A Journey to

A Wales of Cohesive Communities

1: People active in their communities: Creating the conditions where people and communities can do the things that matter to them

2: Connected communities: Supporting communities to be well connected and safe

3: Access to key well-being services: Supporting vibrant foundational economies

4: Community anchor organisations: Valuing the role and potential that community anchor organisations can play in building cohesive communities

A Journey to

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In the Well-being of Future Generations Act, this goal is defined as

"Attractive, safe, viable and well-connected."

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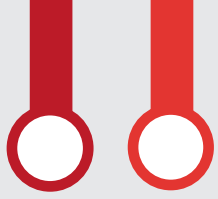
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Defining the goal

American writer Meg Wheatley wrote: "there is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about." Despite that, less than 25% of people across Wales think they can affect decisions made locally.

When communities are cohesive, they're well-connected (including digitally), can adapt to change, and are focused around the well-being of the people who live there with good access to key well-being services such as education, health, housing, retail and transport, and that people can do the things that matter to them.

Cohesive and connected communities are an important part of people's individual well-being. The World Health Organisation identified that lack of agency, trust, belonging and insecure neighbourhoods explain 19% of the gap in poor health between the top and bottom average incomes for men & women in Europe.

A key feature is the presence of strong, locally based institutions - often called 'community anchor organisations' – such as development trusts, social enterprises, coops, housing associations and town or community councils. They're important because they understand local communities and have a long-term commitment to the area they serve.

Cohesive communities also place well-being at the heart of local economic development. The Foundational Economy is about the universal basic services that support everyday life, such as health, care and retail. As these services make up approximately half of all local employment, are relatively stable and resistant to economic shocks, public bodies can value and strengthen them by opening space for conversations to maximise their potential, creating the conditions to help them make a bigger contribution.

Eg

Case studies
Throughout the document you will find a number of reports relating to the topic subject. Please read the link if you see this symbol.

Defining the goal

Where to focus action in contributing to this goal

Create viable communities where people can do the things that matter to them
(See cohesive communities Wales journey topic 1: People active in their communities)

Support communities to be well-connected
(See cohesive communities Wales journey topic 2: Connected communities)

Support access to key well-being services in communities
(See cohesive communities Wales journey topic 3: Access to key well-being services)

Value the role of key organisations in building cohesive communities
(See cohesive communities Wales journey topic 4: Community anchor organisations)

Understand the role of housing in cohesive communities
(Journey topic to be explored further in next phase)

Create communities where people feel safe
(Journey topic to be explored further in next phase)

Enable communities to be digitally connected
(Journey topic to be explored further in next phase)

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Other statutory requirements in relation to this goal

Active Travel Act 2013 requires local authorities to map and continuously improve routes and facilities for "active travel" – defined as walking and cycling for a purpose, like accessing work or services, rather than for leisure.

Planning Policy Wales is significant in moving us towards a low carbon, resilient society, building well-connected environments for everyone in Wales that improves our lives, health and well-being. It introduces the concept of placemaking, a holistic approach to the planning and design of development and spaces, focussed on positive outcomes. It draws upon an area's potential to create high quality development and public spaces that promote people's prosperity, health, happiness and well-being.

Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 imposes duties on local authorities, health boards and Welsh Ministers that require them to work to promote the well-being of those who need care and support, or carers who need support. The principles of the Act are: to support people who have care and support needs to achieve well-being; that people are at the heart of the new system by giving them an equal say in the support they receive; partnership and co-operation drives service delivery; and services will promote the prevention of escalating need and the right help is available at the right time.
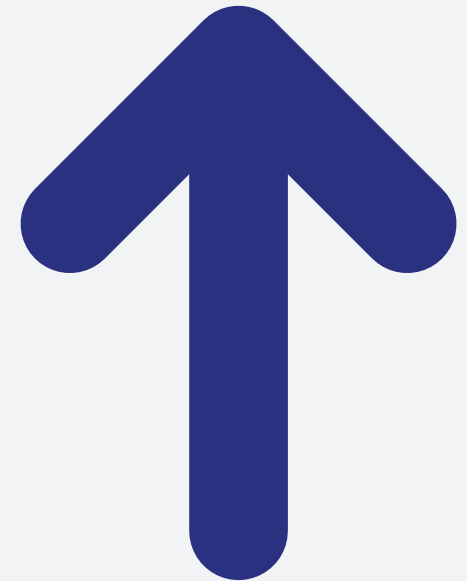
St

Some of the suggested steps and actions in this document complement the policies set out in legislation - specific steps and actions that adhere to these are highlighted in orange and with an 'St' symbol.

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Enablers

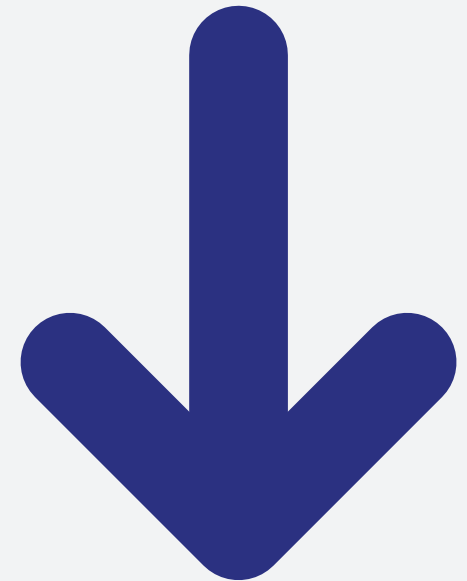Achieving this goal is **more likely to happen** when…

- **Public bodies create the best conditions to help communities do what matters to them.**

- **Public bodies embed 'what matters' to people conversations into how they work (see the [Journey to Involvement]).**

