



BUNLOIT \* ACHTUIE \* DRUMBUIE



# GLEN URQUHART

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## Full-length *Community Action Plan*

*GUCAP  
2022*

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*Our place  
in a changing world*

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CORRIMONY \* SHENVAL \* BEARNOCK

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MILTON \* RYCHRAGGAN \* BALNAIN





*The plan is funded by*



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GLEN URQUHART COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN  
GUCAP 2022

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**A QUICK READ**

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- \* Who is managing the Plan?
- \* Who is a Community Action Plan for?
- \* Striking the correct balance

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

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**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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Thank you to the Glen Urquhart residents, community groups, businesses and organisations who responded with enthusiasm to help produce this Community Action Plan. Grateful thanks also to the volunteers on the steering group, drawn from Soirbheas, GURCA and Glen Urquhart Community Council, who helped to ensure that the plan consultation process reached as many people as it could despite the constraints associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

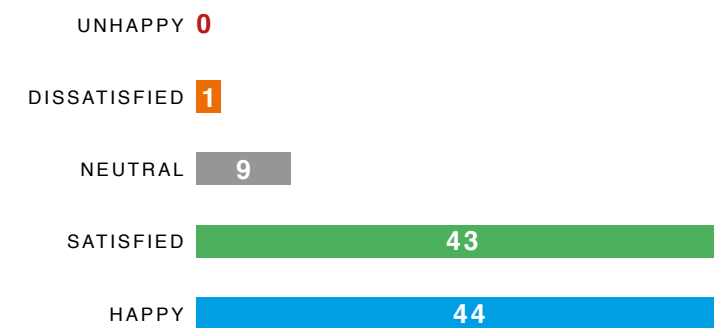




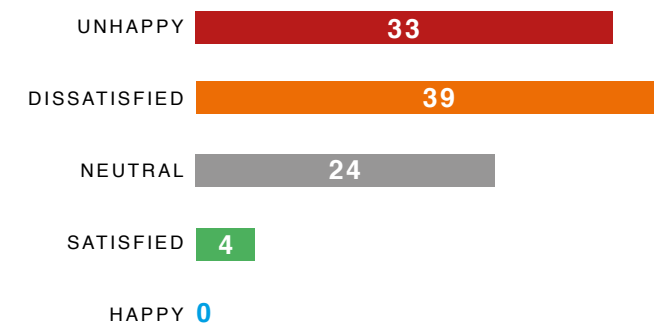
## A QUICK READ GLEN URQUHART COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

We consulted with you on eight key themes in spring 2022; this is what you told us. The actions in this Community Action Plan have been developed from the feedback provided by the community during the consultation process.

### *% How you rate your quality of life?*

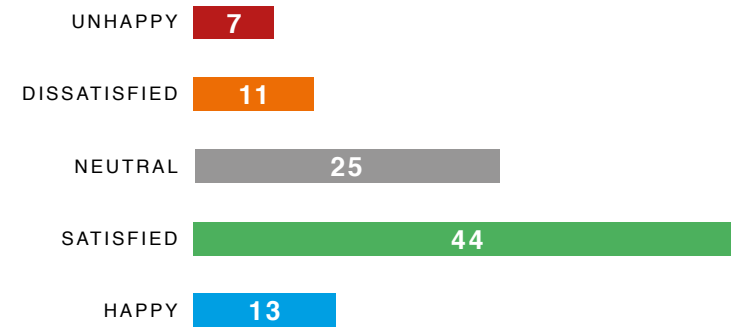


### *% How easy it is to get around on foot or by cycle*

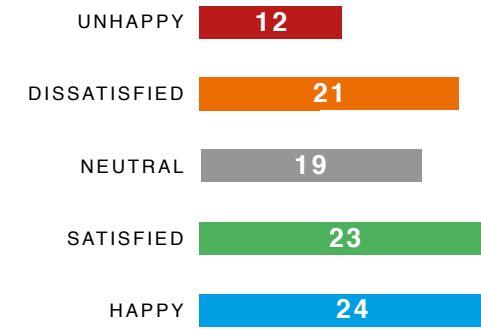




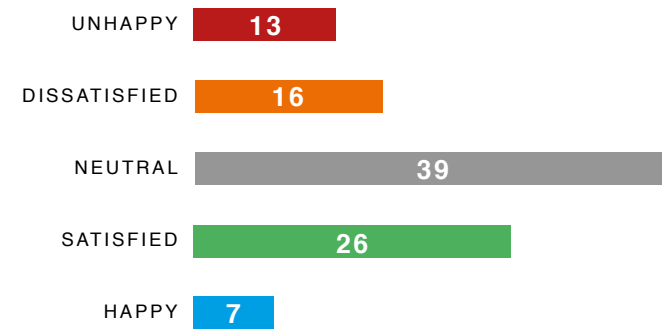
***% Choice and availability of health, social and wellbeing services***



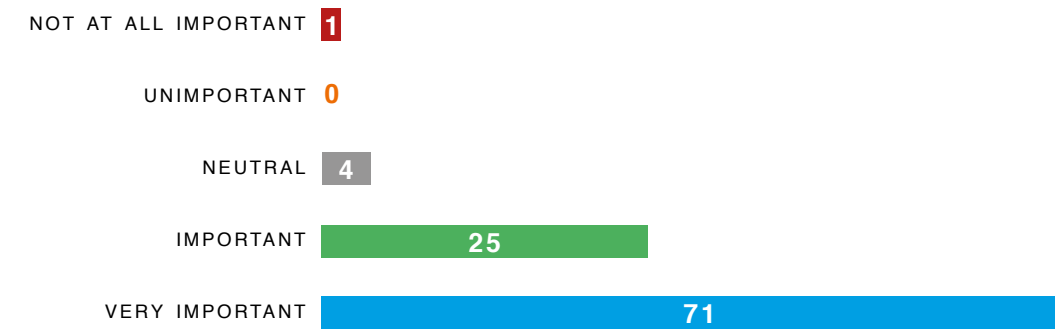
***% Choice and availability of broadband and mobile services***



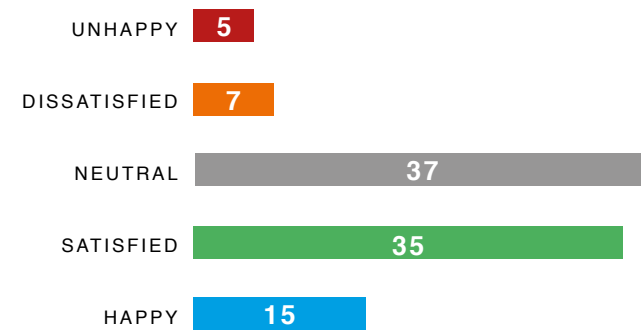
***% Choice and availability of housing***



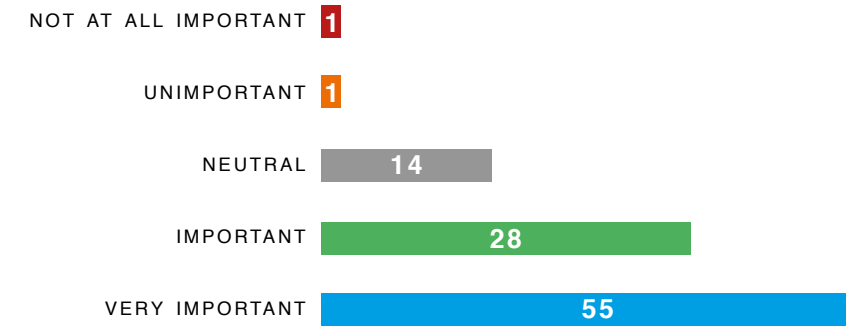
***% Importance of conserving heritage and culture***



***% Expansion of economy (especially tourism)***



***% Importance of working more closely with land managers to protect nature and manage climate change impacts***



**A PIPELINE OF PROJECTS**

**ACTIONS BY THE COMMUNITY OVER THE COMING FIVE YEARS**

**Safe travel on foot/cycle around the area**

- ⊗ Improve path network and user safety.
- ⊗ Campaign for improved public transport provision, develop community transport and shared travel opportunities and active travel links.

**Community assets and activities**

- ⊗ Secure community ownership of more viable assets and facilities.
- ⊗ Invest in, and improve, existing facilities, especially the public hall.

**Improved health and wellbeing**

- ⊗ More efficient use of existing health facilities.
- ⊗ Secure provision of more local care services.

**Broadband/mobile coverage**

- ⊗ Secure improvements to digital connectivity with primary focus on broadband coverage.

**Local environment and climate**

- ⊗ Improve local growing, waste reduction and re-use opportunities.
- ⊗ Greater community involvement in environmental change and land use decisions.

**Affordable housing**

- ⊗ Enable existing housing stock to better manage short-term fuel poverty issues
- ⊗ Investigate affordable housing provision for young people, key workers and employees.

**Local economy and jobs**

- ⊗ Develop more apprenticeship and training opportunities.
- ⊗ Support 'slow tourism initiatives', with longer stays and higher spend.

**Emphasis on sport, heritage and culture**

- ⊗ Improve facilities for unstructured play and sport (including investigating providing a multi-use games area, pump track etc).
- ⊗ Expand heritage and cultural facilities and activities.

**PART 1**

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*Our  
Community Action  
Plan*

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## WHAT IS A COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN ?

The Community Action Plan is a route map and framework that describes what our community wants to achieve, what actions are required during a specified time period, and what resources are needed. The knowledge we have gained from the consultation and research carried out in 2022, and in ongoing projects and future plan reviews, will be crucial to our short- and long-term planning and decision-making. The process of preparing a Community Action Plan ensures that people who live and work in the Glen Urquhart area have had the opportunity to contribute to a 20-year vision for their area.

The Plan is not just a wish list; we have focused on understanding and overcoming problems so that we can make our community more resilient, and so that people's lives and wellbeing can be improved.

## WHO IS MANAGING THE PLAN ?

The Community Action Plan Steering Group is drawn from Glenurquhart Rural Community Association (GURCA), Glen Urquhart Community Council (GUCC), and Soirbheas. These three bodies have distinct roles in the community and have led on many of our previous community initiatives. Bryden Associates were commissioned to undertake research and consultation and to prepare the Community Action Plan for the final approval of the Steering Group.

## WHO IS A COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN FOR ?

The Community Action Plan is for the people who live and work in Glen Urquhart and the community as a whole. It will also benefit people who

visit the area. By working as a community, alongside our public sector and our business partners, we can identify and understand the challenges and the opportunities we face and find ways to deal with them together.

The Plan doesn't replace what the Highland Council and other statutory bodies and public agencies should provide. It does, however, recognise that to achieve our ambitions external funding and ongoing volunteer support from local people will be needed to achieve the outcomes.

### STRIKING THE CORRECT BALANCE

This Community Action Plan takes a short-term view (up to 2027) and a long-term view (up to 20 years). We need to be realistic. COVID legacies, cost of living prices rises, inflation, reduced public sector spending and lower economic growth, and, of course, the climate emergency all impact on us and on our community. There will undoubtedly be further unpredictable events and we need to be prepared. To turn this Plan into reality we will need to be honest, practical and collaborative. We must be realistic about how long some projects will take to form, be funded and be delivered.

Here are the things you said we needed to do to make things better for the community over the next five years.





## PART 2

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*Glen Urquhart  
Community Action Plan*

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1.1

OUTCOME:

A MORE ACTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

The choice for communities to own or manage more assets that improve the delivery of public benefits is well supported by residents in the consultation. The Community Empowerment Act means there are more routes to community and plural ownership than ever before, and our efforts will be focused on the sustainability of asset-based enterprises. The climate crisis and the COVID pandemic calls for greater resilience planning and the future of volunteering in our community depends on making it easier for young people and others to help out.

