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1 **Supportive environments for physical activity in deprived communities in the United**
2 **Kingdom: a qualitative study using photo elicitation**

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24 **Abstract**

25 The health benefits of regular physical activity are substantial and well-established.
26 However, population activity levels are insufficient to obtain health benefits in the United
27 Kingdom (UK), and strategies to increase activity, particularly in income-deprived
28 communities, are sought. Socioecological models of physical activity posit that activity levels
29 are influenced by social, physical and wider environmental factors. In line with a growing
30 evidence base, there is a need to understand the factors that contribute to an activity-
31 supportive neighbourhood within deprived settings within the UK. This study used photo-
32 elicitation qualitative interviews to explore environmental facilitators and barriers to
33 neighbourhood-based, outdoor physical activity in 23 adults living in two income-deprived
34 neighbourhoods in Glasgow, UK. Data were collected between June and October, 2015, and
35 were explored using thematic analysis.

36 Five themes were identified: 'diversity of destinations in the neighbourhood', 'provision of
37 services to support healthy environments', 'ownership of public space and facilities to
38 encourage physical activity', 'collective control of public space to prevent disorder' and
39 'perceived value of the neighbourhood'. Findings highlighted the close interaction between
40 these themes and more broadly between social and physical facets of neighbourhood
41 environments that were unsupportive of physical activity. Discourse about economic aspects
42 was pervasive and emerged as deeply affecting characteristics of the social and physical
43 environment and upstream influences on physical activity. This study supports evidence that
44 multi-faceted interventions addressing aspects of the social, physical and economic
45 environment may be needed to support outdoor physical activity in deprived communities.

46 **Keywords:** UK; socioecological models; physical activity; active living; social environment;
47 physical environment; deprivation; place effects

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50 **Introduction**

51 Participation in physical activity is associated with numerous physical and psychosocial
52 health benefits, yet population activity levels in developed nations remain low (Allender et al.,
53 2007; Mueller et al., 2015; Reiner et al., 2013; World Health Organisation, 2014). In the
54 United Kingdom (UK) levels of inactivity (not meeting national physical activity guidelines
55 (Chief Medical Office, n.d.) are particularly high among socioeconomically deprived groups.
56 Data from the 2013 Active People Survey in England revealed that levels of self-reported
57 physical inactivity were almost 10% higher in local authorities with the highest levels of
58 socioeconomic deprivation compared with authorities with the lowest levels (UK Active,
59 2014). Education has also been found to be inversely related to objectively-measured
60 physical activity in a population-based cohort in England (Hamer et al., 2012). Increasing
61 levels of activity, even slightly, could lead to substantial health benefits. A European cohort
62 study including 334,161 adults estimated that moving individuals from inactivity to moderate
63 activity (equivalent to a daily 20-minute walk) produced reductions in all-cause mortality by
64 7.35%, a significant amount at population level (Ekelund et al., 2015). Walking in particular
65 has been identified by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) as a key
66 mechanism to increase physical activity in adults in the UK as it is low-cost, accessible and
67 achievable for individuals in deprived communities (National Institute for Health and Care
68 Excellence, 2012).

69 Intervening to promote physical activity using environmental rather than individual strategies
70 offers the opportunity to create sustainable change in large numbers of people.

71 Socioecological frameworks of physical activity, which posit that individual factors (e.g.
72 attitudes, beliefs), social factors (e.g. relationships, safety), physical factors (e.g. facilities,
73 aesthetics) and political factors (e.g. transport investment, urban planning policies) have
74 independent and interactive influences on activity, support interventions which target multiple
75 levels of environmental influence on activity (Sallis et al., 2006). Socioecological influences
76 on activity are conceptualised in Kumanyika et al.'s (2012) framework of influences on

77 physical activity and diet for ethnic minority groups. This framework reflects the prominent
78 role of social and cultural influences, highlighting the multiple levels of the environment
79 (social, cultural, physical, historical and political) which work together to encourage, or
80 discourage, healthy lifestyles. Understanding the social and physical environmental factors
81 that constrain or support physical activity, particularly in populations with the lowest activity
82 levels, could inform the development of interventions to increase physical activity, and is
83 therefore a public health priority.

84 Physical environments encompass natural environments, such as green and blue space,
85 and indoor and outdoor built environments, including the function, structure, condition or
86 aesthetics of residential or commercial buildings, public open space and streets or walkways
87 (Sallis, Floyd, Rodriguez and Saelens, 2012). Physical metrics such as land use mix,
88 connectivity, residential density (Saelens and Handy, 2008) and aesthetics (Neckerman et
89 al., 2009; Thornton et al., 2016) have been found to be associated with neighbourhood
90 walkability and activity. The social environment captures constructs such as social networks,
91 social control, safety and social cohesion (Moore and Kawachi, 2017). Recent quantitative
92 studies and reviews suggest that environments with high levels of social control, social
93 cohesion, trust and reciprocity between neighbours and a sense of community are related to
94 increased levels of physical activity (McNeill et al., 2006; Samuel et al., 2014). Perceived
95 safety has also been found to have an effect on activity, although the relationship is
96 inconsistently reported (Foster and Giles-Corti, 2008).

97 Qualitative research provides a richer understanding of associations, highlighting the
98 simultaneous role of social and physical factors in creating activity-supportive environments.
99 For example, a myriad of physical, social and cultural environmental factors influenced
100 physical activity in a sample of 35 adults living in four neighbourhoods in Canada, reinforcing
101 broad, socioecological approaches to physical activity (Belon et al., 2014). A recent meta-
102 synthesis of ten qualitative studies examining environmental influences on adults' walking
103 identified four key themes: 'safety and security', 'environmental aesthetics', 'social relations'

104 and 'convenience and efficiency' (Dadpour et al., 2016). However, only one of these focused
105 on deprived settings (Burgoyne et al., 2007). This study involved focus groups including 53
106 adult residents, and found that social barriers such as anti-social behaviour and perceived
107 neglect of the area by local authorities prevailed over physical facilitators of using a new
108 walking route in the neighbourhood. The findings reflected those obtained by Seaman et al.'s
109 study of urban greenspace in two deprived neighbourhoods in Glasgow, UK (Seaman et al.,
110 2010). Similar to Burgoyne et al., this study was specific to use of a particular amenity
111 (walking route and greenspace, respectively), not physical activity *per se*; authors reported
112 that social cohesion and integration could mitigate negative social factors such as anti-social
113 behaviour and bolster physical accessibility of greenspace.

