

Resilient communities: meeting the challenge of being at the margins – launch event

Introducing separate yet complementary indexes – the Wales Community Assets Index (WCAI) and the Wales Community Resilience Index (WCRI)

BCT
Building
Communities Trust
Ymddiriedolaeth
Adeiladu Cymunedau

Resilient communities: meeting the challenge of being at the margins

Assets

Resilience

September 2023

Background to BCT's work

- BCT works with many isolated communities with low levels of community assets through the Invest Local Programme.
- Universal experience of groups in Invest Local is the importance of people having access to spaces and local facilities offering both support and opportunities.
- Work has taken place against the challenging backdrops of sustained austerity, Covid-19 and cost-of-living-crisis.
- The research builds on these experiences, previous attempts to map community assets in Wales and *Left Behind: Understanding communities on the edge*.



What are we publishing?

Resilient communities: meeting the challenge of being at the margins

Assets

Resilience

September 2023

MSOA	MSOA Name	LAD Name	Chk Assets Domain Score	Chk Assets Domain Rank	Connectiveness Domain Score	Connectiveness Domain Rank	Active and
1	MS000001	Merthyr Tydfil	1.12	163	1.29	12	12
2	MS000002	Rhondda Cynon Taf - Trehafod	7.60	14	1.39	10	10
3	MS000003	Torfaen - Abercynon	9.30	9	2.20	5	5
4	MS000004	Wrexham - Cefn Mawr	8.51	24	1.44	14	14
5	MS000005	Cardiff - St Mellons West	7.63	20	1.44	14	14
6	MS000006	Neepwy - Duffryn & Neepwy	9.10	18	0.76	23	23
7	MS000007	Rhondda Cynon Taf - Pen-ty-Celler	2.68	129	2.04	10	10
8	MS000008	Neepwy - Bettws	4.66	82	0.87	18	18
9	MS000009	Blaenau Gwent - Rassau & Beaufort	7.72	22	1.82	16	16
10	MS000010	Bedford - Conyff	9.19	17	0.22	33	33
11	MS000011	Blaenau Gwent - Aberbilly North & Castellary	11.29	3	0.18	28	28
12	MS000012	The Vale of Glamorgan - Rhosce & Abergart	4.29	89	1.47	17	17
13	MS000013	Monmouthshire - Monmouth & Wotton	7.88	28	1.90	8	8
14	MS000014	The Vale of Glamorgan - Rhosce & Abergart	11.04	4	1.42	17	17
15	MS000015	Cardiff - Casca South	9.28	14	1.37	10	10
16	MS000016	Cardiff - Casca West	9.28	14	1.37	10	10
17	MS000017	Cardiff - Casca East	9.28	14	1.37	10	10
18	MS000018	Hirwaion - Buckley South	7.78	22	0.26	32	32
19	MS000019	Blaenau Gwent - Senny	9.21	15	1.14	12	12
20	MS000020	Swansea - Penarth	1.04	180	2.41	4	4
21	MS000021	Conwy - Old Colwyn & Llandudula	13.81	1	0.11	29	29
22	MS000022	The Vale of Glamorgan - Unstut Major	10.72	5	1.50	7	7
23	MS000023	Torfaen - Fairwater & Greenmeadow	9.49	13	1.93	9	9
24	MS000024	Swansea - Tenby	9.35	16	1.32	11	11
25	MS000025	Cardiff - Sully	10.40	6	0.81	21	21

2 indexes and a suite of resources, including the complete dataset and recommendations for decision-makers

Community Resilience Index and 'less resilient areas' in Wales

Technical report



Wales Community Assets Index

Read our pioneering community assets research which shows sustained, place-based inequality across Wales and what must happen next.

To view the full report (English), please click here.

To view the executive summary (English), please click here.

Wales Community Assets Index

Read our pioneering community assets research.

Read the full report

Executive summary

September 2023

Our research

The research described in this report was commissioned by Building Communities Trust from Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion (OCSI). It maps areas across the whole of Wales for the presence of community assets, levels of engagement within communities and their connectivity in terms of access to jobs, transport networks and IT infrastructure.

In undertaking this research, we have created two new indexes: The Wales Community Assets Index (WCAI) has mapped all 1,624 Middle Layer Super Output Areas (MSOAs) in Wales across domains of connectivity, community assets and engaged communities, to show the combined needs of community infrastructure.

