



BEING WELL TOGETHER

The creation of the Co-op Community Wellbeing Index

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With contribution from Geolytix



GEOLYTIX

About The Young Foundation

The Young Foundation finds new ways of tackling major social challenges by working alongside communities, using the tools of research and social innovation. We run a range of national and international programmes, and work in partnership with leading organisations, thinkers and policymakers to achieve this.



We have created and supported over 80 organisations including: Which?, The Open University, Language Line, Social Innovation Exchange, School for Social Entrepreneurs, Uprising and Action for Happiness.

Find out more at www.youngfoundation.org

About the Co-op

The Co-op is one of the world's largest consumer co-operatives with interests across food, funerals, insurance, legal services and an online electrical store. It has a clear purpose of championing a better way of doing business for you and your communities. Owned by millions of UK consumers, the Co-op operates 2,600 food stores, over 1,000 funeral homes and it provides products to over 5,100 other stores, including those run by independent co-operative societies and through its wholesale business, Nisa Retail Limited. It has more than 63,000 colleagues and an annual revenue of £9.5bn.



About Geolytix

At Geolytix we solve problems where location matters. We are global experts in location analytics and geospatial modelling. We couple our data on places and people with our knowledge of the retail, leisure and service industries to provide practical solutions, robust advice and new insight for our customers across the world.



We are big believers in open data and relish the opportunity to create new, innovative datasets that help us understand our communities and places better.

Find out more at www.geolytix.com

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FOREWORD

Helen Goulden

Chief Executive, The Young Foundation

The Co-op Community Wellbeing Index is the first measure of community wellbeing at a neighbourhood level across all four nations of the UK. It builds on a decade of work across The Young Foundation exploring wellbeing, happiness and community. Some of that work (such as the [Action for Happiness](#)) takes the individual as a starting point, encouraging people to take action to increase wellbeing in their communities. Other work has taken a national perspective such as [Sinking & Swimming \(Watts et al., 2009\)](#), which sought to explore the wellbeing of the nation through the lens of both material and psychological needs.

The Community Wellbeing Index builds on this body of work by recognising the critical importance of having a collective sense of wellbeing in the communities in which we live. It provides a foundation for exploring quite fundamental questions about how well we are living together and the context and conditions for creating both individual and collective wellbeing.

There are serious and growing geographic inequalities across the UK, a looming possibility of a more fragmented nation following Brexit, a society that has been broadly bred on an idea of maximising one's own happiness as the ideal as long as it does not harm others, and an increasing knowledge that higher levels of affluence do not seem to be associated with greater levels of wellbeing. In this context it is more important than ever that we look to a broader set of conditions that foster a broader sense of wellbeing.



The Community Wellbeing Index looks at both material and social conditions that support community wellbeing. In that regard, and in its attempt to map over 28,000 communities across the UK, it is ambitious. For anyone looking at more place-based approaches to funding and interventions it provides a valuable baseline — and many opportunities to extend, evolve and bring in new data, not least from communities themselves through sharing their own stories and experiences. For those exploring a particular topic, such as the ways in which arts and heritage organisations support wellbeing in specific communities, or how to understand prevalence of loneliness at a neighbourhood level, it also offers an opportunity to target resources and action.

Rebecca Birkbeck

Director of Community Engagement, Co-op

Concern for community has shaped Co-op's purpose, values and principles since 1844. As a member-owned organisation we have the unique opportunity to connect with - and understand - the communities served by our different businesses today.

It's why our purpose is to "champion a better way of doing business for you and your communities" - responding to our members' needs and standing up for what they believe in.

Community isn't just about giving back money, it's about understanding what our communities need and helping our members get actively involved to make them stronger.

Our work in communities is wide-ranging, but focused on bringing people together and helping them find new ways to co-operate. Since we re-launched our membership scheme in September 2016 we've given over £24 million back to local causes through our Local Community Fund in the communities where our members live.

We have over 200 Member Pioneers - special people who share our passion to make great things happen - bringing our colleagues, members and local causes together to find new ways to co-operate and get things done in our communities.

We're working with the British Red Cross to campaign against loneliness, raising £6.5 million and tackling social isolation through our Community Connectors programme.

Our campaigning work to tackle modern slavery continues and this year we became the first corporate organisation in the world to sign the Anti-Slavery International Charter.



We also understand the importance of education in our communities and are now the biggest corporate sponsor of academies in the UK, currently running 12 academies and tripling this to 40 by 2022.

That's why we're pleased to be publishing the first ever Community Wellbeing Index which will help our Co-op and others make communities in the UK better places to live for everyone.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

In 2018, on the basis of extensive research and development, the Co-op launched a Community Wellbeing [Index](#) (CWI), the first measure of community wellbeing at a neighbourhood level across the UK. This report presents the CWI and the conceptual model, methodology, and evidence it is based on. The report has been written for anybody interested in community wellbeing and is likely to be of particular interest to community sector organisations and practitioners, policy-makers, researchers, and funders.

Background

The Co-op, The Young Foundation and Geolytix have established a partnership to understand and enhance community wellbeing in the UK. Over the past 40 years there has been increasing attention to the idea of wellbeing in public policy. This reflects the connected observations that higher levels of affluence do not seem to be associated with greater happiness in Western countries and that a single-minded focus on economic growth and GDP ignores many other important aspects of life which matter to people (Layard, 2011). It is now well recognised that wellbeing is not limited to material resources, with charities,¹ nations,² and supra-national³ organisations making efforts to measure and enhance various aspects of wellbeing.

These initiatives have sought to understand wellbeing at multiple geographic levels, including local, regional, and national levels. However, the majority of these measures have been inherently individual in scale, often summing the individual wellbeing of a population and rarely developing

measures applicable to a level below local authorities. As such, many of these measures can be seen to marginalise the social context of relationships, place and community that are so important in determining experiences of wellbeing (Davies, 2016).

To develop our collective understanding of community wellbeing — and what it means to ‘be well together’ — the Co-op commissioned The Young Foundation to design a conceptual model of ‘community wellbeing’ which, in partnership with Geolytix, has been operationalised as an index of community wellbeing at a neighbourhood level across the UK. This [Index](#) measures community wellbeing in over 28,000 communities across the country, building on over a decade of research and action by The Young Foundation on local and community wellbeing.⁴

In order to develop the CWI, The Young Foundation developed a methodology based on principles of co-production⁵ with communities to ensure that the CWI reflects the experiences, voices and views of communities themselves rather than being imposed from ‘above’. We conducted 15 workshops across the UK, interviewed 19 experts on community wellbeing, and conducted a literature review and scan of existing measures of collective wellbeing. In total we worked with 406 people to inform this research.

We used the insights provided by the literature review and qualitative research to draft the CWI which was then tested and developed iteratively at community workshops and in collaboration with project partners.

¹ See for example, Action for Happiness: www.actionforhappiness.org/

² See for example, the UK Office of National Statistics annual wellbeing report, available here: www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing

³ See for example, the United Nations annual World Happiness Report, available here: worldhappiness.report/

⁴ See for example, Neighbourliness + Empowerment = Wellbeing (Mulgan, 2008), The Wellbeing and Resilience Measure (Bacon, 2010), and our flagship wellbeing spin-out, Action for Happiness.

⁵ Co-production involves the active participation of citizens in the creation of policies, services, or initiatives of which they are the target audience i.e. it is an attempt to avoid ‘top down’ policy or service development.

“In our community, people can rely on each other and also can ask for advice from one another. (London Islington (2))

Concept of community wellbeing

To underpin the development of the Index we explored the concepts of ‘wellbeing’, ‘community’ and ‘community wellbeing’. We found that:

- **‘Wellbeing’ has been described as “all the things people need in order to lead a good life”** (Layard, 2011, p. 4). Key dimensions of wellbeing, some of which overlap, include: the fulfilment of absolute and relative needs (Maslow, 1943); objective (observable) and subjective wellbeing (happiness and life satisfaction) (White and Blackmore, 2016); the capability approach which explores what people are able to be and do (Sen, 1999; Alkire and Deneulin, 2009); and relational wellbeing which explores how people relate with each other and the places they live in, to generate wellbeing (Atkinson, 2013; White, 2015).
- Scholars have argued that **focusing predominantly on subjective and individual wellbeing can obscure the relational, contextual and material factors that contribute to wellbeing** (Davies, 2016). We suggest that a broader lens of ‘community wellbeing’ can help to highlight these relational, social and contextual factors which help to make a ‘good life’, and which interact with individual and personal factors. An individual’s wellbeing is dependent on the collective and vice versa.
- **There are multiple and often intersecting definitions and experiences of ‘community’, including communities of place, identity, experience and/or interest, which can be experienced in the digital and/or physical realm.** Despite trends of globalisation, place continues to be an important foundation for experiences of community, especially for those facing economic challenges and limited mobility (Batty et al., 2011).
- The concept of ‘community wellbeing’ is far less developed than the concept of personal wellbeing. In essence, our research found that **community wellbeing is more than the sum of individual wellbeing: it is a shared and collective experience of wellbeing, of which individual wellbeing is one component.**
- Focusing on **shared resources, place, and relationships can help to shift focus away from an individualised to a collective concept of wellbeing, which is best understood as a dynamic process of creation, interaction and maintenance,** rather than as a fixed outcome. Based on our research, and reflecting the Co-op’s place-based approach to community, we have developed the following definition of community wellbeing:

Definition of community wellbeing

Community wellbeing is a collective feeling of leading a ‘good life’, shared and created by people and organisations. Community wellbeing is more than the sum of people’s individual wellbeing; it is the relationships between people and with place.

Co-op Community Wellbeing Index

Building on our concept of community wellbeing and based on our research with communities, we developed a model of community wellbeing, as shown in Figure 1. In our model, community wellbeing is comprised of three key pillars; people, place and relationships. These overlap and intersect as part of a relational and dynamic process. Nesting within each of these key pillars are nine domains⁶ of community wellbeing. These domains strongly echo Co-op values of solidarity, equity, equality, democracy, self-help and self-responsibility.

The complete Index, including an explanation which reflects the aspirations of communities for each domain and related indicators, can be seen in Table 1. These indicators⁷ represent the best data currently available at a neighbourhood level and we see this as a 'best fit' first iteration of the CWI which we intend to grow and develop over time with the collection and emergence of new data sets. The Index uses these indicators to measure community wellbeing in 28,317 neighbourhoods across the UK.

“We need more community spaces that are inclusive, a melting pot of wonderfulness, a place for change makers to come together. (Shoreham)



⁶ Throughout this report we use the term 'domain' to refer to these nine key aspects of community wellbeing that we have identified through our research and which are included in the Co-op CWI.
⁷ A full explanation of the indicators, construction of measures and data sources can be seen in Appendix 6.



Figure 1: Overarching model of community wellbeing

Table 1: Community Wellbeing Index and comparison with Co-op values and principles

Core pillar	Community wellbeing domain	Community aspirations	Indicators
Relationships	1. Relationships and trust	Creating strong and meaningful social, familial and community relationships, solidarity, and togetherness amongst people from across all backgrounds to create a feeling of inclusion, belonging and trust. This is dependent on people treating each other and the community with respect and dignity, and in line with the law, as well as the accessibility and quality of infrastructure, such as social spaces, and opportunities to facilitate this.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social spaces • Presence of young children • Isolation: One person household, aged 50+ • Isolation: Long-term health status • Proximity of work to home • Household churn • Crime in the community • Crime in nearest town centre
	2. Equality	Treating everybody equally so that everybody has an equal and fair opportunity to prosper, regardless of their ethnicity, religion, race, age, ability, sexuality, gender, income etc. People who are potentially excluded are acknowledged, supported and treated with dignity. Where there are differences in people's opportunities and outcomes they are moderate rather than extreme and ensuring services, infrastructure and efforts are in place to promote equality, equity and fairness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gap in house prices • Second home ownership • Proximity to independent schools • Gap in qualifications • Ethnic minority representation in professional occupations • Income inequality • Long-term housing security
	3. Voice and participation	Enabling people to take action and responsibility, as individuals and as collectives, to improve the local community and beyond. People, regardless of their background, have opportunities to have a voice on issues which are important to them and they are heard. Democratic governance and decision-making mechanisms are in place and are taken up.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voter turnout • Co-op member engagement⁸ • Signing petitions
People	4. Health	Creating good physical and mental health among the community by providing accessible and good quality services, opportunities and assets - such as public and voluntary sector health and social care services and initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to health services • GP prescription rates
	5. Education and learning	Maximising educational and learning outcomes of people in a community across all age groups, with the aim of promoting employability as well as personal growth and fulfilment. The provision of accessible, affordable and quality services and infrastructure to enable lifelong learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to schools • School quality • Access to adult education • Access to libraries
	6. Economy, work and employment	Contributing to an economy which is prosperous, sustainable, ethical, inclusive and meets the needs of the local people. It includes the availability of sufficient, fairly-paid, flexible, secure and quality employment for people of all ages, in a way which is respectful of work-life balance. Services and infrastructure are in place to enable employment, economic prosperity and to protect people through economic hardship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity of work to home • Hours worked • Household income • Vacant commercial units • Free school meals • Unemployment

⁸ This indicator is only applicable in relevant geographies where there is a Co-op presence.

Core pillar	Community wellbeing domain	Community aspirations	Indicators
Place	7. Culture, heritage and leisure	Creating culture and leisure activities, services and amenities which are accessible, affordable and inclusive. The diverse history and legacy of a community and the people within it, regardless of their background, are celebrated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of artists and musicians • Leisure facilities • Museums, galleries, music halls and theatres • Listed buildings • Places of worship
	8. Housing, space and environment	Providing and accessing affordable, secure and quality housing and a surrounding living environment which is safe and clean. Well-kept public outdoor and indoor spaces are accessible, inclusive, environmentally sustainable and suitable for a range of people across different age groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordability of housing • Overcrowding • Public green space • Public indoor space • Traffic air and noise pollution
	9. Transport, mobility and connectivity	Providing and accessing appropriate, affordable and sustainable transport and telecommunication networks that ensure everyone, including people with disabilities, has a way of moving around and communicating with the community (and beyond), enabling them to enjoy local assets and opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet provision • Public transport

“Being a Hull City of Culture volunteer: I have met so many nice volunteers, and I interact with the public. I feel like I belong.”

Uniqueness of Co-op Community Wellbeing Index

The Co-op CWI is the first measure of **community wellbeing** at a **neighbourhood level** across **all four nations of the UK**. Based on our review of existing measures of community wellbeing, the key aspects of the Co-op CWI that make it unique are its:

- **Concept:** Its conceptualisation of and application to *community* wellbeing, rather than to individual, regional or national wellbeing.
- **Design:** The combination of nine community wellbeing domains which nest within three core pillars of community wellbeing: people, place and relationships.
- **Geographic unit:** Its practical application to a sub-local authority — neighbourhood — geographic level i.e. a level which could genuinely be considered to be a place-based community.
- **Geographic scope:** Its application to all four nations of the United Kingdom.
- **Measurement level:** Its application as a measure of community wellbeing comprised of a set of indicators.
- **Methodology:** The methodology employed to create the Index involved working directly in collaboration with communities and drawing on the Co-op's close relationship with its members and the Young Foundation's community networks.

“When we feel our voice is heard in situations that affect us. (York)”



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

In 2018 the Co-op launched a Community Wellbeing Index (CWI), the first measure of community wellbeing at a neighbourhood level across the UK. This report presents the CWI and the conceptual model, methodology and evidence it is based on. The report has been written for anybody interested in community wellbeing and is likely to be of particular interest to community sector organisations and practitioners, policy-makers, researchers, and funders.

1.2 Background

The Co-op and The Young Foundation have established a partnership to understand and enhance community wellbeing in the UK. Over the past 40 years there has been increasing attention to the idea of wellbeing in public policy. This reflects the connected observations that higher levels of affluence do not seem to be associated with greater happiness in Western countries and that a single-minded focus on economic growth and GDP ignores many other important aspects of life which matter to people (Layard, 2011). It is now well recognised that wellbeing is not limited to material resources, with charities⁹, nations¹⁰ and supra-national¹¹ organisations making efforts to measure and enhance various aspects of wellbeing.

These initiatives have sought to understand wellbeing at multiple geographic levels, including local, regional, and national levels. However, the majority of these measures have been inherently 'individual in scale', often summing the individual wellbeing of a population and rarely developing measures applicable to a level below local authorities. As such, many of these measures can be seen to marginalise the social context of relationships, place and community that is so important in determining experiences of wellbeing (Davies, 2016).