114 A growing international literature examines how the wider neighbourhood environment can
115 support or discourage physical activity within a deprived setting. A concept mapping study
116 with 59 adults in Atlanta, USA, identified 'pride in the neighbourhood' and 'safety' as key
117 targets for a housing initiative in low-income communities (Dulin Keita et al., 2016). Social
118 factors including safety and social networks were also perceived as central to increasing
119 levels of physical activity in African American adults living a low-income neighbourhood in
120 South Carolina (Griffin et al., 2008). However, there remains a need to examine these
121 influences in deprived contexts in the UK.

122 The aim of this study was to explore perceived environmental factors contributing to the
123 creation of an activity-supportive neighbourhood in a deprived setting in the UK. Findings will
124 inform further conceptualisation of independent and interactive neighbourhood influences on
125 neighbourhood-based, outdoor physical activity in deprived communities, as posited by
126 socioecological models (Sallis et al., 2006), and identify possible levers for intervention.

127 **Methods**

128 Participant photography was used in face-to-face, semi-structured photo-elicitation
129 interviews. Photo-elicitation interviews have advantages over other interview styles in inviting

130 participants to take a more active role in both data collection and the interview process by
131 informing the direction of the interview with participant-produced photography. Such
132 techniques can provide a deeper insight into the lived experiences of the participant (Wang
133 and Burris, 1997) and have been used successfully to explore neighbourhood effects on
134 physical activity in other contexts (Belon et al., 2014; Mahmood et al., 2012).

135 Informed written consent for participation in the study and publication of participant
136 photography was obtained from all participants.

137 *Setting and participants*

138 Two neighbourhoods in Glasgow, UK, were selected for recruitment: Govan, situated
139 approximately 4 kilometres west of the city centre; and Drumchapel, situated approximately
140 9 kilometres northwest of the city centre. These neighbourhoods were both classified as
141 having high levels of deprivation but has different physical environment characteristics (e.g.
142 access to blue space, predominant built form). Both neighbourhoods had been involved in
143 previous research and the researchers could use existing contacts with community
144 organisations to facilitate recruitment. Neighbourhoods were matched in terms of income
145 deprivation (i.e. percentage of residents receiving income-related state benefits): 42% and
146 43% of the population were classed as income-deprived, respectively, higher than averages
147 for Glasgow (25%) and Scotland (14%) (Crawford and Walsh, 2010).

148 Participants were recruited by the lead researcher ([Anonymous]) approaching members of
149 community organisations (e.g. arts groups, community well-being hubs and residents'
150 associations) and through advertisements displayed in community facilities (e.g. libraries,
151 sports centres, churches). Participants were eligible if they were aged ≥ 16 years, had lived in
152 the neighbourhood for ≥ 12 months and lived in accommodation provided by a local housing
153 association (not-for-profit organisations providing low-cost social housing). An approximately
154 equal distribution of participants across neighbourhoods was sought with at least 10
155 participants from each neighbourhood.

156 *Photo-elicitation process and interview framework*

157 At an initial meeting participants completed a self-report questionnaire capturing
158 sociodemographic characteristics and were given a photography briefing and a disposable,
159 27-exposure camera. The photography briefing asked participants to consider what got them
160 'out and about' in the neighbourhood and to take photographs of facilitators and barriers to
161 physical activity. Guidance on safe photography practice, e.g. not putting oneself in
162 dangerous situations, was included. Neighbourhood boundaries were self-defined by the
163 participant. The researcher verbally explained the purpose of the study and that the
164 neighbourhood environment could include natural or manmade physical environments and
165 social environment constructs such as relationships, networks and resources shared by
166 community members. Physical activity was described as any outdoor structured (e.g.
167 planned exercise) or unstructured (e.g. part of daily living) activity, including recreational or
168 functional activities of daily life such as walking, gardening or shopping. Two participants
169 were permitted to use a digital instead of a disposable camera, due to personal preference.
170 Participants were given 7 days to take photographs of their neighbourhood, after which they
171 returned the camera (or digital photographs) to the research centre. The lead researcher
172 developed the photographs and arranged a face-to-face photo-elicitation interview using the
173 participant's photographs as aids. Interviews typically lasted 45-60 minutes. Interviews were
174 conducted by ([Anonymous]), a researcher with training in interview techniques and
175 qualitative research. Data were collected between June and October, 2015.

176 *Data analysis*

177 Interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. Thematic analysis was
178 conducted to derive themes from the data (Braun and Clarke, 2008). Although
179 socioecological models of activity informed a research question examining how features of
180 the environment operate independent and interactively to support physical activity (or not),
181 there is no overarching conceptualisation of neighbourhood effects on physical activity
182 specific to deprived settings. Therefore, an inductive, data-driven approach was used for

183 analysis. Codes were organised within a coding hierarchy of primary, secondary and tertiary
184 codes, which was presented using Microsoft Excel. Codes and the coding hierarchy were
185 independently examined in detail by two researchers ([Anonymous] and [Anonymous]). The
186 codes, coding hierarchy and interpretation of codes were agreed by the researchers
187 ([Anonymous]) and ([Anonymous]) through discussion. All interviews were coded by
188 ([Anonymous]) and a random sample of 3 interviews were double coded by ([Anonymous]);
189 inter-coder agreement was deemed to be excellent at >95% agreement following discussion.
190 The research team discussed emerging themes during analysis to ratify and deliberate on
191 the interpretation of the data and the integrity of themes. Themes obtained from the data
192 were labelled by the authors. A brief case study from each neighbourhood was used to
193 illustrate the interplay between themes in a specific neighbourhood context.

