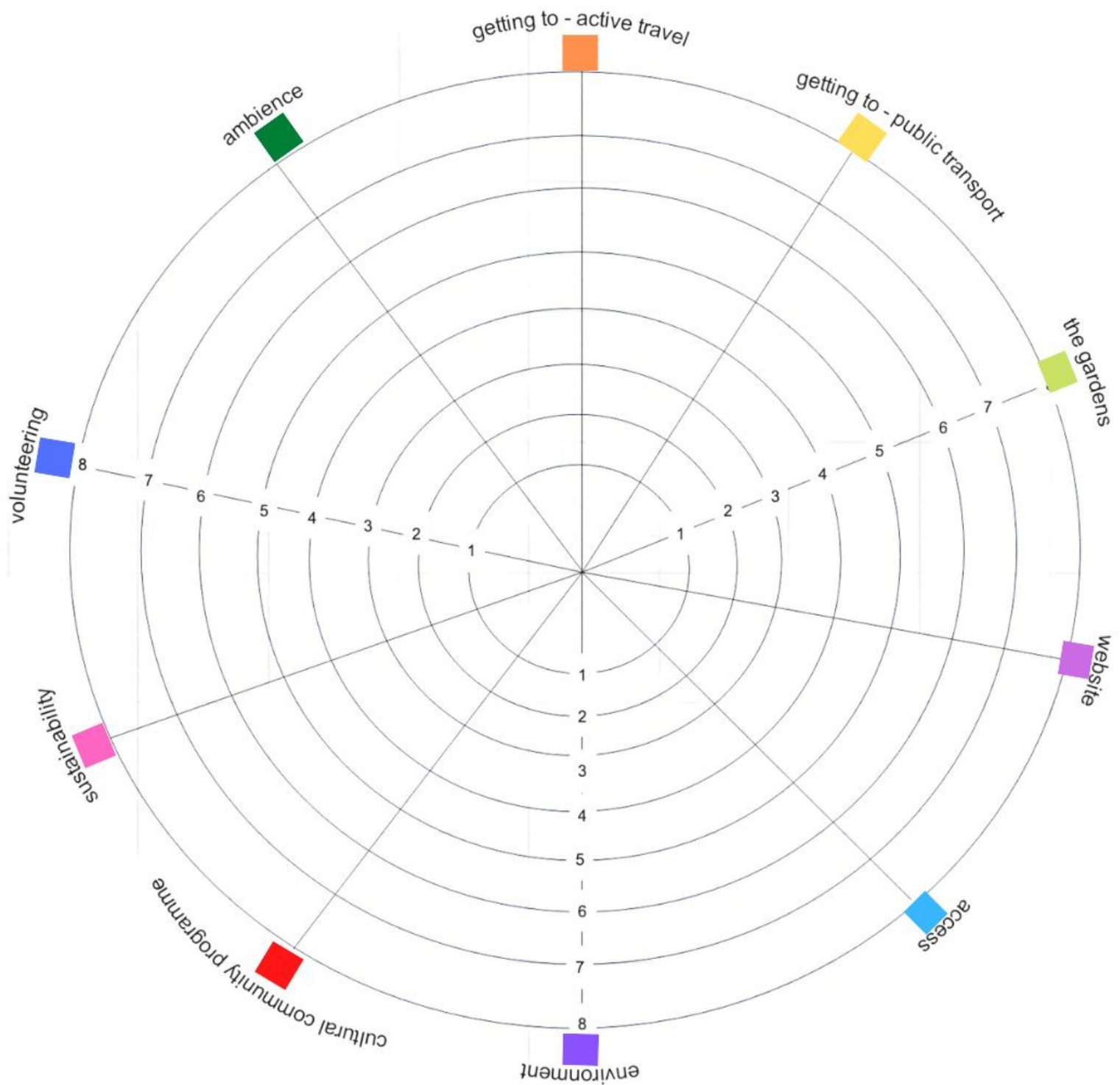


Community Hall Standard - How Good is Our Hall?



The Community Hall Standard - How Good is Our Hall?