PROJECT 1.1A  
OWNING AND MANAGING  
MORE VIABLE COMMUNITY ASSETS

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
<p>To identify viable assets (buildings, land, woodland etc) that add value to community life and that are,</p> <p>a) eligible for capital funding to support purchase and develop.</p> <p>b) supported by volunteer effort and/or cost neutral income streams.</p>	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Use existing assets more efficiently and innovatively including ongoing support to enhance and modernise Glen Urquhart Public Hall.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Review community involvement in green space within Drumnadrochit settlement boundary and Land south of Health Centre and land to the rear of the post office now better protected and close to other commercial facilities and the main hub public car park.</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> Identify other key sites and land allocations that could provide community benefits.</p>	<p>Glen Urquhart Public Hall is refurbished.</p> <p>The number of viable assets in community ownership or management increases.</p> <p>The condition of assets are improved and become more energy efficient and sustainable to run.</p> <p>Feasibility around acquiring Balnain Forestry Buildings for Men's Shed and housing project.</p>	<p>Take advantage of the new Local Place Plan processes, Community Wealth Building and Land Reform legislation to investigate more community enterprises, and shared ownership of, or community-led, carbon projects including renewables and rewilding.</p>	<p>Lead and deliver: GURCA</p> <p>Partners: Landowners, HIE, Scottish Government, Scottish Land Fund, SSE Sustainable Development Fund.</p>



**PROJECT 1.1B  
SECURING EFFECTIVE RESILIENCE  
AND EMERGENCY PLANS**

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
To build on the existing Community Emergency Plan and expand into a more refined response to address immediate and longer-term risks.	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Complete the current Community Emergency Plan.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Build on the strengths we used to get through the COVID-19 pandemic and record community skills, knowledge, and resources.</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> Identify future risks and vulnerabilities and create stronger connections.</p>	<p>Complete and publish the current phase of the Community Emergency Plan.</p> <p>Form a Resilience Partnership, and develop an ‘Everyday’ Resilience Plan which can support an ‘Emergency’ resilience response in the event of a more severe incident—such as a major storm or a further COVID-type impact.</p>	<p>Current plans in place for:</p> <p><b>1:</b> ‘Everyday’ community resilience.</p> <p><b>2:</b> ‘Emergency’ resilience response.</p>	<p>Lead and deliver: GURCA</p> <p>Partners: Scottish Government, Highland Council, Fire and Rescue Scotland, RNLI, First Responders, NHS Highland, Power companies.</p>

**PROJECT 1.1C  
IMPROVING COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERING,  
GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNICATION**

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
To secure the future of community bodies in Glen Urquhart.	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Communities bodies to refresh their identities under a coordinating group and clarify how they jointly address priorities and communicate roles and actions in print and on social media plus through further support for local newsletter team to help the local community better understand what community-led support is available to them.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Set up a volunteer register to record local interests, qualifications and availabilities. Guide people through permissions and clearance and match volunteers with individual projects.</p>	<p>Coordinating group in place, and attracting more volunteers who give more time to the community.</p> <p>Being clear what roles/tasks are required to spread the workload and making roles less daunting.</p> <p>Use of ‘Aye Volunteer’ HTSI app.</p>	<p>A better understanding of what young people may be looking for in a volunteer opportunity and how volunteer roles in community bodies need to be adapted to be more appealing to young people.</p>	<p>Lead and deliver: Soirbheas</p> <p>Partners: Highland Council.</p>

1.2

OUTCOME:

BETTER HEALTH AND WELLBEING OPPORTUNITIES

The proportion of people of working age in Glen Urquhart is below the Scottish average, and the population is ageing faster. This is a challenge for the local workforce and informal care provision. Nationally, almost half of people aged 50–64 years have at least one long-term health condition, and more if they are over 70. Healthier people have an improved quality of life. Better health reduces the demands on our public health services. People want services within the community that mean people can live safely at home. This is an issue not just for those using provision and their carers but also for the wider community—particularly people in their 50s and 60s who may need these services in the future. Affordable childcare in the community gives parents the choice to stay in the work force.

PROJECT 1.2A

IMPROVING MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS SERVICES

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
To establish a focus on preventative and joined-up intervention and co-delivery. Choices that can have an impact on individual’s mental and physical health made more available at earlier stages and to all ages.	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Develop a Wellbeing Action Plan to introduce more people to non-medical ways to help mental and physical health and wellness.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Establish a referral programmes with health professionals and others to include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Connection with outdoors through activities and volunteering</li> <li>* Befriending, Social and other health services</li> <li>* Food and nutrition</li> <li>* Care at Home scheme</li> <li>* Childcare support</li> <li>* Access to other services.</li> </ul>	<p>Increased numbers on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Health walks</li> <li>* Befriending scheme</li> <li>* Social activities.</li> </ul> <p>Increased numbers of people volunteering.</p> <p>Increased referrals to other services.</p>	The Wellbeing Action Plan will explore long-term issues around health and wellbeing arising from poverty, social isolation, child and elder care and limited services as found in rural locations. Sustainable solutions will promote positive long-term public health outcomes through community deliverable non-medical means.	<p>Lead and co-deliver: GURCA and Soirbheas.</p> <p>Partners: GCP, NHS Highland, Drumnadrochit Medical Practice, volunteers and bodies such as the Woodland Trust and Partnership for Wellbeing.</p>



**PROJECT 1.2B  
SUPPORTING A VIABLE  
CARE AT HOME SERVICE**

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
To provide support to local people, enabling them to live independently at home and remain in their own community. To address temporary needs such as post-surgery recovery.	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Joint working group to ensure the needs and views of people accessing social care are valued and represented.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Work to improve and support new and maintain existing wellbeing partnerships and their stakeholders.</p>	Help to recruit more professionally-qualified care workers in the local area and to assist with support measures like transport, phones, laptops and PPE required by carers.	<p>Develop a professional Care at Home service operating across GU with a local Care Coordinator.</p> <p>Supply/loan service of care equipment—lifting, movement etc for residents and visitors.</p>	<p>Lead and lobby: GCP to work with GURCA, Soirbheas and GPs through a working group. Co-delivery: Highland Hospice</p> <p>Partners: NHS Highland.</p>

**PROJECT 1.2C  
SUPPORTING A VIABLE  
BEFRIENDING SERVICE**

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
To further develop the existing Soirbheas, befriending service to alleviate social isolation and the effects of loneliness.	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Recruit more volunteer 'Befrienders'.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Provide training and PVG (Protection of Vulnerable Groups) checks.</p>	Viable and robust Befriending Service in place.	More people with meaningful relationships with others and more people taking part in social activities.	<p>Lead and deliver: Soirbheas</p> <p>Partners: Highland Hospice.</p>

**PROJECT 1.2D  
SUPPORTING A VIABLE  
CHILD CARE PROVISION**

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
To provide support for nursery and after-school care projects.	<b>Step 1:</b> Support a review of current and future demand for childcare, facility type and location.	Viable and robust Child Care provision in place.	Explore option to secure new premises for the Childcare Centre with age group dedicated space.	Lead and deliver: Childcare providers  Partners: Highland Council.

**PROJECT 1.2E  
ENCOURAGING PROVISION OF  
MORE COMMUNITY-BASED HEALTH SERVICES**

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
To facilitate delivery of more local 'pop up' health and wellbeing services.	<b>Step 1:</b> Seek commitment to trial services from visiting health professionals— for example  * Foot specialist  * Optician  * Dental hygienist.	Settled demand for agreed services and services is in place.	Have a greater range of health services available locally.	Lobby: GUCC.  Partners: NHS Highland, other professional health service providers.



**PROJECT 1.2F  
ENCOURAGING MORE  
COMMUNITY-LED SOCIAL ACTIVITY PROVISION**

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
To provide more choice and opportunity for people to socialise together.	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Run trial events to establish demand and then build more regular activities. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Men's Shed</li> <li>* Exercise</li> <li>* Music tea dance /ceilidh</li> <li>* Outings</li> <li>* Eating and cooking together</li> <li>* Assisted shopping.</li> </ul>	Regular programme of social activities.	Use our community transport to help get more people together at more events.	<p>Lead and deliver: GURCA</p> <p>Partners: Highland Council, NHS Highland, U3A</p>

**1.3  
OUTCOME:  
MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING  
AND ENERGY EFFICIENT HOMES**

Managing housing by offering affordable and different choices of living and working locally for more people will create a more sustainable place. Resource efficiency by supporting new building techniques, standards and materials, making existing properties more efficient where possible and exploring/encouraging opportunities for people to utilise low carbon domestic energy sources.

**PROJECT 1.3A  
HELPING TO PROVIDE  
MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
To gather and quantify clear evidence of housing need amongst local residents and people with Glen Urquhart connections. In particular key workers and young people with local connections currently being priced out of the local housing market.	<p><b>Step 1:</b> To carry out a fine-grained local housing survey to assess:</p> <p>a) Number of existing affordable homes and tenures</p> <p>b) Housing need</p> <p>c) Number of second homes/ short-term lets and vacant and derelict properties</p> <p>d) Suitable sites where proof of concept for community owned housing might be developed</p> <p>e) Ways of accommodating workers and seasonal employees.</p>	Better understanding of housing need and an established plan with targets.	<p>More community owned and managed affordable housing with a higher proportion of young and working-age people living in Glen Urquhart.</p> <p>Use Local Place Plan to set a target for affordable houses and the proportion of second homes and short-term let properties.</p>	<p>Research, lobby and lead possible future delivery: GUCC.</p> <p>Partners: Highland Council, local landowners and businesses, Scottish Land Fund Community, Housing Trust, RSLs.</p>

**PROJECT 1.3B  
HELPING TO MAKE  
HOMES MORE ENERGY EFFICIENT**

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
To support financial and CO2 emissions efficiencies and savings through energy use reduction and heat retention.	<p><b>Step 1:</b> To create a short-term graduate placement scheme in Glen Urquhart offering home visits, consultations, and community events aimed at energy conservation.</p>	150 contacts leading to energy saving measures, funding referrals, renewable heating and energy surveys and new energy-saving practices adopted.	Investigate localised manufacturing and installation services and skills training to make housing more energy efficient and financially viable.	<p>Research, lobby and deliver: Soirbheas</p> <p>Partners: Local Energy Scotland, Home Energy Scotland.</p>



1.4

**OUTCOME:  
A GREENER, FAIRER  
AND MORE INCLUSIVE SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY**

Discussion with stakeholders highlighted a skills gaps emerging in two key sectors in Glen Urquhart—tourism and care. For sustainable tourism, Glen Urquhart needs to have visitors who stay longer and who don't just pass through or make day trips from Inverness. Discussion with stakeholders also raised the questions:

'Who benefits from carbon markets?'

'What are the opportunities to generate additional community finance from the 'green' sector?'

'How can growth in "green" sector jobs help us to address climate change and provide career openings for our young men and women to study, train, work and start new businesses in order to breathe further confidence and vibrancy into our community?'

**PROJECT 1.4A  
SUPPORTING CAREERS  
THROUGH GREEN SKILLS AND YOUTH APPRENTICESHIPS**

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
To engage local businesses in creating more opportunities for training and career development in rural-based industries. To generate new employment and thus attract and retain a higher percentage of young people in the area to strengthen and grow the local economy and the community.	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Expand, fund and promote existing Soirbheas apprenticeship scheme.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Investigate 'Women in Wellies' type events led by role models to give young women more confidence and encouragement to think about a rural or green career.</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> Encourage more local businesses to use the HIE graduate programme.</p>	<p>Further funded apprenticeships encouraging an equitable gender balance.</p> <p>A growing working-age population.</p> <p>More graduates working in local businesses.</p>	<p>Apprentices go on to earn a real living wage and gain a recognised qualification that is acknowledged by industry bodies representing the business sectors important to Glen Urquhart and its environment.</p> <p>More employee-owned businesses in Glen Urquhart.</p>	<p>Lobby.</p> <p>Partners: Developing the Young Workforce (DYW), Business Base Highland Council (Education), UHI.</p>

**PROJECT 1.4B  
MOVING TOWARDS  
A WELLBEING ECONOMY**

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
Building a Wellbeing Economy is a top priority for the Scottish Government. It means an economy that benefits everyone and promotes sustainability, prosperity and resilience in communities and businesses. This is what we want for Glen Urquhart.	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Facilitate workshops where businesses and marketers hear directly from leaders in the community who make Glen Urquhart what it is.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Trial pop-ups and event opportunities to bring vacant space in Glen Urquhart to life and trial product sales to test market demand.</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> Review demand for affordable 'green' and accessible workspace with access to fast broadband.</p>	Greater diversity and resilience in the Glen Urquhart economy.	Planning for actions that provide a safe, clean, green, attractive, and well promoted community where the wellbeing agenda is at the heart of future community priorities.	Lead, research, lobby, deliver.  Partners: Local businesses, HIE, social enterprises.

**PROJECT 1.4C  
CAMPAIGNING FOR  
A REAL LIVING WAGE**

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
To build on strengths in low wage sectors like tourism and care but look for opportunities to promote a shift to a Real Living Wage economy for the benefit of everyone.	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Community bodies to pay Real Living Wage, and only partner with organisations and suppliers that pay Real Living Wage.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Promote a Real Living Wage approach to all businesses in Glen Urquhart.</p>	Percentage of businesses and social enterprises in the community signed up to a Real Living Wage pledge.	Long-term actions to drive up average wages and salaries.	Research, lobby:  Partners: Local businesses, social enterprises.

