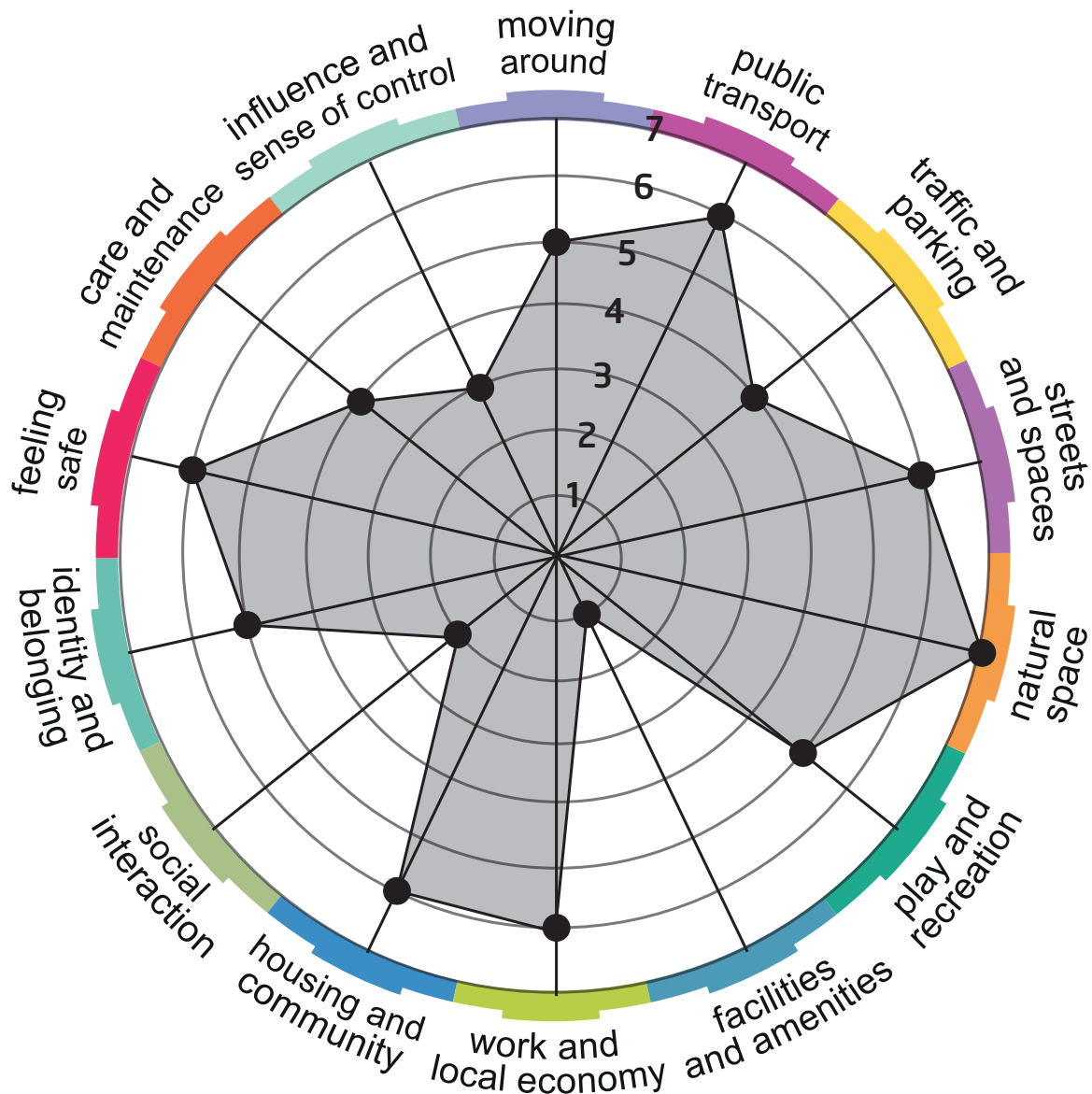


# Place Standard –

## How good is Our Place?



The Place Standard is a tool to evaluate the quality of a place. It can evaluate places that are well-established, undergoing change, or still being planned. The tool can also help users to identify their priorities.

The tool is simple and free to use. It consists of 14 questions which cover both the physical and social elements of a place. Prompts are provide to help users answer the questions. When all 14 questions have been completed, the results are shown in a simple diagram.

## Why Place is important

Research shows that the places where we spend our time have an important impact on our lives. The way a place looks, functions and feels can influence our health and wellbeing, and the opportunities we have access to. Improving the quality of places can help to tackle inequalities.

