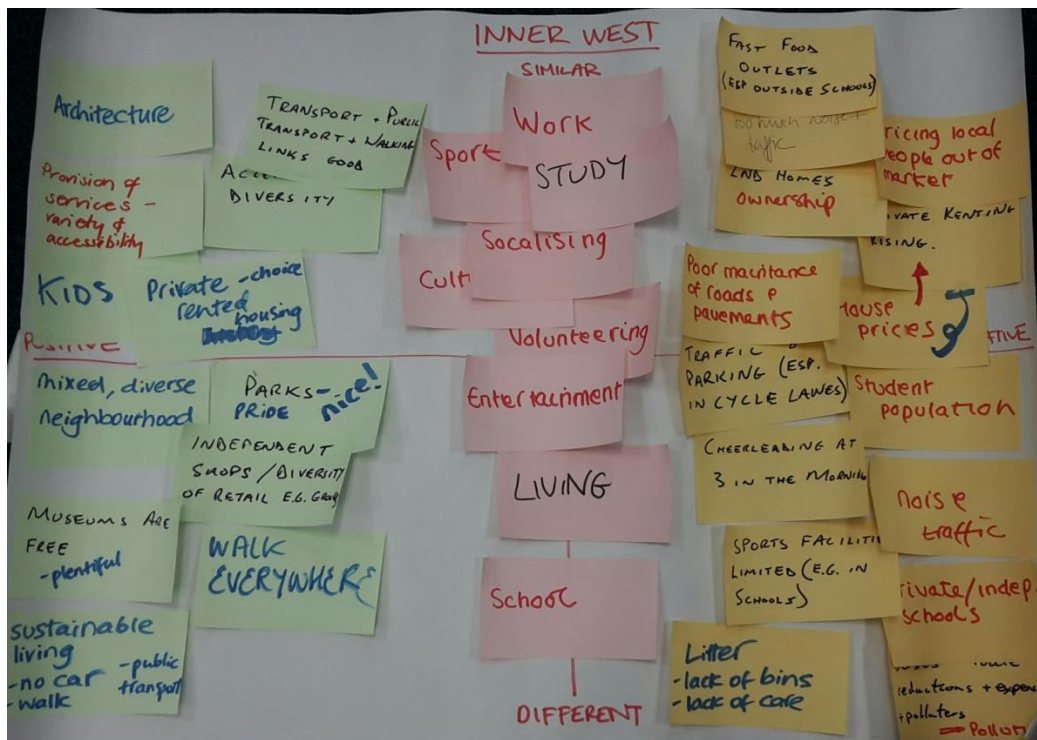
- Great location within the city with good transport links, but too much car congestion
- Good amenities, including shops and leisure facilities
- Good public green space, but a lack of private gardens
- Little affordable housing, made worse by the number of second homes and private rented properties
- Significant noise and disturbance from students and users of some leisure facilities like the SSE Hydro

What could it be like to live there?

- This area scored very highly so there were fewer areas for improvement than some of the other parts of the city
- More sustainable waste disposal and transport infrastructure (including walking)
- Some green space could be made safer by being more well-lit at night
- Greater use of the river for free activities

Actions required to move forward:

- This group disbanded after lunch, so did not complete the discussion.



Inner East

This group discussed Gallowgate, Calton, Barrowfield, Bridgeton, Dalmarnock and Parkhead.

What is it like to live there?