**PROJECT 1.4D**

**USING GREEN FINANCE AND RENEWABLE ENERGY/LOW CARBON FUNDS TO INCREASE COMMUNITY FINANCIAL RESERVES**

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
To consider new models for negotiating future community finance from renewable energy operators and carbon focused investors who may gain consent for new and upgraded developments in and around Glen Urquhart.	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Participation in renewable energy/low carbon community benefits groupings and networks.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Increase oversight and engagement with renewable energy/ low carbon projects to achieve good practice standards for community engagement.</p>	Progressive green finance that delivers measurable community benefits and includes community shareholding as an option.	Support delivery of shared ownership or community-led carbon projects in Glen Urquhart. Explore the concept of forming a GIP (Green Improvement District defined by local green policies).	<p>Lead, research, lobby and seek partners: Soirbheas</p> <p>Partners: Renewable energy and carbon project developers and operators.</p>

**PROJECT 1.4E**

**SUPPORTING RESPONSIBLE TOURISM MEASURES**

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
<p>To stabilise visitor numbers in the peak season while focusing growth on quieter months and on those parts of our community that have the infrastructure and capacity to manage additional visitors.</p> <p>To maximise the economic and community benefit of tourism by encouraging longer stays, while maintaining existing high levels of visitor satisfaction.</p>	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Build and support local tourism work carried out by the Loch Ness Hub.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Support investigation of further initiatives based around walking and cycling, wildlife, local culture and crafts, food and drink.</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> Develop local heritage trails, building on the Cnocan Burraidh site experience.</p> <p><b>Step 4:</b> Assess infrastructure capacity needs including car, coach and camper van parking and accessible spaces, toilet provision and chemical waste disposal points, and EV charging points.</p>	<p>Growth in visitor numbers is concentrated in off-peak times of the year and in areas with capacity.</p> <p>Length of visitor stays increase.</p> <p>Visitor satisfaction levels remain high.</p>	<p>Green and community credentials are key priorities within to our large and small tourism businesses and they publicly report performance.</p> <p>Reduction in reliance on seasonal/ tourist jobs and provision of more year-round stable employment.</p>	<p>Research, lobby and support delivery:</p> <p>Partners Local businesses, Loch Ness Hub CIC, Scottish Canals, HES.</p>



**2.1  
OUTCOME:  
GETTING ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY**

The consultation showed very strong support for access to safe off-road walking and cycling routes connecting settlements and public places and improving access to the Loch Ness shoreline, as well as for better public transport (addressing current problems such as limited timetable, unsuitable vehicles and ‘last mile’ issues to and from the bus stop). Increasing active travel and mobility leads to health and wellbeing benefits for everyone, and, in particular, encourages healthy active travel habits for life for young people and their families. Education and enforcement of road user space and speed limits makes the use of links we already have much safer. Walking and cycling have widespread visitor appeal; the Great Glen Way and Affric to Kintail Way are good alternatives to more well-known long-distance routes. The Scottish Government is committed to reducing car kilometres travelled by 20% by 2030 and to spending 10% of the total transport budget on active travel by 2024–25.

**PROJECT 2.1A  
SUPPORTING IMPROVEMENTS TO  
THE ACTIVE TRAVEL AND LEISURE ROUTE NETWORK**

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
To ensure residents are better connected by a network of safe accessible paths and cycle routes, improving people’s health and wellbeing.	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Map status and condition of existing routes. Revisit engineering studies carried out for a walk/cycle route beside A82.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Explore measures to encourage responsible road use on local roads. Review of A82 junction safety and capacity within Drumnadrochit and Lewiston.</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> Develop a strategic plan to address path upgrades and network gaps including: Planned improvements to the U1640 Bunloit road which forms part of the Great Glen Way and cycle route. Investigating a site and design for a new foot bridge across the Coiltie at the Cover Wood to give access to the Loch and Borlum Bay. Promoting rural cycling activity in line with revised Highway Code Road User hierarchy.</p>	<p>All core paths are in good condition and accessible to the widest possible range of users.</p> <p>Behavioural change where more people are making active travel choices especially for short journeys.</p> <p>Clear messaging around local road use and safety of walking, wheeling, cycling and riding users.</p> <p>Cycle training for local road use, particularly for children and less confident adults.</p>	<p>People increasingly leave their car at home, with residents being more active and making regular use of low/zero carbon transport.</p> <p>Key infrastructure and active travel projects are progressed including:</p> <p>Off-road route from Drumnadrochit to Dochgarroch parallel to A82.</p> <p>Local pump track and more bike routes.</p> <p>Better cycle capacity on public transport.</p> <p>Access to cycle repair and maintenance facilities to ensure cycles are safe and in good working order.</p>	<p>Lead: Soirbheas (paths) and GUCC (roads). Research, lobby, deliver: GURCA</p> <p>Partners: Highland Council, HITRANS, Sustrans, Safe Routes to School HIE, landowners, tourism businesses, Strategic Timber Transport Fund Scotland, Cycle Repair Scheme, Paths for All.</p>

**PROJECT 2.1B  
ENABLING DEVELOPMENT OF  
E-BIKE AND EV INFRASTRUCTURE**

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
To enable residents and visitors to have greater confidence in electric vehicles (cars and bikes) provision by improving support infrastructure.	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Support and expand existing E-bike service offered by the Loch Ness Hub subject to demand.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Review the current provision of EV charging infrastructure in Glen Urquhart and identify gaps and future solutions.</p>	Residents and visitors being more active and making regular use of low/zero carbon transport.	An E-bike and EV infrastructure network that meets demand and is flexible in response to technological advances.	<p>Lead, Loch Ness Hub. Research, lobby, deliver</p> <p>Partners: Highland Council, Sustrans, HITRANS, Transport Scotland, E-bike and vehicle grant funds, Community transport company.</p>

**PROJECT 2.1C  
ENABLING BETTER AND MORE INCLUSIVE  
PUBLIC TRANSPORT, COMMUNITY TRANSPORT AND CAR SCHEMES**

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
To help residents have access to better information and provision about mobility services including public transport. More on call community-based transport schemes to get people out and about and to appointments, social activities, shopping or trips.	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Help residents and visitors make better use of existing provision such as free bus travel for residents aged under 21 and over 60.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Investigate a booking system for a community EV people carrier.</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> Investigate a lift-share network or platform.</p> <p><b>Step 4:</b> Investigate a model for the development of a volunteer car scheme where drivers and users are protected and trained, and providers suitably reimbursed.</p>	At least 50% of eligible young people in Glen Urquhart signed up to free bus travel as identified through on-going school surveys and user data from transport providers.	<p>Registered community bus routes offering a bookable door-to-door service and aiming to meet the individual needs of people who cannot get out and about easily without assistance.</p> <p>Vehicles suitable for all abilities, with accessible lifts or ramps and fully-trained drivers to assist people with mobility problems.</p> <p>Relocation and redesign of services to reduce need to travel in line with 20% of car kilometres reduction by 2030 target in Scottish Government Net Zero route map.</p>	<p>Lead, GURCA and Loch Ness Hub. Research, lobby, deliver</p> <p>Partners: Highland Council, Scottish Government, MaaS Investment Fund (MIF), HITRANS, transport providers.</p>

2.2

**OUTCOME:  
BETTER DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY**

Technological trends such as automation and digitalisation have changed the way we buy goods and services, how we manufacture products, when and where we work, and how we interact with each other. However, a significant number of survey respondents in Glen Urquhart reported very poor broadband speeds which hindered work and study opportunities. Reliable mobile service choices available for everyone are essential in a modern world and in advance of the planned 2025 analogue phone line shut down.

**PROJECT 2.2A  
IMPROVING BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY  
AND DIGITAL SKILLS**

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
To help deliver high speed broadband, because it is important for the future of our people, services, and economies.	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Lobby Scottish Government to deliver maximum connectivity in the shortest possible time.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Offer training in digital and mobile skills to those in need.</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> Investigate provision of a central hub (library or refurbished hall) where local people can be guaranteed easy access to a high-speed connection for work or study.</p>	<p>Achieve Scottish Government's committed target of speeds of at least 30mbps to every home as set in their R100 Digital Scotland initiative.</p> <p>20 people are offered training in digital or mobile skills.</p>	Improve long-term resilience of broadband network and deliver ultra-fast speed levels to as many households as possible.	<p>Lead, research, lobby: Soirbheas and GUCC.</p> <p>Partners: Scottish Government Openreach, internet service providers.</p>



**PROJECT 2.2B  
IMPROVING  
MOBILE CONNECTIVITY**

<b>PROJECT AIM</b>	<b>STEPS TO 2027</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>LONG TERM ACTION</b>	<b>COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS</b>
To help address those parts of Glen Urquhart which have partial or complete 'not-spots areas' where only some or no mobile network operators (MNOS) provide 4G coverage.	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Lobby MNOs for maps to identify 'not spots' and their plans to improve coverage.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Lobby to secure failsafe measures for those who rely on analogue landlines and do not have a broadband connection.</p>	Scottish Government 4G Infill Programme (S4GI) initiative delivered. 100% of Glen Urquhart will be in range of a 4G signal from at least one mobile operator.	Every resident to have 4G/5G connectivity to help all residents to enjoy the benefits of improved connectivity and digital technology.	<p>Research, lobby: Soirbheas</p> <p>Partners: DCMS, Scottish Government Openreach, mobile network operators .</p>

**2.3  
OUTCOME:  
SUPPORTING LOCAL CULTURE, SPORT  
AND HERITAGE**

While recognising the importance of shinty, survey respondents identified a need for facilities to support other sports including a pump track, gym, climbing wall, play space, MUGA, mountain bike trails and water sports. People responding to the survey also identified gaps in the wider access to heritage and history in Glen Urquhart. Recruiting volunteers is an ongoing challenge for most sporting and heritage groups.

**PROJECT 2.3A  
PROVIDING MORE QUALITY, AFFORDABLE OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR SPORT AND RECREATION**

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
To promote and nurture our rich sporting heritage and to identify priorities for additional sporting provision.	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Prepare a directory of volunteers and the local skill base in sports and physical activities to improve leadership and instruction opportunities.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Support efforts to enhance and modernise Glen Urquhart Public Hall as a focal point for cultural, leisure and wellbeing activities.</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> Investigate the feasibility of establishing central 'secretariat' to help groups and clubs to organise venue booking, publicity etc.</p> <p><b>Step 4:</b> Commission a feasibility study to establish actual demand for additional play space(s), community multi-use games areas (MUGA) and pump track.</p>	<p>Recruit and train more volunteers.</p> <p>Invite clubs to identify baseline numbers and to identify measures required to increase membership of existing groups and usage of existing provision.</p> <p>Increase the number of grants awarded to heritage and sport projects.</p>	<p>Getting more local facilities that mean less travelling to Inverness is needed.</p> <p>Exploring need and viability for a 'proper' gym facility and swimming pool as identified in the survey.</p>	<p>Lead: High Life Highland</p> <p>Partners: Highland Council, community bodies and clubs .</p>

**PROJECT 2.3B  
CONSERVING AND IMPROVING ACCESS TO  
CULTURAL HERITAGE**

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
To care for and celebrate our rich cultural heritage through trails, events, interpretation and storytelling and performance.	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Investigate feasibility of a cultural heritage network, building on, for example, the success of Cnocan Burraidh burial ground project.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Seek funding to investigate and develop local heritage trails.</p>	<p>Develop heritage trails and related events.</p> <p>Increased opportunities for traditional music, dance and Gaelic language.</p>	<p>Explore measures that better reflect local heritage and history interests and offer heritage themed specialist tours, visitor experiences, genealogy, access to digital archives and school resource provision.</p>	<p>Lead: GURCA</p> <p>Partners: Highland Council, High Life Highland.</p>

2.4

**OUTCOME:  
A PLACE THAT IS NATURE-RICH  
AND CLIMATE-CONSCIOUS**

The consultation process confirmed a strong connection between residents and the environment where they live and how improved visual quality and natural amenity give a greater sense of welcome to visitors. There is interest in knowing more about the motivations of local landowners/managers and how the community could work more closely with them.

By 2024, all land should be in a public register. The Scottish Government’s Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement promotes greater diversity in ownership of land including more community ownership, high standards and transparency of land ownership and use, and better community engagement in decisions about land.