Understanding the existing and potential strengths of a place can inform good decision making, allowing resources to be targeted to where they are most needed. This approach can deliver better results over the long term.

The tool can also support the design and delivery of successful places, creating quality development where people want to live.

## Who it is for

The tool is designed to be accessible for everyone to use: communities; public sector; third sector; and the private sector. People will want to use the tool in different circumstance and for different purposes, but it allows people to work together productively across sectors and boundaries in a consistent way.

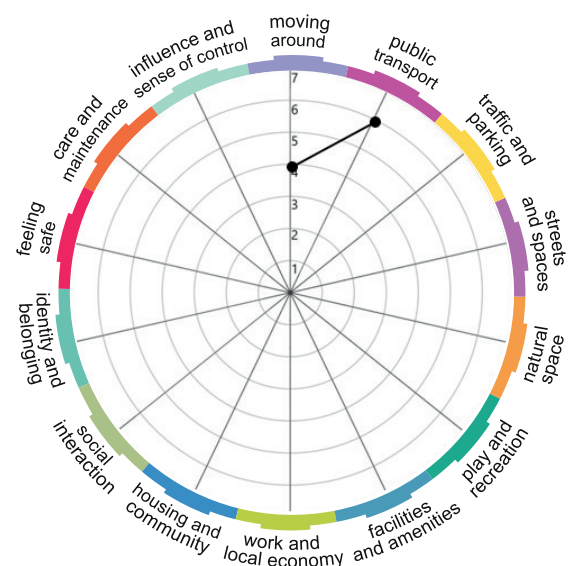
## Area

The tool allows different sizes and types of places to be assessed. This can include whole towns or neighbourhoods in urban or rural locations. The tool can be used to assess existing places as well as places that are still being planned. Whatever the place, the area to be evaluated should be agreed in advance by those involved.

## How to use

You can either complete the tool on paper or [placestandard.scot](http://placestandard.scot)

- Record who you are, noting if you are an individual or representing a group, and agree the area you are going to assess.
- Answer each question by recording a rating on a scale from 1 to 7. Some prompts are provided as a starting point for discussion. The rating should be agreed amongst the group carrying out the assessment. Space is provided to record the reasons for your answers.
- When you have answered all the questions, plot each rating on the 'compass diagram'. In this example (below) the "Moving Around" question was rated as '4'. The next question, Public Transport, was rated a "6". A line should be drawn between each point.



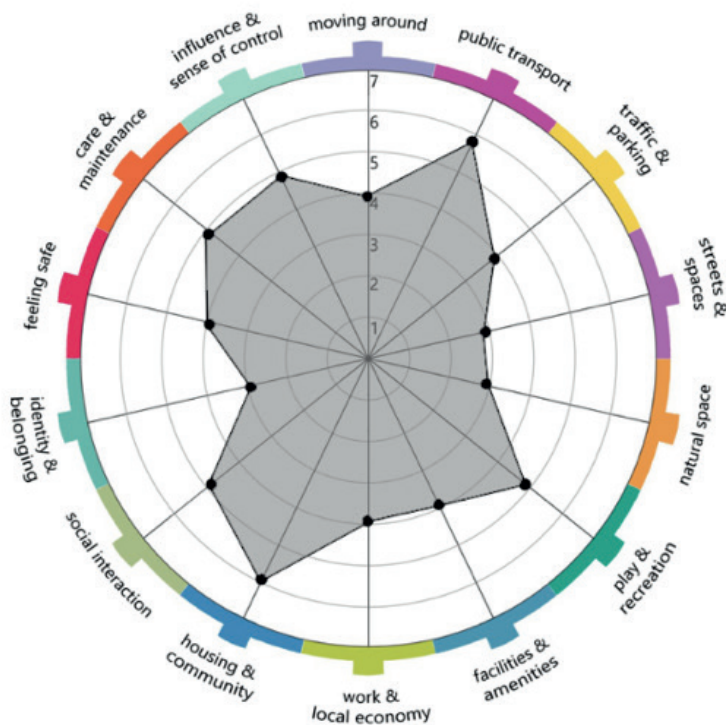
- After completing the diagram, you can reflect on the results by agreeing priorities and actions. Space is provided for you to list the main issues.

There may be occasions where the question does not seem relevant or where you feel you do not have enough information to answer. In these cases you should think about the area that is being evaluated as part of a larger place or ensure that there is a way in which community views can properly be taken into account.

