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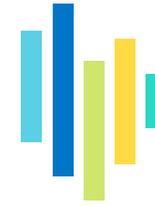


**A Journey to**

# A Wales of Cohesive Communities

- 1: People active in their communities:** Creating the conditions where people and communities can do the things that matter to them
- 2: Connected communities:** Supporting communities to be well connected and safe
- 3: Access to key well-being services:** Supporting vibrant foundational economies
- 4: Community anchor organisations:** Valuing the role and potential that community anchor organisations can play in building cohesive communities





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# A Wales of Cohesive Communities

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

*“Attractive, safe, viable and well-connected.”*



## Defining the goal

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

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

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

A key feature is the presence of strong, locally based institutions - often called 'community anchor organisations' – such as development trusts, social enterprises, coops, housing

associations and town or community councils. They're important because they understand local communities and have a long-term commitment to the area they serve.

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



### Case studies

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



## Defining the goal

Where to focus action in contributing to this goal

**Create viable communities where people can do the things that matter to them**

[\(See cohesive communities Wales journey topic 1: People active in their communities\)](#)

**Support communities to be well-connected**

[\(See cohesive communities Wales journey topic 2: Connected communities\)](#)

**Support access to key well-being services in communities**

[\(See cohesive communities Wales journey topic 3: Access to key well-being services\)](#)

**Value the role of key organisations in building cohesive communities**

[\(See cohesive communities Wales journey topic 4: Community anchor organisations\)](#)

**Understand the role of housing in cohesive communities**

[\(Journey topic to be explored further in next phase\)](#)

**Create communities where people feel safe**

[\(Journey topic to be explored further in next phase\)](#)

**Enable communities to be digitally connected**

[\(Journey topic to be explored further in next phase\)](#)



## Other statutory requirements in relation to this goal

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

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

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

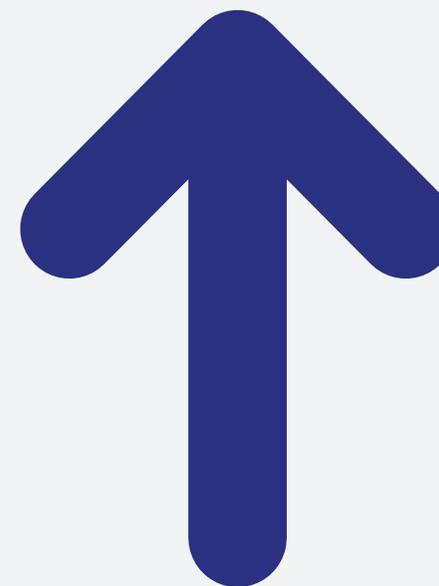


Some of the suggested steps and actions in this document complement the policies set out in legislation - specific steps and actions that adhere to these are highlighted in orange and with an 'St' symbol.

## Enablers

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

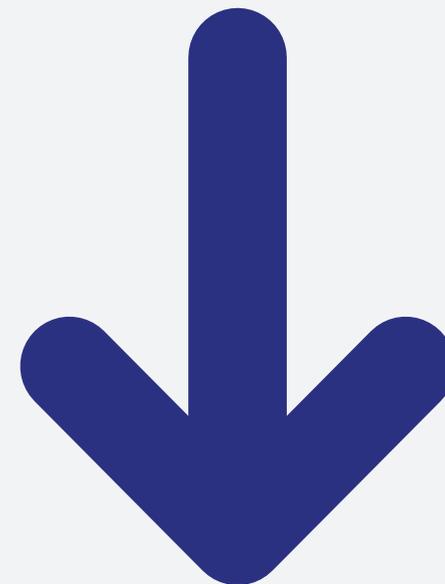
- **Public bodies create the best conditions to help communities do what matters to them.**
- **Public bodies embed 'what matters' to people conversations into how they work (see the [Journey to Involvement](#)).**
- **There is creative use of key funds and local budgets.**
- **Community anchor organisations which can give a voice to local people, are supported to hold assets and build resilience.**
- **There is support for community leaders, activists, entrepreneurs and volunteers.**



## Disablers

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

- **Public bodies work in silos and don't take 'place-based' approaches to what matters to people.**
- **Public bodies take a deficit view of communities, focusing on perceived weaknesses and ignoring strengths.**
- **Funding opportunities are short term and fragmented.**
- **Attitudes to community ownership of assets are constrained by a view that public bodies are the 'natural place' for assets to be held and community ownership only becomes a possibility when public bodies cannot afford them.**
- **Public bodies talk about involvement and co-production but don't invest in doing it properly.**





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# A Wales of Cohesive Communities

## 3: Access to key well-being services

Supporting vibrant foundational economies

## Defining the issue

Cohesive, viable communities need access to strong foundational services to be successful - including gas, electricity, water, broadband, housing, health, care, education, housing, food, retail, transport and culture. Cohesive communities need to value and strengthen foundational services by building on what already exists; understanding the cross-sector organisations who operate locally, and having conversations about how to maximise their potential whilst creating the conditions for this to become a reality.