The Community Hall standard is a way of assessing community halls. Whether the hall is well-established, undergoing change or still being planned, the tool can help you. The Community Hall Standard tool provides a simple framework to structure conversations about community halls. It allows you to think about the physical elements of a hall (for example its accessibility and transport links) as well as the social aspects (for example whether people feel they have a sense of ownership in their community space). Research shows that the way community halls function, look and feel can influence our health and wellbeing. The tool provides prompts for discussions, allowing you to consider all the elements of a community hall in a methodical way. The tool pinpoints the assets of a hall and community as well as areas where there is room for improvement.

Why Community Halls are Important

Where we spend our time has an important effect on our lives and our wellbeing.

Improving the quality of community gathering places and creating opportunities to access cultural community programmes can help to tackle inequalities. Understanding the existing and potential strengths of a hall can help us make good decisions and allow us to target resources to where they are needed most. This approach can deliver better results over the long term. The Community Hall Standard tool can also support the design and delivery of successful community halls, creating good-quality, creative community development.

Increasingly, since the Community Empowerment Act 2015, Community Halls are assets that have been transferred into community ownership through the stewardship of a Trust.

A Community Hall offers residents a 'third space'. A space separate from the private sanctuary of the home and the professional arena of the workplace. A 'third space' offers people a chance to gather, talk and engage in social, recreational, educational and cultural activities. Accessing these opportunities has a positive impact on health and wellbeing and helps to forge cohesive, resilient communities.

Many people dedicate time and skills as volunteers to keep their community halls running. When we ask people why they volunteer they often say they want to 'make a difference' - a positive difference. But how do can you *know* that you are making a difference?

One of the ways we know that we are making a difference is by **measuring impact**. The Community Hall Standard tool will help you to measure impact. Working through the tool will provide you with an evidence base against which you can measure your progress by working through the process again in the future.

Who is the Tool For?

The tool is designed to be used by everyone who is running a Community Hall – communities, the public sector, the third sector (voluntary and non-profit organisations) and the private sector. People will want to use the tool in different circumstances and for different purposes, but it allows people to work together productively and consistently across sectors and boundaries.

How to Use the Tool

You will need to do the following:

- Answer each question by giving a rating on a scale from 1 to 8. We have provided some prompts to help the discussion to flow. If you are answering as a group you should agree the rating between you. There is a space for you to record the reasons for your answers.
- When you have answered all the questions, plot each rating on the compass diagram. Draw a line between each point as you go along.
- After the diagram is complete, you can look at the results and agree priorities and actions. We have provided space for you to list the main issues.

Results

The diagram produced will be easy to understand. It should show, at a glance, the areas where a Community Hall is performing well and where there is room for improvement. If you have assessed a hall as 'good', the shape of the diagram will be fuller, reaching towards the edge of the circle. Where a place is seen as performing poorly, the shape will be smaller, remaining towards the centre of the diagram.

What Happens Next

The Hall Standard tool is part of a process, not the end of the process. When considering what you might do next, you should think about opportunities to develop and build on the conversations and relationships the tool has started. The tool allows you to assess the hall consistently, and over time to see if improvements have been made. To get the most out of the tool you will want to record the qualities of the hall you are assessing and the reasons for your rating. This will help you to set out your ambitions for the community hall.

Active Travel

getting to the hall on foot or by pushbike

For visitors and residents, getting to the hall is key.

Walking and cycling are good for our health and the environment.

Pleasant safe routes to the hall can encourage walking and cycling.

Now think about the community hall you are assessing and ask yourself?

Can I easily walk or cycle to and from the hall using good quality routes?

Are there enough routes for walking and cycling to the hall?

Are routes good quality, attractive and easy to use?

Do routes meet the needs of everyone, whatever their age or mobility?

Do routes feel safe to use all year round and at different times of the day?

Use this space to note the reason for your rating.

Public Transport

getting to the hall via public transport

For visitors and residents, getting to the hall is key.

Good public transport links make it easier for visitors to come to the hall.

Now think about the place you are assessing and ask yourself?

Does public transport to and from the hall meet the needs of residents and visitors?

Are public transport services frequent and reliable?