When the tool is being used to help plan a new development where there is no established community, you will want to think about what it will be like to live there. It will also be useful to consider the needs of, or impact on neighbouring communities.

## Output

The diagram that is produced is easy to understand. It shows at a glance the areas where a place is performing well and where there is room for improvement. Where a place has been assessed as good, the shape will be fuller, reaching towards the edge of the circle (in the example below: *public transport*). Where it is viewed as performing poorly the shape will be smaller, remaining towards the centre (eg: *streets and spaces*)



There is no benchmark or minimum standard. The tool is used to determine the strengths and assets of a place and to indicate areas in which action may be taken.

## When to use

The place standard tool can help you to achieve a number of aims.

Communities can use the tool to assess what works about their place and where it needs to improve. This may be part of a wider discussion about the regeneration of an area, or it might be to inform a new place or development which is planned nearby.

Local authorities and Community Planning Partnerships can use the tool to help plan their activities and prioritise appropriate action.

The development sector can use the tool to establish to the needs of communities and create good places where people want to live.

## What happens next

The place standard tool is part of a process, not the end of a process. In considering what you do next, you should think about opportunities to develop and build upon the conversations and relationships the tool has initiated.

The method allows assessment to be consistent and comparable over time to see if improvement has been made. In order to get the most out of the tool you will want to record the qualities of the place and the reasons for your rating. This will be useful for people to set the ambition for their place.

# Moving around

Walking and cycling are good for both our health and the environment. The design and layout of a place can encourage walking and cycling by providing pleasant and safe routes that connect people to where they want to go.

Now consider the question:

## Can I easily walk and cycle around using good quality routes?

Next, rate your place on a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means there is a lot of room for improvement and 7 means there is very little room for improvement. Record your rating on the compass.

You might want to think about the following :

- Are there enough routes for walking and cycling? Are these given priority over cars and other traffic as much as possible?
- Do routes provide obvious and direct links with the places that people want to go, such as schools, shops, parks and public transport?
- Are routes of good quality, in an attractive environment and pleasant to use?
- Do routes meet the needs of all people regardless of age, mobility or disability? Is seating available for those who may need it?
- Do routes feel safe to use all year round and at different times of the day?
- If you wish, note why you rated your answer the way you did below:-

# Public transport

Access to an affordable, reliable and well-connected public transport service is important for communities in any place. Good public transport allows people to get around in a sustainable way which in turn is good for the environment.

Now consider the question:

## Does public transport meet my needs?

Next, rate your place on a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means there is a lot of room for improvement and 7 means there is very little room for improvement. Record your rating on the compass.

Here are some things that you might want to think about as you consider your rating:

- Are public transport services frequent and reliable? Do they take people to the places they need to go?
- Is public transport accessible for all regardless of age, mobility or disability?
- Are bus stops and stations in convenient places and within walking distance of people's homes? Is seating available for those who may need it?
- Are public transport services affordable for all?
- Are facilities and vehicles of a good quality and well maintained? Do they encourage use and help people to feel safe?
- Do public transport hubs offer good facilities such as toilets, secure parking and cycle storage?
- If you wish, note why you rated your answer the way you did below:-

# Traffic and parking

Places that are dominated by traffic and parked cars can have a negative impact on our daily lives. Appropriate arrangements for traffic and parking that allow people to move around safely can help people to get the most out of a place.

Now consider the question:

**Do traffic and parking arrangements allow people to move around safely and meet the community's needs?**

Next, rate your place on a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means there is a lot of room for improvement and 7 means there is very little room for improvement. Record your rating on the compass.

Here are some things that you might want to think about as you consider your rating:

- Do people take priority over cars and other traffic?
- Does the amount and location of parking affect how people feel about the place and how they use it?
- Are there any aspects of the place that are adversely affected by the levels of traffic and parking? You might want to think about access, noise and air quality.
- Are there appropriate road safety measures in place to ensure everyone can get about safely regardless of age, mobility or disability?
- Are traffic calming measures used effectively to benefit the community?
- Is parking in a safe and secure location?

If you wish, note why you rated your answer the way you did below:-

# Streets and spaces

Buildings, landmarks, greenery, views and natural landscape can all help to create an attractive, distinctive place that people enjoy being in. These features can also help people to find their way around.

Now consider the question:

## Do buildings, streets and public spaces create an attractive place that is easy to get around?

Next, rate your place on a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means there is a lot of room for improvement and 7 means there is very little room for improvement. Record your rating on the compass.