Land based initiatives around wildlife, leisure activities, water quality, growing and cooking can improve health issues, meet Net Zero targets, and provide climate change mitigation. “Boots on the ground” in the form of a ‘warden service’ was mentioned in the survey but clarifying costs and integration with existing provision is required.

The Scottish Government’s Circular Economy Bill includes measures on litter and waste and forms part of wider plans on reducing, reusing, and recycling materials to create green workplace cultures and using traditional techniques, innovation and technology.

**PROJECT 2.4A  
CLOSER WORKING WITH LAND MANAGERS  
TO ENSURE COMMUNITY NEEDS ARE ACCOMMODATED**

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
To secure greater collaboration and transparency on the way land in the community is owned and managed.	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Use an online map-based resource to show the ownership of land and water assets and the contact details of controlling persons to assist in developing future community engagement and projects.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Collaborate with landowners on the range of tools available to support them in engaging with communities.</p>	<p>Managers of larger land holdings meeting regularly with community bodies to explain their future plans.</p> <p>Land and water resources in Glen Urquhart to be kept ‘in good ecological status’ as per national codes and definitions.</p>	Action that lead to a strong and dynamic relationship between the land in Glen Urquhart and people, where all land contributes to a modern and successful community and country, achieving Net Zero by 2045, and where rights and responsibilities in relation to land are fully recognised and fulfilled.	<p>Research, lobby: Soirbheas and GURCA</p> <p>Partners: Land managers, Scottish Government, Scottish Land Fund, Scottish Land Commission, SEPA, NatureScot, Forestry and Land Scotland.</p>



**PROJECT 2.4B  
GREATER COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO THE CLIMATE  
AND BIODIVERSITY EMERGENCIES THROUGH PRACTICAL ACTION**

**PROJECT 2.4C  
A COMMUNITY WARDEN/RANGER POST  
FOR GLEN URQUHART**

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
<p>To promote practical action in developing a circular economy at a community level.</p> <p>To promote practical action that has a sustainable business base.</p>	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Explore the feasibility of establishing more garden areas with community-based food growing space, growing tunnels, community composting and learning capacity.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Explore opportunities for self-financing local growing ventures, composting and biochar production for soil improvement, and repair/recycle/reuse outlets.</p>	<p>A community growing space in Glen Urquhart with facilities for recycling and composting.</p>	<p>The community is actively participating and contributing to establishing a working circular economy in Glen Urquhart.</p>	<p>Lead: Soirbheas and GURCA</p> <p>Partners: Local land managers, Highland Council, Forestry and Land Scotland.</p>

PROJECT AIM	STEPS TO 2027	TARGET	LONG TERM ACTION	COMMUNITY ROLE AND PARTNERS
<p>To support work managing outdoor visitor-related pressures and ensuring visitors have the best possible experiences.</p>	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Investigate the options for funding a community warden/ranger on visitor duties in the summer and taking on local maintenance and resilience duties in the winter in partnership with Highland Council's current pilot ranger scheme.</p>	<p>A blended outcome to share costs, but with clarity on commitments for community warden/ranger, HC rangers, staff from other bodies, and local volunteers.</p>	<p>Enhanced provision in partnership with other providers and community co-ordination of agreed services to be delivered and necessary support and resources committed.</p>	<p>Lead, research, deliver:</p> <p>Partners: Local land managers, Highland Council, Forestry and Land Scotland, RSPB, Woodland Trust, NatureScot.</p>

## PART 3

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*Who took part in the  
Community Action Plan  
consultation?*

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Our main consultation tool was an online survey, using the Commonplace platform, which was open Tuesday 11th January–Wednesday 27th April 2022. The survey was promoted in Glen Urquhart on social media, through posters and leaflets, through the post to individual households, at community events and through the *Inverness Courier*. Businesses on the Chamber of Commerce platform were emailed. Paper versions of the survey were made available for those not able to connect online.

In addition to the online survey, although COVID-19 restrictions made face-to-face interaction challenging, several other types of consultation took place:

- \* Engagement with local school children.
- \* Five focus groups on specific themes (land management, youth and children, health and care, housing and business).
- \* Focus groups with Soirbheas, GURCA and GUCC.
- \* 1:1 interviews with business, public sector and community leaders and decision-makers.
- \* Pop-up events (Tattie Day and Market on the Green).
- \* Informal polls at local events like the Market on the Green and also using forms supplied in the library.

We have tried our best to give everyone the opportunity to contribute but recognise that some people have not taken part.

A total of 1,475<sup>1</sup> people visited the online survey pages (67% of the estimated 2,200 people living in Glen Urquhart). Of these, 55% engaged with the survey in some way. Not everyone answered all of the questions or provided comments. You can find out more about how the consultation operated in the Appendices.

1. Other Glen Urquhart public 'consultations' for comparison: The local government elections in May 2022 saw a turnout for Ward 12 (Aird and Loch Ness) of 51.5%—pro rata for Glen Urquhart approx. 850 people. Compulsory 2022 Census returns in Highland submitted by the date due were only 75%. There were 19 responses to consultation on the IMFLDP2 which sets the 'blueprint' for development over the next 10 years. The Inner Moray Firth Active Travel Plan consultation in 2021 had three public comments.



## PART 4

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*The community  
in 2022  
and future trends*

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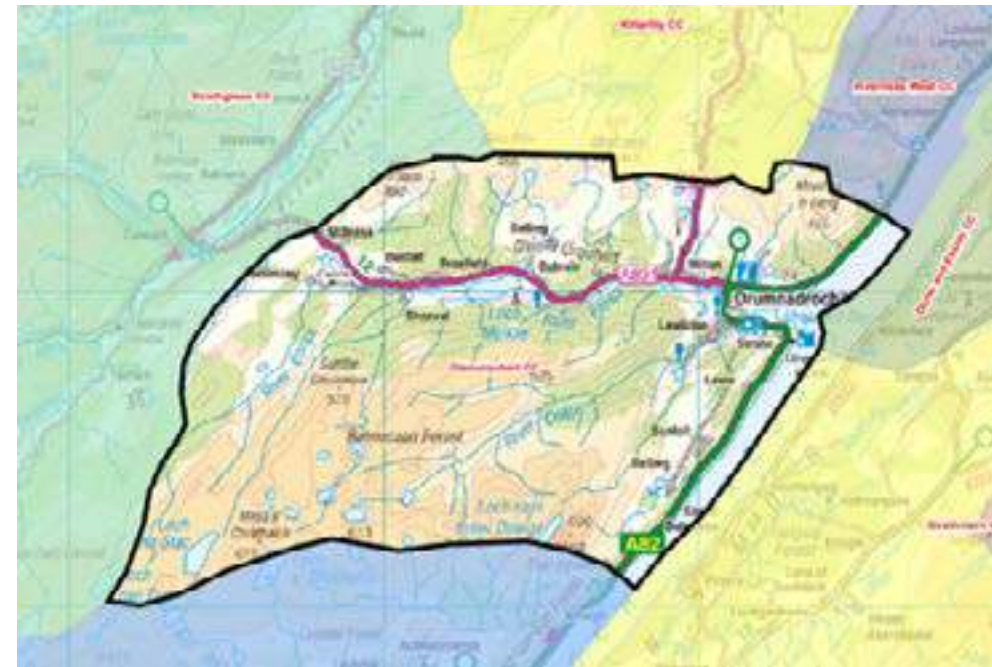
**A**round 2,200 people live in our area (Glen Urquhart Community Council area) as shown in Figure 2 below. Scottish Government sources provide the population figures. When available, the 2022 census will provide the most current data.

**FIGURE 1:** *Population*

<b>DATA ZONE</b>	<b>AREA</b>	<b>POP. IN 2020</b>
1010667	<i>Drumnadrochit to Bunloit.</i> (Note: this figure also includes Abriachan and Lochend which lie outside the Glen Urquhart Community Council boundary.)	666
1010666	<i>Lewiston</i>	991
1010664	<i>Upper Glen— Kilmichael to Corrimony</i>	867
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2,524</b>



**FIGURE 2:** The study area—Glen Urquhart Community Council Boundary



In simple terms, our Plan area has

- \* Fewer young people: 14.7 % of us are aged 0–15 years (Scotland average—16.8%)
- \* Fewer working people: 60.7% of us are within the working age population (Scotland average—63.9%)
- \* More older people, some with dependencies for assistance: 24.6% of us are aged over 65 years (Scotland average—19.3%)
- \* Our ‘dependency ratio’ (the ratio of non-working age to working age is 0.64. (The Scotland average is 0.56.)

Unless things change over the coming decades, our community will continue to have much higher levels of older people than the Scottish average. Older people offer much to our community but tend to need particular services and support. For example, older people were amongst the worst affected by COVID-19 and, on average in Scotland, people aged over 70 live with three chronic health conditions. The number of people aged over 85 will double in the next 20 years. Delivering quality care services

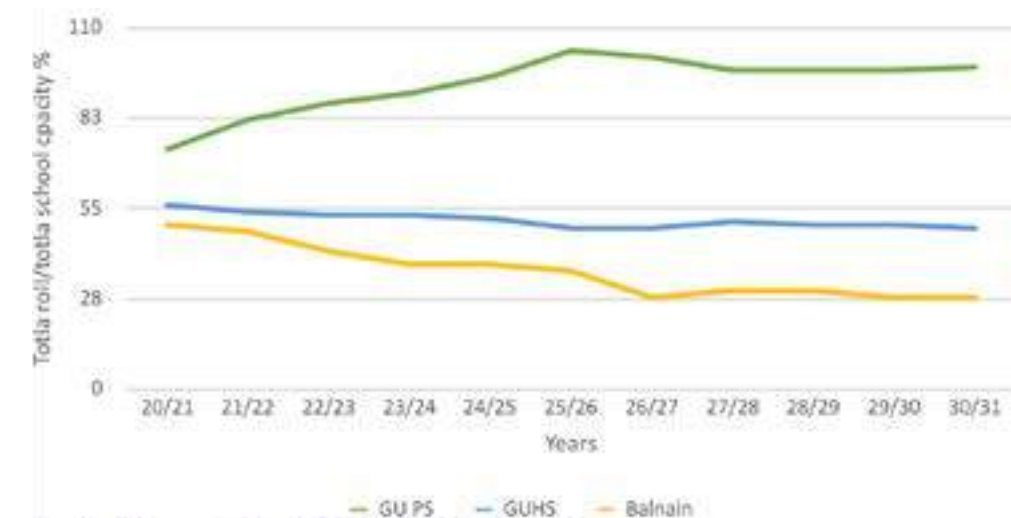
to scattered households in rural areas brings a specific set of challenges.

At the other end of the age spectrum, as Figure 3 below illustrates, Highland Council’s school role forecasts, based on population and housing allocations, for our three schools over the next 10 years indicate that:

- \* Glen Urquhart Primary School will be close to or above capacity
- \* Both Glen Urquhart High School and Balnain Primary School are operating at around 50% capacity, at situation forecast to continue to 2031 and beyond.

**FIGURE 3:** School rolls forecast to 2031<sup>2</sup>

Glen Urquhart Schools—pupil roll/school capacity



Falling school rolls at the High School and Balnain Primary are likely to mean fewer of the young people and families in the area who are key to supporting the workforce.

2. School roll forecasts March 2022 | (highland.gov.uk)

## WORKFORCE AND EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

The Understanding Scottish Places (USP) online platform<sup>3</sup> is the source of 2018 data on the Drumnadrochit and Lewiston workforce (note: this data does not cover all of Glen Urquhart). Drumnadrochit and Lewiston are graded by USP as an ‘interdependent to independent’ village/town (similar to, places like Golspie and Dufftown).

Full workforce and employment figures are not readily available for the entire Glen Urquhart area, and it is possible the COVID-19 pandemic and recent economic drivers have influenced this pattern since the original data was gathered.

However, using the 2018 USP data for Drumnadrochit and Lewiston and applying them to the wider Glen Urquhart area this means that in a Scottish context we have:

- \* A good number of assets ( schools, shops, health facilities) relative to our population size.<sup>4</sup>
- \* Job diversity,
- \* many residents largely travel shorter distances, suggesting locally-based work and study, although some travel longer distances.
- \* People come from neighbouring towns to use some of our assets and to work.

There were 231 jobs in Drumnadrochit in 2018 (29.8% part time, 70.2% full time); between 2009 and 2014 the number of jobs increased by 16%. (People commuting out of the Drumnadrochit economy to Inverness or beyond for work are not included in this total.)