194 Data were stored and managed in NVivo 11. The consolidated criteria for reporting
195 qualitative research (COREQ) checklist informed data collection, management and reporting
196 (Tong et al., 2007).

197 **Results**

198 **Table 1** presents participant characteristics for our sample of 23 adults. Participants were
199 split between the two neighbourhoods (Govan: n=12; Drumchapel: n=11). There were
200 slightly more females than males (females: n=13, males: n=10) and ages ranged from 16-77
201 years but were fairly evenly distributed across age groups (16-24 years: 21.7%; 25-39 years:
202 26.1%; 40-60 years: 30.4%; >60 years: 21.7%). The sample was predominantly White
203 British (91.3%).

204 [Insert Table 1 here]

205 *Identified themes*

206 Participants discussed physical activity as a broad construct including structured and
207 unstructured outdoor activity. Rather than being descriptive in terms of where participants
208 did or did not perform activity, data described upstream factors that could contribute to an

209 activity-supportive neighbourhood. As presented in **Figure 1**, two categories of attributes
210 characterised activity-supportive neighbourhoods: i) diverse and physically accessible places
211 in which to be active and ii) safe, orderly and inviting places where individuals *want* to be
212 active. Five themes were drawn from the data which conceptualised the environmental
213 conditions needed to achieve these attributes: 'diversity of destinations in the
214 neighbourhood', 'provision of services to support healthy environments', 'ownership of public
215 space and facilities', 'collective control of public space to prevent disorder' and 'perceived
216 value of the neighbourhood'. These themes were perceived as interrelated.

217 [Insert Figure 1 here]

218 *Diversity of destinations in the neighbourhood*

219 A diversity of destinations in the neighbourhood created places in which to be active. Social
220 and economic deprivation in the neighbourhoods was seen to create a lack in diversity of
221 destinations which acted as a barrier to physical activity.

222 *"Long ago... Everything you needed was in Govan. There was numerous fish shops,*
223 *butchers, fruit shops, shoe shops, various fashion shops, furniture shops, everything... You*
224 *could come down to Govan on a Saturday and spend the afternoon in Govan. You can't now.*
225 *Ten minutes and [claps] you've seen it." Female, >60 years, Govan.*

226 Participants noted that diversity in neighbourhood destinations was characterised by
227 diversity in destination functions (e.g. shopping, recreational), operating hours (night- vs day-
228 time), user groups (e.g. across ages and needs) and structure of activity (e.g. specified and
229 non-specified functions). Streets that lacked diversity of destinations could manifest as
230 mono-functional spaces that could be perceived as unwelcoming or unsafe and therefore
231 discourage activity.

232 *"I think it probably does impact on some people's behaviour because like they don't want to*
233 *be going out until late at night... I don't think it's good that it's only pubs that are open at night*

234 *and that creates like a different atmosphere about the place. It feels like a really safe place to*
235 *be during the day.” Male, 25-39 years, Govan.*

236 It was acknowledged that destinations needed to respond to needs in the community by
237 providing opportunities for low-cost physical activity facilities for young people and places
238 where different resident groups could integrate to promote social cohesion. Participants
239 noted several contributors to a lack of diversity in neighbourhood destinations, including a
240 weak local economy and social problems in the area.

241 *“Before [the children would] all climb over the fence, so we created a pay-a-pound for a walk-*
242 *on ticket and they get their ticket and they go on [the football pitch], in a safe environment*
243 *and not climbing fences” Female, 40-60 years, Drumchapel.*

244 *“[The reason there are no seating areas in cafes] is probably just because the people who*
245 *would tend to sit in would be the undesirables I would imagine, during the day aye, it’s the*
246 *people that are not workin’ will be the people that they don’t really want in your business.”*
247 *Male, 25-39 years, Drumchapel.*

248 Although diversity of destinations was seen as central to an activity-supportive environment,
249 it was also noted that provision of destinations was not sufficient; individual factors such as
250 motivation were also important.

251 *“When I’ve gone up there with the dogs I’ve never ever bumped into anybody and I think this*
252 *is beautiful here and they just don’t use it, I feel like chappin’ on doors ‘come on, come on out*
253 *running in the fields!” Female, 25-39 years, Drumchapel (Figure 2).*

254 [Insert Figure 2 here]

255 *Provision of services to support healthy environments*

256 Public and private services were important in i) providing physical access to places within
257 and beyond the neighbourhood in which to be active and ii) maintaining orderly
258 environments in which one wanted to be active (i.e. lower levels of social and physical
259 disorder). Well-serviced environments that encouraged and supported activity were

260 characterised by adequate street lighting, punctual bin collection, good roads and pathways
261 and reliable, extensive and affordable transport.

262 *“They’ve put a lot of thought into the new kind of scheme there, they’ve got this like*
263 *thoroughfare right the way through it and it’s also a cycle path as well. It takes you from the*
264 *library right into Govan. It’s pretty nice and you’re just away from traffic and stuff.”* Male, 25-
265 39 years, Govan.

266 *“I think the ferry is only ever on free during the school holidays and then it goes off. So to go*
267 *on the underground to go to that it’s quite costly... So I think the ferry and that should be*
268 *free... it cannae cost that much [to fund]!”* Female, >60 years, Govan (**Figure 3**).

269 [Insert Figure 3 here]

270 Community organisations were viewed as a key service-provider, offering destinations for
271 activity and opportunities to strengthen social networks and social cohesion. They were also
272 a valuable resource for signposting individuals to existing opportunities for activity.

273 *“I think a lot of people stay in the house a lot. ‘Cause like the weather’s so bad though. And*
274 *they just like sit and watch telly too much but that’s because there isn’t much to do, even as*
275 *adults. That’s why people should get to this place [community garden and hub] because I*
276 *come here nearly every day, it gets me out of the house.”* Female, 16-24 years, Govan.

277 *“Unity had a bike workshop down, just very close to Govan Cross. And like it’s free to sort of*
278 *like go in and just work on your bike.”* Male, 25-39 years, Govan.