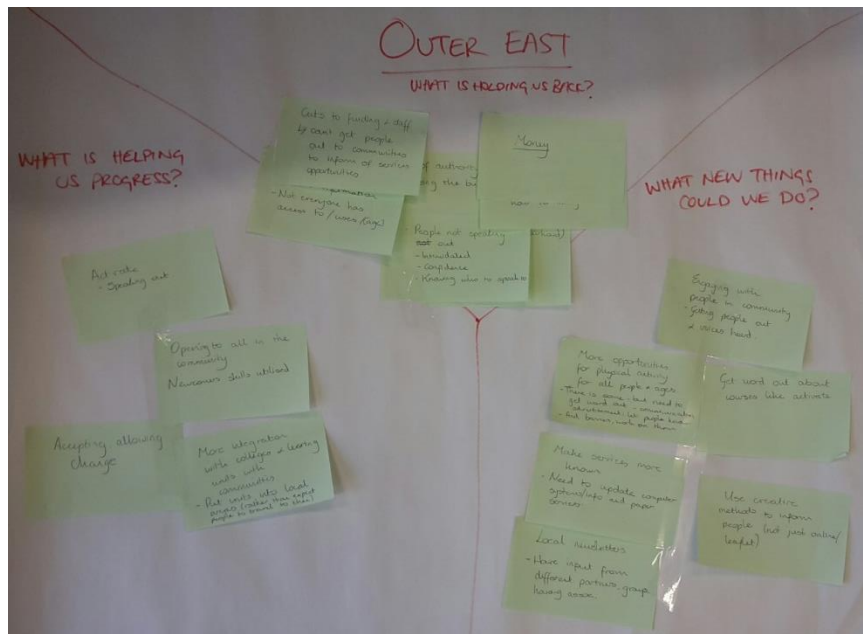
- There is strong community spirit, although some areas have lost the familiarity they once had, and Athlete's Village was highlighted as lacking a sense of community
- Transport is good along London Road, and some areas are close to the city centre, but patchy elsewhere
- There are huge funding pressures on local organisations
- Many people have to rely on benefits and experience poverty and poor health
- Some have concerns about safety, especially in the street at night

What could it be like to live there?

- A well-funded community sector that is well-publicised, well-known and well-used
- Strong communities and less people living in isolation
- High levels of community safety
- A strong, good reputation
- Enough skilled, stable jobs for local people
- Vacant land put to good use
- High levels of digital inclusion (everyone has access to and can use a computer and the internet)

Actions required to move forward:

- Existing communities need to be reinforced, not broken up and reinvented
- Generate some real legacy from the Commonwealth Games
- Local people taking charge of regeneration – not imposed by outsiders
- More local organisations and businesses, and especially more social enterprises
- New people in local community organisations, especially young people, and maybe greater use of social media to make this happen



Outer East

This group discussed Cranhill, Ruchazie, Garrowhill, Royston and Greater Easterhouse.

What is it like to live there?

- There is a strong community spirit, although there are still some divisions between areas
- There are some great community spaces, but not enough of them, especially free or cheap spaces and those that can be used as social spaces for adults
- There are different activities in different areas for children, young people, adults and older people, although some areas lack services for certain age groups and others are not well advertised
- Work has poor pay and conditions, there is not enough to go around, and this is especially stressful given changes to the benefits system and the sanctions that are imposed
- Transport is better the closer to the centre of Easterhouse you are, but its poor further out, and expensive wherever you live

What could it be like to live there?

- Local people are confident, involved in local planning and trust the Council
- There is good public transport that's free for children and young people
- People have access to good quality work locally, or within easy reach by public transport
- A fair tax system is in place, including Council Tax
- A range of affordable leisure activities, shops and services are available locally or within easy reach by public transport
- There are safe, free spaces for young people to socialise without feeling like they are under surveillance

Actions required to move forward:

- Local people build up their confidence and get genuinely involved in local planning
- Housing Associations and/or the Council build infrastructure for local shops alongside new homes, and invest in existing community services
- The Council encourage and support public transport providers to provide a better and more affordable service
- Housing Associations prioritise people with a local connection so that extended families can stay together for support
- Existing services and community activities need to be promoted in creative ways
- Existing social enterprises and voluntary projects need to be encouraged and grown
- Local people accept change and start to heal divisions across communities

Southside

This group talked about the Gorbals, Laurieston, Govan, Govanhill, Pollokshaws and Castlemilk.

What is it like to live there?

- Strong, active communities in some areas, although less strong in others
- A diverse population, which creates vibrancy, but can make it difficult for people to understand each other's way of life
- Lots of good amenities, organisations and facilities, although knowledge about them, access to them, distance to them and engagement with them could be better in some areas
- Poor quality private rented sector housing in some areas
- People experiencing poverty (and especially benefits sanctions) in some areas
- Lack of joined up thinking and working, with residents feeling disempowered

What could it be like to live there?