Are bus stops and stations in convenient places and within walking distance of people's homes and is seating available for those who need it whilst they wait?

Can everyone afford public transport services?

Use this space to note the reason for your rating.

Green Space and gardens

Natural spaces can be good for wildlife, improve air quality and benefit our health and wellbeing.

Now think about the community hall you are assessing and ask yourself?

Do the green spaces meet the needs of residents and visitors?

Can I regularly experience the green spaces?

Is the space well maintained and attractive?

Is there seating available for those who need it?

Is the green space accessible for everyone, whatever their age or ability?

Use this space to note the reason for your rating.

Website and communications

Does the community hall have a web presence and if so, does it meet the needs of residents and visitors?

The website acts as a potential customer's first point of contact with the community hall and the organisation that runs it so it's very important it gives a good first impression.

Now think about the hall you are assessing and ask yourself?

Does the website look good?

Is it easy to navigate?

Is it accessible to those who may need additional support?

Is it easy to find the information you need? For example, how to book the hall?

How easy is it for visitors of the website to support the hall through donations or buying merchandise?

Does the information look relevant and up to date?

Use this space to note the reason for your rating.

Access and Inclusion

Is the hall accessible to all regardless of age, ethnicity, ability, gender, etc?

Is the hall an accessible space for all members of the community and does it welcome marginalised or vulnerable groups.

Now think about the space you are assessing and ask yourself.

Is the hall accessible to wheelchair users and those with mobility issues?

Does the hall welcome all religions and backgrounds?

Does the hall accommodate people with hearing and/or sight loss?

When someone books the hall for an event are they encouraged to consider how to make their event more accessible?

Is the hall a safe space for BPoc (Black People and People of Colour)?

Is the hall a safe space for LGBTQI+ people?

Use this space to note the reason for your rating.

Environment

Is the hall environmentally friendly?

Now think about the space you are assessing and ask yourself.

How environmentally conscious is the hall?

Does the hall have an environmental policy?

Does the hall endeavour to keep its carbon footprint small?

Use this space to note the reason for your rating.

Cultural Community Venue

Does the programme of events meet the needs of the community?

Now think about the space you are assessing and ask yourself.

Does the current programme at the hall benefit a large cross section of the community of residents of Fittie?

Are recreational, physical, educational and social opportunities available on a regular basis?

Do we know what the community want from the hall? Is this knowledge evidence based?

Are new ideas from community members encouraged?

Is the programme affordable to all in the community?

Does the hall host events that attract visitors from out-with the residential community?

Use this space to note the reason for your rating.

Sustainability

Does the hall have a sustainable business model?

Running a community asset can be expensive. You may have overheads for heating, lighting, cleaning, consumables, equipment, and support staff.

Now think about the space you are assessing and ask yourself.

Do you have means of funding your overheads?

Do you have access to a variety of funding streams?

Do you have a fundraising strategy?

Use this space to note the reason for your rating.

Volunteering

Does the hall harness and value a workforce of volunteers?

Volunteers are at the heart many third sector organisations and without volunteers any community halls would not exist.

Now think about the space you are assessing and ask yourself.

Does the hall actively recruit volunteers?

Are volunteers valued and appreciated? (Including volunteer board members) Do volunteers feel they are 'making a difference?'

Is volunteering at the hall a positive and life enhancing experience where new friendships are formed and new skills are gained?

Do you offer any recognised volunteering awards such as SQAs in Award in Volunteering Skills.

Use this space to note the reason for your rating.

Ambience

How does the hall look and feel? What is the atmosphere?

Now think about the space you are assessing and ask yourself.

Does the hall look and feel good?

Does the hall feel like a welcoming space?

Is the hall decorated to a high standard?

Does the hall feel like an asset the community can take pride in?

Does the hall meet its health and safety requirements? Does it feel safe?

Use this space to note the reason for your rating.

Thank You
for completing the

Community Hall Standard - How Good is Our Hall?



The Community Hall Standard was inspired by
The Place Standard - How Good is our Place
and adapted by
Claire Abbott (MEd CLD)
for Out Beyond Ideas.

To find out more about the Place Standard please
visit <https://placestandard.scot/>