Understanding the types and spread of jobs in our community is important as this influences need and demand for digital connectivity/

3. Understanding Scottish Places—Scotland’s Towns Partnership (scotlandstowns.org).

4. “Drumnadrochit benefits from a range of facilities beyond what would be expected for the size of the settlement and wider Glen Urquhart catchment population” IMFLDP 2022 page 149.

technology and suitable workplaces in the local area. It may also affect the level of spending in local shops by, for example, home workers.

Other indirect factors affected by the profile of a working age population and types of local jobs also affects the availability of volunteers for roles such as caring for dependent relatives or friends or providing emergency service cover for fire and rescue or lifeboat crews. Broadly speaking, the workforce profile is

- \* Skilled manual—30.6%
- \* White collar administrative supervisory and clerical—28.8%
- \* Semi-skilled and unskilled manual—21.4%
- \* Professional and managerial—19.2%

Diversity of jobs is important in our community. Labour demands in sectors are changing and new sectors like renewable energy and other ‘green’ jobs are expanding, often attracting wage and salary levels above the current Scottish average of £26,000.<sup>5</sup>

Significantly, some jobs in sectors like health (care), accommodation (tourism), retail (shops) and agriculture (farms and estates)—which make up 61% of our jobs (see below)—are often paid below the Scottish average wage. With many workers in these lower wages sectors, the spending power our economy and local housing market could be affected.

During the consultation process, issues like Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic were given as reasons why staff and skill shortages were occurring in the hospitality trade, in particular in early 2022.

The USP data suggests a diverse sectoral workforce. (Sectors are defined by UK industrial sector classification<sup>6</sup> which does not specifically identify tourism.)

- \* Health 29%

5. Earnings in Scotland: 2021 | Scottish Parliament.

6. UK Standard Industrial Classification of Economic Activities—Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk).



- \* Accommodation 20%
- \* Transport 16%
- \* Education 10%
- \* Retail 9%
- \* Construction 6%
- \* Agriculture 3%
- \* Mining and quarrying 2%
- \* Property 2%
- \* Manufacturing 1%
- \* Information 1%
- \* Business admin 1%

### WHERE DO OUR WORKERS LIVE ?

USP data also suggest three in five locally-based jobs are filled by people living in Glen Urquhart. The other two in five jobs are filled by people travelling into Glen Urquhart from elsewhere. Out of the total number of people in the Drumnadrochit work force, two in five of them commute to work elsewhere.

### SKILLS AND EDUCATION

People in our working population are slightly better qualified than the Scottish average.

- \* No qualification: 21.9% (Scotland 26.8%)
- \* Standard grade or equivalent: 24.5% (Scotland 23.1%)
- \* Higher grade or equivalent: 15.5% (Scotland 14.3%)
- \* HNC, HND: 10.7% (Scotland 9.7%)
- \* Degree or higher professional qualification: 27.4% (Scotland 26.1%)

### MIGRATION

Our community profile is constantly changing. Exacerbated by COVID-19, we are seeing increased mobility and migration within and to our community, including work and lifestyle migrants. In 2022 and beyond, folk will want to return or move to Glen Urquhart. People (recent graduates, for example) who grew up in Glen Urquhart and who moved away for education or to build a career now wish to return. This appears to be down to quality-of-life values and local connections that can provide childcare and other care services. This type of demand is supported by comments in the consultation.

Some people have accumulated capital and gained employment skills and perhaps wish to raise a family, enjoy rural living or take retirement in a country setting. Decent broadband also means workers using technology and their specialist knowledge can make their home here.

However, housing demand is outstripping supply and, overall, additional growth beyond current housing and services allocations in the Drumnadrochit settlement area is not supported by the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan 2 proposals.<sup>7</sup> We know there are fewer young people. Businesses operating in the care, hospitality and transport sectors continue to report significant labour shortages, and a majority in the hotel sector report they cannot trade effectively due to staff shortages.

Recent arrivals and returners bring different experiences, new sources of income and views but some, attracted by Glen Urquhart's rural setting, are less enthusiastic about changes, especially around developments such as renewable energy infrastructure or, in some cases, larger housing projects.

7. However, it (Drumnadrochit) is not a sustainable location for significant further growth. IMFLD Plan 2022 Page 149.

## NEIGHBOURS

Inverness is one of the UK’s fastest growing cities with a population of nearly 50,000. It is 15 miles (20/35 mins by car) from Drumnadrochit via the A82. People move both ways between the city and Glen Urquhart for work and leisure. Some people cannot find suitable housing in Glen Urquhart and travel into the area on a daily basis.

## VISITORS

We continue to be a popular tourist destination—apart from 2020–21—with over one million visitors coming to our area every year. This means that there are roughly 450 visitors for every resident. Drumnadrochit is the most visited part of Glen Urquhart.

Glen Urquhart is mostly a ‘transient’ visitor destination, and many people visit for the day or are passing through the area heading elsewhere. Overnight stays are, frequently, just one or two nights.

Visitor numbers at Urquhart Castle, managed by Historic Environment Scotland were 547, 518 in 2019 (up 12.4% from 487,291 in 2018). Jacobite Cruises reported 325,210 visitors in 2019, a 2% increase from 2018. Similar numbers, approximately 450,000, are reported for the Clansman Hotel complex. Visitor numbers during the COVID-19 pandemic period 2020–2021 are not yet fully reported but are likely to be much lower.

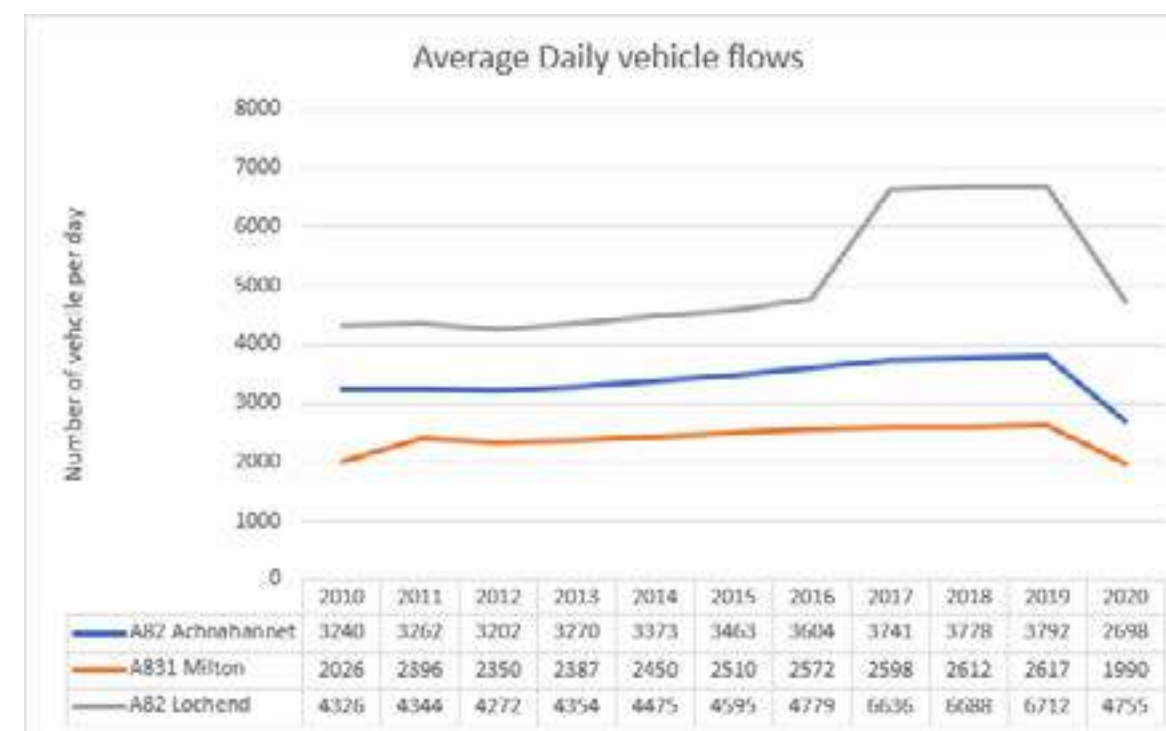
2022 is already seeing a significant uplift in numbers but not to levels seen in 2019. Urquhart Castle is deploying an advance booking ticket arrangement for the first time. Currently, the effects of the pandemic, cost of living crisis, and the present recruitment struggles by tourism businesses along with their ability to compete internationally on price all raise questions over Glen Urquhart’s longer-term economic reliance on a tourism sector vulnerable to national and international events.

## TRANSPORT

Figure 4 shows the increase in traffic over the period 2010–2020 (until the COVID-19 pandemic struck). The A82 trunk road through Drumnadrochit sees an annual average of over 3,000 daily vehicle movements (with well over one third being HGVs, buses and ‘white vans’), while almost 2,000 daily vehicle movements are recorded on the A831 through Milton and Balnain towards Cannich.

In 2022, traffic levels appear to be rising again after a fall due to the pandemic. A return to 2019 levels of traffic, as shown in Figure 4, seems likely but high fuel costs for private and commercial users may suppress growth in vehicle movements, at least in the short term.

**FIGURE 4: Average annual daily vehicles flows on our local roads (Dept for Transport)<sup>8</sup>**



8. Map Road traffic statistics—Road traffic statistics (dft.gov.uk).

**FIGURE 5: The local travel choices of survey respondents. One or more options could be selected**

CATEGORY	PERCENTAGE
Cycle	11
Motor bike	1
Other	1
Private car/van	51
Public transport	8
Walk	28

The information in Figure 5 is taken from responses to the Community Action Plan survey and confirms that the private car is the most popular choice, by some margin, of those who answered this question. It appears that journeys by public transport, foot and cycle are popular (when considered in total). Frequency and journey length are not reflected.

Bus is the only choice of public transport. Bus Service 17 currently offers four (40 min) daily services to and from Inverness (Monday–Friday) to Drumnadrochit and Balnain, with three services on Saturday and none on Sunday. There are no later evening services.

The Citylink Service 919 Inverness to Fort William passes hourly each way through Drumnadrochit until early evening. The Citylink Service 917 Inverness to Portree offers four service daily through Drumnadrochit each way. This gives 20 scheduled services on weekdays, 13 on Saturdays and six on Sundays.

**PLACE**

***The land***

Glen Urquhart is around 230 sq km in size. Much of the area is uplands

and is dominated by commercial forestry or moorland (with peat). The hills make up the catchments for two flood prone rivers—the Enrick and the Coiltie which enter Loch Ness through Drumnadrochit. (Drumnadrochit has experienced over 22 major flood events since 1818.) The Drumnadrochit Flood Protection Schemes aims to reduce the risk of flooding and provide protection for 35 residential and commercial properties.

The climate and biodiversity emergency are making their impacts felt in rural areas in Scotland through ‘unprecedented’ destructive effect of unpredictable weather events (flood, fire, wind) such as Storm Frank in 2015, Storm Arwen and multiple others in 2021/2022. Summer 2022 has delivered record-breaking temperatures. These types of events look set to occur with greater frequency, and we need to prepare for them as the risk is increasing and recovery time from their more destructive effects can be long. Steep ground tree management work above the A82, for example, is designed to lower the risk to road, power lines and fibre optic cabling infrastructure.

Like much of rural Scotland, the ownership of large areas of Glen Urquhart is in the hands of a small number of people. Historically, the Glen became home to several smaller owner/occupier farmers as the main Seafield estate was broken up. This contributed to the development pattern we see today. Much of the remaining land is divided into a few larger estates now managed by a mix of private owners, Forestry and Land Scotland and some NGOs like the RSPB.

Post war, agriculture and forestry management income has relied heavily on public subsidy. In 2022, public subsidy levels and outcomes are shifting from direct support from livestock and crops more towards environmental improvements, especially in marginal areas like much of Glen Urquhart. Private funds for activities such as rewilding and carbon management are increasingly influencing how land is used, while climate change and energy security priorities may lead quite rapidly to further renewable energy developments. Our community may see several new

large onshore wind turbine clusters being installed alongside extensions and ‘re-powering’ of existing provision over the next decade.

### **Social conditions**

Including our community, the Scottish Government divides the country into about 7,000 geographical areas or data zones and gathers annual statistics (income, employment, education, health, access to services, crime, and housing) for each. These variables are combined to show how well each data zone is performing. Glen Urquhart is covered by three data zones. All 7,000 data zones sit in a ‘league table’ where 1 means the most deprived area and 100 the least deprived area.