To develop our collective understanding of *community wellbeing* — and what it means to 'be well together' — the Co-op commissioned The Young Foundation to design a conceptual model of 'community wellbeing' which, in partnership with Geolytix, has been operationalised as an **Index of community wellbeing at a neighbourhood level across the UK**. Our vision is for this measure to provide insight on community wellbeing as well as serving as a spring-board for evidence-based action. As such, this work builds on over a decade of research and action by The Young Foundation on local and community wellbeing.¹²

This report presents the Co-op Community Wellbeing Index (CWI), and the concept, methodology and evidence it is based on.

⁹ See for example, Action for Happiness: actionforhappiness.org

¹⁰ See for example, the UK Office of National Statistics annual wellbeing report, available here: ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing

¹¹ See for example, the United Nations annual World Happiness Report, available here: worldhappiness.report/

¹² See for example, Neighbourliness + Empowerment = Wellbeing (Mulgan, 2008), The Wellbeing and Resilience Measure (Bacon, 2010), and our flagship wellbeing venture, Action for Happiness (as above), which is an international movement for happiness.

1.3 Research methodology

The Young Foundation's methodology was designed to build an evidence base for informing the design and creation of the CWI; that is, to provide a broad overview of the key dimensions and domains of community wellbeing from the perspectives of communities. We developed a methodology based on the following key principles:

- A community-led and co-created Index based on views, voices and experiences of communities, and built from 'the ground up'

- An evidence-based Index, drawing on existing secondary data and primary data related to community wellbeing

Our methodology thus aimed to avoid taking a 'top-down' approach to the development of wellbeing indicators which has been roundly critiqued in the literature (Scott & Bell, 2013; Kim et al., 2014).

An overview of our methodology can be seen in Figure 2. It depicts the iterative approach taken to develop the Index, alternating between data collection, Index design and discussion with Co-op and Geolytix.

Figure 2: Overview of Young Foundation project methodology



Table 2 outlines the key methods employed, the sample or source we drew from, and the key insights provided by each method. In total we worked with 406 people to inform this research.

Table 2: Summary of research methods

Method	Sample/source	Key areas of insight
Literature review	Online literature related to community wellbeing	The concept of community wellbeing, key debates, methodologies for creating indices, and existing indices and measures. A reference list can be seen in Endnotes.
Semi-structured interviews	19 experts from academia, think tanks, local government and the third sector	The concept of community wellbeing and implementation of indices. For a full list of participants, please see Appendix 1.
Community participatory workshops	387 people in 15 communities across the UK	The domains which are important to people's sense of individual and community wellbeing. See Appendix 2 for a summary of participants.

The community workshops formed the centrepiece of our methodology. These took place in two phases:

Phase 1 approached the question of what determines communities' sense of wellbeing from an open and exploratory perspective.

Phase 2 workshops sought to test and refine the draft community wellbeing model, as well as to explore the relative importance of domains to participants.

Appendix 2¹³ shows a summary of the demographic characteristics of workshop participants; overall we achieved a good spread

of representation in terms of gender, age, and ethnicity, albeit there was a slightly higher proportion of attendance among women and those in the 41-64 age group. The map in Figure 3 shows the 15 locations in which we conducted community workshops.

The full data-set was uploaded onto NVIVO (a qualitative analytic programme) and coded to help identify the key themes emerging from the findings. All quotes have been anonymised.

The quantitative data sets, such as the 2011 census and the Land Registry, that are used to populate the Index are outlined in Appendix 6.

Figure 3: Map of community workshop locations



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It should be noted that since there were three workshops in London and two conducted in the London borough of Islington they have been named London Islington 1 and 2. The other workshop in London is named London Greenwich.

1.4 Analytical approach

“We like to divide things up as it makes it easier for us to understand, but these things are messy. It is not the way life is lived. (Academic interviewee)



Our research methodology produced a large data set to draw on to create the Community Wellbeing Index. The literature review revealed that one of the major challenges in implementing community wellbeing measures is the process of agreeing upon a finite number of domains among competing priorities and interest groups (Ereaut & Whiting, 2008; Atkinson & Joyce, 2011; Brown et al., 2017). It is at this juncture that certain interests and experiences can either be revealed or hidden, and can potentially significantly impact the direction of policy and practice.

As such, our methodology for distilling the large quantity of data we collected into a finite number of domains involved the creation and refinement of domains against the following criteria:¹⁴

1. **Balance between breadth and depth** so that domains are neither too broad nor too narrow in their focus.
2. **Amenable to local action** as factors that local communities can aspire to have an influence on.
3. **Understandable** and readily understood by a range of audiences.

4. **Valid and meaningful to people** and reflective of people's understanding of community wellbeing.
5. **Reflect diverse perspectives**, including those of vulnerable and marginalised groups.
6. **Measurable** so that each domain can be quantitatively assessed.
7. **Availability of data** at a neighbourhood level across the UK.

In order to assess whether the emerging domains met these criteria we built frequent collaboration and iteration into the methodology, testing the emerging model amongst The Young Foundation team, with communities, Geolytix and the Co-op. In particular, we assessed the viability of domains in five community workshops in terms of criteria 2, 3, 4, and 5 and we worked with Co-op and Geolytix to assess the domains in terms of criteria 1, 6 and 7. We have attempted to reflect the depth and nuance of views on community wellbeing in the CWI as far as possible but, inevitably, due to the need to create a finite and concise index, there are aspects of community wellbeing which are not reflected in the index as they do not fulfil all of the criteria above. Further information on the alignment of the domains with available data, and the operationalisation of the CWI as a measure, is outlined by Geolytix in section 5.

¹⁴

These criteria have been drawn and adapted from Jacobs (2009) and also from Brown et al (2016).

2. CONCEPT OF COMMUNITY WELLBEING

What is community wellbeing?

‘Wellbeing’ has been described as ‘all the things people need in order to lead a good life’. Key dimensions of wellbeing, some of which overlap, include: the fulfilment of absolute and relative needs; objective (observable) and subjective wellbeing (happiness and life satisfaction); the capability approach which explores what people are able to be and do; and relational wellbeing which explores how people relate with each other and the places they live in, to generate wellbeing.

Scholars have argued that **focusing predominantly on subjective and individual wellbeing can obscure the relational, contextual and material** factors that contribute to wellbeing. A broader lens of community wellbeing can help to highlight the relational and contextual factors which make a ‘good life’.

There are **multiple and often intersecting definitions and experiences of ‘community’**, including communities of place, identity, experience and/or interest, which can be experienced in the digital and/or physical realm. Despite trends of globalisation, **place continues to be an important foundation for experiences of community**, especially for those facing economic challenges and limited mobility.

The concept of community wellbeing is far less developed than the concept of personal wellbeing. In essence, **community wellbeing is more than the sum of individual wellbeing; it is a shared and collective experience of wellbeing, of which individual wellbeing is one component.**

Focusing on shared resources, place, and relationships can help to shift focus away from individualised ideas of wellbeing to broader relations between people and places which are best conceived as a dynamic process of interaction, rather than a fixed outcome.

Based on the literature review and primary research, we have developed the following definition of community wellbeing to underpin the CWI:

Definition of community wellbeing

Community wellbeing is a collective feeling of leading a ‘good life’, shared and created by people and organisations. Community wellbeing is more than the sum of people’s individual wellbeing; it is the relationships between people and with place.

2.1 Overview

As a starting point to the creation of the Co-op Community Wellbeing Index, we sought to explore the overarching concept, an idea made up of two concepts – ‘community’ and ‘wellbeing’ – which are each in their own right contentious and multi-faceted. Whilst there have been many decades of research on the concept of wellbeing and its measurement, as we will see, there has been far less theoretical work on the concept of community wellbeing, and even less on measuring community wellbeing at a neighbourhood level across the UK. In this section we aim to develop a definition of community wellbeing by drawing primarily on a review of relevant literature and interviews with experts, supplemented with findings from community workshops.

2.2 Wellbeing

In order to understand community wellbeing, we will first briefly explore the key dimensions of wellbeing as a concept. Perhaps most simply the concept of wellbeing has been described as an attempt to define “all the things people need in order to lead a good life” (Layard, 2011). Yet what constitutes the good life has been approached in a number of different ways.

A needs-based approach to wellbeing can be based on an absolute concept of needs, including the things that every human being requires to survive — such as food and shelter — to more relative and socially-defined needs, such as access to employment, education and the internet (Maslow, 1943; Doyal & Gough, 1991). Several of our expert interviewees frame wellbeing in terms of meeting needs. For example:

“People should be born into families where there is enough food on the table and stability in terms of housing and people getting the help and support they need. There needs to be access to good education, good jobs.”

A key way in which researchers have differentiated between types of human needs is by exploring objective and subjective dimensions, as one interviewee suggested: *“it is a mix of concepts, which are both subjective and measurable”*. Academics Sarah White and Chloe Blackmore (2016, p.8) explain the distinction as:

“Objective dimensions of wellbeing are those that in principle can be verified by an external observer. Quality of housing, level of education or income would be examples. Subjective dimensions of wellbeing are those that are interior to the person him or herself, thoughts and feelings where in principle the individual is the ultimate authority.”

While understandings of objective wellbeing can be verified by an external observer, the extent to which needs are met is often more contested (Doyal & Gough, 1991).

Reflections from community workshops: objective wellbeing

In a workshop in Aberdeen, a participant spoke about how their sense of wellbeing was diminished by the difficulty in finding *“appropriate and affordable housing”*.

A participant in York talked about the need for *“access to basic services – schools, doctors, shops, mobility issues, internet access... and support to access them.”* Several young people in London Islington highlighted the importance of sports and exercise facilities for their wellbeing. One young person told us that *“there are no good gyms in the area that are independent, I love free weights”* and another said that *“The Arsenal hub helps the community”*.

In Leeds the significance of *“things we take for granted”* like *“infrastructure, clean safe water, sewage and public health”* were mentioned.

There has been growing attention to the importance of more subjective aspects of wellbeing in recent years as a result of the studies which show that higher levels of affluence do not seem to be associated with greater happiness (Layard, 2011). It is now well recognised that wellbeing is not limited to material resources, with national organisations, including the UK Office of National Statistics, and supra-national organisations, such as the OECD and United Nations, making efforts to measure subjective wellbeing. Participants in interviews, as well as the literature we reviewed, stressed the need to consider not only *objective*, but also *subjective* aspects of wellbeing.

Subjective wellbeing can be seen as “thinking and feeling positively about one’s life” and can be thought of in terms of happiness (affective wellbeing) or as life satisfaction (evaluative wellbeing) (Cummins, 2013). An interviewee emphasised the importance of subjective wellbeing:

“I could find out your income, and your living environment and your health indicators and I wouldn’t be able to tell where you were in terms of mental and emotional wellbeing and health. Individuals themselves are best placed to judge how happy they are feeling at a given point in time... wellbeing is best thought of as subjective, any construct has to be driven around feeling representative of lived experience”.

This quote echoes findings from Diener (2008), Happy City (2017) and White and Blackmore (2016) which highlight the importance of subjective human perceptions and experiences for understanding wellbeing.

Reflections from community workshops: subjective wellbeing

Participants in workshops spoke of aspects of wellbeing which could be considered to be subjective. For example, one participant in Aberdeen explained what was important for their wellbeing: *“having my feelings acknowledged. It makes me feel valued and that I can make difference.”*

The need for time for inner reflection and calm was identified by a participant in Aberystwyth: *“I need time to reflect, contemplate, be still, get grounded. It helps to calm me after/during stressful periods and helps me identify what I need.”*

A participant in Belfast told us what makes them feel well: *“doing something unplanned/new which I don’t normally do. It makes it feel like I have a break and see new things.”*

The role of feelings of belonging in promoting wellbeing surfaced in several workshops; a participant in Hull said that *“belonging and having a voice”* is important to their wellbeing and somebody in Aberystwyth told us that *“connecting with people who value me gives me a sense of belonging and support”*.

However, several expert interviewees raised concerns about an over-reliance on the subjective dimensions of wellbeing. One interviewee highlighted how subjective wellbeing is often given more attention than other aspects of wellbeing: *“the UK seems more focused on subjective wellbeing...but it is not enough to focus on subjective wellbeing.”* Experts caution that focusing on subjective wellbeing can exclude the experiences and perspectives of people who struggle with poverty and/or a lack of resources who may be more concerned with their material reality than their sense of happiness or life satisfaction (see also Hargreaves (2004) and Lewicka (2005)). Similarly, political economist William Davies (2015, p. 6) warns that the science of happiness *“ends up blaming – and medicating – individuals for their own misery, and ignores the context that has contributed to it”*. This suggests that focusing exclusively on subjective wellbeing can obscure the environmental and systemic factors that can determine sense of wellbeing; there is a need to balance our focus on both subjective/internal and objective/external factors.

One approach to wellbeing which acknowledges subjective dimensions while appreciating the importance of context is the capability approach. Philosopher and economist Amartya Sen has argued that wellbeing should also be considered as “the ability to achieve valued functionings”: that is, what we are capable, want to be capable, or should be capable to be and/or do (Sen, 1999; Alkire & Deneulin, 2009). Expert interviewees suggest that wellbeing is crucially about people’s (differential) capabilities to, for example, access opportunities or take action. For example: *“what it means to be a fully functioning person, the capability to be certain things and do certain things.”* This was reiterated by another expert who said: *“capability is also important, not looking at what people have, but their ability to do things with the things they have and their ability to affect things — agency, democracy, and participation”*.

Sen’s approach with reference to functionings and capabilities emphasises how context and need can affect the extent to which capabilities are realised. Sen famously uses the example of an inaccessible environment that can disable a person in a wheelchair from having equal access to society; it is not the impairment but the environment which is disabling (Sen, 2004; Nussbaum, 2003). As well

as highlighting contextual factors, the approach also acknowledges distributional difference (or inequality) because it accepts that different people will need different resources to achieve the same capabilities, emphasising the importance of equality of outcome. Another key advantage of this approach is its recognition of intrinsic values of rights, freedom and human agency as fundamental to human dignity. Such an approach to promoting agency within wellbeing relates to Ryan and Deci's (2001) Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which suggests that autonomy, competency and relatedness are key determinants of wellbeing.

Reflections from community workshops: capabilities

Our findings in community workshops also suggest the importance of capabilities for understanding wellbeing.

In Aberystwyth a participant talked about how *“being able to make a contribution and therefore feel valued”* was critical to community wellbeing.

In Hull a participant spoke about how *“social inequality, lack of confidence, lack of income and lack of opportunity”* impeded community wellbeing.

Overall, community workshops highlight that as well as needing appropriate services and infrastructure, communities also need the *opportunity and resources* to achieve certain capabilities as individuals and as a collective.

One of the key factors which determine people's capabilities, as recognised by Ryan and Deci, is the relationships they have with others. Indeed, Atkinson (2013, p. 143) and White (2010, pp. 158-72) stress the importance of a dynamic and 'relational wellbeing' approach — focusing on the very relations between people and places, and how they can collectively mobilise resources that bring about wellbeing. The valuable role of relationships in shifting our focus from individual to community wellbeing is explored further in section 2.4.

2.3 Community

While the Co-op Community Wellbeing Index takes a place-based approach to understanding community, it is important to recognise that there are multiple and competing definitions of community which all have implications for conceptualising community wellbeing (Mitchell, 2009). As one interviewee explained: *“we as an organisation do not have an agreed definition of community. There are multiple definitions of community and each is probably useful and relevant.”* Such multiple forms of community can include those based on experiences of place, interest and/or identity, and can be facilitated by face-to-face and/or virtual connection (Stacey, 1969). Our review of the literature and interviews with academics and practitioners found that people often identify with more than one type of community at any one time and that these identities can overlap and intersect, rather than exist as separate entities. Furthermore, definitions of community can be hierarchical where some communities are given more legitimacy than others, which can risk excluding some people (see, for example, Hargreaves, 2004).

Despite sociologists arguing that trends such as globalisation and increasing individualisation, which with technology and increased mobility often uproot ties to place (Giddens, 1991; Bauman, 2001), recent findings suggest the continued importance of place for communities and their wellbeing (Hargreaves, 2004; McKnight et al., 2017). The link between community wellbeing and place has been established in multiple studies, showing how **a strong sense of place can help to generate community belonging and integration** (Faggian et al., 2012; McKnight et al., 2017). For example, in a review of place-based policy, the British Academy (2017) found that:

“Places matter to people. They shape the way we live our lives, feel about ourselves and the relationships we have with others... and contribute significantly to personal and societal wellbeing.”