- A cohesive community with a range of people involved in and informed about things
- Good support services and amenities all over the Southside are accessible to everyone in the Southside through affordable transport and affordable prices
- People have tolerance, confidence and aspirations
- Strong, well-funded schools, coupled with quality, affordable childcare and education options for adults
- Good access to work
- Good access to quality, affordable housing

Actions required to move forward:

- Help more local people start or contribute to a business or non-profit organisation
- More democratic involvement of local residents in local government decisions and spending, with a long-term view of what the goals are
- Regulate and enforce regulation for private landlords
- Set-up skills and resource sharing schemes among local people to support one another and develop new skills
- The political will to change things
- Local people need to communicate more, especially across boundaries, be open to difference and change, and take responsibility and power

Overall

There were lots of points that came up in many of the discussion groups – these are issues that are affecting people across the city, regardless of where they live. Firstly, poverty and a lack of good quality employment, alongside a difficult benefits system, were identified as barriers to a happy, healthy life. However, many felt that there were lots of aspects of the areas they lived that could help support those having a difficult time.

In terms of community activity, many felt that new people needed to get involved in their community, especially young people and newcomers. This would give a more diverse group of people involved in shaping what happens in their local area. People recognised that confidence, aspiration and power were needed to get people more involved, and that sharing and learning skills from one another might be a way to improve this. People wanted more meaningful involvement in decision-making and saw a focus on longer-term goals, the genuine sharing of power and the building of trust with authority organisations as ways forward.

In terms of a sense of community, some areas were felt to be closer and more friendly than others. This was an important source of support for people and many saw housing as having a big effect on this. In some areas, big housing renewal projects have broken up close communities and in others there is not enough supply of housing for extended families to live in the same area. People also felt it was important to improve the reputation of their community from the point of view of outsiders.

In terms of social and community spaces (including green space), there was felt to be a lack of affordable, suitable spaces in many areas. This restricted the activities and services that could be organised and provided for people of different ages and needs. In some parts of the city, territoriality issues prevented people from accessing some spaces - people recognised the need to build relationships and heal divisions to deal with this. In other areas, use of derelict or vacant land to provide community and social spaces was seen as a solution.

In terms of shops, leisure facilities and services, some areas were not well provided for. The cost and quality of public transport was seen as a big contributing factor to this, as people couldn't access amenities outside of their local area. Local start-ups, community shops and other kinds of locally-run social enterprises, which could provide the services and amenities needed locally, were also seen as a solution. However, people recognised the need to build confidence and skills among local people first. Finally, people saw there was a need to better publicise the services and activities already happening, in creative ways and to new audiences.

Next steps

We will be organising a number of informal 'meet and chat' mornings and afternoons for those who want to follow-up the discussions from the workshop. These will be based in different parts of the city so that you can meet and share ideas with others from your local area. We hope this will give you all a chance to decide what you would like to do about the issues raised at the workshop. As soon as we have venues and dates confirmed for these sessions an invite will come out to you and you're welcome to send this on to others.

The feedback from many of those who attended the workshop is that they would like to attend a follow-up event. We are keen to hear your views on what might happen at a follow-up event, who should be invited and where/where it should take place. We know that some of those who attended the workshop struggled to commit to the full three and a half hours across the middle part of the day and we welcome your input on how any follow-up session could be better timed.

This workshop was part of a larger research project that looks at the past, present and future of four parts of the city: Anderston/Finnieston, Bridgeton/Dalmarnock, Drumchapel and Easterhouse. As well as working with the Activate course participants, it has also involved talking to people living or working in these four areas, as well as looking at written histories of these areas and statistics about them. The aim is to understand how these parts of the city have changed over the past few decades and the positive and negative impacts regeneration and development have had on people's quality of life there.

There will be an end of project report published in summer 2017, which you will receive a copy of. There will be a short, plain English summary of this report, too. If there are Activate community investigations, parts of this workshop summary or the final project report that are of interest to a group or organisation you are a part of or work with, we would be happy to come and talk to you. This could be a short presentation, a workshop, or something else. Please let us know.

More information

This summary has been sent to all of those who attended the workshop, as well as those who wanted to attend but were not able to. Please feel free to send it on to others.

If you have any questions about the workshop or the wider research project, or would like to be added to our mailing list, please contact Lisa Garnham on 0141 330 1924 or email lisa.garnham@gla.ac.uk. A full transcript of all of the notes taken by the facilitators on the day is available on request. If you need this document in an alternative format, please let us know.

More information about the Activate community development course, provided by the University of Glasgow, can be found at www.gla.ac.uk/schools/education/cpd/activate/

More information about the Glasgow Centre for Population Health can be found at www.gcph.co.uk

Thanks

Finally, we would like to offer our thanks to all of those who participated in the workshop. Special thanks and congratulations go to the Activate participants, who put a huge amount of time and effort into their projects and their stalls.

