

# **What Works Scotland:** **Evaluating place-based approaches**

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**WHAT  
WORKS  
SCOTLAND**



- A three-year project led by researchers at **University of Glasgow and University of Edinburgh**
- Funded by the ESRC and the Scottish Government
- To **support and improve public services** in Scotland

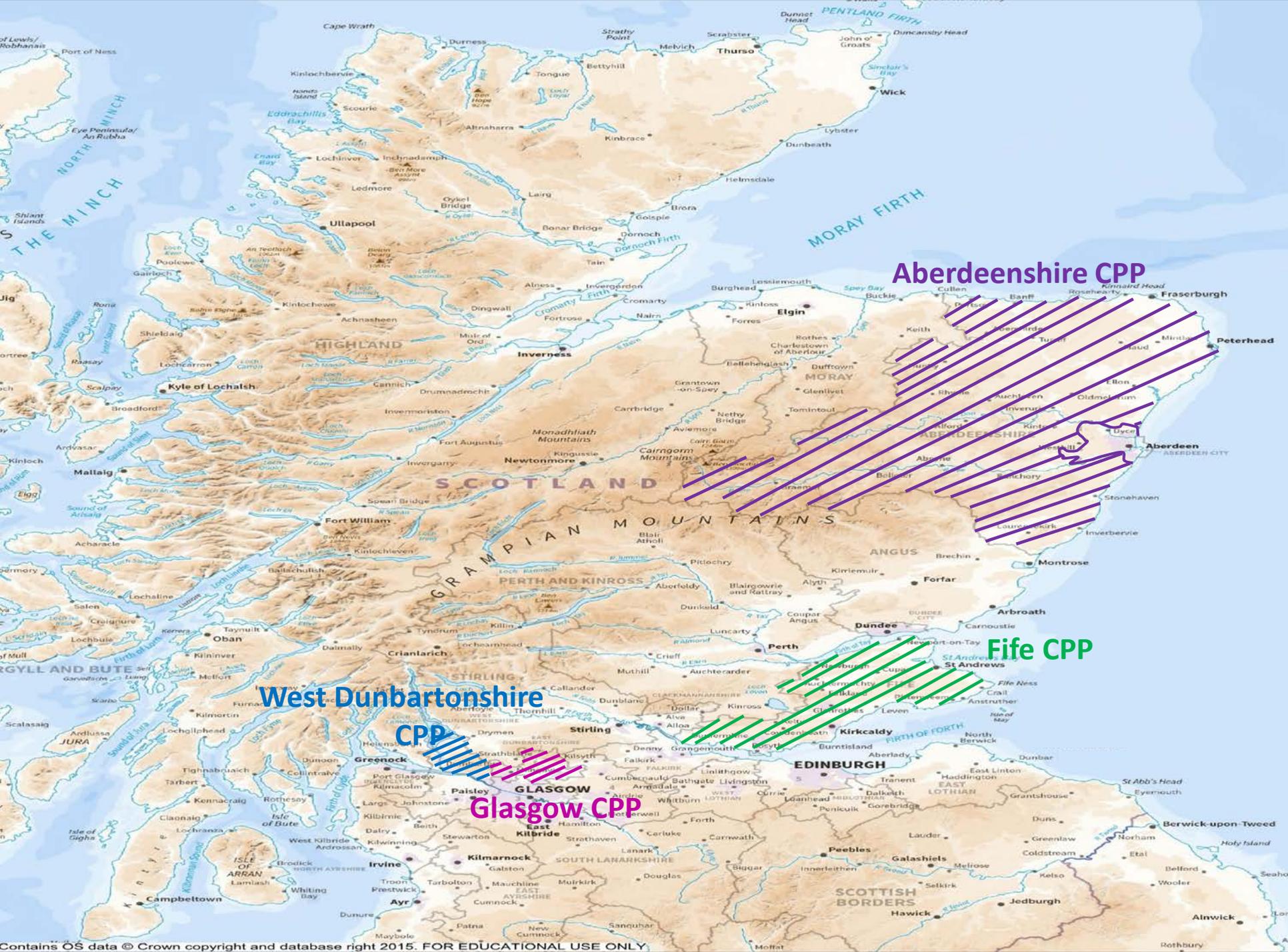
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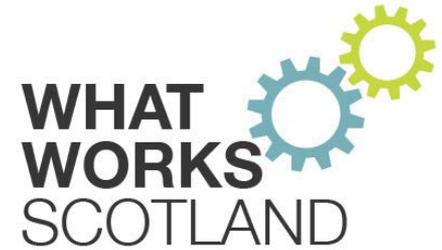
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# COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES

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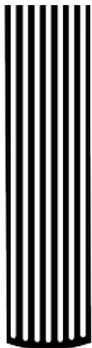
We work across the four  
pillars of the Scottish  
Government's Christie  
Commission



# The fifth 'P'



## Place



- CPPs must develop -
  - A complex understanding of the needs of local areas over time - based on robust data.
- This cannot be achieved without:
  - community engagement
  - CPPs working with local and national agencies to make use of their knowledge and resources
- Community Empowerment Act (2015)
  - Local Outcome Improvement plans and locality plans

# Post-Christie Commission - what progress has been made?

## Audit Scotland 2016:

**‘We are yet to see CPP partners sharing, aligning or redeploying their resources in significantly different ways and on a larger scale to deliver the priorities’**

So far, change has been incremental – not the transformational change sought by the Christie Commission...