In 2020, the Drumnadrochit to Bunloit data zone scored 52.7, the Lewiston data zone scored 58.1 and the Kilmichael to Corrimony data zone scored 69.8. Glen Urquhart scores above the national average in terms of income, employment, education, health, and crime. The map in Appendix 3 shows our community as, overall, being significantly less fragile compared to other parts of the Highlands, but the other map in Appendix 3 shows much poorer housing affordability which was also identified as a key issue in the Community Action Plan consultation process.

Relative to the rest of Scotland we are not a deprived community, but we do have some social challenges. These include:

- \* Access to services and affordable housing are below average and are highlighted in the consultation.
- \* Local water and sewerage capacity is constrained and additional investment to increase capacity is not programmed.<sup>9</sup>
- \* Poor broadband connectivity outside the main settlements.

We also know that beneath the high-level statistics there are people in our community who do experience ill health, isolation, and low incomes. These are our more vulnerable people, and they need our support.

9. IMFLD Plan 2022

Comments from the Community Action Plan consultation illustrates the challenge:

*‘I’m desperate to buy in Drumnadrochit but I just can’t afford it. I’m a single parents living at home with my parents. I have money saved up to buy property with a mortgage, but I’m constantly outbid by those coming from outside of the village to live. I’m worried that 23 houses at affordable prices isn’t enough for the village.’*

*‘A care home is desperately needed in our village along with an adequate care at home service.’*

### **WE ARE CONNECTED TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD**

This Community Action Plan was commissioned in late 2021 during the COVID-19 control measure. In spring 2022 the UK has seen sudden and massive economic shocks with inflation and cost of living rises hitting us all. This is likely to make existing inequalities worse. Further price increases are anticipated into 2023.

We are facing a cost of living rise unparalleled for over 40 years. The 10%+ increase forecast in inflation will reduce real public sector spending and public service provision. The Scottish Government five-year financial plans show a significant tightening on public spending, meaning smaller budgets for Highland Council and other public bodies. UK economic growth in 2023 is predicted be worse than almost all other G20 countries.

On the property front, the average house in Glen Urquhart cost £253,256 in late 2021<sup>10</sup>—ten times the average wage—way above the Scottish average house price of £207,778—and prices may rise yet further. Fuel poverty will affect a large proportion of households,

10. Zoopla.



especially in the older, harder to heat, properties common in the Glen Urquhart housing stock.

Local jobs could be affected. HIE's April 2022 Business Panel survey for the Highlands and Islands,<sup>11</sup> includes Glen Urquhart businesses and showed while 43% of businesses were striving for growth, overall confidence has dipped. Amongst food and drink and tourism businesses, core to our business base here in Glen Urquhart, 98% had concerns about rising costs, particularly energy and fuel. On the upside, businesses want to use more local suppliers which could be beneficial to future community growing projects.

Our technology and broadband/phone connectivity needs to improve. Due to geography, Highlands and Islands businesses will become more dependent on technology than elsewhere in rural Scotland. The HIE Business Survey showed that more than four in ten businesses were adopting low carbon technologies and investing in premises and more than seven in ten were actively moving towards low carbon ways of working.

At community level, we are likely to see rapid, large-scale, and unprecedented change to the way our homes, energy, transport, land, goods, and services need to function in order for Scotland to reach our Net Zero target by 2045.

Our community priorities and needs may change quite quickly, often due to factors beyond our direct control. While services delivered by the Highland Council and other public bodies are shrinking, more is being asked of communities, volunteers and of the third sector organisations. We may have to adopt new ways of working and seek new and progressive sources of finance as traditional sources of public funding become increasingly constrained.

11. Survey shows Highlands and Islands business resilience—*Business Insider*.

## WE HAVE ALREADY ACHIEVED MUCH THROUGH OUR COMMUNITY ACTION

We are a well-motivated capable community; over the past two decades volunteers and staff working with a range of community bodies have already achieved much.

**The Glen Urquhart Care project (GCP)** was incorporated in 1995 and includes:

- \* a day care centre and, 2019,
- \* 12 new supported housing units, owned by GCP and allocated to local people.

**GU Child Care Centre** was established 2002 and currently:

- \* occupies premises rented from the Highland Council at Glen Urquhart High School,
- \* offers nursery services and out-of-school breakfast and holiday clubs for over 35 children,
- \* employs fourteen staff including a manager,
- \* would like to find new, larger, premises.

**Soirbheas** (whose catchment area is defined as the Community Council areas of Glen Urquhart and Strathglass) was established 2010. It has two Development Officers, and its services include:

- \* four grant programmes, with over £500k distributed since 2014, in grant funding for over 75 projects including food, apprenticeships, housing, heritage, energy, social enterprises.
- \* research, studies, directories, reports and publications with topics covered including:

- ◇ health/wellbeing 2015,<sup>12</sup>
- ◇ energy 2018,<sup>13</sup>
- ◇ transport 2019,<sup>14</sup>
- \* a befriending service,
- \* paths and walking projects.
- \* Community event and activities,
- \* development support days.

**Corrimony Community Wind Farm** has been operational since March 2013 with an installed capacity of 11.3MW. Soirbheas receives the community benefit from this scheme.

**GURCA** was established in 1947 and changed to a two-tier SCIO in 2017. It employs a Development Officer (a three-year post appointed in 2022). Its activities include:

- \* public hall renovation project which won grant support for roof replacement,
- \* ownership of various assets including the public hall (2018), Blairbeg Park (leased to Glen Urquhart Shinty Club on a 100-year lease) and the Loch Ness Hub,
- \* Markets on the Green, fireworks events, children’s parties and the ‘Light up the Glen’ Christmas initiative.

**Glen Urquhart Community Council’s** role includes:

- \* being a statutory consultee on number of areas including planning, and licensing matters,
- \* campaigning on local issues including roads, drainage, speed limits, and broadband provision.

12. Research Report—Needs of the Elderly and Vulnerable, Including Young People in Glen Urquhart & Strathglass (soirbheas.org).

13. Microsoft Word—Drum LEP July 2018 FINAL.pdf (soirbheas.org).

14. REP\_1907\_Transport-Feasibility-Study-for-Glen-Urquhart-and-Strathglass.pdf (soirbheas.org).

Membership open to all residents of Glen Urquhart, with elections taking place every four years. Open public meetings are held monthly in Balnain, Blairbeg and Craigmonie.

**Loch Ness Hub Limited** was established in 2020 as a Community Interest Company. Its activities include:

- \* the refurbished hub building (shop with artisan crafts and goods, toilets, bike hire, ticket sales and bookings, information) leased from GURCA as anchor shareholder,
- \* digital signage system with real time bus schedules,
- \* motorhome service point,
- \* baggage transfer service,
- \* transport and active travel partnership with Soirbheas,
- \* EV people carrier to be purchased for community use,
- \* ambitions to develop slow tourism.

During 2020/2021 and into early 2022 the joint response from community-based groups to the COVID-19 pandemic was remarkable.

In 2022, we have over 30 active volunteer-run organisations in the local community together with many businesses, private estates, NGOs, schools and public bodies. (See appendix 4 for details).

## PART 5

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*What you told us  
about the eight themes  
we consulted on*

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**D**uring the Community Action Plan consultation process, we asked you to comment under eight themes agreed by the steering group as being the key areas relevant to future community action:

1. community,
2. getting around,
3. health and wellbeing,
4. housing,
5. heritage, sport and culture,
6. our local environment,
7. mobile and broadband connectivity,
8. our local economy.

#### **THIS IS A SHORT ANALYSIS OF WHAT YOU TOLD US**

**a)** We have a diversity of views about most community issues. This is especially challenging in our community where we live in scattered settlements and have widely different needs and service levels. Competing and sometimes contested views of a place are a normal part of the fabric of any place or community, but at times we are not always sure of what is planned or proposed.

**b)** We are broadly positive about living in Glen Urquhart in 2021/22 and like the community/village feel and our environment.

**c)** We are a little confused at times about the community bodies and their roles and responsibilities and would like better communication, such as a newsletter. We value the efforts of volunteers and know events and projects would not happen without them, but we are less keen to volunteer ourselves.



**d)** Most of us want a redeveloped public hall which is appealing, warm and attractive with more social events and activities and meeting spaces. A few of us want a new hall on a different site.

**e)** We really want to get around on foot and by bike, but we don't feel safe using the current provision and paths don't go where we want to go—particularly to Loch Ness. We agree with the *2019 Glen Urquhart and Strathglass Transport Feasibility Study* findings around poor provision of low carbon travel choices and options. Community transport is something we would generally support but most of us still rely on our cars.

**f)** In Glen Urquhart, we think it is difficult to reconcile competing claims for rights over housing. Some of us report a chronic shortage, others are concerned with over-development. Housing allocation to rent or buy remains a burning issue with our young folk. We know further new housing is coming and without growth the viability of some services can be questionable, but growth also brings pressures on existing services, our greenspace and village culture. The old shop site got a few mentions with a preference for 'low rise' affordable housing.

**g)** The pandemic has changed our patterns of activities from homeworking and self-employment to childcare and travel. Two of our community groups looking after young and old in our community both report financial pressures and possible deficits.

**h)** We like our new health centre but many of us feel it is underutilised and we would like to see more 'visiting' health services in the village such as a dentist, an optician, foot care, mental health, and wellbeing support services.

**i)** We value our culture and heritage which, alongside sports like

shinty, give our community roots. Some of us see shinty as sometimes 'overshadowing' other team sports and we feel more could be done with 'outdoor sports' on the water, the hills and in the forest. Others amongst us feel that our culture and heritage are insufficiently 'showcased' to both residents and visitors.

**j)** Whilst we like our formal sporting and play space some of us would like more 'informal' facilities like a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) we didn't have to book.

**k)** We are really split on broadband. Just under half of us are content with our current provision. Young people were most concerned with broadband availability and speed with over four in ten saying it was too slow. A minority of us really struggle to run our businesses or study with low speeds available making some lives difficult. Some of us even have to go to Inverness to make a video call or have to apologise to guests who cannot get online. Mobile phone coverage is better but there are still some 'not spots' we would like removed. We feel that both broadband and mobile phone coverage are essentials of modern life.

**l)** Many of our tourism businesses are taking a more sustainable approach and have the support of most of us. But a small minority think that tourism is becoming more than an inconvenience and that is unsettling our capacity to live out the routines of everyday life. Some of our young people question tourism as a career choice and housing for tourism staff is in short supply.

**m)** We are generally not impressed with the provision of 'green' services like recycling/repair facilities, growing space and composting, and would like the community to act on these shortages.

n) We can see major change in our landscapes, with allocation of government subsidy and support payments in favour of carbon management/rewilding. Some of us are sceptical but most of us want to try to address climate change and we would like land managers to better explain their intentions to us.

**A KEY QUESTION FOR OUR COMMUNITY ARISING FROM OUR ANALYSIS IS:** what is the community role within a vibrant place with housing and community service needs that is also a popular tourist destination and a location for farming/sporting estate activity/commercial forestry and rewilding enterprises?

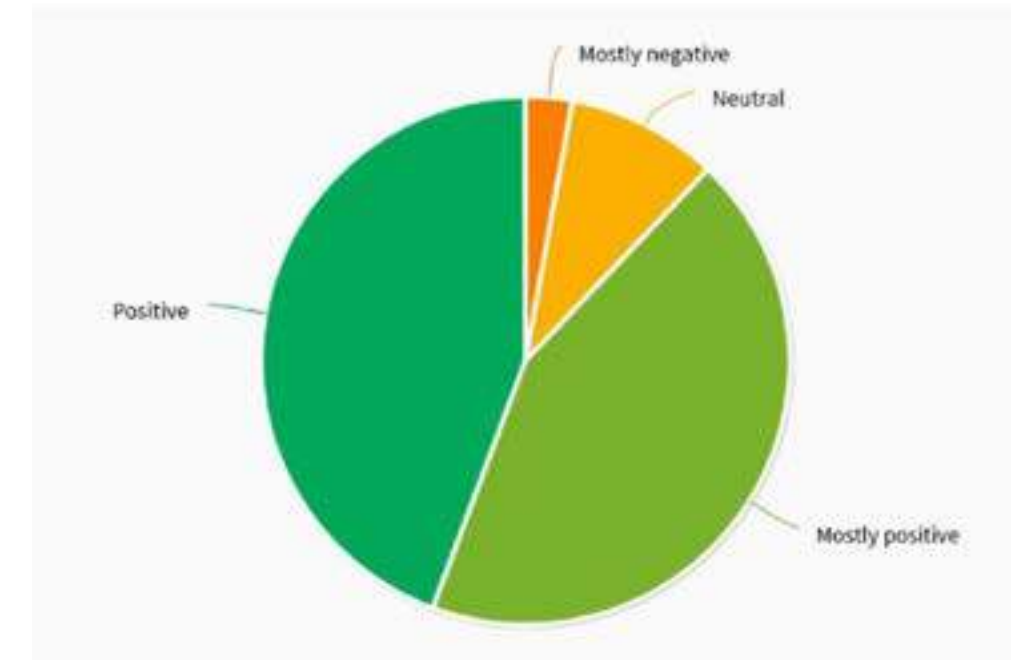
### A MORE DETAILED ANALYSIS OF WHAT YOU TOLD US

The pie charts under each of the themes show what you told us as a community. Strengths, challenges and tensions that were mentioned in the comments and during the wider consultation are summarised.