Furthermore, initiatives such as the Place Standard in Scotland and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Regional Wellbeing measure are based on this strong link between sense of community and

sense of place — both of which can contribute to wellbeing. This is also echoed in findings of The Young Foundation's *Valuing Place* report (Green & Hodgson, 2017) — an ethnographic study of three Welsh towns.

In relation to this, a study by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation found that people's sense of belonging to a place often mattered most in neighbourhoods where economic prospects were most challenging (Batty et al., 2011). Describing the unequal effects of globalisation for different groups, Bauman (2001) coins the term 'glocalisation'. 'Glocalisation' is where those at the higher end of the socio-economic scale are more mobile and thus may have a weaker sense of place and community than those who are "impoverished and marginalized" (Lewicka, 2005) who tend to be less mobile and develop deeper attachments to place.¹⁵

Given these findings, the Co-op Community Wellbeing Index seeks to reflect the continuing importance of place-based communities for many whilst acknowledging the multiple and intersecting forms of community that can exist within and across place.

2.4 Community wellbeing

Much of the existing literature and policy debates surrounding wellbeing has been inherently 'individual in scale'. However, our research highlighted the potential value of understanding wellbeing at a community, rather than just individual, level. Over-prioritising individual aspects of wellbeing can obscure the more structural causes of low levels of wellbeing, such as inequality and poverty and as one interviewee said, *"if you are serious about community wellbeing you need to think about these wider structural issues."*

In addition to this, reflecting Davies' argument, another interviewee warns that, *"there is a real danger with the narrative of wellbeing being turned into something that is the individual's responsibility"*. In this sense conceptualising and measuring wellbeing at a community level can help to maintain the key structural and social drivers of wellbeing at the fore.

In this section we build on the concepts of wellbeing and community to explore and develop

a concept of community wellbeing. We argue that a relational approach to wellbeing can help us to shift from a focus on the individual to an understanding of community wellbeing which is about the broader relations between people and with the places they live (Atkinson, 2013; White, 2015).

So, what is community wellbeing? Participants in interviews were explicitly asked how they define community wellbeing. Given that it is an emerging concept, it was unsurprising that the definitions of the term were varied and contested. Interviewees highlighted the complexity of the term and suggested some key components which could be included:

"It is two words that on the face of it seem to make sense but actually if you go behind that there is a lot of complexity... I can give you all kinds of definitions of what community wellbeing might mean but I would suppose I'd to go back to... a community where people can be healthy, safe and happy."

Or from the perspective of another:

"It is a combination of social, economic, environmental, cultural and political conditions identified by individuals and their communities as essential for them to flourish and fulfil their potential."

Another way of approaching the concept of community wellbeing is by understanding its relationship to individual wellbeing. This is important because even many community wellbeing initiatives effectively aggregate individual wellbeing to a local or regional level (Bagnall et al., 2017). For instance, that community wellbeing:

"...covers the individual and the collective. A lot of the measures of community wellbeing are really population measures. They measure the wellbeing of individuals and add them up. These don't quite capture that sense of togetherness."

This suggests that community wellbeing is about more than aggregating the wellbeing of individuals in a given place, although the wellbeing of individuals clearly feeds into community wellbeing as part of a reciprocal relationship. As Kee et al

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This does not hold up for those who migrate for labour or non-sedentary low-income communities such as Roma.

(2015, p. 16) suggest, community wellbeing should be conceived as “more than the sum of individual wellbeing”. This is echoed in a recent definition used by What Works Wellbeing (2017, p.4) which states that community wellbeing looks beyond the individual to a sense of “being well together”. Therefore, simply aggregating individual wellbeing can give a misleading picture of the wellbeing of a community as a collective. This highlights the importance of collective and collaborative methodologies for exploring community wellbeing.

Our research revealed that a relational approach to wellbeing, which recognises the relationships between people and with place is key to moving beyond aggregations of individual wellbeing and towards a more collective understanding of a ‘good life’ (see also Atkinson, 2013 and Kee et al., 2015). The What Works Wellbeing Centre (2015) undertook a six month engagement programme to explore the concept of ‘community wellbeing’ and they found that people primarily understood community wellbeing to be about “about strong networks of relationships and support between people in a community”. This understanding was echoed in our research with one interviewee explaining: *“community wellbeing needs to be relational wellbeing... and I use the term to highlight its importance and to distinguish it from a more narrow and psychological approach.”*

Related to this, experts stress that mutual support between people should be at the core of community wellbeing. Many commented on the importance of relational wellbeing with reference to the issue of loneliness and isolation. For example, one talked about the need for *“kindness in communities”* which she feels is the *“antidote to social isolation”*. Social isolation and loneliness is an issue recognised by Co-op and Red Cross in their campaign to tackle loneliness (Co-op, 2017) and increasingly recognised by Government with the recent appointment of a Minister for Loneliness (Gov.uk, 2017).

Reflections from community workshops: relational wellbeing

When asked what was important for their own personal wellbeing, participants in workshops stressed the importance of relationships and we found that people’s personal feelings are often tied up in their relationships with others.

This example from a participant in a workshop in Belfast illustrates how volunteering can support their wellbeing: *“helping out when needed makes me feel worthwhile and that I am contributing”*.

Similarly, another participant from Shoreham highlighted: *“helping people value themselves and feeling valued by others: love seeing people have their confidence boosted.”*

These quotes highlight the reciprocal relationship between individual and community wellbeing.

A relational approach to wellbeing can also be understood in the sense of relationships between people and place and between different aspects of place. For instance, academic Sarah White (2015, p.12) highlights the fluid relationship between the various domains of wellbeing as “inter-linked, personal, social and environmental processes”. Likewise, Gabrielle Davies (2015) characterises the “iterative and systemic” relationships between individuals and their environment as part of an overall “wellbeing ecology”. These points not only highlight the relationship between people and environment, but also the idea that community wellbeing is a dynamic process, not a fixed outcome. Echoing this, an interviewee suggested that: *“a community that has wellbeing at its heart will reinforce its own wellbeing if it is working properly.”* While this idea of wellbeing as a process of maintenance is well developed in relation to individual subjective wellbeing, it has not been previously applied to community wellbeing (Dodge et al., 2012).

Based on our research on the concept of community wellbeing we have developed a definition to underpin the Co-op Community Wellbeing Index. Reflecting the application of the Index to place-based communities, this definition focuses primarily on wellbeing within communities of place.

A photograph of a woman with long brown hair, wearing a green shirt and dark pants, sitting on a patterned blanket on the grass. She is holding a baby in her arms. They are positioned at the base of a large tree with vibrant autumn foliage in shades of red, orange, and yellow. The background shows a grassy field with other trees and a fence in the distance. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

Community wellbeing is a collective feeling of leading a ‘good life’, shared and created by people and organisations. Community wellbeing is more than the sum of people’s individual wellbeing; it is the relationships between people and with place.

2.5 Existing indices of community wellbeing

To inform the development of the Community Wellbeing Index, as well as exploring the concept of community wellbeing, we reviewed existing collective wellbeing measures and indices, as summarised in Appendix 3. We have also drawn on the insights provided by the What Works Wellbeing centre's *Systematic scoping review of indicators of community wellbeing in the UK* (Bagnall et al., 2017).

Our review of existing indices shows that multiple indices and frameworks of collective wellbeing exist at international, national, regional and local levels but that the Co-op Community Wellbeing Index is the first measure of community wellbeing across all four nations of the UK.

Previous indices and frameworks include efforts to support local authorities in measuring and improving wellbeing, such as the Local Wellbeing Project (Steuer & Marks, 2008) (made up of academics, local authorities and The Young Foundation), and the development of methodologies and tools to support neighbourhoods measure their own wellbeing such as the Wellbeing and Resilience Measure (Mguni & Bacon, 2010). In their systematic review, as summarised in Appendix 4, the What Works Wellbeing Centre identify 47 frameworks of community wellbeing in the UK which:

- **Function at different measurement levels.** Frameworks and measures of community wellbeing can function at a range of 'measurement levels'. They can range from purely conceptual frameworks, such as the Welsh Government Well-being Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, to sets of quantitative data indicators, such as the Office for National Statistics Measuring National Wellbeing programme (Seigler, 2015). A table of measurement levels can be seen in Appendix 4.
- **Seek to measure varying outcomes of interest.** Some frameworks of community wellbeing explicitly seek to measure this outcome, such as the American Wellness as Fairness framework (Prilleltensky, 2012), whereas others measure outcomes which

are related to, but not necessarily directly focused on, community wellbeing, such as the New Economics Foundation's new social settlement (Coote, 2015).

- **Include a wide variety of different indicators.** Some indicators are more commonly included than others in frameworks; health and wellbeing related indicators represent 11% of all indicators, whereas trust related indicators represent just 1% of all indicators. In Appendix 4 we outline all of the indicators identified and compare them with the indicators included in the Co-op CWI which includes some of the most common indicators, such as health, as well as some of the least common indicators, such as trust.
- **Measure wellbeing at various geographic levels.** Frameworks and measures approach community wellbeing at varying geographic levels. Some take a very small-scale neighbourhood approach, such as the Wellbeing and Resilience Measure (Mguni & Bacon, 2010), whereas others take a regional or local authority level lens, such as the Happy City's Thriving Places Index.¹⁶ The overall geographic scope of frameworks varies too, with some applying to cities, such as Cardiff's Liveable City initiative (City of Cardiff Council, 2015), and others applying to the nation, such as NEF's five headline indicators of national success (Jeffrey & Michaelson, 2015).

In contrast with existing frameworks and indices, the Co-op CWI is the first measure of community wellbeing at a neighbourhood level across all four nations of the UK. As we will outline, it is therefore unique in its approach because of a combination of factors including: concept of wellbeing (community wellbeing), its design, its geographic unit of analysis (neighbourhood level), and its geographic scope (UK-wide).

In section 5 of this report we explain the technical creation of the geographic units and indicator set. Before that, in the next section we explain how the Co-op Community Wellbeing Index was designed, working with communities to understand what matters to them and their sense of 'being well together'.

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For more information see: www.thrivingplacesindex.org

3. MODEL OF COMMUNITY WELLBEING

Based on our research with communities and our concept of community wellbeing, we have developed a model of community wellbeing which underpins the Community Wellbeing Index, shown in Figure 5. The key aspects of the model are that:

- It is based on a **concept of community wellbeing as a shared and collective experience, underpinned by the relationships between people and with place.**
- It is based on a dynamic and reciprocal concept of community wellbeing based on the notion that **community wellbeing should be conceived as an ongoing process of maintenance and enhancement in which people, place and relationships all contribute to and benefit from the community.**
- **These aspects of community wellbeing intersect and any one aspect of wellbeing can sit in multiple domains at any one time.** For example, ‘events that celebrate the people of the community’ can sit in the domain of relationships and trust but could also potentially sit in the domain of culture heritage and leisure. We have sought to achieve a ‘best fit’ wherever possible.

- The model is made up of individual and shared/communal wellbeing domains because our research showed that **community wellbeing and individual wellbeing are interdependent and reciprocal.**
- The model includes structural drivers of community wellbeing, such as inequality¹⁷ (as a domain) and public services (as indicators woven throughout the domains), **reflecting the importance of societal determinants of community wellbeing as well as individual factors** such as qualifications attained.

Figure 5 illustrates the community wellbeing model. Reflecting our concept of community wellbeing, there are nine domains of community wellbeing nested within three core pillars of people, place and relationships. These domains strongly echo Co-op values of solidarity, equity, equality, democracy, self-help and self-responsibility.

The complete index, including explanations and selected indicators for each domain, can be found in section 6.

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For a discussion of the link between inequality and wellbeing see: Pickett, K. and Wilkinson, R. 2009. *The Spirit Level: Why equality is better for everyone.* London: Penguin.

Figure 5: Overarching model of community wellbeing



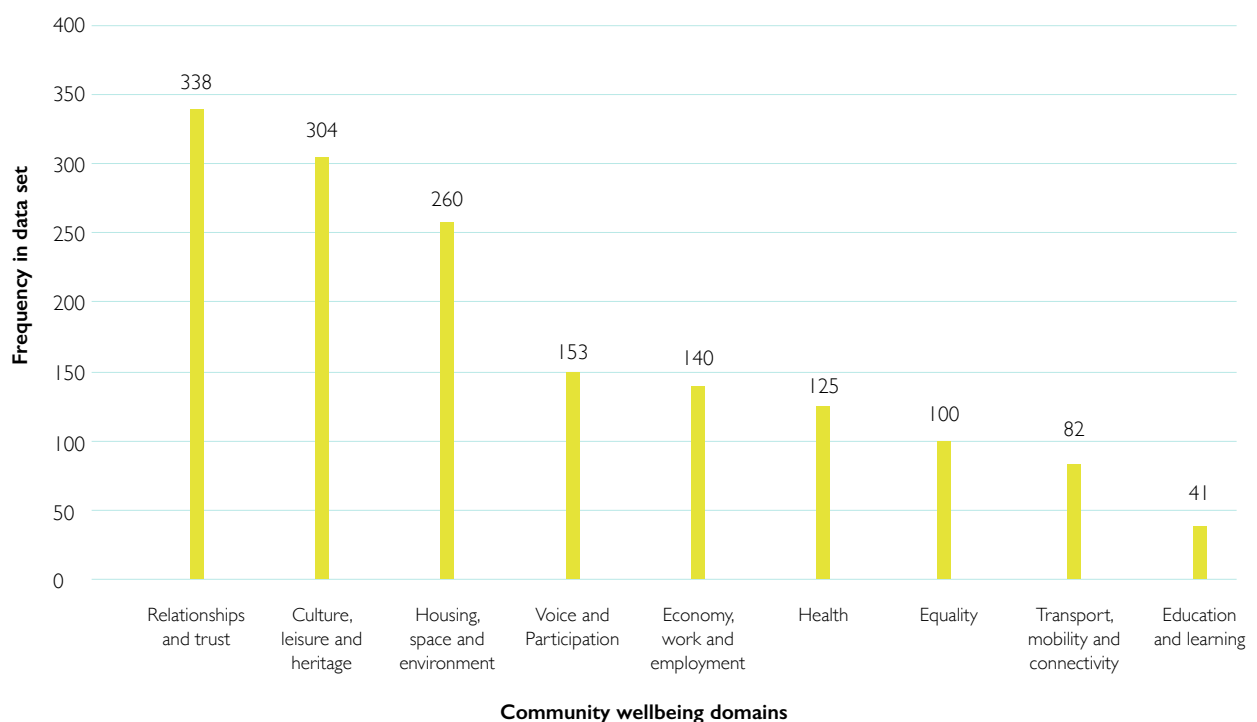
4. DOMAINS OF COMMUNITY WELLBEING

In line with our concept of community wellbeing as something which is collectively experienced and shared, we took a collaborative approach to defining dimensions of community wellbeing to be measured by working with communities to understand what matters to them. We highlight in the words of communities themselves the key ways in which they experience or would like to experience particular aspects of community wellbeing to demonstrate the evidence on which the Community Wellbeing Index is based. The analysis here seeks to outline some of the complexities and nuances of community wellbeing which are inevitably hidden by the Index itself, but which we hope illustrate the richness of experiences of community wellbeing and serve as a guide for the future development of the Co-op Community Wellbeing Index.

Figure 6 shows the breakdown of the different aspects of community wellbeing and the number of times these were mentioned by participants. However, it should be noted that data may fall into more than one category. For example, one participant explained that “community events – rap, dance, singing, spoken word” are important for community wellbeing. This has been included within the domain of relationships and trust, as ‘community events’ implies the coming together of people, and also within culture, leisure or heritage.

In addition, although the analysis was cross-checked, there remains scope for interpretation of the most appropriate categories to be applied to data and the analysis should therefore not be viewed as irrefutable reflections of the meanings being conveyed by research participants. Notably, it is the relationship between the different aspects of community wellbeing which is as important as the domains themselves.

Figure 6: Summary of the number of times each domain of community wellbeing was coded within our data set



4.1 Relationships

THE IMPORTANCE OF RELATIONSHIPS



The core pillar of relationships recognises the need for positive social connections that support community wellbeing. Such relationships are developed through social connections and trust, equality and voice and participation, all of which strongly echo Co-op values of solidarity, equity, equality, democracy, self-help and self-responsibility.