# Evaluability Assessment of Thriving Places

- ✓ Late-2015: Glasgow CPP asked WWS to work with officers involved with Thriving Places, to support them to develop an evaluation framework.
- ✓ Evaluation of area based initiatives is very complex.
- ✓ Showing change has often been difficult to evidence.
- ✓ Thriving Places is particularly complex, with lots of room for local interpretation and autonomy.
- ✓ How to usefully evaluate a project that is so local and diverse?

# Evaluating Area Based Initiatives

- two types of area approaches; people based and place based:

**Place based** include: regeneration schemes, enterprise zones, infrastructure and supply side development strategies

**People based** include: capacity building, community development, workability programmes and other similar initiatives

# Evaluation of the New Deal for Communities Programme

- household surveys,
- the generation of NDC specific administrative data (including worklessness and benefit claimants, pupil-level educational attainment rates and house prices),
- levels of spend,
- operational data and
- evidence on prevailing socioeconomic context

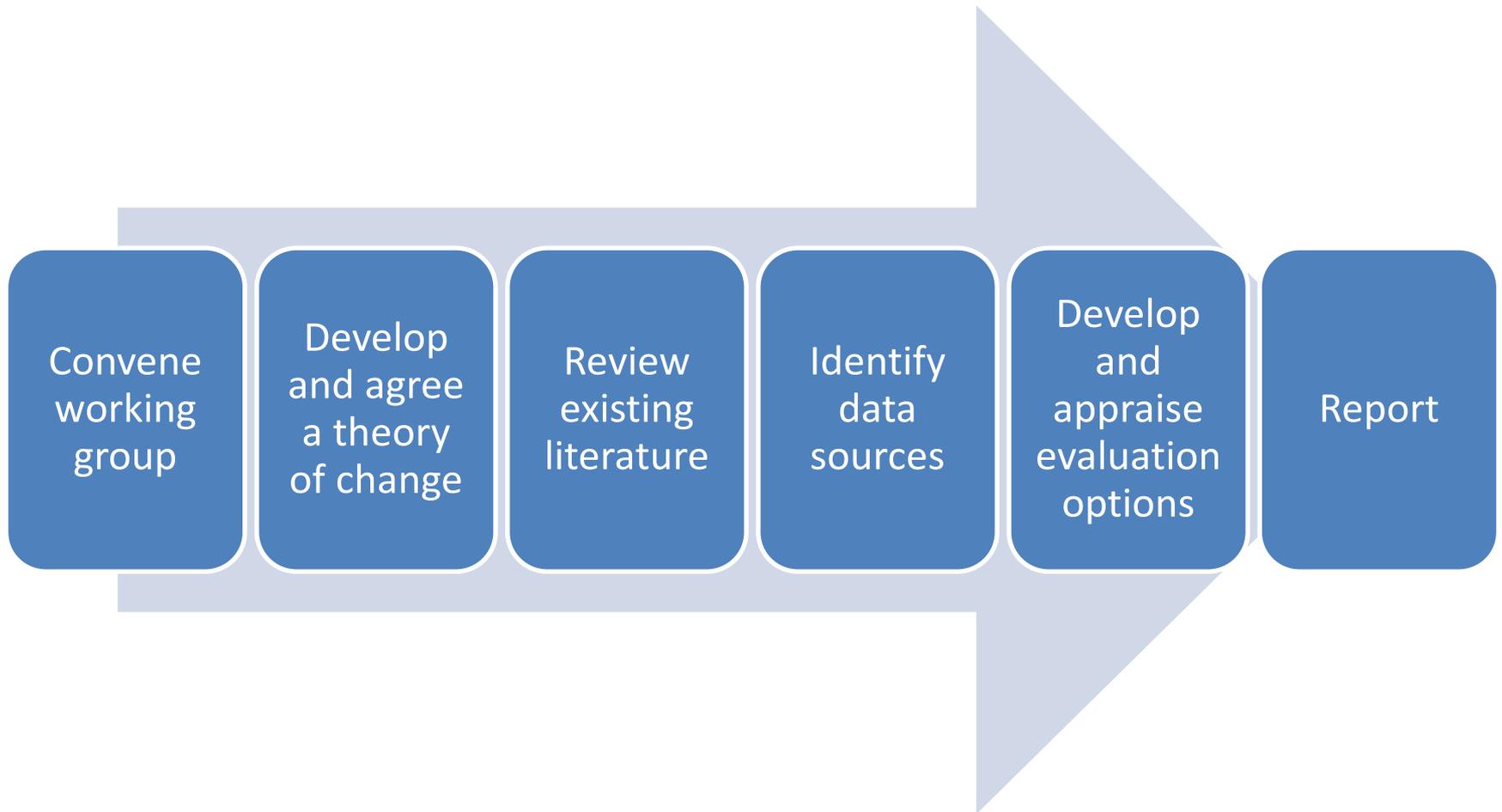
- The evaluation cost £22m.
- Improvements in outcomes were found across 32 of the 36 core indicators and when compared to non NDC areas greater improvement was shown in 18.
- They also report differences in effect on locality of the place based initiative with those placed on the periphery of towns and cities less likely to see positive change than core inner cities.