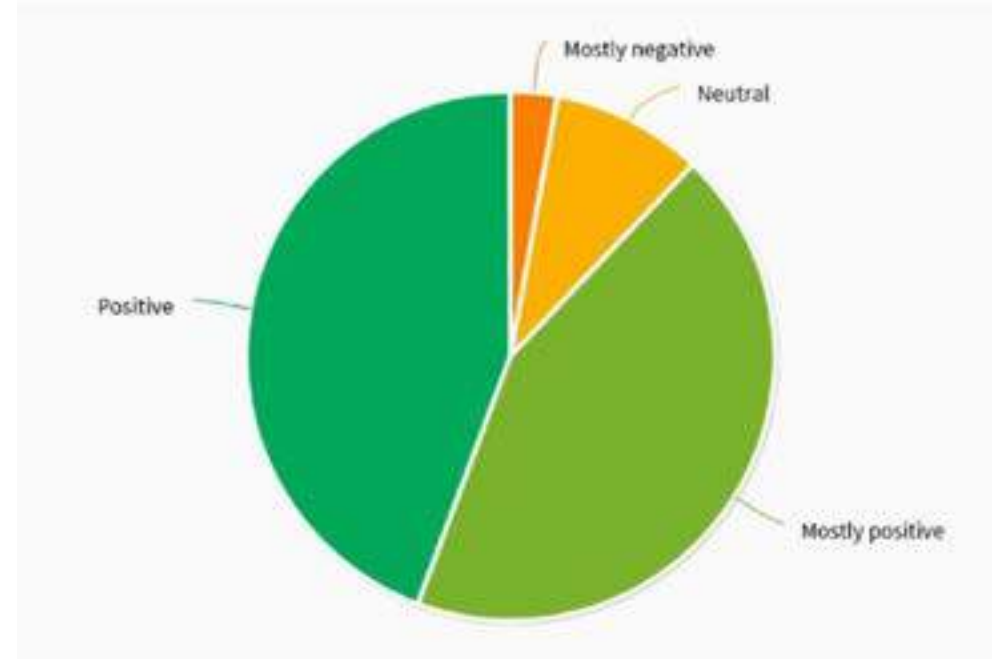
A small selection of the 500 individual comments, aspirations, concerns and expectations posted by people who participated in the consultation are included 'as written' for each theme.

## 1 COMMUNITY

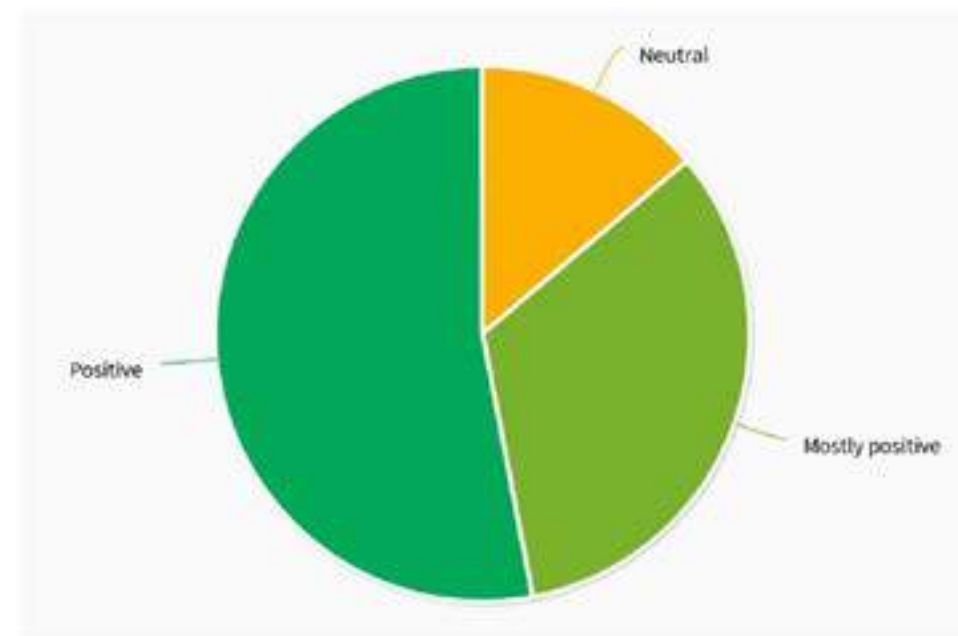
We asked you about your quality of life in Glen Urquhart—and most of you said that you are positive or mostly positive about your quality of life living in Glen Urquhart.



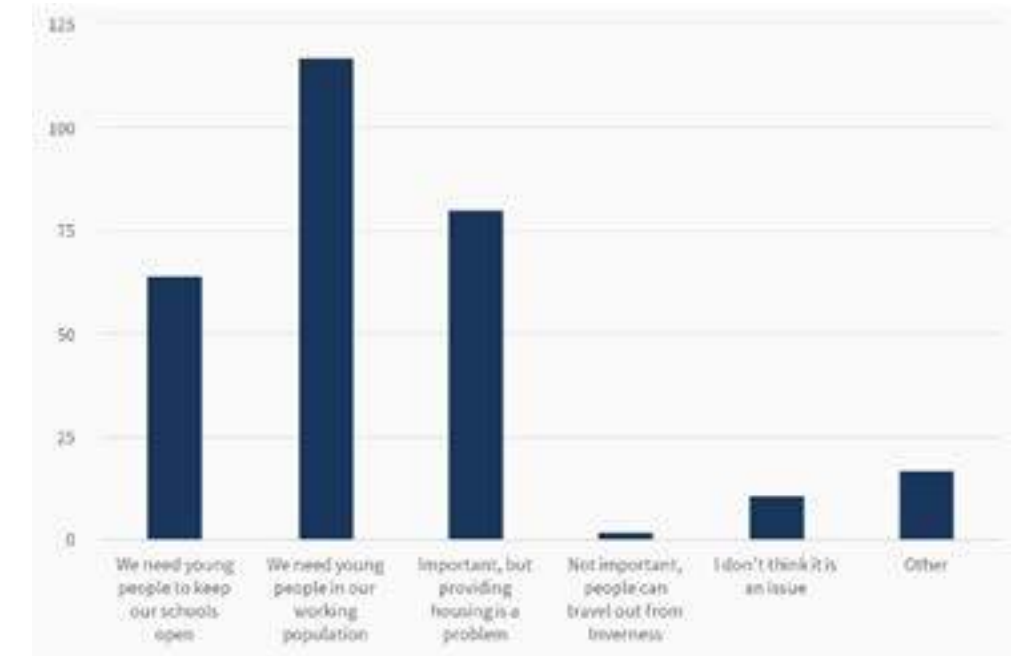
We asked you if the community should own more buildings and land where facilities can be provided. A large majority of you are positive or mostly positive about more community ownership



We asked you if the community should do more to encourage young and working age people to live in Glen Urquhart. An overwhelming majority of you are positive or mostly positive to this approach.



When we asked you why you feel this way, you said:



**Strengths:**

- \* Friendliness of the community,
- \* environmental quality,
- \* positive sense of place.

**Challenges:**

- \* Community body identity and roles,
- \* finding community volunteers with time and skills to provide services and activities and (a) ensure good governance, (b) support actions, projects and on-going viability,
- \* community body identity, profile and communication with residents,
- \* viability and availability of resources to support community assets,
- \* need less reliance on short-term public funding and grants,
- \* concerns about loss of key services such as the Post Office.

**Tensions:**

- \* Tensions between community growth and levels/variety of services available locally,
- \* many people like the ambiance of the existing village hall and would like to see it refurbished while others highlight the challenges older buildings have along with the lack of parking,
- \* despite the presence of nearby Abriachan and other community-owned woods, expressions of support for community woodland ownership are currently modest.

**A selection of your comments:**

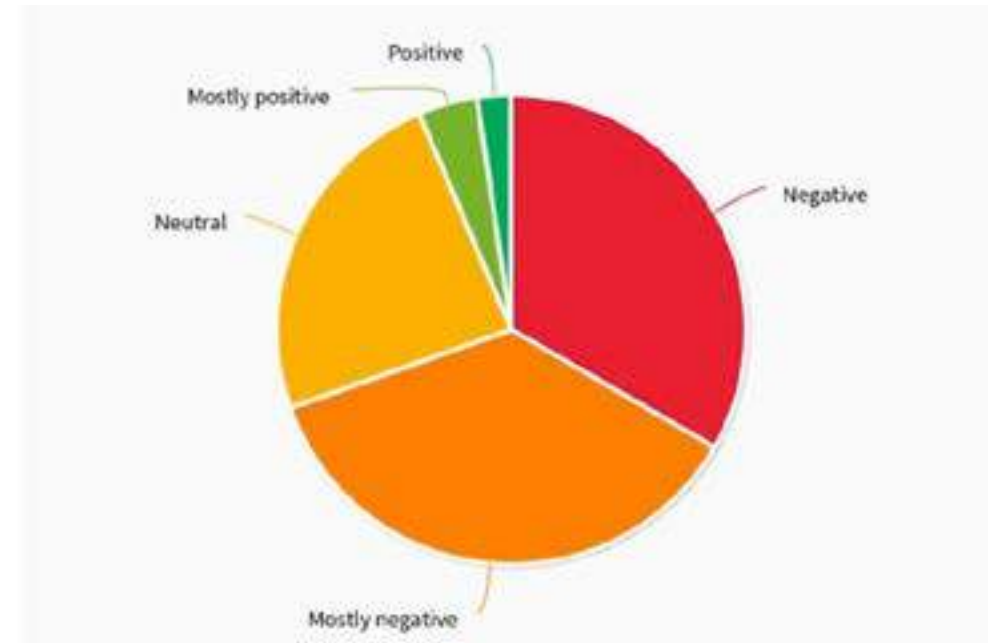
- \* 'Community owned shops and business. The acquisition and development of community land.'
- \* 'The proposed renovation of the village hall is a hugely important project. A warmer and better equipped hall, with a more appropriate layout (as proposed) is essential to allow expansion of community led activities.'
- \* 'Refurbishment of Village Hall ... a gathering place for the community ... Youth Centre ... our youth are missed out badly in the village.'
- \* 'I'd like to see Village Wardens in Drum to look after the common spaces, clear snow from pavements in winter, cut grass and look after planted areas, etc. I think Highland Council would give some funding to this as some activities are statutory duties, but rest should be local salary funded by community money.'
- \* 'And I think there isn't enough for youngsters to do outside school. There is no youth club so unless they are in shinty club then they can get bored and into trouble! Other activities for them would be positive.'
- \* 'I think we should own the woodlands that are up for sale as they are ancient. Real affordable housing is needed but priority should be local. Not selling to the highest bidder and building on flood plains.'

I think keeping the village feel is important. New estates aren't what is needed. We don't have the infrastructure at the school or on the roads. Our school is a good one with wonderful open space which helps with mental health and physical health. Filling that space with non-permanent classrooms changes the feel of the school and the reason it is a good school. New buildings for the community are great but we have some great halls here.'