279 *Ownership of public space and facilities*

280 A sense of ownership of space was supportive to physical activity by i) creating an inviting
281 setting for activity where all residents felt they were allowed to use public spaces and ii)
282 maintaining orderly public space with functional facilities by discouraging physical disorder or
283 disrepair. Participants felt that within their neighbourhoods, certain groups (e.g. young
284 people) felt a greater sense of ownership over public space than other groups, creating an
285 imbalance that could lead to physical and social disorder. Collective ownership of public

286 space was perceived as crucial and could be encouraged by shared use of areas and
287 facilities.

288 *"It's only the river Clyde but I mean it's quite a nice... it also lets you go out and walk, wi' the*
289 *pram and meet people and sit and have a gab 'cause they've got all these wee seatin'. We*
290 *don't want it to be somewhere fae young people to go doon and drink. So if we don't keep*
291 *walkin' along these, that's what's going to happen because it's going to be a place where*
292 *young people can hide."* Female, >60 years, Govan.

293 *"Young people who don't have much respect [kept damaging the polytunnel] but people who*
294 *work there, they just keep patching it up...[the gardener] was like 'oh, come on in', he was*
295 *just being inviting to like make [the young people] feel welcome... it hasn't happened since so*
296 *I think it has worked. Because the main thing is that it is for everybody, it's for the*
297 *community."* Female, 16-24 years, Govan (**Figure 4**).

298 [Insert Figure 4 here]

299 As the sample lived in social-rented accommodation, housing associations were important
300 agents in bestowing a sense of ownership of property and surrounding space to residents.
301 Permitting or funding tenants to repair or update their housing was suggested as a way to
302 improve housing conditions and reduce physical disorder (e.g. litter, disrepair, untidy
303 gardens). Some participants also noted that resident attitudes towards renting
304 accommodation were important as they could lead to individuals relinquishing responsibility
305 for the condition of the housing and surrounding area in a way one might not do if they
306 owned their accommodation. The local socioeconomic environment was also believed to
307 influence the use and appearance of the environment.

308 *"If you own it, you want to keep it clean, if you're just renting, you don't pay for anything like*
309 *that, a lot of them just think someone else will do it... they should take some sort of*
310 *responsibility and keep their own area clean."* Male, >60 years, Govan.

311 *"The housing situation, y'know, if you're not happy in your surroundings, I think you wouldn't*
312 *bother with the outside."* Female, 40-60 years, Govan.

313 *Collective control of public space to prevent disorder*

314 Collective control of public space supported physical activity by i) engendering a perception
315 of safety through collective management of social disorder and ii) creating orderly places in
316 which to be active through social norms around physical disorder. Participants noted that
317 within the neighbourhoods there remained certain places that were perceived to be under
318 the control of specific groups, often loitering or drinking. Such territoriality was noted as a
319 barrier to free movement around the neighbourhood by creating hostile environments where
320 individuals outside of that group felt unwelcome or unsafe.

321 *“There’s a drinking culture down there... Elderpark, it’s a beautiful park, during the day it’s*
322 *well-used with people walking their dogs, doing bits and pieces... everything starts to change*
323 *as the young ones come out of school, they’ve gone into the park, they’re running about with*
324 *this gang, and then it becomes eh, not safe... They’ve spent this money putting a nice play*
325 *park in and a nice wee kind of gymnasium for people to do things, you know what I mean, but*
326 *if you’re scared or intimidated to go to these places then you tend just to stay away.” Male,*
327 *40-60 years, Govan.*

328 Collective control wielded by community members was seen as a way to combat this; it had
329 a separate purpose to formal policing.

330 *“When you’ll have other people sticking together to stand up against these ones that are*
331 *causing all the hassle and they’ll get ousted... If they cannae get away with it there, they’ll*
332 *want to go somewhere else.” Male, 40-60 years, Govan.*

333 Physical cues of social disorder (e.g. empty alcohol bottles), lack of street lighting and
334 reputation was sufficient to deter activity by evoking perceptions of an unsafe environment.
335 However, social cues such as informal interactions or shared supervision of children could
336 mitigate feeling of unsafety and demonstrate social cohesion and strong social networks and
337 support.

338 *"I mean obviously Govan has a bad reputation for that kind of thing but I do feel quite safe.*
339 *Yeah I guess when you see people chatting to each other on the street you kind of feel a*
340 *sense of people look out for each other."* Male, 25-39 years, Govan.

341 *"[Housing association] schemes are the only place you'll find toddlers running about. Where's*
342 *the adults? 'Cause nothing ever happens to the kids, they trust them and they trust people to*
343 *look after them. You never see it anywhere else... that's a scheme thing."* Female, 40-60
344 years, Drumchapel.

345 Collective control was perceived as arising from factors embedded in the local economic,
346 political and cultural context. For example, social norms of appropriate behaviour and social
347 cohesion generated through traditionally living closely with neighbours in tenement buildings
348 (traditional apartment block with a shared stairwell) and socialising within neighbourhoods. A
349 community that was perceived to be disempowered and poorly integrated was a barrier to
350 the implementation of social norms. This was particularly important in Govan, where the
351 resident population had undergone dramatic change in a short period through the closure of
352 the shipyards, resulting in families leaving the area, and a perceived increase in immigrants
353 housed in the area. Owing to an increasingly diverse population, integration was important in
354 creating a cohesive and empowered community.

355 *Perceived value of the neighbourhood*

356 The perceived value of the neighbourhood impacted on physical activity through the creation
357 of places in which to be active and the development of places in which one would want to be
358 active because they were i) orderly and well-maintained and ii) inviting and desirable rather
359 than oppressive. Perceived value was expressed by both those in authority (landowners,
360 service-providers) and by residents. The extent to which those in authority were perceived to
361 value the neighbourhood was expressed in poor maintenance or dereliction of space and
362 facilities and a lack of inward investment into the neighbourhood; this contributed to negative
363 external reputations of the area. Perceptions that the neighbourhood was not valued by
364 residents were created through physical disorder such as litter, fly-tipping, dog foul and

365 vandalism, which reinforced negative internal reputations of the neighbourhood as
366 somewhere good to live. The extent to which the neighbourhood was valued by those in
367 authority was thought to influence residents' valuations of the neighbourhood, and vice
368 versa.