The Wales Community Resilience Index (WCRI) merges the assets index with the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) to show the degree to which communities experience challenges with both deprivation and lack of infrastructure. There is a striking degree of convergence between the WCAI and the WIMD, for more than might be expected in a country like Wales, where so many people live in rural areas. For most people in Wales living in disadvantaged areas, it also means living in areas lacking in key community assets.

Our findings

The research identifies a category of Less Resilient Areas (LRAs), which are the 20% of places with the least assets, which also have a greater level of deprivation. Only 10% of the top 10% of the WIMD 100 areas fell into that category. By comparison only 27 areas are in the 20% most deprived on the WIMD, but are not listed as an LRA.

Strikingly, many LRA communities experiencing infrastructure challenges and deprivation are found on the periphery of major urban centres, on post-world war housing estates and in former mining communities.

The data suggests that, relatively speaking, most rural areas have been able to sustain their community assets, despite not normally being described as wealthy and experiencing often very poor connectivity. Deeper analysis of the data suggests that many rural areas across Wales experience high levels of active and engaged communities.

Our research shows that communities with fewer places to meet, a less engaged and active community and poorer connectivity to the wider economy, experience significantly different social and economic outcomes compared to communities possessing more of these assets. Communities with fewer of these assets have higher rates of unemployment, tend to often do not have qualifications and experience longer term issues than both areas classified as experiencing deprivation which do have those assets and tables as a whole. They also have lower levels of community activity and receive lower levels of funding from both the state and charitable sources despite their social challenges, and despite the problems with connectivity, almost a third of households in LRAs do not own a car, making residents more likely to have problems accessing work and the public services.

Some of these findings are encouraging: the relative peripherality of many LRAs has almost certainly led to the sub-optimal use of more skilled, younger people, but the findings relating to health, community action and access to funding are not as obvious.

This unprecedented mapping of community infrastructure, combined with the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD), clearly demonstrates sustained, place-based inequality throughout the nation. This requires further research to identify different social and economic outcomes for people living in LRAs.

Our recommendations

To reduce these place-based disparities we recommend that:

- 01 Identify and map areas of high deprivation and low connectivity to key services and infrastructure.
- 02 Invest in infrastructure and community assets in these areas to improve connectivity and access to services.
- 03 Support community-led initiatives and local enterprise partnerships to improve connectivity and access to services.
- 04 Support community-led initiatives and local enterprise partnerships to improve connectivity and access to services.
- 05 Support community-led initiatives and local enterprise partnerships to improve connectivity and access to services.
- 06 Support community-led initiatives and local enterprise partnerships to improve connectivity and access to services.

More information

To view our full report, please visit: [HSEFT LINK](#).

To view the OCSI report, please visit: [HSEFT LINK](#).

About us

Building Communities Trust (BCT) was established in 2020 with the purpose of supporting local-based community development, to enable people to make their own neighbourhoods stronger and better places to live in, with the support of a £18m endowment from the National Lottery Community Fund. We established the Inver Local programme to provide £1m over 10-12 years for 12 communities across Wales, for residents to invest according to their own priorities. These communities were identified due to their problem on the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) and their physical limited access to services.