Here are some things that you might want to think about as you consider your rating:

- Is being in or passing through this place a pleasant experience?
- Are there positive features such as local landmarks, historic buildings, public squares or natural features that make the place feel distinctive?
- Are there distinctive features and routes that help you to find your way around?
- Do buildings, features and public spaces look interesting and attractive?
- Are there negative features such as derelict buildings, vacant land or excessive noise? Does the design of the area help to lessen their impact?
- Is the experience of the place positive both day and night and in different seasons or weather conditions?

If you wish, note why you rated your answer the way you did below:-



# Natural space

Natural space includes a wide variety of different environments from parks, woodlands, fields, streams and rivers to green space alongside paths and roadways and tree lined streets. These spaces are good for wildlife, can improve air quality and benefit our health and wellbeing.

Now consider the question:

## Can I regularly experience good quality natural space?

Next, rate your place on a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means there is a lot of room for improvement and 7 means there is very little room for improvement. Record your rating on the compass.

Here are some things that you might want to think about as you consider your rating:

- Are there a range of natural spaces that are readily available to people and can be used for a variety of purposes?
- Are there opportunities for people to experience and have contact with nature?
- Is natural space accessible to all regardless of age, mobility or disability? Is seating available for those who need it?
- Is the available natural space attractive, well maintained and free from hazards? Is it affected by negative features such as excessive noise or poor air quality?
- Is the natural space used, and felt safe to use, by all regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religious belief, sexual orientation or disability?
- Will the available natural space continue to meet people's needs in the future?

If you wish, note why you rated your answer the way you did below:-

# Play and recreation

Good places encourage children to play and allow adults to enjoy leisure and sporting activities. Opportunities for play and recreation can improve the quality of our lives and our health.

Now consider the question:

## Do I have access to a range of space and opportunities for play and recreation?

Next, rate your place on a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means there is a lot of room for improvement and 7 means there is very little room for improvement. Record your rating on the compass.

Here are some things that you might want to think about as you consider your rating:

- Are there opportunities and spaces for all to engage in play and recreation? You might want to think about some specific groups like teenagers, children with disabilities and older people.
- Are there appropriate spaces and facilities to support play and recreational activities? Are these used to their full potential?
- Are the available spaces and facilities of good quality and well maintained?
- Are the available spaces and facilities accessible for all? And are they affordable to use?
- Are children able to challenge themselves during play and build confidence through exposure to and experience of judging and managing risk? Is the presence of children playing outdoors welcomed by the community?
- Do the available spaces and facilities feel safe to get to, be in and use? Is this affected by the time of day or year?

If you wish, note why you rated your answer the way you did below:-

# Facilities and amenities

Facilities and amenities are the things that we need to live and enjoy life; this can include local shops, schools, nurseries, libraries, GPs and places to eat, drink and meet friends. Access to good quality facilities and amenities is important in supporting people to lead healthy, fulfilling lives.

Now consider the question:

## Do facilities and amenities meet my needs?

Next, rate your place on a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means there is a lot of room for improvement and 7 means there is very little room for improvement. Record your rating on the compass.

Here are some things that you might want to think about as you consider your rating:

- Is there a range of facilities and amenities available to meet a variety of different needs?
- Are these accessible and used by all regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religious belief, sexual orientation or disability?
- Do the available facilities and amenities help to support a healthy lifestyle?
- Are they within a reasonable distance and easily accessible by walking, cycling or public transport?
- Are facilities and amenities good quality and well maintained?
- Are the available facilities and amenities being used to their full potential? Will they continue to meet people's needs in the future?

If you wish, note why you rated your answer the way you did below:-

# Work and local economy

Good quality work can offer important benefits through the income, activity, social networks and sense of identity and satisfaction that it can bring. A thriving local economy can provide work opportunities and help create lively and attractive places where people want to spend time.

Now consider the question:

## Is there an active local economy and the opportunity to access good quality work?

Next, rate your place on a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means there is a lot of room for improvement and 7 means there is very little room for improvement. Record your rating on the compass.

Here are some things that you might want to think about as you consider your rating:

- Is there an active local economy that helps to create a thriving place?
- Are there job opportunities that are available and accessible to local people regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religious belief, sexual orientation or disability?
- Are there effective services that help people to find and keep work, such as Jobcentres, recruitment agencies and affordable childcare, available locally?
- Are there opportunities for people to gain skills for work such as education, training and volunteering?
- Are there opportunities and spaces for local businesses to start up and grow?