# What is an Evaluability Assessment?

A systematic, collaborative approach to the **planning** of evaluation projects, by engaging stakeholders, and working together to:

- ✓ **clarify intervention goals**
- ✓ **develop a theory of change**
- ✓ **decide whether a useful evaluation can be carried out at reasonable cost**
- ✓ **Co-production: through dialogue and deliberation reach a common understanding of TP values**

# Evaluability Assessment



## How did the Glasgow CPP Evaluability Assessment work?

- ✓ **Four workshops across six months** facilitated by WWS, convened by CPP
- ✓ Approx. 25 **central and local** TP leaders from approx 12 service areas/third sector/councillor
- ✓ Dialogue and deliberation enabled the planned strategic aims of TP to be amended, clarified, unified
- ✓ **Co-produced a 'theory of change' for TP**
  - ✓ **In practical terms, a principles and ten-year outcomes diagram for dissemination across TP workers.**

## Revised Thriving Places principles and ten-year outcomes

### Principles – cluster 1: services and communities working in partnership

Local and city-wide organisations and partnerships, local people and communities work together to **jointly define their local priorities**, approaches and outcomes sought

joint working at a **very local** community level

**long term** focus on partnership working

Communities and organisations **working together to design, develop and deliver local services** based on locally defined need

### Principles – cluster 2: mobilising communities, assets and resources

Increasing and embedding activities to **facilitate community participation** and widen social networks

Facilitating the development of people, communities, buildings and land in order to **realise their potential**

Supporting and sustaining the development of third sector and community-led organisations to **act as community anchor organisations**

**changing the way in which local and city-wide resources** (people, time and funding) **are allocated and utilised**, in response to community-defined needs and priorities

### Principles – cluster 3: monitoring outcomes and sharing the learning

Central role for CPP sector partnerships, local people and communities in **capturing, describing and monitoring Thriving Places processes and outcomes** locally

CPP sector partnerships, local people and communities work together to jointly **share their learning within, across and beyond their Thriving Place**

### Ten-year outcomes – cluster 1: community changes

Places where **more people are proud to live**

**Resilient people and communities**

**Connected communities**

**Supportive communities**

**Inclusive communities**

**Active and powerful communities**

### Ten-year outcomes – cluster 2: community mobilisation and public services change

Services and activities are **defined, developed and delivered by communities, agencies, services and the third sector together**, and are led by communities where demanded

**communities are confident that services will respond** to community-defined needs and priorities

**Services alter in response to changing needs and awareness levels**, and services are more accessible and inclusive

Service provision is more strongly based on **early intervention and prevention**

### Ten-year outcomes – cluster 3: learning from the Thriving Places programme

**Identify and disseminate what has and has not worked in Thriving Places** in relation to: developing place-based approaches; promoting community participation; realising potential; and working together to design, develop and deliver local services; measurable change in the way organisations work within Thriving Places

### Ten-year outcomes – cluster 4: measurable outcomes within Thriving Places

**a relative and absolute improvement in multiple measures of deprivation** (including but not exclusively tracked through SIMD), with the rate of improvement greater than comparator areas

**progress across measures of pride, inclusion, supportiveness, resilience, community connection, activity and power**

# Recommendation of how to evaluate Thriving Places

- ✓ Thriving Places is actually a *people-based* intervention (not so much place-based)
- ✓ Approach to evaluation of TP:
  - ✓ *formative evaluation of promising practice*
- ✓ Formative evaluation *complements – not replaces –* CPP Performance Management Framework and Health & Wellbeing Survey booster samples as existing measures

## Recommendation: formative evaluation of TP using a structured case study approach

- ✓ Case studies can identify promising practice for adaptation across TP areas
  - ✓ **ten year programme allows opportunity for formative learning**
- ✓ Recommend that **approx. five case studies** be coordinated by professional researcher, working collaboratively with TP staff and communities
- ✓ Cases selected to embrace a purposive sample of TP activities, incorporating:
  - ✓ a range of TP areas
  - ✓ a range of levels of intervention (micro-, meso- and macro); and
  - ✓ a range of TP Principles and Ten-year outcomes.

# Risks and Opportunities

***Risks - place-based approaches become a 'catchall'?***

- **Workforce overload – too many agendas and approaches**
  - **Restructuring and realigning services, increased workloads, less security, short term contracts, reduced pool of capable staff**
- **Attention diverted from wider causes of inequality**

***Place-based approaches are not a silver bullet***

***Opportunities***

- **Community Empowerment Act** – emphasis on inequalities and a deeper understanding of local needs and assets
- **Improvement Agenda** – greater emphasis on understanding practices of public service reform in situ