369 *"I think that influences on how Drumchapel is looked at on a whole, 'cause they see all the*
370 *run-down buildings like the old police station, all of our waste land and think oh it must be a*
371 *bad, dingy place to live when it's not, we just need a new face."* Female, 16-24 years,
372 Drumchapel.

373 *"If [residents] do care, they should be like showing some respect, listening to other people,*
374 *tidying up after themselves but I think none of them cares about it... they don't care about the*
375 *place 'cause it's already dirty, it's already damaged."* Male, 16-24 years, Govan.

376 In comparison, positive cues such as well-maintained gardens were perceived as
377 manifestations of residents' pride in their neighbourhood. Cues indicating positive and
378 negative valuations of the neighbourhood operated reciprocally with individual behaviour,
379 reinforcing norms around physical disorder and social interaction by indicating whether it
380 was acceptable behaviour sanctioned by local residents.

381 *"Because if you've got a broken-down area, you'll have broken-down people, simple as that.*
382 *Have a nice area, have nice people. I'll give you an example: yesterday morning, stood out in*
383 *my back garden have a cup of coffee and a cigarette. And this guy walks up to me... he says*
384 *'it's nice to see somebody's taking pride in their area'. I said 'ah, I worked on it, I like doing it,*
385 *I don't just do it for myself'."* Male, >60 years, Govan (**Figure 5**).

386 [Insert Figure 5 here]

387 Visible investment in the area through improvement works also discouraged disorder.

388 *"That whole street has had like a facelift... Before [the shops] were sort of like a bit tatty or*
389 *just a bit crap really. I mean, it's just a really nice street now. And it is just like an aesthetic*
390 *thing but it makes a big difference, that street's really pleasant to walk down and it's like,*

391 *suddenly there's less dog shit on the street and stuff, people don't want to ruin it... It lifts*
392 *people's like pride in the place if they see stuff like that going on."* Male, 25-39 years, Govan.

393 *"What happens is there's less anti-social behaviour. Err, like, if someone's littering, y'know,*
394 *years ago, away back before the improvement works happened, they wouldn't think nothing*
395 *of just dropping their papers on the ground. Where's now, you know, they feel slightly guilty*
396 *about it...'Oh, I shouldn't have done that'."* Male, 16-24 years, Drumchapel (**Figure 6**).

397 [Insert Figure 6 here]

398 Comparisons with neighbouring areas emphasised a lack of value in the local
399 neighbourhood. Participants used such comparisons to discuss how negative external
400 reputations held by service-providers, landowners and individuals living outside of the
401 neighbourhood could manifest in the physical condition of the neighbourhood.

402 *"If this was in a different housing area they'd be a bin there. But the vandals come down...*
403 *they think it's funny just to get your bins off. That was like that for I don't know how long*
404 *before a new bin goes on... If this was in a different place like Bearsden [affluent*
405 *neighbourhood] you wouldn't get that."* Female, 40-60 years, Drumchapel (**Figure 7**).

406 [Insert Figure 7 here]

407 *"In another area that [path] would be all trimmed and all cut back and quite a nice wee walk,*
408 *but because of where it is in Drumchapel, they just leave it... It should be nice and clean and*
409 *tidy to encourage people to walk up it but a lot of folk won't walk up there because it's litter, it*
410 *smells, you don't know what you're gonna encounter up there."* Female, 40-60 years,
411 Drumchapel.

412 The impact of cues indicating a lack of value (e.g. derelict space, physical disorder) was
413 greater when the site was physically or culturally prominent as it indicated low valuation of
414 the community as a whole, characterising it as a post-industrial or deprived community with
415 unmet social and economic needs.

416 *“North of the city they seem to get the money to do things easier than here... And what’s*
417 *around here is the graving docks, the dry docks... it’s all weed-infested. So, there’s nothing*
418 *there... to me that is a perfect site for a shipping museum.”* Male, >60 years, Govan (**Figure**
419 **8**).

420 [Insert Figure 8 here]

421 Using cultural or symbolic environmental features to create a sense of place was seen as a
422 valuable opportunity to engender pride in the neighbourhood, thereby making more
423 appealing places be active and inviting individuals to spend time in the neighbourhood.

424 *“You know you’re in Drumchapel when you see the water tower. It’s part of it, it’s like the*
425 *finishing cran, or it’s like sort of the Eiffel tower.”* Female, 40-60 years, Drumchapel.

426 *Case studies demonstrating interactions of the physical and social environments*

427 Participants very rarely discussed themes in isolation, rather they were viewed as being
428 interrelated, operating simultaneously to create environments that supported or discouraged
429 physical activity. As illustrated in **Figure 1**, themes cut across different factors contributing
430 towards an activity-supportive environment. A case study from each of the neighbourhoods
431 was selected because it was discussed by nearly all participants and demonstrated the
432 interdependency between themes.

433 Drumchapel shopping centre

434 [Insert Figure 9 here]

435 Drumchapel shopping centre (**Figure 9**) is the main collection of shops in Drumchapel and is
436 located close to other amenities (library, greenspace, health centre and transport hubs).
437 Shops are collected around an uncovered, outdoor precinct with pedestrianised streets.
438 Although the shopping centre should have been a place in which individuals could be active,
439 all of the participants in this neighbourhood noted that it was not a place in which one
440 wanted to be active and was therefore an unsupportive environment for physical activity. The
441 centre comprised a cluster of destinations including the job centre, an off-licence and a

442 public house, which were perceived to exclusively serve individuals who were out of work
443 and potentially had alcohol or drug-related issues. There were a number of empty shops and
444 few good shopping or recreational destinations, therefore other residents often went to more
445 desirable areas for shopping and leisure-time and performed activity in these destinations
446 rather than in the neighbourhood. The lack of diversity in visitors to the shopping centre
447 perpetuated the perception that a single group had ownership of the space. Therefore,
448 problems with individuals loitering outside the public house weren't combated by collective
449 control enforcing certain forms of behaviour. Despite a police presence (the police station
450 was nearby), individuals still felt intimidated by perceived territoriality of a single group.