If you wish, note why you rated your answer the way you did below:-

# Housing and community

The housing on offer can determine who lives in an area and how a place looks and feels. Good places have a well-integrated mix of quality homes that support a range of household sizes and people of different ages and incomes.

Now consider the question:

## Does housing support the needs of the community and contribute to a positive environment?

Next, rate your place on a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means there is a lot of room for improvement and 7 means there is very little room for improvement. Record your rating on the compass.

Here are some things that you might want to think about as you consider your rating:

- Is housing a positive feature of the area?
- Does the variety of housing allow people to stay in the area even as their needs change?
- Is there a range of house types, sizes and tenures (i.e. rented, privately owned, etc) to meet different needs and are these well-integrated with each other.
- Is there a range of good quality housing available for people, regardless of their income.

If you wish, note why you rated your answer the way you did below:-

# Social interaction

Feeling isolated can be damaging to our health and wellbeing. Good places provide a variety of spaces to meet and spend time with others.

Now consider the question:

**Is there a range of spaces and opportunities to meet people?**

Next, rate your place on a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means there is a lot of room for improvement and 7 means there is very little room for improvement. Record your rating on the compass.

Here are some things that you might want to think about as you consider your rating:

- Are there spaces that provide opportunities for people to meet and interact?
- Is there a range of different spaces for interaction; these could be indoor, outdoor, purpose built and more informal?
- Can they be used at different times of the day and year or in different weathers?
- Does the place encourage people from across the whole community to mix and get to know each other?

If you wish, note why you rated your answer the way you did below:-

# Identity and belonging

How people feel about a place can be influenced by many factors, including how the place looks; how other people view the place; and the place's culture and history. Places with a positive identity, and where people feel they belong, can help to build strong communities.

Now consider the question:

## Does this place have a positive identity and do I feel I belong?

Next, rate your place on a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means there is a lot of room for improvement and 7 means there is very little room for improvement. Record your rating on the compass.

Here are some things that you might want to think about as you consider your rating:

- Do people perceive the place positively?
- Are the history, heritage and culture of the place apparent and celebrated?
- Do people feel connected to their neighbours and the community?
- Do all people in the place feel like they belong regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religious belief, sexual orientation or disability?
- Are people positively engaged in their community? Are there groups and networks that help strengthen a sense of community?

If you wish, note why you rated your answer the way you did below:-

# Feeling safe

How safe a place feels can affect people's wellbeing and how they spend time there. Good design and maintenance can help make places feel safer and minimise crime and antisocial behaviour.

Now consider the question:

## Do I feel safe?

Next, rate your place on a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means there is a lot of room for improvement and 7 means there is very little room for improvement. Record your rating on the compass.

Here are some things that you might want to think about as you consider your rating:

- Is the area safe for all regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religious belief, sexual orientation or disability?
- Are routes and spaces overlooked by buildings and are these well used, adding to a feeling of safety?
- Are routes and spaces safe and well used at different times of the day and throughout the year?
- Do people feel safe both at home and when out and about?
- Is the area free of negative features, such as empty or derelict property, crime, or anti-social behaviour?

If you wish, note why you rated your answer the way you did below:-



# Care and maintenance

Places that are well-cared for can make us feel positive, while those that are not looked after properly can have the opposite effect. Having proper maintenance arrangements in place, and ways in which residents can get support when needed, allows people to feel positive about their environment.

Now consider the question:

## Are buildings and spaces well cared for?

Next, rate your place on a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means there is a lot of room for improvement and 7 means there is very little room for improvement. Record your rating on the compass.

Here are some things that you might want to think about as you consider your rating:

- Are public areas, facilities and properties well maintained?
- Are there any specific problems in the area, such as litter, vandalism or dog fouling?
- Are there good facilities for refuse storage and collection? Are recycling facilities available and easily accessed?
- Do local authorities, housing associations, landlords and residents all know their roles and responsibilities? Is action taken when necessary?
- Is communication clear and effective? Residents should be kept informed of any change to services and be able to easily report problems if they arise.
- Is there a local residents association? Is it effective?

If you wish, note why you rated your answer the way you did below:-

# Influence and sense of control

Having a voice in decision making and feeling empowered to make changes can help to build stronger communities and better places. Having this sense of control can make people feel positive about their lives.