Relationships and trust. Family, social and community relationships are critical to both individual and community wellbeing. Trust is another key aspect of this domain and includes the breakdown of relationships between people, and with place, in the form of crime. There are significant interconnections between this domain and the domains of: culture, leisure and heritage; voice and participation; space, housing and living environment; and health.

Equality. People's experiences of (in)equality take both explicit and implicit forms. (In)equality is multi-dimensional; the challenges people face do not only relate to economic inequality, but also to social, cultural and political inequality. Participants discuss equality in broad terms of how people in communities should be treated, but also in more personal day to day experiences of (in)equality. We also found that inequality is experienced on both an individual and community level, and in terms of relative experiences of access to resources or positive external recognition.

Voice and participation. Voice and participation are interconnected; people feel they have a voice if they can participate and vice versa. We found that having a voice and participating in the community is linked with individual wellbeing and helps to strengthen relationships between people. Therefore, there is a strong connection between voice and participation and the other domains of equality and relationships and trust.

Relationships and trust

“People helping and caring for others and not expecting payments. (Leeds)”

We found that the determinants of community wellbeing most commonly identified relate to the domain of relationships and trust (cited 338 times across all community workshops), echoing the Co-op value of solidarity. The importance of this aspect of community wellbeing reflects findings from expert interviewees and the background literature review (e.g. Merz et al., 2009; Thomas et al., 2017; Haslam et al., 2009; Holt-Lunstad et al., 2010). Workshop participants highlighted a range of ways in which they consider relationships and trust as important to creating a sense of wellbeing in the community.

In particular, family relationships are often identified as a key source of wellbeing, (particularly at the individual level). For instance, a participant in York explained how “*spending quality time with family/my children e.g. going for a walk/playing games/reading: watching them*” supports her wellbeing. In Belfast a participant explained what was important for their wellbeing; “*spending time with my wife and children at weekends. [It is] enjoyable, fun, I get to chat to my children and watch them smile.*”

Many participants also told us that friends and social relationships are important to both their individual and community wellbeing. “*Chatting with friends, being part of a group of like-minded people*” is important for one participant in Aberystwyth. In Wrexham one participant spoke of the quality of their friendships and why this is important; “*having true friends: you always have someone to rely on.*”

Crucially, in terms of community wellbeing, many participants highlighted the importance of the existence, and quality of, broader place-based relationships and acquaintances that are not necessarily considered ‘friends’, but are clearly valued in terms of community wellbeing:

“*A group called Transition inner North West Leeds. While it existed it promoted garden sharing where people helped their neighbours who had a problem with their garden. The volunteer gardener could perhaps grow food for themselves or others in their garden.*” (Leeds)

“*Community centre with events like Chorlton Water Park. During these events we are able to meet and have a chat.*” (Manchester)

“*In our community, people can rely on each other and also can ask for advice from one another.*” (London Islington (2))

There were a number of factors identified within the workshops that help to facilitate these community relationships. For example, children and pets, especially dogs, were commonly mentioned in terms of facilitating connections between people. Other points of connection for building relationships include: community events, local shops, green space, social activities and community spaces (Hodgson & Green, 2017).

In the workshops we found that trust is inextricably connected to relationships; quality social relationships reinforce trust and vice versa. Participants identified that trust between people can be negatively affected by crime, inequality, antisocial behaviour and generally feeling unsafe. In community workshops, many participants cited trust and safety as being intrinsic to community wellbeing. For example, a participant in Hull talked about the importance of feeling safe in their community: “*I know I can go anywhere and have a certain level of safety and security, [and there are] services on hand to help. An example might be City of Culture volunteers.*” In Manchester, a participant talked about how “*anti-social behaviour (and public*

turning a 'blind eye' for fear or not wanting to get involved)" impeded their sense of community wellbeing. Furthermore, issues associated with substance misuse, vandalism, violence and neglected public and private space impede people's trust in each other and therefore their sense of community wellbeing.

Expert interviewees spoke of how relationships and trust are aspects of community wellbeing often overlooked by existing measures:

"There is a gap in the indicator of social relations and social capital. This involves whether people have people they can rely on, trust within the community, and social cohesion. This domain is missing from the existing frameworks."

While the domain of **relationships and trust** is important, it does not sit in isolation in terms of people's experiences. Aspects of wellbeing can fit into one or more domains at any one time, and these overlaps help to reveal interactions between domains. Domains which interact most often with **relationships and trust** in the data are: **culture, leisure and heritage; voice and participation; space, housing and living environment; and health.**

It seems that culture, leisure and heritage, and the opportunities they provide can help to foster relationships and trust between people. For example, a participant in Hull explained why singing is important for their wellbeing:

"I like to sing in choirs and I run my own choir project. I like to sing opera: I feel a sense of achievement. I enjoy using my voice as it's quite good. I love teaching other people as I am a teacher. I enjoy helping people learn."

It is evident that this is both a culture and leisure activity and a way in which relationships and trust can be formed and developed. It offers a shared and valued experience.

The ways in which people experience relationships and trust also interact strongly with their ability to participate and have a voice. For instance, another participant in Hull stated:

"Community Spirit: A community that considers others. Take care of the community. Having shared plants around you on an avenue that are collectively cared for and loved."

Here, this aspect of community wellbeing can be seen as an action, as a form of participation and also a way in which relationships, trust and connections can be reinforced. As the idea of 'community spirit' suggests, workshop participants also highlighted intangible aspects of community wellbeing. Whilst we have included proxy measures of 'community spirit' in the Index, such as relationships and heritage and culture, there is no direct measure or available data for this less tangible aspect of community wellbeing.

As illustrated by the reference to 'shared plants' in the quote, there is also an interconnection between relationships and trust and space, housing and living environment. The spatial aspect of space, housing and living environment includes community and public spaces where people can meet, such as parks. This was strongly reiterated by expert interviewees. For example, one expert especially stressed the need for more "bumping space" for people to meet each other and spend time together.

Summary of community aspirations - Relationships and trust:

Creating strong and meaningful social, familial and community relationships, solidarity and togetherness amongst people from across all backgrounds to create a feeling of inclusion, belonging and trust. This is dependent on people treating each other and the community with respect and dignity, and in line with the law, as well as the accessibility and quality of infrastructure, such as social spaces, and opportunities to facilitate this.

Equality

“Equality should be at the heart of all well communities. (Stirling)”

Equality and inequality were frequently identified as key determinants of community wellbeing in interviews with expert interviewees and in our workshops across the country. This strongly echoes Co-op values of equity and equality. (In)equality is fundamentally about the relative position of one person (or group of people) in relation to others and the ways in which this enables or hinders connection, co-operation and cohesion. As such, the domain of equality is situated within the overarching core pillar of relationships because it is fundamentally a relational dynamic.

One interviewee reflected on the inequality communities experience, and how dealing with more explicit forms of inequality first, can enable us to then tackle more subtle types of inequality. While some expert interviewees did not directly use the word ‘(in)equality’ they talked about it indirectly in terms of inclusion and the need for dignity, care for those who may be/feel excluded or vulnerable. As an interviewee suggested:

“It is about treating people with dignity and respect — that is the most fundamental thing in terms of thinking about wellbeing. If you don’t treat people with dignity and respect then you relate to them in ways that undermine their wellbeing. This is important in the context of austerity and policies which aim to punish people. If you are serious about community wellbeing you need to think about these wider structural issues.”

(In)equality was identified by workshop participants (both directly and indirectly) as a key aspect of community wellbeing (cited over 100 times across all community workshops). Many people explored (in)equality in terms of the resources they have access to and how people are treated. For instance, in London Islington (2) a young workshop participant highlighted the inequality between their own area and other parts of London; “[there has been] no funding in my estate for ages — it’s not nice, but Kensington has just got a new swimming pool and all those massive houses”. One participant in Wrexham talked about inequality in terms of the difference in services and opportunities between Chester and Wrexham. This suggests that inequality is not just something individuals experience, but also something that communities can experience collectively; it is about inequality within as well as inequality between communities.

Participants talked about equality in broad terms, especially in terms of how people in the community should be treated. A workshop participant in Aberdeen explained, “**everyone should be treated fairly and equally**” and another in Belfast expressed there needs to be “**acceptance — a community where people live together regardless of religion, race, colour, wealth, age etc.**” Likewise, in Nottingham, a participant explained how they understood equality: “the feeling of inclusivity and being safe and being who you want to be i.e. pride weekend.”

Most commonly, participants talked more about the day-to-day experience of inequalities, their own lived experience or that of others they knew in the community (Green and Hodgson, 2017). For example, a participant in Hull talked about feeling excluded because of the cost of attending events and difficulty finding information online. A new mother from Hull explained why equality is important for her: “[there should be] accessible opportunities to be involved in as a new breast-feeding parent.” In this way our research found that

(in)equality as an aspect of community wellbeing is not only economic, but also social in nature.

These quotations suggest that (in)equality is often experienced in terms of relative ability to participate and feel included, which highlights the connections between the domains of voice and participation and relationships and trust, which all sit within the overarching core pillar of relationships.

Summary of community aspirations - Equality

Treating everybody equally so that everybody has an equal and fair opportunity to prosper, regardless of their ethnicity, religion, race, age, ability, sexuality, gender, income etc. People who are potentially excluded are acknowledged, supported and treated with dignity. Where there are differences in people's opportunities and outcomes, they are moderate rather than extreme and services, infrastructure and efforts are in place to promote equality, equity and fairness.



Voice and participation

“When we feel our voice is heard in situations that affect us. (York)

Closely related to equality and relationships in creating community wellbeing is the extent and ways in which people are able to have a voice and participate in their community (cited 153 times in all community workshops). Voice and participation strongly echoes Co-op values of democracy, self-help and self-responsibility.

Notions of voice and participation vary from person to person, but voice and participation are interconnected, i.e. participants felt if they can participate then they have a voice in the community and vice versa. The importance of voice and participation, and therefore autonomy, is also reflected in the literature, for example, in the work of Ryan and Deci (2001).

Participants talked about how being able to participate in community activities is important for their wellbeing. In Aberystwyth, a participant explained, “being able to make a contribution and therefore feel valued” supports their sense of community wellbeing. A participant in Manchester spoke of how “community volunteer groups work very well in bringing people together”.

Other participants talked about voice and participation in relation to feeling listened to and valued. In Belfast, a participant stressed that “feeling listened to and valued by decision making bodies” is important for their community. Similarly, in interviews voice and participation was mentioned as a key aspect of community wellbeing which is often overlooked. One expert explained that “people need a voice and to be listened to” and others feel that voice and participation are among the most important aspects of community wellbeing.

Some participants spoke about ‘participation’ on a more personal level and how having a voice and participating in one’s community is not only beneficial to the community, but is also supportive of individual wellbeing. For instance, when asked

what makes them feel good or well, a participant in London Islington (2) explained that working with children in their youth club supports their own wellbeing and the value of participating in community activities was also reinforced by another participant in Hull: “being a Hull City of Culture volunteer: I have met so many nice volunteers, and I interact with the public. I feel like I belong.” The dual value of participation is reflected in the Community Wellbeing Index where individual and community wellbeing are treated as interdependent and reciprocal.

We found that there is a strong link between voice and participation and equality, particularly in terms of (in)equality of the ability to participate and have a voice. For example: “voice and participation are important throughout life – older people still want to give their time/effort. There should be opportunities no matter what age” (Aberdeen). In addition, the domain of voice and participation is strongly connected to relationships and trust because voice and participation is something supported or hindered by relationships between people and institutions in places.

Summary of community aspirations - Voice and participation:

Enabling people to take action and assume responsibility, as individuals and as collectives, to improve the local community and beyond. People, regardless of their background, have opportunities to have a voice on issues which are important to them and they are listened to. Democratic governance and decision-making mechanisms are in place and are taken up.

4.2 People

THE IMPORTANCE OF PEOPLE



The key pillar of people includes domains of health, education and learning and economy, work and employment. These aspects of community wellbeing are situated in this core pillar because they are primarily about the factors that enable human development, growth and prosperity.

Health. There are both individual and collective factors which support physical and mental health. For example, relationships between people and local services and infrastructure help to support the health of individuals in a community.

Education and learning. Formal and informal, and accessible, education and learning opportunities across different age groups are a key aspect of community wellbeing. This includes self-education as well as opportunities for being taught. Education and learning interacts strongly with the domains of housing, space and environment and culture, leisure and heritage. Participants highlight the importance of community spaces where education and learning can happen.

Economy, work and employment. An inclusive, sustainable, accessible and diverse economy is important for community wellbeing. We found that the local economy is not only a space to purchase goods and services, but also a space where relationships are reinforced. Participants discussed employment in terms of availability, quality of pay, work-life balance and the infrastructure needed to support people with employment.

Health

“A healthy community is a happy community.” (Stirling)

Health, both physical and mental, came up as a major factor affecting community wellbeing (cited 125 times across all community workshops). In our review of existing frameworks and indices, health is the most commonly included domain. Although health tends to be experienced individually, there are both individual and collective factors which support physical and mental health.

Health was discussed at a community level and people recognised that the availability, or lack - of shared resources helps to create health in the community. For example, many participants but particularly those in Nottingham, Wrexham, York and Aberystwyth, talked about how the cuts to health services have affected community health. In Aberystwyth, the centralised health service means that people have long distances to travel to their nearest mental health provider. Other cuts affecting health are the closure of childcare facilities, drug and alcohol centres, care homes and palliative care centres. Services and infrastructure in the community like green space, community centres and leisure provision also serve to support the health of the individuals in that place.

More individual factors that support health creation include: relationships with friends and family, work and employment, and participation in leisure and culture activities. For example, a participant in Belfast explained the importance of “walking, particularly near a beach: feels good to breathe air and it helps me get rid of any stress I have.” Another person in the Manchester workshop told us that going to the gym and exercising was important for their health. They explained that it “feels good to be keeping healthy and active to music – and catching up with friends before and after”.

As is evident, many of these factors supporting health also supported other aspects of wellbeing. For example, while exercise and leisure supports physical and mental health they can also help to

build relationships and trust between people. In this way, it is clear that health is strongly connected to other aspects of wellbeing particularly relationships and trust, culture, leisure and heritage and space, housing and living environment.

Summary of community aspirations – Health:

Creating good physical and mental health among the community by providing accessible and good quality services, opportunities and assets, such as public and voluntary sector health and social care services and initiatives.

Education and learning

“Art classes give a sense of community – they are stimulating and creative. (Aberystwyth)”

Education and learning are also key ways in which community wellbeing can be created (cited 41 times across all community workshops). Education and learning were discussed in various ways including the need for accessible educational services, the need for affordable education services and having spaces and opportunities for more informal learning. Participants also discussed education and learning in personal and individualised ways. For instance, in Shoreham a participant explained how “*learning about stuff, especially languages and people’s personal stories*” helps to expand their “*knowledge and empathy*”. In this sense, education is both active and passive — as much about self-education as it is about being taught.

Our research found that classes and learning opportunities need to be accessible and affordable. This issue was highlighted in the Torquay workshop: “*we need funding for education e.g. sign language, foreign language, first aid. How can people with low income access them?*” Specifically, in terms of accessibility, people feel that educational classes and opportunities for learning should be accessible across different age groups. A participant suggested there “*needs to be more classes for older people to learn new skills*”.

It is not only formal classes and institutions which are important for community wellbeing, but also more informal opportunities. For instance, a workshop participant in Manchester stressed how “*visiting museums and galleries*” supports them and their community with “*being creative, feeling inspired and learning new things*”. Such opportunities for learning in the community do not need to come from formal education centres, but can come from social and cultural activities.

Related to this idea of opportunities for learning is the need for appropriate community space and culture and leisure activities for this to happen. For example, participants talked about the need

for vibrant libraries where community activities can happen and which would encourage learning. Therefore, in this way, there is a crossover between the domains of: **space, housing and living environment; culture, leisure and heritage;** and **education and learning.**

Summary of community aspirations — Education and learning:

Maximising educational and learning outcomes of people in a community across age groups, with the aim of promoting employability as well as personal growth and fulfilment. The provision of accessible, affordable and quality services and infrastructure to enable lifelong learning.



Economy, work and employment

“Good shops in walking distance and places to congregate. (Manchester)”

Closely related to the domain of education and learning is economy, work and employment (cited 140 times across all community workshops). This domain was largely discussed in terms of prosperity, inclusivity and diversity.