- **There is creative use of key funds and local budgets.**

- **Community anchor organisations which can give a voice to local people, are supported to hold assets and build resilience.**

- **There is support for community leaders, activists, entrepreneurs and volunteers.**

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Disablers

Achieving this goal is **less likely to happen** when…

- **Public bodies work in silos and don't take 'place-based' approaches to what matters to people.**

- **Public bodies take a deficit view of communities, focusing on perceived weaknesses and ignoring strengths.**

- **Funding opportunities are short term and fragmented.**

- **Attitudes to community ownership of assets are constrained by a view that public bodies are the 'natural place' for assets to be held and community ownership only becomes a possibility when public bodies cannot afford them.**

- **Public bodies talk about involvement and co-production but don't invest in doing it properly.**

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2: Connected communities

Supporting communities to be well connected and safe

A Wales of Cohesive Communities

2: Connected communities

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Defining the issue

Over 80% of journeys are currently made in cars - this is damaging for our health, causes air pollution, can contribute to accidents, social isolation, and can reduce employee productivity.

Public transport and community transport increase social interactions between communities, whilst protecting and enhancing green space. Active travel has a range of benefits for economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being, particularly for children and young people.

Sustrans set out the benefits of active travel for young people, which includes increased concentration, more positive mood, encouraging healthy growth and development and reducing anxiety and stress.

Synergies and connections to other journeys

Journey to a Healthier Wales
Topic 5: Physical activity

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Making **Simple** Changes

Promote active travel throughout your organisation.

Eg E.g. **Cardiff and Vale University Health Board** Cycle to Work scheme.

Publish active travel maps to get to hospitals.

Support a varied choice of cycle routes to the public which avoid and highlight polluted areas.

Eg E.g. **Cardiff and the Vale** - Moving Forward - Healthy Travel for All in Cardiff and the Vale Cardiff.

Support car sharing and car clubs.

Scope the provision of electric vehicle charging points in your premises, workplaces, commercial developments and residential areas.

Eg E.g. **Monmouthshire County Council.**

Support community transport schemes, especially in rural areas, including volunteer led car sharing schemes.

Sign up to the Cycle Workplace Challenge to encourage and promote active travel to your staff.

Encourage physical activity during the working day by providing lockers and other facilities for staff.

Learn from studies that encourage everyday walking to school, to work and in communities.

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Being More **Adventurous**

Provide electric vehicle charging points across your estate, and publicise them to staff and to the public.

Eg E.g. **Caerphilly County Borough Council** Electric Vehicle Strategy.

Switch from petrol and diesel to electric fleet vehicles.

Eg E.g. **Monmouthshire County Council** are trialling 20 hydrogen fuel cell cars, working with RiverSimple.

Be part of an annual car free day in cities and towns – to encourage pedestrians, cyclists and use of public transport and community activities.

Eg E.g. Car Free Day Cardiff and Paris.

Explore the relevant legal duties in order to pilot car free streets and street play for children and young people.

Undertake analysis to understand whether there is a gender gap in active travel and work with communities and relevant groups to address the reasons why. The Sustrans Bike project funded by the Scottish Government increased cycling amongst girls by over 5%.

Negotiate corporate membership schemes with transport companies, for discounts to employees of public service organisations, and seek to roll out to third sector and private sector organisations.

Establish cycle to work salary sacrifice schemes and cycling expenses policies, so that staff are encouraged to commute using active travel.

Eg E.g. **Carmarthenshire Cycling Strategy.**

Make pool bikes available for use by employees to commute and travel to meetings.

Support social enterprises that promote cycling and active travel.

Learn from **Newport City Council** and **Sustrans** work with **St David's RC Primary** to improve active travel through community design.

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Owning your **Ambition**

National or collaborative actions

Create a vision and long-term plan for a transport system that maximises benefits to the economy and our society, as well as our environment and culture. Scottish Government doubled their investment to £80 million in 2018-19 for active travel.

Eg

E.g. Be inspired by **City of Edinburgh Council's** 'Transport 2030 vision'

Work with operators to procure emission free public transport and support initiatives for electric and hybrid vehicles**.**

Work through planning and economic development initiatives to foster low impact development that reduces the need to travel by private car.

Invest in cycling infrastructure to develop a UK leading comprehensive cycle network.

E.g. In Bogota in Colombia, the city council succeeded in negotiating the public realm away from car use in favour of active travel, including hundreds of miles of cycle paths.

Create walkable and 'cyclable' neighbourhoods through 20mph speed limits, placemaking, streetscape design and re-design to encourage walking and cycling.

Organisational actions

Develop a staff Healthy Travel Charter, and then roll it out to other organisations.

Eg

E.g. Cardiff Active Healthy Travel Scheme

Make Bike Hire schemes, such as the Nextbike scheme in Cardiff, mainstream modes of transport within communities.

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Owning your **Ambition**

Support cycle infrastructure.

Eg

E.g. As well as a comprehensive cycle network, the city of Utrecht in the Netherlands is providing the practical infrastructure helping achieve 43% of all trips being made by bike. This includes building the world's biggest bicycle parking lot with space for 12,500 bikes, indoor ramps and digital systems to direct cyclists to free space.

Provide opportunities to connect cycling routes with nature.

Eg

E.g. The Taff Trail in South Wales and Limburg in Belgium, where cyclists can ride 'through water' on a specially designed path that cuts through the ponds of a nature reserve.

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Other examples and resources

The Bicycle Architecture Biennale (BAB) is a prestigious showcase of cutting edge and high-profile building designs that are facilitating bicycle travel and transforming communities around the world: https://bycs.org/bab/

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