### Synergies and connections to other journeys



#### **Journey to a Healthier Wales**

**Topic 4:** Seamless organisations and services for well-being



#### **Journey to a Prosperous Wales**

**Topic 3:** Local economies



## Making **Simple** Changes

**Map the nature** of the [Foundational economy](#) in communities you serve – learning from research in [Swansea](#).

**Maximise opportunities** for local social enterprises, development trusts, co-operatives, housing associations and SMEs to work in foundational economy sectors.

Eg

E.g. [Pilots in the foundational economy](#).

**Proactively procure services** provided by locally based social enterprises. Check what social businesses have to offer you at [Social Business Wales](#).

Eg

E.g. **Public Health Wales** purchased carpet tiles from [Greenstream](#) carpets.

HOME

**Ensure** that [key funds](#) are available to support new and existing groups with a commitment to local wealth creation.

**Increase access** to [credit unions](#) and other community development finance initiatives.

**Support local credit unions** by enabling staff to save through [direct from payroll](#).

**Make it easier** for staff to save regularly with their local credit union. Enable staff to make monthly salary payroll deductions direct to their [credit union](#) account.

**Promote** [money advice services](#), including promoting financial literacy lessons in schools.

## Being More **Adventurous**

**Support** [local enterprise facilitation](#) to enable local businesses (profit and non-profit) to contribute to local economic development.

**Support** and connect local wealth builders by using [the local wealth building toolkit](#).

**Support** the development of [community energy schemes](#).

Eg

E.g. [Awel Aman Tawe](#) community energy social enterprise.

**Extend** the use of ['Can Do' procurement toolkits](#), developed and widely used in social housing, to other areas of procurement.

HOME

**Promote** the innovative use of social investment funding streams.

E.g. **Wales Council for Voluntary Action** [Action Social Investment Funding](#)

**Promote** community share opportunities with communities looking to acquire and manage local assets.

Eg

E.g. **Wales Cooperative Centre** - [community share issue](#) opportunities for communities looking to acquire and manage community assets.

**Identify** ways in which vulnerable groups such as homeless people can be financially included.

## Owning your **Ambition**

### National or collaborative actions

**Learn from** foundational and community wealth building approaches such as:

Eg

E.g. [Barcelona Activa](#), providing support to local business and a [wide spectrum of activity](#) for 30 years, including neighbourhood level 'social solidarity' work with citizens. Future priorities include key well-being areas: energy, water, clean air, transport, food, housing, and transport. <https://youtu.be/Dm7kUYFSYc0>

**Learn from** a renewed interest in the [Foundational Economy: Municipalism](#) in the [UK](#) and in the [US](#).

**Learn from** [Keep it Local](#) and '[Local by Default](#)' approaches that proactively unlock local assets and well-being opportunities

### Organisational actions

**Embed** [place based procurement strategies](#) to enable locally based SMEs to play a full part in local economies.

**Ensure your** local anchor institutions - especially community anchors - are valued and included fully in approaches to building foundational sectors in areas such as: infrastructure; utilities; food processing, retailing and distribution; health; education and welfare.

Eg

E.g. [Preston, Lancashire](#) where local government and 'anchor' institutions are working to leverage their joint procurement power to support locally owned businesses and cooperatives.

Eg

E.g. [The Cleveland Model](#), keeping wealth in the local economy by mobilising the resources of key anchor institutions and addressing stark economic disparities in communities.

## Other examples and resources



[Credit unions](#)



[Money Line Cymru](#)



[Money Advice service](#)



[Foundational Economy](#)



[Community Wealth Building](#)



[Building Communities Trust  
Manifesto](#)



**'The foundational economy:  
what's housing got to do with  
it?'** - [Foundational Economy  
pilots](#) in Morriston, Swansea,  
Blaenau Gwent and social care.