Participants talked about the need for the local economy, i.e. shops and services, to be inclusive, sustainable (economically and environmentally), accessible and diverse. In terms of diversity, participants told us that there should be a range of shops and services, including locally-owned enterprises.

A workshop participant in Manchester explained there needs to be a “*diversity of activity at street level.*” People reflected on the importance of sustainability of the local economy in terms of both the environment and the economy itself. In Shoreham a participant feels that “*buying fair-trade, buying and giving to charity shops, giving things away through Freecycle and green cycle*” supports community wellbeing because “*I feel like I’m giving back, doing the right thing and wasting less.*” In this sense, economic activity is conceived in relational terms and the impact that consumer choices can have on others.

Participants spoke about geographical accessibility, such as having shops and services which are within walking distance, and financial accessibility, such as the cost and expense involved in attending events and leisure activities, as supporting their sense of community wellbeing.

As such, shops and business are important spaces for building connections and meeting people. A participant in Nottingham explained the social connections made in their local market: “*you get banter from the stallholders — it is not the same as in Asda.*” In Manchester a participant talked about the significance of “*having a coffee or meal in a Chorlton café [as there is] a nice atmosphere, people watching and friendly staff who recognise me.*” These commercial spaces can help to provide ‘bumping space’ and the formation of social connections.

Employment was discussed in terms of the availability of well-paid jobs. In some of the workshops, participants explained that their pay is not much higher than their cost of living, and the mismatch between rents and salaries is a particular issue. A participant in Belfast illustrates the importance of having a ‘living wage’: “*there needs to be enough money to get by*” as “*it alleviates worrying about financial problems.*” The need for secure employment and a reduction of ‘zero’ hour contracts and ‘casual hours’ jobs to facilitate community wellbeing was also expressed by participants across the country.

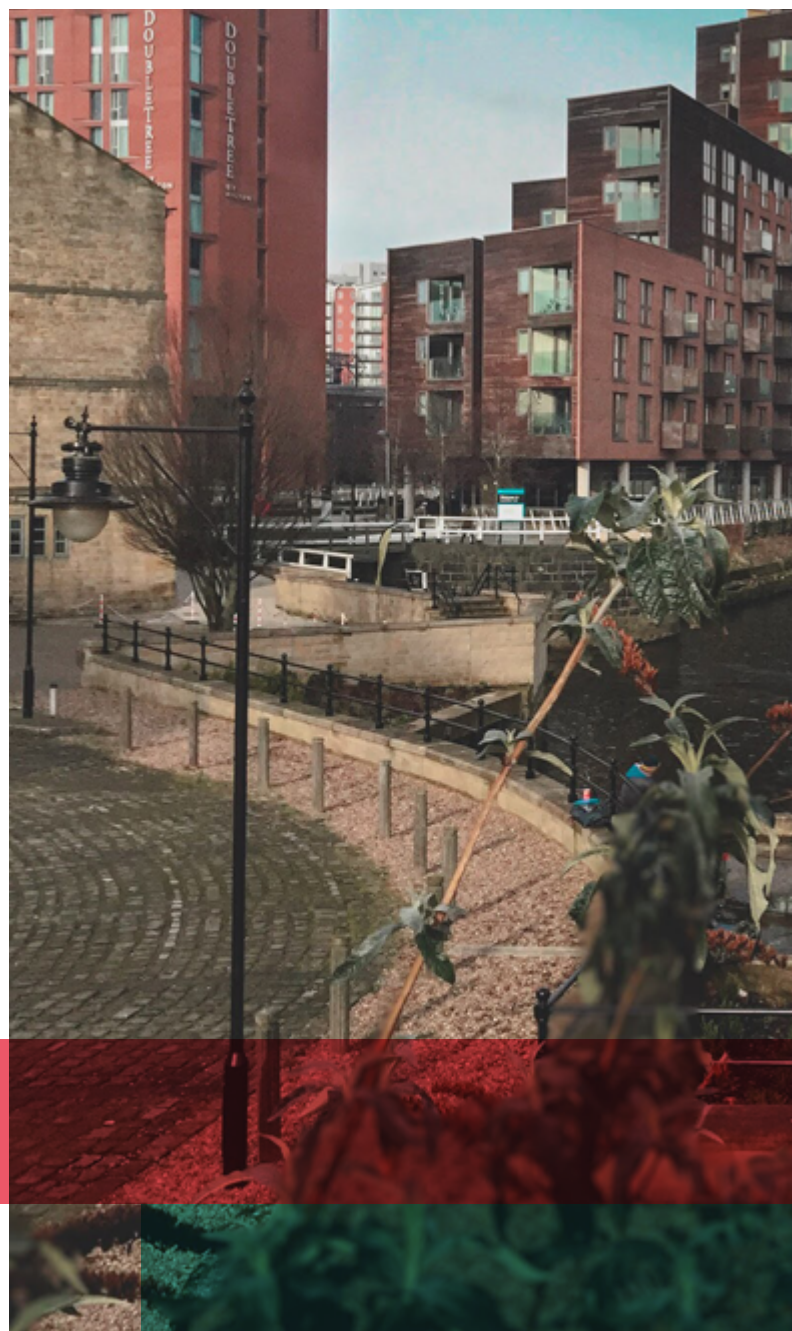
Related to availability of employment, is the need for jobs and opportunities which would encourage and allow young people to stay in the area they grow up in. This is a particular issue in the small coastal towns we visited. For example, one participant in Torquay explained that for community wellbeing *“young people should be able to continue to live and work in the area and have employment to get accommodation”*. Some participants added that support for securing employment would perhaps help to create more local and long-term opportunities for young people.

Work-life balance is another aspect of community wellbeing, as stressed by one participant in Aberdeen: *“work-life balance is important; there is more to life than work.”* Not only do people need well-paid jobs but also employment which allows them time off to relax and spend time with their family and friends, as well as to participate in the community. Supporting this, a participant from Hull adds, *“my husband and I both work full-time, so quality ‘family time’ means so much to us”*. Connected to work and employment is the need for recognition of, and support for, unpaid work like childcare and volunteering. In Torquay, a participant explained, *“there needs to be better recognition of the work of carers”*.



Summary of community aspirations - Economy, work and employment:

Contributing to an economy which is prosperous, sustainable, ethical, inclusive and meets the needs of the local people. It includes the availability of sufficient, fairly paid, flexible, secure and quality employment for people of all ages, in a way which is respectful of work-life balance. Services and infrastructure are in place to enable employment, economic prosperity and to protect people through economic hardship.



4.3 Place

THE IMPORTANCE OF PLACE

The core community wellbeing pillar of place includes domains of culture, heritage and leisure; space, housing and environment; and transport, mobility and connectivity. These domains of community wellbeing relate to the space, 'hardware' and infrastructure available in a particular community, although they clearly interact with the core pillars of relationships and people.

Culture, leisure and heritage. Culture, leisure and heritage activities are important for both individual and community wellbeing. This includes the arts, entertainment and connections to the history of a community. However, it is not just the presence of culture, leisure and heritage activities which is important, but also their affordability and accessibility. We found significant interconnections between culture, leisure and heritage and the domains of space, housing and living environment, relationships and trust, voice and participation and health.

Housing, space and living environment. Our research found that quality and affordable housing is pertinent to community wellbeing. The need for housing that allows people to be close to their work, friends and family is also important. We found that indoor community spaces that can host community activities and events or provide opportunities for people to meet, are critical to community wellbeing. The natural environment and public space are both important for individual health and wellbeing, but also provide opportunities for people to meet and build relationships.

Transport, mobility and connectivity. Our research revealed that accessible and affordable transport is key for communities to thrive. Transport differs from mobility, as mobility is concerned with the extent to which people feel that they can easily get around the community. Although access to digital and telecommunication varies, participants largely feel that such technology is important for community wellbeing. However, there is concern about how automation can have an effect on social relationships.

Culture, leisure and heritage

“History and legacy of the area — canal, abbey, industry links to other humans that have lived before and into the future (Leeds)”

Aspects of community wellbeing which could come under the domain of culture, leisure and heritage were frequently mentioned by participants (cited 304 times across all community workshops). This contrasts with the fact that this domain is very rarely included in previous frameworks of community wellbeing (as outlined in Appendix 4). Participants talked about this with regard to influencing their own individual wellbeing, community wellbeing and also in terms of accessibility, inclusivity and affordability of culture, leisure and heritage activities.

Individuals spoke about how culture, leisure and heritage events and activities within the community support their own wellbeing. This can range from reflections on how “listening to music” (at home or at gigs) helps them to “switch off” and to “meet other people” (Manchester) to talking about how crafting and creating textiles helps them to relax and build a sense of achievement, or how simply “going out for a good meal” with their partner can make them feel good.

The contribution of culture, leisure and heritage was also discussed more collectively. For instance, a participant in London Islington (2) spoke of how community events with “rap, dancing, singing and spoken word” support community wellbeing. In Belfast, one participant talked about how “celebrations, cooking together and community gardens” brings people together and in Hull “playing or following a team” enables people to socialise and develop a sense of belonging. The sense of connecting to a shared history through local heritage was also highlighted as a source of ‘togetherness’. In our research, we found that local identity and belonging is often derived from community cultural and heritage events and activities. As a participant in Manchester explained, “we already have community events — free events with live music, open air cinema, family days, etc. These are great for a sense of belonging and enjoyment.”

“Creativity and beauty: inspires, relaxes, opens up new ideas and ways of being. Belfast”

It is not only the presence of culture, leisure and heritage opportunities, but the accessibility, inclusivity and affordability of them that emerged as important to communities. Across most locations, participants commented on the lack of affordable leisure and cultural activities, and in Torquay, participants felt there was a particular lack of affordable activities for young people and a lack of inclusive activities and spaces for people in the LGBTIQ¹⁸ community. In York, a participant commented that they do not have “enough money to get involved in things”. In contrast, participants in Aberdeen feel that there are lots of free talks and festivals in the city contributing towards community wellbeing.

There is a significant interconnection between culture, leisure and heritage and the domains of: space, housing and living environment; relationships and trust; voice and participation; and health. It is often during culture and leisure events and activities that relationships are made and trust is built. Similarly, it is in local community spaces where culture, leisure and heritage activities can happen, and it is sometimes during these events where people can participate and make their voice heard. Evidently, culture, leisure and heritage activities can help to support the health, both physical and mental, of participants. For example, in Manchester, workshop participants talked about the importance of an ‘atheist church’ (Sunday Assembly) who met up to sing, share ideas and talk about meaningful issues. This is an example of a leisure activity which also fosters mental health and participation in the community.

18

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex and asexual.

Summary of community aspirations - Culture, leisure and heritage:

Creating culture and leisure activities, services and amenities which are accessible, affordable and inclusive. The diverse history and legacy of a community and the people within it, regardless of their background, are celebrated.



Housing, space and environment

“We need more community spaces that are inclusive, a melting pot of wonderfulness, a place for change makers to come together. (Shoreham)

Nesting within the core pillar of place is the domain of housing, space and environment (cited 260 times across all community workshops). Workshop participants highlighted a range of ways in which this domain contributes to their sense of community wellbeing.

Across the country, people talked about the importance of accessible, quality and affordable housing. For example, in Aberdeen, participants talked about the issue of finding “*appropriate and affordable*” housing and that it was difficult to “*know who to talk to*” about assistance with housing issues. In Aberystwyth, the need for quality social housing was also mentioned: “*there are housing issues: affordability, quality of housing stock and a shortage of social housing.*” One expert interviewee outlines how housing issues can affect health: “*at a community level, housing deprivation, not having a good quality home, contributes to lowering life expectancy.*” In addition to the need for quality

affordable housing, participants talked about the need for housing which allows them to enjoy other aspects of life, such as relationships and work. For instance, in Nottingham, a participant told us, “*being able to live in the area you wish to (e.g. close to family, work etc.)*” contributed towards their sense of community wellbeing.

Further to the need for decent housing, participants talked about how the need for their surrounding living environment and immediate public space to be clean, safe and inviting - “*well-maintained and planned space.*” (Belfast). For example, people spoke about how broken shop windows, pollution, litter, fly tipping, dog fouling and damage to the natural environment decrease their community wellbeing. In Aberystwyth, beach clean-ups are seen as important for maintaining the cleanliness of the community and for bringing people together.



Participants in workshops stressed the importance of community spaces for people to meet and build relationships. For example, participants' spaces like the Mersey Bank Community Centre in Manchester, which runs a youth club, a children's museum and a senior citizens club, are critical to community wellbeing. Similarly, the Corner House in Shoreham was mentioned as an important space in the community where people can seek support for their mental health and wellbeing.

However, there is concern from workshop participants and expert interviewees that these spaces are increasingly under threat. For instance, in Torquay, *"community spaces and building are vital and under increasing pressure due to cutbacks in maintenance, and councils are looking to redevelop commercially."* The need for community spaces for local people to meet and the threats they face was echoed by expert interviewees:

"Communities need spaces and places to come together. This has been completely undervalued as a policy issue. Post-austerity has affected the availability and accessibility of public spaces, libraries, pubs and post offices are closing and or under threat. Without spaces to gather it's hard for people to become active and develop their own sense of community capacity."

Public space and the natural environment are important for participants, both for their own individual wellbeing and community wellbeing. Participants frequently talked about how being in 'green space' is key to their mental health and wellbeing. For instance, in Manchester, a participant told us, *"green spaces (parks) make me feel good because it is tranquil [and allows me] to meet other people"*. As this quote suggests, green spaces were also discussed in terms of how they provide opportunities for social connections: *"attractive outside space where people could stop, chat and socialise"* (Hull). In Nottingham, a participant told us, there needs to be *"shared outdoor green spaces [with] benches"* and others talked about the need for *"welcoming place to get together, a green space where everyone is welcome"*. Others, especially those in coastal areas, highlighted the importance of the sea and other 'blue spaces' as shared natural resources which support individual and community wellbeing.

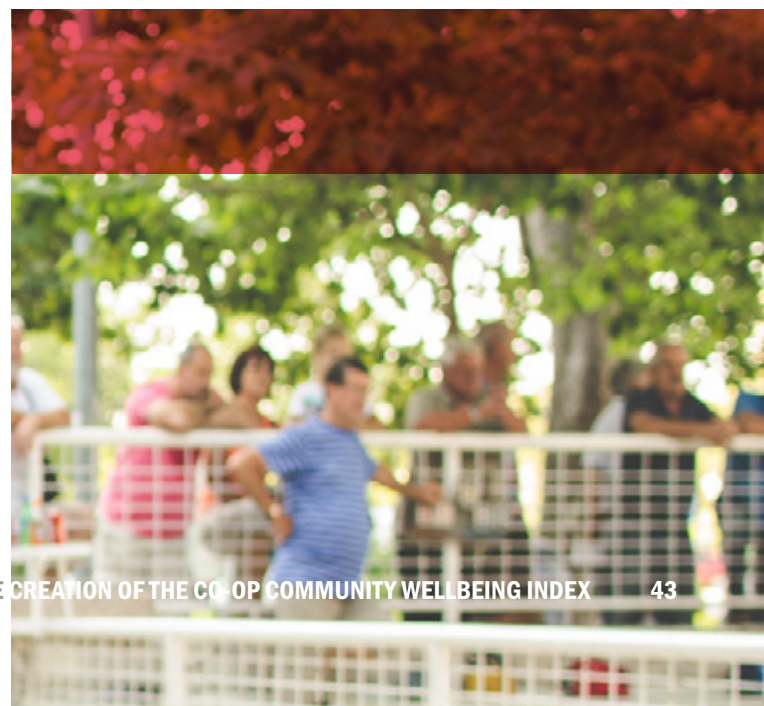
The importance of the natural environment for both individual and community wellbeing was also stressed by an expert interviewee:

"Green space appears to weaken some of the impacts of inequality on health, especially mental health. Green space has become an important indicator of health. The makeup of the physical environment in particular communities is important or being able to access that is critically important."

Related to the natural environment, is concern for environmental sustainability. In our research, communities spoke of the importance of working towards environmental sustainability for community wellbeing. A participant in Manchester spoke of their concern for the *"lack of respect/ care for the natural world"* and how this can impede community wellbeing. An interest in environmental sustainability is a way in which relationships and trust could be reinforced.

Summary of community aspirations - Housing, space and living environment:

Providing and accessing affordable, secure and quality housing and a surrounding living environment which is safe and clean. Well-kept public outdoor and indoor spaces are accessible, inclusive, environmentally sustainable and suitable for a range of people across different age groups.