451 *"I don't feel safe, because there's so many people that just walk out of it just look at you as*
452 *if... 'What the hell are you doing here?' 'You don't... you're not supposed to be here. You're*
453 *not a regular member of The Butty [pub]'...It's quite a hostile environment."* Female, 16-24
454 years, Drumchapel.

455 *"They need a bomb on it! It's horrible! They've no' got enough shops. The shops are closing*
456 *down, I think it's the rates and everything are too high now. And how it used to be was*
457 *marvellous but that'll no' come back 'cause with everything else they've no' got the money.*
458 *You don't want to go down to the shopping centre 'cause there's always alcoholics or*
459 *somebody passing 'have you got a fag? have you got a fag? 50 pence?'"* Female, >60 years,
460 Drumchapel.

461 *"The problem with the shopping centre is you've got the off-sales obviously, then you've got*
462 *the chemists, the Job Centre so they're the 3 places where they're gravitating towards....You*
463 *see if there were more shops you'd probably find an increase in people going, not just the*
464 *alcoholics or the addicts."* Male, 16-24 years, Drumchapel.

465 The run-down buildings and facilities may have created the impression that service-providers
466 and landowners did not value the space in the neighbourhood. Furthermore, appearance
467 and social disorder contributed to a negative external reputation of the neighbourhood. All
468 these factors dissuaded residents from spending time and being active there.

469 *“They want to leave it to rot so they can knock it down... they’re not doing any repair works on*
470 *it, which they really should do. Repair works to make it look more welcoming because then*
471 *it’ll make a nicer image of Drumchapel.”* Female, 40-60 years, Drumchapel.

472 The Lyceum in Govan

473 [Insert Figure 10 here]

474 The former Lyceum Cinema (**Figure 10**) is a listed building, originally opened as a cinema in
475 1938 on the site of the Lyceum Music Hall, opened in 1898. It was later converted to a
476 cinema and bingo hall, closing in 2006. It stands on the main road through Govan and is
477 currently in a state of dereliction and disrepair. All but one participant from Govan discussed
478 the Lyceum as an environment that did not support activity because it did not provide a
479 destination for activity and created a streetscape in which one did not want to be active.
480 Participants viewed the building as an indication that the authorities weren’t investing in the
481 community and its historic assets. Participants had a degree of attachment to the building as
482 it symbolised the popularity of Govan during a period of successful industry. They therefore
483 wanted the building to be used as a community resource, for multiple user groups and to
484 serve the whole community rather than stoke divisions or for the financial gain of housing
485 developers.

486 *“And it’s a shame it’s lying there rotting... it’s such a massive resource and it’s been sittin’.*
487 *They paid £8000 for that banner... to hide [that] it’s derelict, it’s really bad, smashed*
488 *windows. It was all art deco windows I think, they’re all smashed. So this was to make Govan*
489 *look good? I went ‘why didn’t you add another couple of noughts and actually just clean the*
490 *building. Rather than a bandage, put a bandage over it’... If I won the lottery I would have*
491 *loved to have made that a big social building for every age.”* Female, >60 years, Govan.

492 *“I heard they were gonna open it up as a mosque... That’s just poking a hornet’s nest with a*
493 *stick. So to me I was like that, if anything I can see a developer going in, just some big cats*
494 *with money gonna go in and make even more money. We don’t need more houses there; we*

495 *need more things for people to do... They're not going outside, they've not got any*
496 *education... I'm actually quite a wee bit passionate about it."* Male, 40-60 years, Govan.

497 **Discussion**

498 Participants living in two deprived communities in Glasgow, UK, identified several important
499 environmental factors that could contribute to a neighbourhood setting that is supportive of
500 neighbourhood-based, outdoor physical activity. These were labelled: 'diversity of
501 destinations in the neighbourhood', 'provision of services to support healthy environments',
502 'ownership of public space and facilities', 'collective control of public space to prevent
503 disorder' and 'perceived value of the neighbourhood'. These themes were thought to act
504 together to create environments that were supportive of physical activities across ages and
505 demographics. However, within this deprived setting, these factors largely acted to deter
506 physical activity in an unsupportive environment. To our knowledge, this is the first study
507 using qualitative methods to explore social and physical environmental influences of the
508 wider neighbourhood on physical activity in adults living in a deprived setting in the UK.

509 Themes presented here relate to those identified in previous qualitative research in other
510 settings which also identified the impact of safety, physical appearance, accessibility, social
511 relations and cohesion on physical activity or use of health-promoting facilities such as
512 greenspace (Belon et al., 2014; Dadpour et al., 2016; Seaman et al., 2010). 'Perceived value
513 of the neighbourhood' was a novel and cross-cutting theme identified in this context,
514 perceived by participants as an upstream factor to creating orderly, inviting places to be
515 active and driving diversity of destinations. This theme expanded on Burgoyne et al.'s
516 discussion around the concept of perceived neglect of the local area by authorities
517 (Burgoyne et al., 2007); in the current study we noted how external and internal reputations
518 recursively influenced each other and affected physical disorder in the local area. The theme
519 also relates to Dulin Keita et al.'s (2016) concept of 'pride in the neighbourhood', identified
520 as an important prospective outcome for a housing initiative in a low-income neighbourhood
521 in the USA. The pervasiveness of the local economic environment across themes revealed

522 how the manifestation of environmental influences could not be separated from the local
523 context, highlighting the merits of context-specific analysis of environmental effects on
524 physical activity. For example, a challenge in providing a diversity of destinations was a
525 weak local economy with too few employment opportunities and residents with lower levels
526 of disposable income for leisure or recreational opportunities. Social problems such as anti-
527 social behaviour also shaped the physical environment, for example, by restricting seating in
528 cafés in order to deter loitering.