Now consider the question:

**Do I feel able to participate in decisions and help change things for the better?**

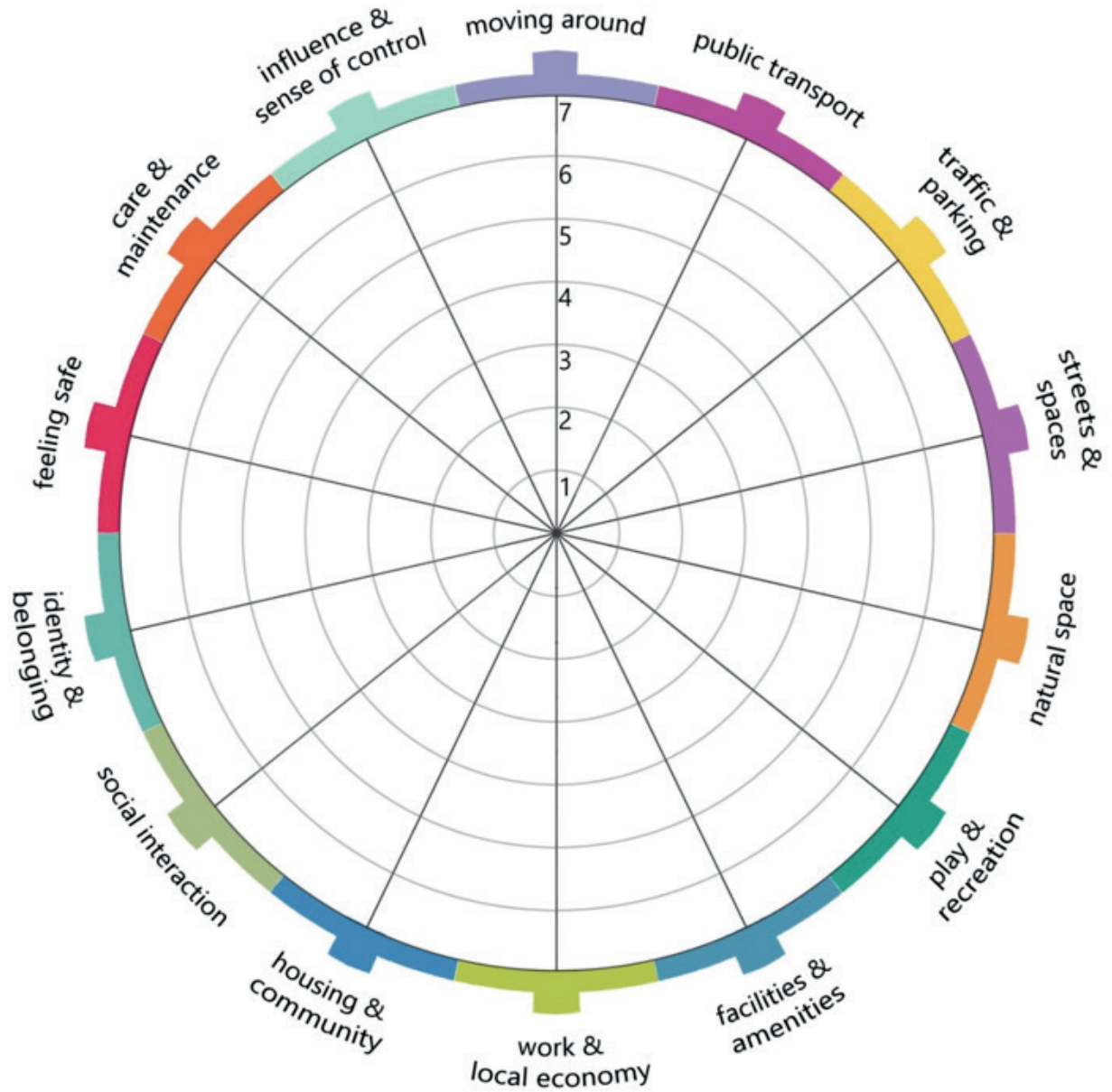
Next, rate your place on a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means there is a lot of room for improvement and 7 means there is very little room for improvement. Record your rating on the compass.

Here are some things that you might want to think about as you consider your rating:

- Are people able to contribute to decisions that affect them?
- Are all people able to contribute regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religious belief, sexual orientation or disability?
- Do organisations such as local authorities, health services and housing associations actively work with the community to understand their needs?
- Do people feel listened to?
- Are there local community services or groups that allow people to get involved?

If you wish, note why you rated your answer the way you did below:-

When you have answered all the questions, plot each rating on the 'compass diagram'



# Priorities for action

What are the main issues and priorities for change that you have identified?

# Priorities for action

What actions could be taken to address these?

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