“Local transport lines are vital for wellbeing and links to employment. (Stirling)”

The final domain of the core pillar of place is transport, mobility and connectivity (cited 82 times across all community workshops). Workshop participants highlighted a range of ways in which they consider transport, mobility and connectivity as important to creating a sense of community wellbeing.

Participants feel that local, accessible and affordable transport services and networks are important for community wellbeing. A participant in Aberdeen highlighted the issue they have with transport: *“a major issue in Aberdeen is that public transport is so expensive people cannot get to jobs/training”*. This was also echoed in Torquay and in Aberystwyth. Furthermore, in Aberystwyth a participant spoke of how they feel they are *“geographically isolated because of having no rail link south to Carmarthen.”* In Torquay a participant explained that the local bus only runs every two hours and it is expensive, which hinders their sense of community wellbeing because it makes them less mobile and connected. Participants also talked about the need for appropriate and accessible cycle routes and pedestrian pathways which can enable environmentally sustainable and healthy mobility.

Linked to transport is mobility, and the extent to which people feel they can easily get around their community. For example, the ease of car parking and disabled access were two frequently mentioned aspects related to mobility. Illustrating this, a disabled participant in Aberystwyth talked about how they are isolated due to a lack of disabled access and benches to sit on. In York, the heavy traffic and lack of pedestrian crossings were mentioned as impeding community wellbeing. Mobility is a capability which affects people's abilities to access community opportunity and assets, such as shops, amenities, work, events, family and friends. It is therefore inherently related to many of the community wellbeing domains.

Connectivity more explicitly refers to the extent to which people are connected through telecommunications and digital networks. In Aberystwyth, workshop participants talked about the issue of having slow broadband. The difficulty of accessing information and services on the internet for older people was an issue stressed in both workshops and interviews - *“as the world changes people are left behind i.e. computers/online”* (Torbay). This underscores the importance of maintaining a range of digital and non-digital modes of connectivity. Our research found that issues with transport, mobility and connectivity are generally more prevalent in more rural areas and among the older population.

Overall, access to the internet and the connection it offers people to local events, services, amenities and social networks, was highlighted as key tool for generating community wellbeing by many. In a workshop in London Greenwich, participants talked about how they enjoy using social media and how it allows them to communicate with their friends. Participants also spoke of how digital technology can be an effective way to build relationships in the community and for social action. For example, in London Islington a participant talked about how Nextdoor.com helps to “link local communities online.”

Interestingly, there was little mention of the potentially detrimental impacts of digital technology on social relationships. However, a few participants did mention how the increasing prevalence of automation, such as automated checkouts, could have a potentially damaging effect on community relationships, by reducing interactions between shop staff and customers.



Summary of community aspirations - Transport, mobility and connectivity:

Providing and accessing appropriate, affordable and sustainable transport and telecommunication networks that ensure everyone, including people with disabilities, has a way of moving around and communicating with the community (and beyond), enabling them to enjoy local assets and opportunities.

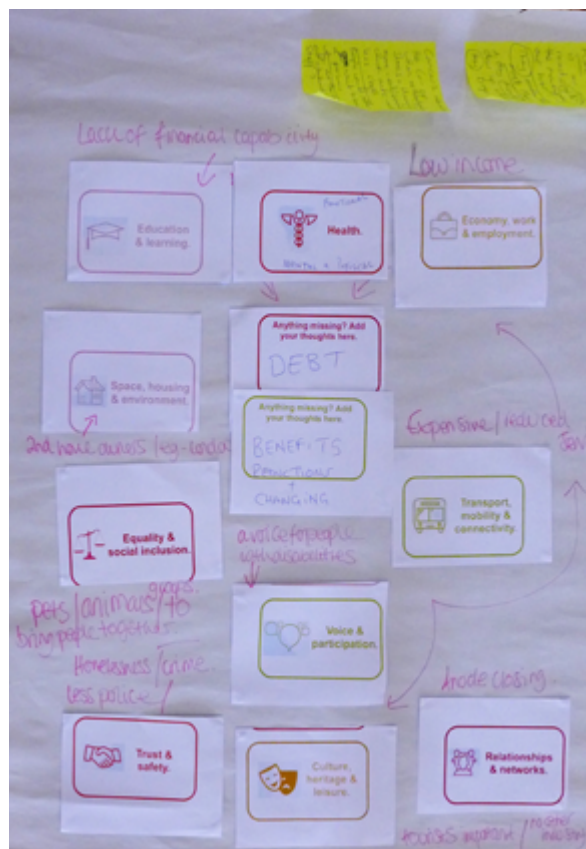
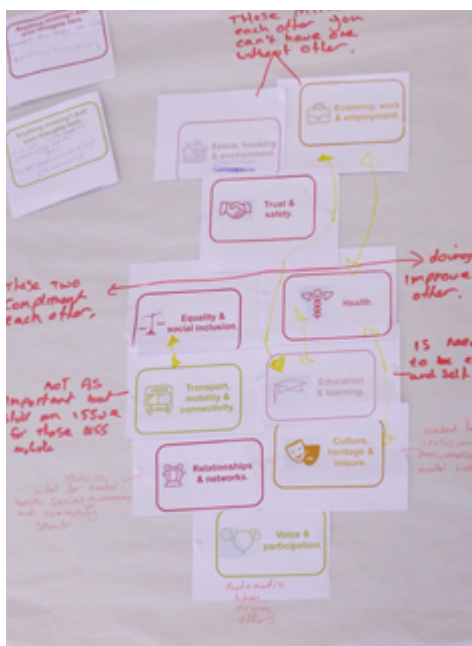


4.4 Ranking the domains

In the phase 2 workshops, we explored the relative importance of the community wellbeing domains and their relationships with each other. The aim of this was to deepen our understanding of the connections between domains and to explore whether it would be appropriate to weight domains within the Index. We asked participants to develop their own approach to ranking the domains and developing connections between them, an approach in line with our participatory and collaborative ethos, and which is shown to have positive impacts on the final outcome (Scott & Bell, 2013).

Depending on the group of participants, domains of wellbeing were ranked and arranged in many different ways, reflecting the diversity of opinions across different communities. This highlights the importance, if possible, of communities being able to weight the Community Wellbeing Index according to their own priorities (Scott & Bell, 2013). The lack of a clear consensus means that rather than imposing a 'top down' weighting, the Co-op Community Wellbeing Index weights all domains equally.

Examples of ranking around the country



MEASUREMENT OF COMMUNITY WELLBEING

This section of the report outlines the approach taken by Geolytix to operationalise the conceptual model of community wellbeing designed by The Young Foundation, by identifying measures to assess community wellbeing across the UK. Operationalisation of the model as a measure involved two key steps:

- The division of the UK into geographic 'communities'; these serve as the units of analysis in which community wellbeing is measured.
- The alignment of the domains with existing quantitative data by selecting the best available indicators to measure each domain of community wellbeing.

5.1 Geographic unit of analysis

The key to creating the geographical area of measurement for the Community Wellbeing Index was to select the optimum size. A large geography, such as Local Authority District, would allow us to access a wide range of suitable data sets, but it would be unlikely to resonate with common understandings of place-based communities. On the other hand, the use of a very small sub-local authority geographic level means that there is a risk of data not being available at this granular level. There are few existing measures of community wellbeing at neighbourhood rather than local authority level.

After exploring a number of possible geographic units, 'Seamless Locales'¹⁹ were selected as the area of measurement. In total there are 28,317 locales within the Co-op Community Wellbeing Index, which sit between middle layer super output areas and lower layer super output areas.²⁰

On average these communities have 2,230 inhabitants, 973 homes and occupy a space of 8.7 square kilometres. The locales were created to reflect areas people would refer to as their 'neighbourhood' or 'community' and were created on the basis of travel and shopping patterns, the location of retail places, a town centre catchment model and feedback from users. A full explanation of the methodology used to create seamless locales can be found in Appendix 5.

The creation of a measure applicable to the whole of the United Kingdom, rather than to any one of the four nations, also presented challenges due to requirement of drawing on shared or comparable data across all four nations, which is not always available.

5.2 Populating the index with available data

Using the nine domains of community wellbeing identified by The Young Foundation, Geolytix selected the best available quantitative indicators to serve as proxy measures for each domain. As the geographical building blocks being used are neighbourhood level (sub-local authority level), the main challenge faced was being able to source appropriate data at a suitably low and granular geographic level (lower layer super output area: LSOA). As a result for some of the domains, proxies²¹ have been selected to reflect the domains as closely as possible. In particular, there is a lack of survey data related to how people think and feel about certain domains at a LSOA level. For example, we were unable to access ONS subjective wellbeing data at LSOA level due to concerns about compromising respondent anonymity in areas with small populations. As such, we see this as a 'best fit' first iteration of the CWI

19 Seamless Locales are a product created by Geolytix, designed to reflect a truly identifiable local area somewhere locals would call their 'home' or 'neighbourhood'.

20 Output Areas are geographic classifications created for statistical purposes based on 2001 Census data and based on postcode units. In 2011 there were 34,753 lower layer super output areas and 7,201 middle layer super output areas.

21 A statistical proxy is a variable that can be used when it is not possible to directly measure the variable of interest.

which we intend to grow and develop over time with the collection and emergence of new data sets.

In the sections that follow we detail each of the indicators and data sources identified to 'measure' each of the domains of community wellbeing. A detailed explanation of how each indicator has been created can be seen in Appendix 6.

Relationships

Relationships and Trust

Indicators Include

- Social spaces
- Presence of young children
- Isolation: One person household, aged 50+
- Isolation: Long-term health status
- Proximity of work to home
- Household churn
- Crime in the community
- Crime in nearest town centre

As a proxy for social connections, we used *working in close proximity to your home* as a factor likely to encourage community engagement, as shorter distances can mean people are more likely to have time to spend in their community and connect with each other.

Similarly the CWI counts social spaces where relationships can be reinforced; these include playgrounds, pubs, community centres and cafes. As indicated by the primary research, the more social spaces in the community, the more opportunities there are for building social connections there are likely to be, and therefore the stronger the community wellbeing.

Building on this, we include the presence of young children (babies, preschool and primary school age), as having children often provides an opportunity for socialising with people in the community, as highlighted by the workshops.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, we identified the count of people living alone as a proxy for isolation. As an additional layer to this

we specifically measure the number of people living alone and aged over 50, because living alone in old age is associated with loneliness (Age UK, n.d.). Also feeding into the idea of isolation is the number of people with long term health issues as this has been identified as a factor associated with loneliness (Kantar Public, 2016).

High levels of household churn and transience are associated with a lack of community cohesion and resilience; as such we have also incorporated levels of household churn in an area as a proxy for relationships and trust (Berlotti et al., 2012; CLES, 2014).

The final data sources we identified relate to the latter part of the domain title — 'trust'. As a proxy for trust we used data on crime, firstly within the locale itself and secondly within the nearest major shopping 'destination'. Crime types such as 'shoplifting', 'other theft' and 'other crimes' were omitted, as these tended to relate to financial and business crimes, which were not relevant to personal and community wellbeing.

Equality

Indicators Include

- Gap in house prices
- Second home ownership
- Proximity to independent schools
- Income inequality
- Gap in qualifications
- Ethnic minority representation in professional occupations
- Long-term housing security

The domain of equality interlinks with many domains of the CWI such as relationships and trust; and voice and participation. The way in which we have chosen to measure it is through calculating variance in outcomes, based on the notion that the smaller the difference in outcome and the lower the level of inequality, the better it is for community wellbeing. This notion is based on studies on the relationship between inequality and wellbeing (Pickett & Wilkinson, 2009).

The data sources cover a range of topics including housing, education and ethnicity. Specifically, the indicators measure the local gap in house prices, relative income, the gap in qualifications attained, ethnic representation in professional occupations and families in private rental accommodation.

Large differences in outcomes in a community suggest neighbourhood inequality. In addition, we have included the presence of second homes and independent schools as an indicator of high levels of inequality.

Voice and Participation

Indicators Include

- Voter turnout
- Signing petitions
- Co-op member engagement¹

As identified by the primary research, ensuring everyone is able to have a voice on the issues that matter to them and be listened to are important components of community wellbeing. We have been able to include election and petition data for this domain, as well as Co-op member data where available. Voter turnout at both a national (general election) and local level (local elections), and participation in petitions (the top 10 national petitions by number of signatures) are used. To supplement this we have also included Co-op member data (where there are 100 or more members in the locale), including the proportion of members that have voted for a cause in the past year as an additional measure of community participation.

People

Health

Indicators Include

- Access to health services
- GP prescription

For this domain, we use access to health services as a proxy for mental and physical health: distance to nearest hospital, GP, pharmacy and mental health service. GP prescription rates will also be used to measure physical and mental health. We specifically included prescription rates for drugs that can cover all age ranges, rather than focusing on the elderly. In particular, prescriptions for drugs used to treat the following conditions are included: heart related issues, diabetes, obesity, depression and dementia. They are factored against the patient list size of the GP to give the overall picture of physical and mental health in the local area.

Education and learning

Indicators Include

- Access to schools
- School quality
- Access to libraries
- Access to adult education

For this domain, access to educational services is considered. Firstly, schools are covered by distance to the nearest school and the distance to the nearest school rated 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted, as the quality of education is important as well as access alone. Given this, the percentage of schools that are judged to be 1 (outstanding) or 2 (good) in Ofsted ratings is measured.

Reflecting the importance of the opportunity to access lifelong learning highlighted in the primary research, we have also factored the distance to adult education facilities.

Additionally, distance to nearest library, a facilitator of informal and self-education, has also been included as a measure for education and learning.

Economy, work and employment

Indicators Include

- Proximity of work to home
- Household income
- Vacant commercial units
- Free school meals
- Unemployment
- Hours worked

Indicators for this domain include average household income and levels of unemployment as these provide an insight into whether there is sufficient, fairly paid employment. To reflect work-life balance, which emerged from the primary research as an important characteristic of quality work and employment, we measure the number of hours worked and the distance travelled to work (with the underlying assumption that longer commutes have negative implications for work-life balance).

We have included the proportion of children with access to Free School Meals, as an indicator of the number of low-income families in a community. As an additional lens on the economic prosperity of the community, the number of vacant commercial units are also measured.

Place

Culture, heritage and leisure

Indicators Include

- Presence of artists and musicians
- Distance to leisure facilities
- Places of worship
- Museums, galleries, music halls and theatres
- Listed buildings

The opportunity to enjoy culture, leisure and heritage was identified as an important aspect of community wellbeing in the primary research. Consequently, for cultural activities we have chosen to measure the distance to music halls and theatres, museums, art galleries, and places of worship. In addition to this, the number of artists, musicians and listed buildings in the community has been included. For leisure activities we measure distance to leisure centres, sports halls, sports pitches and swimming pools.

Housing, space and environment

Indicators Include

- Affordability of housing
- Overcrowding
- Public green space
- Public indoor space
- Traffic, air and noise pollution

As a measure of access to and quality of housing, we have chosen to include affordability of housing (housing costs relative to average income) and levels of overcrowding. The data sources identified to measure the quality of the wider environment are levels of public outdoor and indoor space (specifically playgrounds and community centres) as well as traffic counts, both total and heavy goods vehicles (HGV), as a proxy for pollution.

Transport, mobility and connectivity

Indicators Include

- Internet provision
- Public transport

To reflect the importance of connectivity, the number of internet connections and the speed of internet is included. Access to public transport via measured via counts of bus and rail services. Counts of bus stops and traffic counts of buses are used, as well as calculating the distance to both the closest rail station, and, large rail station (> 1 million annual passengers).

5.3 Next steps

As a result of this work, we have identified and included indicators in the Index that reflect the best publicly available data that can be used to measure community wellbeing as defined by the domains. The online measure of community wellbeing can be seen [here](#). As we have discussed for some domains there is a more comprehensive set of data available than for others. As a result of this, in the future we would like to explore ways of:

Sourcing and including subjective survey data — related to personal wellbeing as well as community domains — in the Index. This has been highlighted as an important dimension of understanding community wellbeing in this research as well as in previous projects (see for example, Steur and Marks, 2008).

Sourcing and using online and crowd-sourced data, as far as this can be collected in a consistent and reliable manner across the UK at a neighbourhood level.

Including data in the Index which can be more regularly updated (than once per year) so that the Index can be used to monitor changes in community wellbeing on a more frequent basis. This will help to reflect the dynamic nature of community wellbeing.