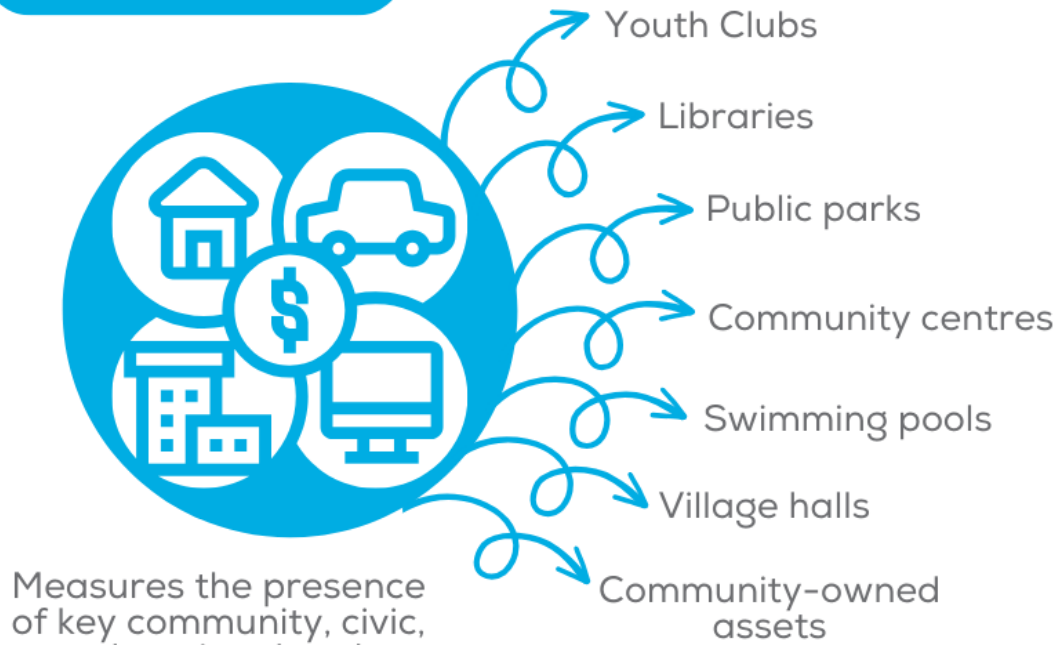
Methodology

- Asset-based by design – measuring the strengths of communities and presence of community infrastructure, as opposed to what is absent.
- Uses MSOAs as the geographical measure.
- Brings together 20 different indicators under 3 new domain headings.
- Scores and ranks each of the 410* MSOAs in Wales.
- A rank of 1 indicates low provision of community infrastructure and weaker resilience, whereas a rank of 410 indicates stronger provision of community infrastructure and greater resilience.

* the indexes rely on 2011 census data when there were 410 MSOAs in Wales. In the 2021 update this was reduced to 408.



Civic Assets



Measures the presence of key community, civic, educational and cultural assets in the area.

Facilities that provide things to do and spaces to meet often, at no or little cost (to the end user) which are important to how positive a community feels about its area.



Active and Engaged Community



Measures the levels of active participation in community and civic life.

- Voter turnout rates
- Rates of volunteering
- Perceptions of social relationships
- Number of charity trustees
- Grant funding per head from major grant funders

Are charities active in the area, and do people appear to be engaged in the broader civic life of their community?



Wales Community Assets Index (WCAI)

An index ranking every MSOA in Wales across three domains (civic assets, connectedness and active and engaged communities).

This index considers community infrastructure challenges.

Wales Community Resilience Index (WCRI)

An index ranking every MSOA in Wales comprised of the WCAI combined with the WIMD 2019.

This index considers community infrastructure challenges AND deprivation levels.



Less Resilient Areas (LRAs)

Areas with high levels of need on both the WCAI and the Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) 2019. Areas ranked in the top 25% in Wales (ranked 1-102) identified as 'less-resilient' areas .

102 MSOAs.

Other Deprived Areas

Areas ranked in the most deprived 20% on the 2019 Wales Indices of Deprivation, which were not identified as LRAs.

27 MSOAs.

Less Resilient Areas

102 areas in the WCRI are categorised as Less Resilient Areas (LRAs). LRAs are areas within the top 25% of the WCAI (ranks 1-102)..

LRAs are categorised as areas experiencing the dual disadvantage of: high levels of deprivation; and community infrastructure challenges.

In essence: LRAs are areas with fewer community and civic assets experiencing relative isolation and low levels of participation, alongside significant deprivation.



LRAs

This map demonstrates the 102 Less Resilient Areas (LRAs). These are MSOAs which experience the dual disadvantage of deprivation and community infrastructure challenges.

LRAs are also in Holyhead & in Newtown and Blaenau Ffestiniog

88% of all people in LRAs, live in cities and towns (68% national average)