529 The use of case studies helps to demonstrate how aspects of the themes are interdependent
530 and reinforce one another in creating an unsupportive environment for activity. Findings build
531 upon previous quantitative research in the same setting, providing further insight into the
532 manifestation of interactive effects of environmental factors. For example, quantitative
533 research reported an effect of cohesion and safety (conceptually similar to collective control)
534 and physical disorder on walking and a measure of moderate physical activity which
535 included gardening and use of physical activity facilities ([Anonymous], submitted for
536 publication). Case studies also demonstrated that although specific environments in the two
537 neighbourhoods were perceived as unsupportive for activity, common themes acted upon
538 these environments, manifesting in different ways depending on the local context. For
539 example, perceived value of the local environment was a salient theme for both case
540 studies, however it manifested as perceived lack of value for historical assets in Govan but a
541 perceived lack of value for current local infrastructure in Drumchapel. An implication for
542 policy could be to engage the community to identify these 'hot spots' which deter physical
543 activity, and then evaluate interdependent upstream influences which underpin
544 environmental barriers and can be targeted through intervention. Engagement with the
545 community throughout the process of identifying targets for intervention to intervention
546 implementation is supported by Dulin Keita et al. (2016) and Marinescu et al. (2013) who
547 highlight the importance of developing culturally-sensitive interventions. A difficulty policy-
548 makers face in this situation is firstly, ensuring adequate representation from the community

549 during engagement and secondly, balancing private and public interests in the community
550 (for example, through the management of local rental rates - pertinent to the Drumchapel
551 shopping centre, and ownership of local assets - pertinent to the Lyceum in Govan). In line
552 with suggestions arising from Kumanyika et al.'s (2012) framework, specific routes to
553 interventions for policy-makers identified as potentially effective in this context could include
554 providing affordable public transport, ensuring urban design enhances the social and cultural
555 environment and funding community organisations which help to generate social cohesion
556 and networks which underpin informal social control.

557 As noted, although different contexts were discussed in the two neighbourhoods,
558 perceptions of facilitators and barriers of activity were strikingly similar across
559 neighbourhoods and participant characteristics. This is surprising in light of previous
560 evidence of sex differences in the perceived influence of safety at night on physical activity in
561 low-income communities (Bennett et al., 2007). However, it does reflect the lack of reported
562 sex differences in the influence of safety during the day (Bennett et al., 2007). This suggests
563 fairly universal barriers to activity in this sample.

564 The themes identified in this study can be understood in relation to constructs within the built
565 environment and planning literature. For example, the 'three Ds' framework has been used
566 to illustrate features of pedestrian-oriented planning. The three Ds are density (population
567 and employment), diversity of land use and design (street layout and sidewalk design)
568 (Cervero and Kockelman, 1997). 'Diversity in neighbourhood destinations' and 'provision of
569 services to support healthy environments' elucidate the impact of diversity of land use and
570 design of street layout upon physical activity within this context. Although not a separate
571 theme, density of employment opportunities was encapsulated in discussion of the role of
572 the economic environment throughout the themes. Additionally, 'diversity of destinations in
573 the neighbourhood' and 'collective control of public space to prevent disorder' relate to Jane
574 Jacob's conceptualisation that diverse land uses increase the diversity of users and 'eyes on
575 the street' which encourages collective control of space with reduced levels of social

576 disorder (Jacobs, 1961). Findings can also substantiate frameworks of place effects on
577 health originating in the public health literature. Kumanyika et al.'s (2012) framework of
578 influences on physical activity and diet in ethnic minority groups can be applied and
579 substantiated in this context, acknowledging the social, cultural, physical, historical and
580 political factors implicated in creating activity-supportive neighbourhood environments.
581 Findings presented here help to operationalise the multifaceted effects of such constructs on
582 neighbourhood-based physical activity.

583 Participants predominantly spoke about unstructured physical activity embedded in daily
584 living, rather than structured exercise. This could be attributable to the lower costs
585 associated with unstructured outdoor activity compared with structured exercise which might
586 require equipment or use of unaffordable facilities (Panter, Jones, Hillsdon, 2008). A lack of
587 discussion around structured activity also reflects low levels of physical activity in this
588 population. In the 2016 Scottish Health Survey, 29% of adults living in the most deprived
589 areas obtained less than 30 minutes of moderate physical activity over a typical week,
590 compared with 13% in the least deprived areas (ScotCen Social Research, 2017). Findings
591 from this study suggest that multiple barriers exist in deprived communities which deter even
592 unstructured physical activity such as walking which is accessible to individuals on very low
593 incomes. Identifying opportunities to increase activity as part of daily living is beneficial for
594 populations with low levels of activity, although it should be noted that different barriers and
595 facilitators might influence structured physical activity.

596 The use of participant photography was a strength of the study. Previous authors have noted
597 the benefit of participant photography in facilitating insider perspectives by enriching verbal
598 interviews with visual data (Guell and Ogilvie, 2015). The 7-day photography period was
599 advantageous in encouraging participants to consider the research questions over a
600 prolonged period of time – when compared with one-off interviews or focus groups, informing
601 perspectives into the research question that might not have been available otherwise and
602 identifying thoughts that might otherwise have remained implicit (Rose, 2016). The method

603 also helped to redress the balance of power between interviewer and interviewee as the
604 participant was able to co-direct the interview and bring personal data and insights to the
605 interview. Proponents of such participatory methods have previously emphasised this as a
606 key strength (Wang and Burris, 1997), which is reflected in growing interest in engaging
607 residents to act as observers or “citizen scientists” to gather data about their neighbourhood
608 and inform the research process (Rosas et al., 2016).

609 However, this method also has potential limitations. It is possible that not all individuals
610 approached to participate felt able to take on the role of an observer in their neighbourhood.
611 Vulnerable individuals may feel uncomfortable or too conspicuous in this role; therefore, their
612 voice might be missing from the current study. In addition, it is possible that individuals who
613 were very rarely active in the neighbourhood would not have been targeted during
614 recruitment or would not have opted to take part in the study which involved photography of
615 the neighbourhood. These data do not represent special populations such as those who are
616 socially isolated. Such populations may have different perceptions and experiences of the
617 neighbourhood; this possibility requires further investigation.