THE CO-OP COMMUNITY WELLBEING INDEX

Table 3 presents the complete Co-op Community Wellbeing Index, including community aspirations for each domain and selected indicators.

In particular, the key aspects of the Co-op CWI that make it unique are its:

- **Concept:** Its conceptualisation of and application to *community* wellbeing, rather than to individual, regional or national wellbeing.
- **Design:** The combination of nine community wellbeing domains which nest within three core pillars of community wellbeing: people, place and relationships.
- **Geographic unit:** Its practical application to a sub-local authority — neighbourhood — geographic level i.e. a level which could genuinely be considered to be a place-based community.
- **Geographic scope:** Its application to all four nations of the United Kingdom.
- **Measurement level:** Its application as a measure of community wellbeing comprised of a set of indicators.
- **Methodology:** The methodology employed to create the Index involved working directly in collaboration with communities and drawing on the Co-op's close relationship with its members and the Young Foundation's community networks.

Table 3: Co-op Community Wellbeing Index

Core pillar	Community wellbeing domain	Community aspirations	Indicators
Relationships	1. Relationships and trust	Creating strong and meaningful social, familial and community relationships, solidarity, and togetherness amongst people from across all backgrounds to create a feeling of inclusion, belonging and trust. This is dependent on people treating each other and the community with respect and dignity, and in line with the law, as well as the accessibility and quality of infrastructure, such as social spaces, and opportunities to facilitate this.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social spaces • Presence of young children • Isolation: One person household, aged 50+ • Isolation: Long-term health status • Proximity of work to home • Household churn • Crime in the community • Crime in nearest town centre
	2. Equality	Treating everybody equally so that everybody has an equal and fair opportunity to prosper, regardless of their ethnicity, religion, race, age, ability, sexuality, gender, income etc. People who are potentially excluded are acknowledged, supported and treated with dignity. Where there are differences in people's opportunities and outcomes they are moderate rather than extreme and ensuring services, infrastructure and efforts are in place to promote equality, equity and fairness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gap in house prices • Second home ownership • Proximity to independent schools • Gap in qualifications • Ethnic minority representation in professional occupations • Income inequality • Long-term housing security
	3. Voice and participation	Enabling people to take action and responsibility, as individuals and as collectives, to improve the local community and beyond. People, regardless of their background, have opportunities to have a voice on issues which are important to them and they are heard. Democratic governance and decision-making mechanisms are in place and are taken up.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voter turnout • Co-op member engagement²⁴ • Signing petitions
People	4. Health	Creating good physical and mental health among the community by providing accessible and good quality services, opportunities and assets - such as public and voluntary sector health and social care services and initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to health services • GP prescription rates
	5. Education and learning	Maximising educational and learning outcomes of people in a community across all age groups, with the aim of promoting employability as well as personal growth and fulfilment. The provision of accessible, affordable and quality services and infrastructure to enable lifelong learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to schools • School quality • Access to adult education • Access to libraries
	6. Economy, work and employment	Contributing to an economy which is prosperous, sustainable, ethical, inclusive and meets the needs of the local people. It includes the availability of sufficient, fairly-paid, flexible, secure and quality employment for people of all ages, in a way which is respectful of work-life balance. Services and infrastructure are in place to enable employment, economic prosperity and to protect people through economic hardship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity of work to home • Hours worked • Household income • Vacant commercial units • Free school meals • Unemployment

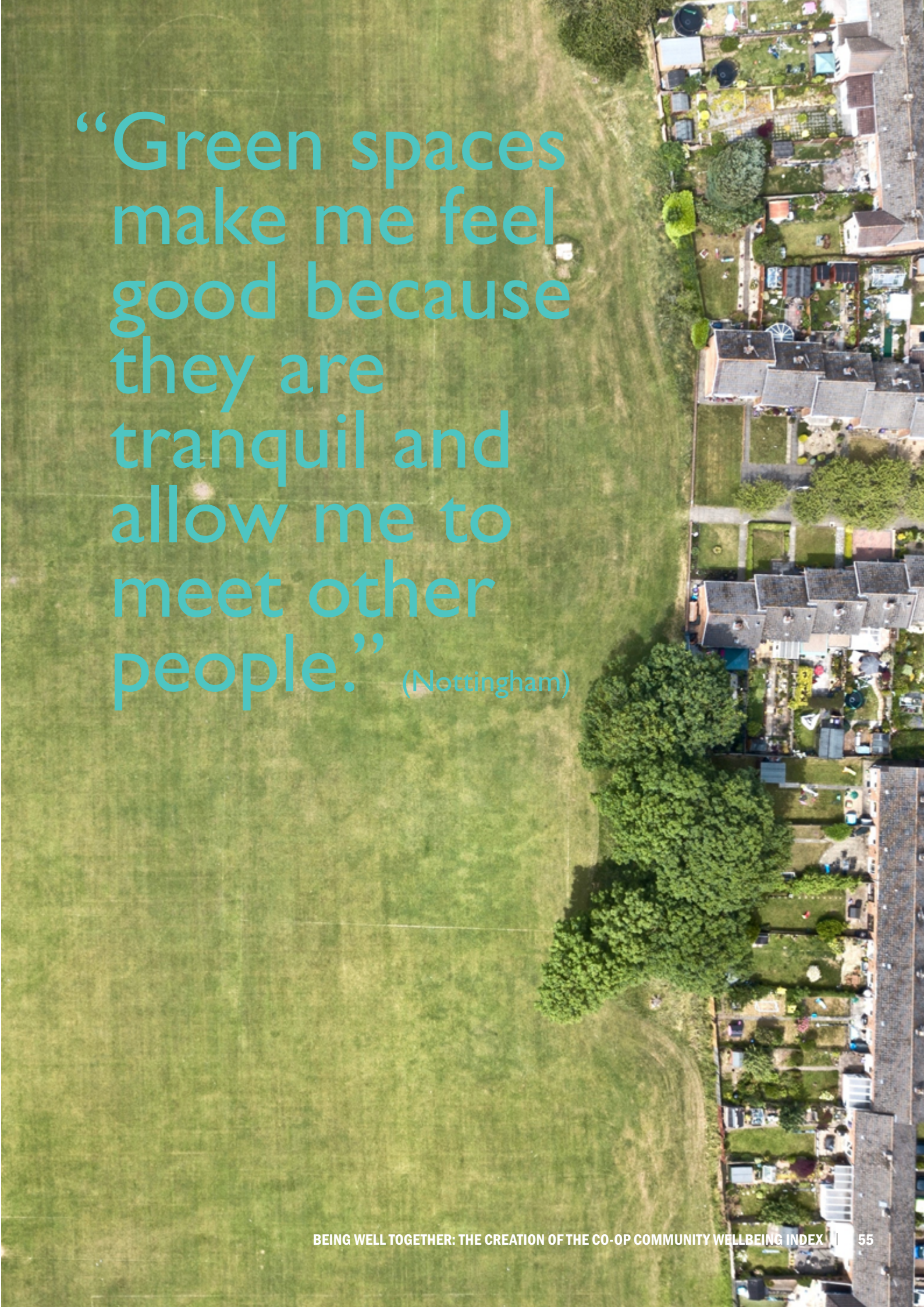
Core pillar	Community wellbeing domain	Community aspirations	Indicators
Place	7. Culture, heritage and leisure	Creating culture and leisure activities, services and amenities which are accessible, affordable and inclusive. The diverse history and legacy of a community and the people within it, regardless of their background, are celebrated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of artists and musicians • Leisure facilities • Museums, galleries, music halls and theatres • Listed buildings • Places of worship
	8. Housing, space and environment	Providing and accessing affordable, secure and quality housing and a surrounding living environment which is safe and clean. Well-kept public outdoor and indoor spaces are accessible, inclusive, environmentally sustainable and suitable for a range of people across different age groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordability of housing • Overcrowding • Public green space • Public indoor space • Traffic air and noise pollution
	9. Transport, mobility and connectivity	Providing and accessing appropriate, affordable and sustainable transport and telecommunication networks that ensure everyone, including people with disabilities, has a way of moving around and communicating with the community (and beyond), enabling them to enjoy local assets and opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet provision • Public transport

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Expert interviewees

Table 4: Experts interviewed for this project

Name	Organisation	Role
Carlton Smith	Bradford Trident	CEO
Claire Long	Policy Mutual	Head of Police Service Engagement
David Buck	Senior Fellow	The King's Fund
Dr Pritpal Tamber	Bridging Health & Community	CEO & Founder
Dr Tracy Ibbotson	General Practice and Primary Care Department	SPCRN Research Co-ordinator
Dr Katie Wright	Reader in International Development	University of East London
Elaine Goddard & Darren Ward	Sheffield City Council	Community Ward Support Officer
Jennifer Wallace	Carnegie UK Trust	Head of Policy
Katie Schmuecker	Joseph Rowntree Foundation	Head of Policy
Lizzie Stimson	Islington Clinical Commissioning Group	Engagement Lead
Mark Williamson	Action for Happiness	Director
Matthew Todd	Centre for Local Economic Strategy	Researcher
Mike Wild	Macc	Chief Executive
Professor Sarah Atkinson	University of Bath	Professor of International Development and Wellbeing
Richard Timney & Amanda Wright	Community First	Business, Planning, Community Assets and Buildings
Sarah MacLennan	What Works Centre for Wellbeing	Head of Evidence
Susan Paxton	Community Health Exchange	Head of Programmes

An aerial photograph showing a large, open green field on the left side of the frame. To the right of the field is a residential street with several houses, each with a garden. The houses are built close together, and the gardens vary in size and landscaping. Some gardens have trees, some have lawns, and some have more formal garden beds. The overall scene is a mix of urban and green space.

“Green spaces
make me feel
good because
they are
tranquil and
allow me to
meet other
people.” (Nottingham)

Appendix 2: Summary of community workshop participants¹

Table 5: Summary of community workshop participants

No.	Workshop Locations	Attendees	Gender (n=287)		Age (n=351)					Ethnic diversity (n=347)						
			Male	Female	16-17	18-24	25-40	41-64	65+	White British	White Other	Asian	African	Caribbean	Mixed	Other
1	Belfast	23	28.6%	71.4%			16.7%	72.2%	11.1%	72.2%	22.2%					5.6%
2	Leeds	28	60.0%	40.0%			14.8%	37.0%	48.1%	79.2%	8.3%	8.3%				4.2%
3	Aberystwyth	48	37.5%	62.5%		2.6%	31.6%	28.9%	36.8%	86.5%		2.7%			2.7%	8.1%
4	Nottingham	35	16.7%	83.3%		15.4%	23.1%	61.5%		85.2%	11.1%	3.7%				0.0%
5	London Islington (1)	11	25.0%	75.0%			36.4%	63.6%		63.6%		9.1%	9.1%	9.1%		9.1%
6	York	35	22.2%	77.8%		6.5%	38.7%	41.9%	12.9%	96.8%			3.2%			0.0%
7	Hull	29	27.3%	72.7%			19.4%	71.0%	9.7%	90.3%	3.2%	6.5%				0.0%
8	Manchester	42	29.6%	70.4%		2.9%	5.7%	45.7%	45.7%	70.6%	2.9%	8.8%	5.9%	8.8%	2.9%	0.0%
9	Wrexham	20	28.6%	71.4%		10.0%	25.0%	55.0%	10.0%	85.0%						15.0%
10	Shoreham	24	80.0%	20.0%			12.5%	66.7%	20.8%	91.7%					4.2%	4.2%
11	Torquay	25	37.5%	62.5%			8.0%	44.0%	48.0%	96.0%					4.0%	0.0%
12	Aberdeen	8	37.5%	62.5%		25.0%	37.5%	37.5%		100.0%						0.0%
13	Stirling	7	42.9%	57.1%			14.3%	71.4%	14.3%	85.7%		14.3%				0.0%
14 ²	London Islington (2)	26	64.0%	36.0%	61.5%	38.5%				50.0%	8.3%		4.2%	12.5%	12.5%	12.5%
15	London Greenwich	26	73.1%	26.9%	37.5%	58.3%	4.2%			80.8%	15.4%					3.8%
	TOTAL	387	40.7%	59.3%	7.1%	10.3%	18.2%	43.9%	20.5%	82.4%	4.9%	3.2%	1.4%	2.0%	2.0%	4.0%

¹ The percentages shown in this table are based on valid responses (where no response is not valid).

² For workshops 14 and 15 we sought the views of young people and men because these groups were under-represented in the first 13 workshops.

Appendix 3: Review of existing collective wellbeing indices and measures

Table 6: Summary of our review of existing collective wellbeing indices and measures

Tool	Scope	Geographical level	Content/Function	Domains/Sub-Domains	Ownership	Type	Methodology	Start Date
OECD Regional Wellbeing Framework	International — OECD countries	Regional	Guidelines for measuring regional wellbeing. Looks at links between individuals and place-based characteristics.	Material Wellbeing (Income, Jobs, Housing, Health, Education, Environment quality); Quality of Life (Health, Education, Environment, Safety, Civic Engagement, Personal Security, Access to services, Work-Life balance) Subjective Wellbeing (Community/Social Connections, Life Satisfaction)	International government organisation	Dashboard	Mixed, predominantly quantitative	2014
Office of National Statistics, Measuring National Wellbeing	UK	National	Reports wellbeing for the UK, across 10 domains & 43 indicators. Individual level. Used for measuring implementation of UK Health & Social Care Act, passed in 2012.	Personal Well-being Relationships Health What we do (arts, leisure) Where we live (place) Personal Finance Economy Education & Skills Governance Natural Environment	National government	Index and dashboard	Quantitative	2010
Indices of Multiple Deprivation, UK Government	England	Local — lower layer super output area	Official English measure for small local areas/ neighbourhoods that face multiple dimensions of deprivation. Measures deprivation for 32,844 local areas/neighbourhoods across England.	Income Employment Education, Skills & Training Health Deprivation & Disability Crime Barriers to Housing & Services Living Environment	UK government	Index and dashboard	Quantitative	Ongoing
INSEE (French Statistical Institute)	France	National	Measures of evaluative wellbeing and survey tool	Work-Life Balance; Subjective Wellbeing	National government	Survey and analysis	Quantitative	2008

Table 6: Summary of our review of existing collective wellbeing indices and measures

Tool	Scope	Geographical level	Content/Function	Domains/Sub-Domains	Ownership	Type	Methodology	Start Date
Canadian Index of Wellbeing	Canada	National	Tracks 64 indicators over the 15-year time period from 1994 to 2010, allowing comparisons to be made over time. They use a composite index to display the information in an easily accessible format. A key aim of the index is to provide a tool to Canadian citizens enabling them to hold their government to account.	Income Employment Housing Health Work-life balance Education Civic engagement Environment Leisure and culture	Civil society and community led	Index and dashboard	Quantitative	2001
Place Standard	Scotland	Flexible / user-defined	Interactive tool to evaluate physical/social quality of a given place	Social interaction Housing and community Work and local economy Facilities and amenities Place and recreation Natural space Streets and spaces Traffic and parking Public transport Moving around Influence and sense of control Care and maintenance Feeling safe Identity and belonging	Public sector partnership - NHS Health Scotland (NHS HS), Scottish Government (SG) and Architecture and Design Scotland (A&DS)	Self-completion tool	Interactive, mixed methods, primary data	Ongoing
Young Foundation: Wellbeing and Resilience Measure (WARM)	UK	Ward	Framework to measure local wellbeing	Life Satisfaction Education Health Income & Wealth Relationships / Support Systems & Structures (Housing/ Infrastructure; Crime; Public Service)	Partnership of local authorities, community groups and local organisations	Methodology for measuring local wellbeing and resilience	Quantitative, secondary data	2008
Manchester City Council	Manchester	Local authority	Survey by Manchester City Council for budget planning for 2017-20	Services & Places (covers range of aspects: health, environment, culture, place, infrastructure) Neighbourhood (community spirit, peace, cleanliness)	City Council	Survey	Quantitative	2017-2020

Appendix 4: What Works Wellbeing: systematic scoping review of indicators of community wellbeing in the UK

In Table 5 we present the indicators of community wellbeing which are identified in the What Works Wellbeing Centre's *Systematic scoping review of indicators of community wellbeing in the UK* (Bagnall et al., 2017). This is based on a review of 47 frameworks related to community wellbeing, operating at varying measurement levels, and it shows the prevalence of indicators related to particular domains across all frameworks. We compare these indicators with those that are included in the Co-op CWI. It shows that the Co-op CWI includes some of the most commonly included indicators (such as those related to health), as well as some of the least commonly included indicators (such as those related to trust).