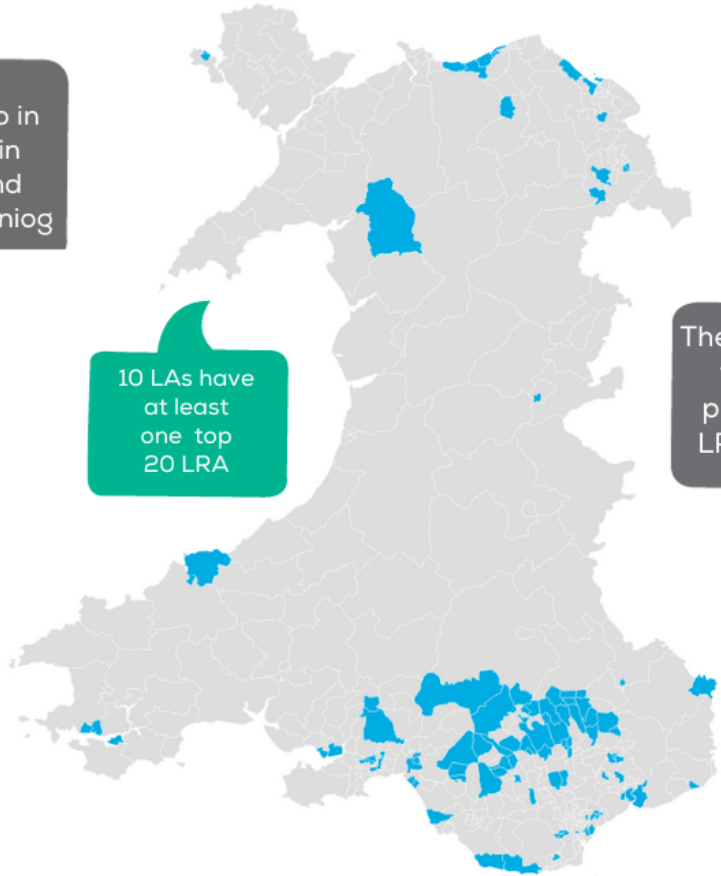
LRAs are also along the coast at Milford Haven, Pembroke Dock & Cardigan

10 LAs have at least one top 20 LRA

LRAs in North Wales are found around the North Coast, the mouth of the River Dee & Wrexham

The Valleys have the highest proportion of LRAs in Wales

Most of the Top20 LRAs are in South Wales (on the outskirts of Cardiff, Newport & Swansea),



Map data: © Crown copyright and database right 2021 • Created with Datawrapper



What do we mean by resilience?

Communities that possess or have access to a range of tangible and intangible assets which are used by people in the community to enhance individual and community wellbeing.

These assets can be accessed by people both to enable opportunities for social and recreational activities, as well as providing vital support in adverse situations- be they sudden and unexpected or long-term and chronic in nature.



Notes of caution

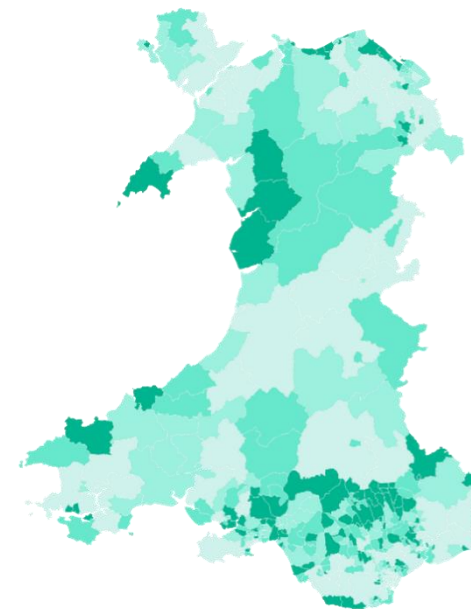
MSOAs – there is ambiguity over this as a geographical measure, but overall it's considered an appropriate measure for indicators used, due to its relatively uniform size and the availability of data sources.

Density measures – both indexes rely on density measures irrespective of usage rates or the range of opportunities resulting from the existence of the civic asset.

Contextual blindness – the indexes were not designed to examine contextual factors such as particular demographic groups accessing the assets or additional barriers that some people might face e.g. accessibility or affordability.