618 There were no discernible differences in the number or content of photographs taken by the
619 two participants who opted to use digital cameras, suggesting digital and disposable
620 cameras were used by participants in an equivalent manner. Specific to this study, the act of
621 photography may have biased data collection if it was restricted to certain areas in the
622 neighbourhood. For example, one participant noted that they felt unsafe taking photographs
623 in certain contexts: *“It’s not very nice down there... I was going to take the camera down with
624 me but I didn’t want to take it down in case somebody tried to steal it”* (Female, 25-39 years,
625 Drumchapel). Additionally, while participants spoke about differences in day- and night-time
626 neighbourhood environments, no participants took photographs at night. This could have
627 been due to the rudimentary disposable cameras prohibiting high-quality night-time
628 photography or because participants did not go out at night, potentially due to safety
629 reasons. Moreover, because data collection took place from early-Summer to mid-Autumn,

630 seasonal differences in the experience of being active in the neighbourhood may not have
631 been captured. Therefore, it was necessary to use the interview to interrogate photographs
632 that might not have been taken, in addition to those that were, and consider this potential
633 limitation when interpreting the data. Finally, it is important to acknowledge that participants
634 self-defined the neighbourhood shape and size. Participant photographs were taken
635 predominantly within administrative boundaries for the neighbourhoods, suggesting self-
636 defined boundaries were not larger than administrative ones, although it is possible that had
637 administrative boundaries been used, participants might have identified additional influences
638 on their activity.

639 **Conclusions**

640 In conclusion, this study provided evidence of several interdependent social and physical
641 environmental aspects that were perceived to have substantive influence on neighbourhood-
642 based, outdoor physical activity in a deprived setting in the UK. The value of context-specific
643 investigation of factors that impact upon activity settings was evident in overarching
644 discussion of the socioeconomic context. Findings underline the value of a broad ecological
645 approach to the study of neighbourhood-based physical activity and suggest that multi-
646 faceted interventions addressing aspects of the social, physical and economic environment
647 may be needed to support physical activity in deprived settings.

648 **Conflicts of interest:** None.

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755 **Figure captions**

756 **Figure 1**

757 Solid arrows indicate contribution of themes to attributes of an activity-supportive neighbourhood. Dotted arrows
758 indicate interrelationship between themes

759 **Tables**

760 **Table 1:** Participant characteristics

Characteristic	Total N (%)	Govan N (%)	Drumchapel N (%)
Sex			
Male	10 (43.5)	7 (58.3)	3 (27.3)
Female	13 (56.5)	5 (41.7)	8 (72.7)
Age category			
16-24	5 (21.7)	2 (16.7)	3 (27.3)
25-39	6 (26.1)	3 (25.0)	3 (27.3)
40-60	7 (30.4)	3 (25.0)	4 (36.4)
>60	5 (21.7)	4 (33.3)	1 (9.1)
Ethnicity			
White British	21 (91.3)	10 (83.3)	11 (100)
Non-British	2 (8.7)	2 (16.7)	0 (0)
Household			
Single-person	9 (39.1)	7 (58.3)	2 (18.2)
Adult only	5 (21.7)	1 (8.3)	4 (36.4)
Family	7 (30.4)	3 (25.0)	4 (36.4)
No answer	2 (8.7)	1 (8.3)	1 (9.1)

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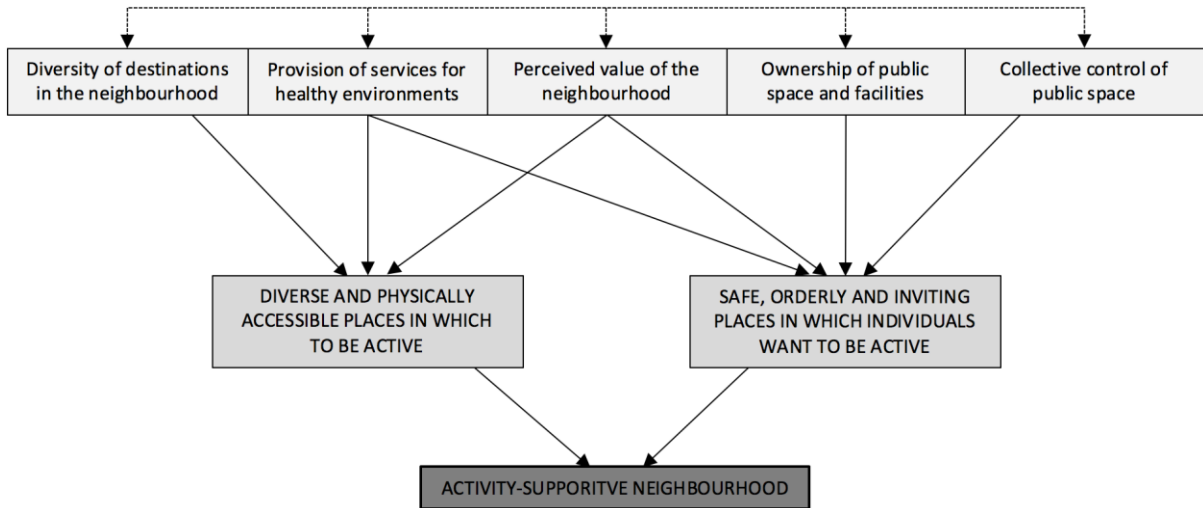
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770 **Figures** (to appear in colour on online version only)

771 **Figure 1:** Identified themes relating to the two categories of attributes of an activity-
772 supportive neighbourhood



773

774 **Figure 2:** Participant photograph of greenspace in Drumchapel



775

776 **Figure 3:** Participant photograph of the ferry in Govan



777

778 **Figure 4:** Participant photograph of greenhouse in community garden in Govan



779

780 **Figure 5:** Participant photograph of their garden in Govan



781

782 **Figure 6:** Participant photograph of housing improvements in Drumchapel



783

784 **Figure 7:** Participant photograph of dog waste bin in Drumchapel



785

786 **Figure 8:** Participant photograph of dry docks in Govan



787

788 **Figure 9:** Participant photograph of the shopping centre in Drumchapel



789

790 **Figure 10:** Participant photograph of the Lyceum in Govan



791