Table 7: Indicators of community wellbeing

Domain	Prevalence of indicators related to this domain	Included in the Co-op CWI
Health and wellbeing	11%	•
Economy	9%	•
Inclusion and integration	9%	
Relationships	7%	•
Environment	7%	•
Sense of belonging and cohesion	6%	
Demographics	5%	
Work	5%	•
Services	4%	•
Safety	4%	•
Engagement	4%	
Housing	3%	•
Social capital	3%	•
Justice, fairness and equality	3%	•
Education	3%	•
Resilience and empowerment	3%	
Governance	2%	
Culture and leisure	2%	•
Infrastructure	2%	•
Citizenship	2%	
Opposition and resistance	2%	
Participation	2%	•
Transparency	2%	
Culture and leisure	2%	•
Co-production	2%	
Trust	1%	•

Table 8 shows the varying ‘measurement levels’ that community wellbeing frameworks operate at, as highlighted by What Works Wellbeing (ibid).

Table 8: Levels of measurement

Rungs	Ladder of Measurement	What do they do?
1	Conceptual frameworks	Unpack complex constructs into different concepts/elements Provide definitions and may link validated tools
2	Evaluation frameworks	Provide guidance on what can be measured and how to go about evaluation Frameworks often provide categories or domains of measurement. They can be used to identify measures or to guide data collection and report outcomes
3	Logic models/logical frameworks/evaluation plans	These identify the expected outcomes — short, medium and long term of specific interventions or types of intervention
4	Indicator sets or indicator frameworks	Lists of defined outcomes that could change due to an intervention/type of intervention This can be at population level (e.g. local government indicators) or more specific to an intervention or service Proxy indicators show change in a related outcome using an aspect that is easier to measure than the actual thing
5	Measures and scales	These specify components that can be measured quantitatively A single indicator can be broken down to a number of measures These may be validated (e.g. social capital or WEMWBS) or non-validated measures/scales Often the terms indicator and measure are used synonymously
6	Validated tools or instrument or question sets	The questionnaires or groups of questions that can be used in evaluation, usually administered through survey

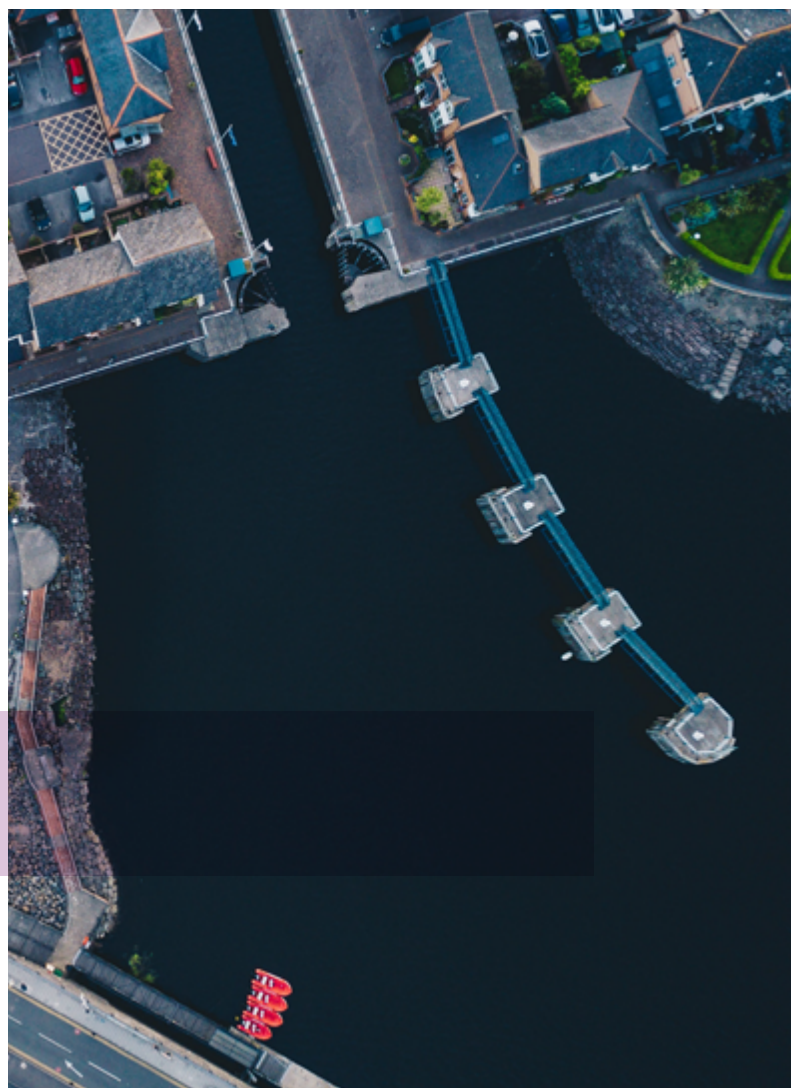
Appendix 5: The creation of seamless locales

A key part of the process of creating geographic units of analysis for the CWI involved the creation of 'Seamless Locales'. These are bespoke geographic units created by Geolytix, designed to reflect a truly identifiable local area somewhere locals would call their 'home' or 'neighbourhood'. In total there are over 28,000 Seamless Locale boundaries, which cover 100% of the UK.

The Seamless Locale boundaries are derived from the Towns & Suburbs data pack (another bespoke Geolytix product). There are two components of this dataset. Firstly the Town boundaries, which are a collection of polygons representing built up areas of the United Kingdom. The boundaries were created by running a number of distance-based rules using the open Ordnance Survey buildings, House Price Paid data (from Land Registry) and the Office for National Statistics postcode directory. The output from these processes were then heavily manually checked. The largest 60 towns were then split down into Suburbs (the second component of the dataset) using bus stop locations and administration boundaries to identify a lower level geography. Suburbs were designed using observed travel, work and shop patterns together with expert judgement to reflect neighbourhoods within each city with spatial extents recognisable to a local resident. Names were attributed using the bus stop name, Ordnance Survey open name and the National Public Transport Gazetteer hierarchy. House Price Paid and ONS postcode data is used to identify new towns and town extensions.

From the Town & Suburb data packs the Seamless Locales are created using a voronoi process, in order to achieve a seamless layer covering 100% of the UK. The process is constrained by the UK coast to ensure cross-estuary multi-polygon localities are avoided.

The resultant town-based locales are then subdivided into a series of sub-town seamless locales. This process uses a two-stage process. Firstly the Geolytix Suburbs from the Towns & Suburbs product are used for the largest 60 towns. These seamless Suburbs also use a postcode voronoi approach to ensure they nest within their host town locales. For towns with no suburb objects but with more than 20,000 residents seamless locales are created by using a combination of NaPTAN points, the Geolytix Retail Places product and manual intervention. These boundaries are designed to reflect how people familiar with the area would divide them. Feedback is given from users which where appropriate is fed back into the product. A polygon vertex voronoi process was run to significantly reduce polygon node counts allowing for fast rendering and use in web applications.



Appendix 6: Index data sources and indicators

Here we outline the specific data sources and indicators used to populate the Community Wellbeing Index.

Table 8: Index data sources and indicators

Community wellbeing domain	Indicators	Approach to measurement	Data source
Relationships and trust	Social spaces	Distance to nearest pub (m)	© OpenStreetMap contributors
		Distance to nearest cafe (m)	
		Distance to nearest community centre (m)	
		Distance to nearest playground (m)	
		Distance from outer boundary to each of the nearest social spaces, with a value of 0, if contained within the Locale.	
	Presence of young children	% of population who are children (aged <14)	Census 2011, ONS
	One-person households, aged 50+	% of one-person households, aged 50+	Census 2011, ONS
	Proximity of work to home	% workers working > 30km from their home address	Census 2011, ONS
	Household churn	% of houses sold in the community since 2014	Land Registry
	Long-term health status	% of population suffering from long term illness and/or disability Proportion of the population that are suffering from long term illnesses & disabilities, categorised as 'day-to-day activities limited a lot'	Census 2011, ONS
	Crime in the locale	Crime in locale per 10,000 population (2016)	data.police.uk & IMD Scotland
	Crime in town centre:	Crime in Town Centre (2016) Total crime counts in the nearest retail place, class: City Centre, Large Town Centre, Major City Centre, Major Urban Centre, Town Centre. This was restricted to the nearest centre within 20km, if there was no centre in that distance, this indicator was assigned a weight of zero for the Locale.	data.police.uk & Geolytix Retail Places ³

3 All of the Geolytix data sources are bespoke data sets created by Geolytix on the basis of publicly available data. More information about these can be found here: www.geolytix.co.uk/geodata

Community wellbeing domain	Indicators	Approach to measurement	Data source
Equality	House price gap	<i>Gap between lowest and highest priced houses in the area</i> The Inter Quartile Range (IQR) of the house price for all houses sold in the Locale since 2014. The IQR was used to avoid skews for particularly cheap & expensive properties.	Land Registry
	Second home ownership	<i>% of homes which are second homes</i> Proportion of empty houses from the Census, a proxy for second home ownership.	Census 2011, ONS
	Independent schools	<i>Distance to nearest independent school</i> Distance to the nearest independent school. This was weighted separately for London & the South East due to a much higher supply in those two regions.	Geolytix Education pack
	Qualification inequality	<i>Degree Level qualifications versus no qualifications</i> The absolute difference between the proportion of the population with a degree and the proportion of the population with no qualifications. A large score represents a less equal Locale, as skewed to one end of the scale.	Census 2011, ONS
	Ethnic minority representation in professional occupations	<i>Proportion of people from ethnic minority backgrounds in professional occupations</i> The proportion of people from ethnic minority backgrounds in professions: 1. Higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations; 2. Lower managerial, administrative and professional occupations; and 3. Intermediate occupations versus the total proportion of ethnic minorities. A % >0 is demonstrative of an under-representation, a % < 0 demonstrates an over representation.	Census 2011, ONS
	Relative affluence	<i>Income inequality</i> The proportion of households earning above average versus the proportion of households earning below average. A larger score represents a more equal Locale.	ONS Income Estimates
	Long-term housing security	<i>Families in private rental accommodation</i> The proportion of households that are privately renting and have at least one dependent child.	Census 2011, ONS
Voice and participation	Voter turnout	<i>% General Election Turnout</i> <i>% Local Election Turnout</i> The proportion of voter turnout in both General & Local Elections. As these were at larger geographies (Ward & Parliament Constituencies), the counts were apportioned out to Output Area. Then using the British Census Survey, an index was applied, based on age, ethnicity & region of the Output Area. They were then re-aggregated to Seamless Locales. Seamless Locales without a local election in the past 4 years were assigned a weight of zero for that variable.	Electoral Commission, British Census Survey
	Signing of petitions	<i>Signing of Petitions per 1,000 population</i> The proportion of people signing petitions. As these were at Parliament Constituencies level, the counts were apportioned out to Output Area. Then using the British Census Survey, an index was applied, based on age, ethnicity & region of the Output Area. They were then re-aggregated to Seamless Locales	Government Petitions, British Census Survey
	Coop member engagement	<i>Co-op member engagement</i> The proportion of Coop members that have voted for a cause in the past year, within the Locale. Locales with 100 or less total members were assigned a weight of zero.	Co-op

Community wellbeing domain	Indicators	Approach to measurement	Data source
Economy, work and employment	Proximity of work to home.	% Workers working over 30km from their home address Proportion of workers that are travelling 30km or further from their home address to their work address, in the Locale.	Census 2011, ONS
	Hours worked	% population working >49 hours per week Proportion of workers working over 49 hours per week, in the Locale.	Census 2011, ONS
	Household income	Average household income Average Household Income within the Locale.	ONS Income Estimates
	Vacant commercial units	% Vacant units from VOA Proportion of total commercial units in the Locale that are currently vacant.	Valuation Office Agency
	Free school meals	% children eligible for free school meals Proportion of children at schools within the Locale taking Free School Meals.	Geolytix Education Pack
	Unemployment	% Claiming job seekers allowance Proportion of adults within the Locale claiming JSA with higher levels of claims signalling higher levels of unemployment.	ONS
Health	Access to health services	Distance to nearest GP (m) Distance to nearest hospital (m) Distance to nearest mental health service (m) Distance to nearest pharmacy (m) Distance from outer boundary to each of the nearest health services, with a value of 0, if contained within the Locale.	Geolytix POI pack
	GP prescription rates	Prescription rates for hypertension and heart failure Prescription rates for drugs used in diabetes Prescription rates for antidepressants Prescription rates for obesity Prescription rates for dementia The % of drugs prescribed in relation to total patients within the Locale. In the case of no GP within the Locale, the nearest two were selected	NHS UK
Education and learning	Access to schools	Count of Schools Distance to nearest Non-Independent & special educational needs (SEN) school Distance to nearest Non-Independent, SEN and good/outstanding school The total count of schools, and distance to the nearest state school, both total and specifically Ofsted rated good or outstanding.	Geolytix Education pack
	Access to high quality schools	% of schools rated good or outstanding by Ofsted The proportion of schools that are rated good or outstanding by Ofsted. In the case there are more than 5 schools in the Locale, it is the average of all of those. In the case there are 5 or less, it is the average of the nearest 5, including the schools in the Locale.	Geolytix Education pack
	Access to adult education	Distance to nearest adult education facility (m) Distance from outer boundary to the nearest adult education facility, with a value of 0, if contained within the Locale.	Geolytix Education pack
	Access to libraries	Distance to nearest library (m) Distance from outer boundary to the nearest adult education facility, with a value of 0, if contained within the Locale.	© OpenStreetMap contributors

Community wellbeing domain	Indicators	Approach to measurement	Data source
Culture, leisure and heritage	Access to places of worship	<i>Distance to nearest place of worship (m)</i> Distance from outer boundary to the nearest place of worship, with a value of 0, if contained within the Locale.	© OpenStreetMap contributors
	Artists and musicians	<i>% of Artists & Musicians</i> Proportion of workers that are musicians or artists in the Locale.	Census 2011, ONS
	Access to leisure facilities	<i>Distance to nearest leisure facility (m)</i> <i>Distance to nearest grass pitch (m)</i> <i>Distance to nearest sports hall (m)</i> <i>Distance to nearest swimming pool (m)</i> Distance from outer boundary to each of the nearest leisure facilities, with a value of 0, if contained within the Locale.	© OpenStreetMap contributors
	Museums, art galleries, music halls, theatres	<i>Distance to nearest museum (m)</i> <i>Distance to nearest art gallery (m)</i> <i>Distance to nearest theatre (m)</i> Distance from outer boundary to each of the nearest venues, with a value of 0, if contained within the Locale.	© OpenStreetMap contributors
	Count of listed buildings	<i>Count of listed buildings</i> Count of listed buildings that fall within the Locale.	© OpenStreetMap contributors
Housing, space and environment	Affordability of housing	<i>Affordability</i> The average house price within the Locale on all households sold since 2014, divided by the average household income of the Locale, with a larger score demonstrating 'less affordability'	Land Registry, ONS Income Estimates
	Overcrowding	<i>Overcrowding</i> Proportion of households within the Locale that have more than 1 person per room.	Census 2011, ONS
	Public green space	<i>% Public Green Space</i> % of the area of the Locale that is made up of Green Space.	Ordnance Survey, Geolytix Physical Geography pack
	Access to public space	<i>Distance to nearest community centre (m)</i> <i>Distance to nearest playground (m)</i> % of the area of the Locale that is made up of public green space.	Ordnance Survey, Geolytix Physical Geography pack
	Traffic noise and air pollution	<i>HGV Maximum total count</i> The maximum counts of both HGV and total traffic going through the Locale. High counts of traffic will result in higher levels of pollution.	Department for Transport
Transport, mobility and connectivity	Communication - Internet	<i>Average Internet Speed</i> <i>Max Internet Speed</i> <i>Count of total connections per 10,000 population</i> Various measures of connectivity, with the average, maximum and total all considered. Whilst there may be high speeds, counts were also included, as there may be availability, but no take up of the services	Ofcom
	Public transport	<i>Count of bus stops per 10,000 population</i> <i>Distance to major rail station (>1,000,000 annual passengers)</i> <i>Distance to any rail station</i> Buses & Rail were considered key public transport facilities. Rail was split two ways, as there may be cases where whilst being close to a rail station, there is still be a long distance to a major station.	Geolytix Transport pack

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