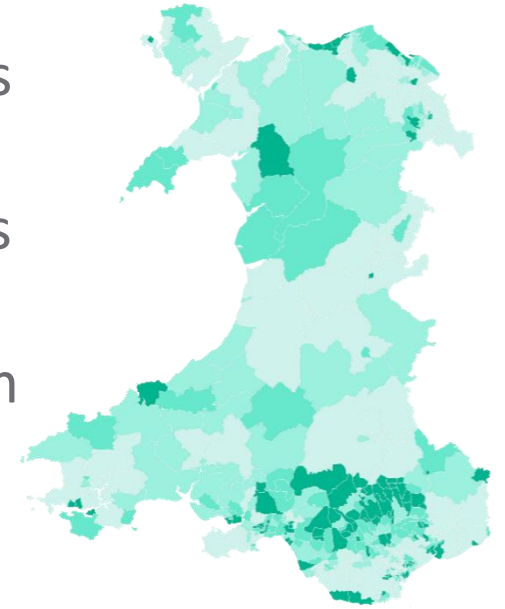


Findings



Overview

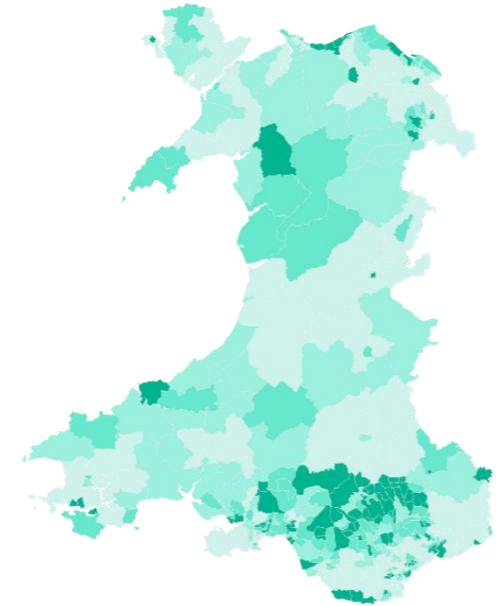
- A surprisingly strong link between the Wales Community Assets Index (WCAI) and the WIMD.
- Many of the areas with fewest assets experience characteristics of peripherality, despite being relatively close to urban centres.
- Notable how many more rural areas of Wales suffered less from some of the impacts of peripherality than outlying housing estates and former mining areas.



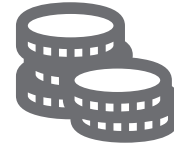
Housing



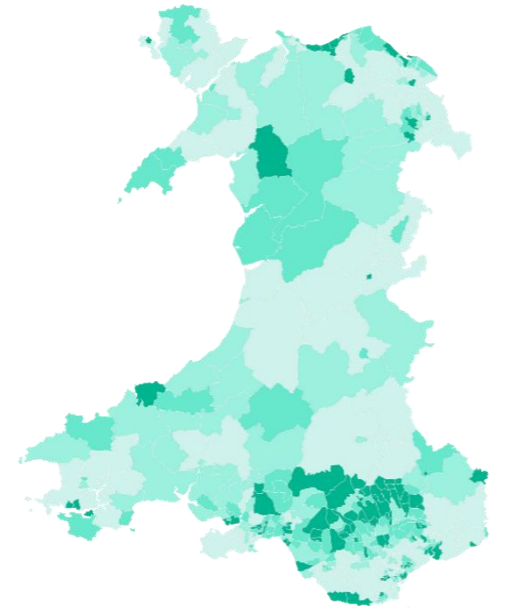
- People in LRAs are more likely to live in social rented housing than in other parts of Wales but are also more likely to own their own homes than in Other Deprived Areas.
- A higher proportion of people in LRAs reside in post-war housing, with more than 30% of dwellings built between 1945 and 1972.
- By contrast, there are few houses built this millennium in LRAs. This reflects the perceptions of developers and planners that fewer people want to live in LRAs, and the limited availability of land in some areas.



Economy and Employment



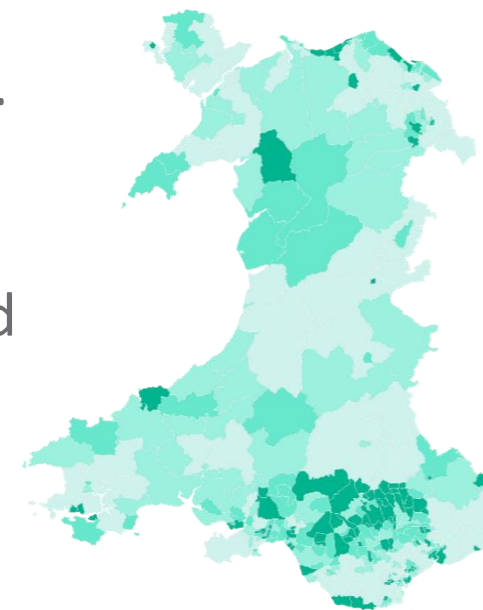
- Substantially fewer local jobs (and especially local skilled jobs) available in LRAs compared with Wales average. This is almost certainly a result of their peripherality, but emphasises the need for good transport to central areas, especially given relatively low rates of car ownership.
- Working age population is far less qualified than Welsh average – with over a third of adults with no qualifications and evidence of outmigration of better qualified young people .
- The average annual household income in LRAs is more than £3,800 below the Welsh national average (once housing costs are taken into account).
- People in LRAs are more likely to experience wider worklessness than other parts of Wales: many people who are out of work are not receiving benefits and many people are not working due to health issues or caring roles.



Community and Services



- LRAs have relatively high levels of community-based assets compared to Welsh average but fewer volunteers to run them.
- LRAs have far fewer charities than other parts of Wales and secure far less charitable funding despite the presence of “cold spots” being identified by independent funders for over 15 years.
- Much larger proportion of children living in poverty are in LRAs than in other parts of Wales.

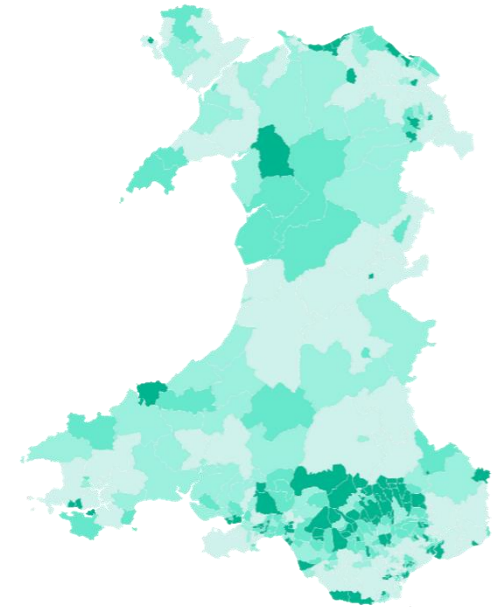


Conclusions – how have we got here?

Many of the challenges facing LRAs are a result of economic peripherality.

However, they have been exacerbated by:

- Centralisation of services due to austerity
- Poor transport connections
- Poor urban design and planning.



To reduce these place-based disparities we recommend that:

01

Welsh Government should distribute resources based on resilience as well as deprivation, recognising the additional challenges facing vulnerable people living on the margins of Welsh towns and cities.

02

Transport planners need to prioritise LRAs for public transport services, including funding community transport where necessary.

03

Welsh Government should develop mandatory guidelines to ensure that all future housing developments are "future proofed" with good transport access and minimum provision of community assets, like a community centre.

04

Welsh Government must ensure, through stronger guidance or legislation, that communities have a simpler process to take over key community facilities.

05

To build community resilience across Wales, Welsh Government must create a 'Community Wealth Fund' using the new wave of money to be released under 2022's Dormant Assets Act.

06

Funders need to recognise the needs of Less Resilient Areas and ensure they get their fair share of resources.

Where can you find our research?



The image shows the cover of the Wales Community Assets Index report. It features a large green diagonal arrow pointing from the bottom-left towards the top-right. Three circular inset images are placed along the arrow: a rural landscape with a river, a residential street with trees, and the exterior of the Marset Hall Cinema. The text 'Wales Community Assets Index' is prominently displayed in the top-left corner. Below it, a smaller line of text reads 'Read our pioneering community assets research.' and a button labeled 'Read the full report' is visible.

English

Wales Community Assets Index

Read our pioneering community assets research.

[Read the full report](#)



This image shows a summary page for the Wales Community Assets Index. It has a green header with the title 'Wales Community Assets Index'. Below the header, the text reads 'Read our pioneering community assets research which shows sustained, place-based inequality across Wales and what must happen next.' There are three links provided: 'To view the full report (English), please click here.', 'To view the full report (Welsh), please click here.', and 'To view the executive summary (English), please click here.' Below the text are three icons representing different asset categories: 'Civic Assets', 'Connectedness', and 'Active and Engaged Community'. Each icon is accompanied by a list of related items and a brief description of what the category measures.

Wales Community Assets Index

Read our pioneering community assets research which shows sustained, place-based inequality across Wales and what must happen next.

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- Civic Assets**
 - Youth Clubs
 - Libraries
 - Public parks
 - Community centres
 - Swimming pools
 - Village halls
 - Community-owned assets

Measures the presence of key community, civic, educational and
- Connectedness**
 - Health services
 - Digital connectivity- upload and download speeds
 - Social connectivity
 - Rates of loneliness
 - Access to public transport
 - Access to private transport
 - Strength of the local jobs market

Measures connectivity, both in physical terms and ease of access to
- Active and Engaged Community**
 - Voter turnout rates
 - Rates of volunteering
 - Perceptions of social relationships
 - Number of charity trustees
 - Grant funding per head from major grant funders

Measures the levels of

www.bct.wales/wcai



Questions?



Croeso i...

Gwenlli Evans



Welcome to...

Sarah Griffiths



Questions?



Diolch am ymuno â ni heddiw

Thank you for joining us today



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