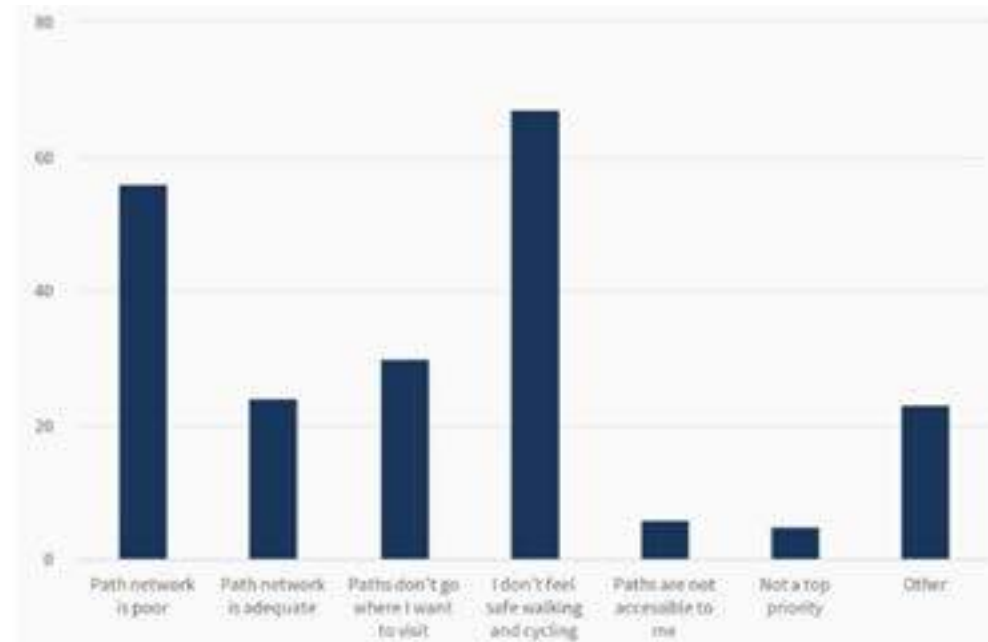


## 2 GETTING AROUND

We asked you about the ease of getting around Glen Urquhart without using a car. A large majority of you returned negative or mostly negative responses.



When we asked you why you feel this way, you said:

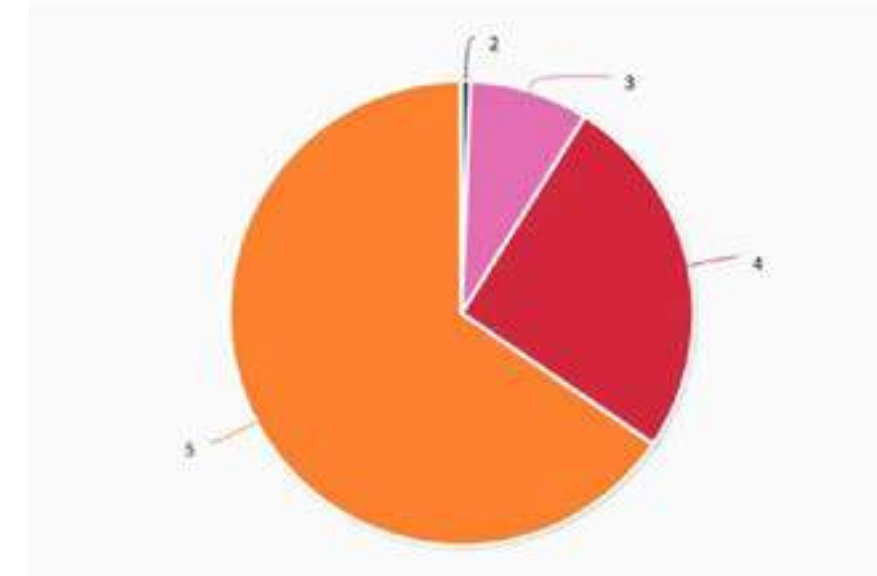


## WHAT YOU TOLD US ABOUT THE EIGHT THEMES THAT WE CONSULTED ON

We asked you to rate the importance you gave to linking all our communities and key sites such as the loch shore and attractions by safe routes suitable for all users.

1 = unimportant, 5 = very important.

An overwhelming majority of you said such links and access are important or very important.



### Strengths:

- \* People enjoy and value the surrounding countryside,
- \* more people want to walk and cycle,
- \* there are 20 scheduled daily bus services to Drumnadrochit.

### Challenges:

- \* Agreeing suitable routes,
- \* year round, children must be able to walk and to cycle safely to school,
- \* providing safe, segregated routes to encourage more people—especially women, children, and people with disabilities—to use active travel,

- \* conflicts between drivers and cyclists needs to be addressed if more people are to be encouraged to cycle,
- \* capital costs, especially on work related to A82 where road design and topography make changes difficult,
- \* bus services are limited up the Glen to four per day. Fewer services operate at the weekends, especially Sundays, and there are no services in the later evening. Stops are mainly limited to the A82 and there are ‘last mile’ gaps issues and a lack of accessible vehicles. For some, the current service restricts access to employment and opportunities to access services and spend on retail and leisure—especially the evening economy.
- \* Place-making priorities for Drumnadrochit in the IMFLDP 2022 include consolidating and improving active travel accessibility to the village centre.

**Tensions:**

- \* The A82 is a long-standing issue. It is getting busier every year.
- \* It’s unsafe for people to use some routes. There is a road with 60mph speed limit between key locations and settlements,
- \* parents ask their children not to ride their bikes or even walk in some locations as they are concerned about their safety,
- \* landowners are concerned about greater formal access provision and implications of littering and maintenance/liability costs.

**A selection of your comments:**

- \* ‘Bus services that are more regular. Also bus services Saturdays and Sundays. At present the 17 does not run at all on Sundays.’
- \* ‘Community-run bus service. The bus service timetable is atrocious. If they ran a bus service from Inverness to the castle and back perhaps taking in Culloden in the summer months, it would make a packet. It should be every half hour ... perhaps electric buses?’

- \* ‘New cycle/walk paths. Safer routes to schools to allow children to walk to and from school safely. Transport options available for those wishing to use Balnain Primary from Drumnadrochit with links to out of school club.’
- \* ‘Suitable development with improvement of paths, horse and cycle routes directly connecting the village with forest trails in Glen Coiltie, Creag Nay and Glen Urquhart for easier and open access would be a huge advantage.’
- \* ‘I would really like to see the community working to create a pedestrian ‘greenway’ around the edge of Drum that would connect the village and the loch (all year, not just when it hasn’t rained in a while!), potentially to the castle too. Something that would be good for locals but would also tick boxes for tourists. It could connect with the harbour too, thus negating the need for minibuses taking tourists there for cruises. For us to be at the heart of Loch Ness and yet not to have reliable access to the loch just seems crazy to me.’

NOTE: Similar comments were submitted to the IMF Active Travel Plan consultation 2021 which supported the local development plan process.

- \* ‘There should be a new cycleway/walkway/disabled route to run alongside the loch (below the A82 not in line with it) to provide safe access to/from Inverness and Drumnadrochit so locals can cycle to work. The Great Glen Way is fantastic, for mountain bikes.’
- \* ‘Footpaths to school need to be improved. Nothing in Cannich direction. Very poor in Drumnadrochit direction. If upgraded and extended all the way to Drumnadrochit would be used for commuting, shopping, leisure by bike (especially now more folk have electric bikes). Huge tourist benefit as well to link with lower forest tracks.’
- \* ‘The A82 is horrendously unsafe for cyclists, it’s a real barrier to people who may want to cycle commute from Drumnadrochit/Abriachan etc. And for leisure cycling—I got up at 4.30 just to avoid the traffic on the



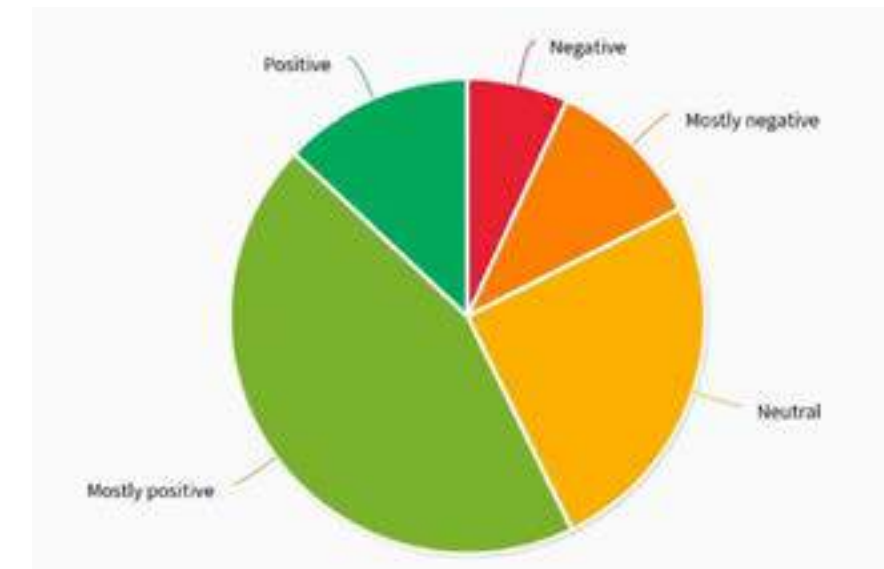


A82 to cycle around Loch Ness. Cycle tourism would really benefit from a cycleway here too.'

- \* 'The A82 is very popular with routes such as Lands' End–John O'Groats LEJOG). I can only describe this road as "terrifying" when cycling it. Traffic is too fast, roads too narrow and there is simply no cycling facilities. There are no minor roads to take as an alternative.'

### 3 HEALTH AND WELL BEING

We asked you about your satisfaction with the current provision of health, social and care services. Over half of you were positive or mostly positive about the current provision.



#### **Strengths:**

- \* New health centre is appreciated.

#### **Challenges:**

- \* there is some evidence of marginalised groups in the community who can face struggles in terms of their ability to access and use social space and contact with other people in terms of housing, care, mobility and employment. These don't appear to represent a distinct demographic although they may share challenges associated with age, health and financial security.



- \* there is significant demand for other health service being made available locally—mental health counselling, dental, optician, physio and podiatry services were all mentioned.
- \* The pandemic has greatly impacted on the care sector. Staffing is an issue and the loss of fund-raising events over two years means restricted budgets in 2022/23 for GU Care Project and GU Childcare Centre.

**Tensions:**

- \* Although there is a new health centre facility, some people are concerned that local health services have not really expanded to meet local needs,
- \* appointments in Inverness are difficult and costly to attend.

**A selection of your comments:**

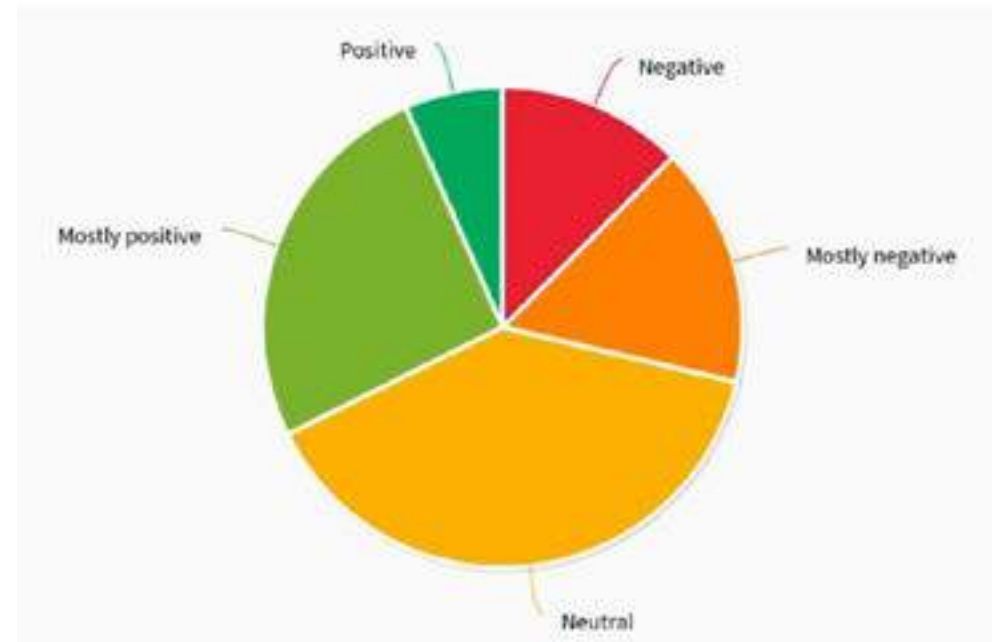
- \* ‘My 22-year-old son has a mobility disability and learning difficulties, it would be lovely to have somewhere he could go to meet with other special needs young adults. Even if just once a week especially as currently the social care system does not have enough resources to help him have social contact.’
- \* ‘I would like to see a respite/residential care service in the Glen. When the Care Centre was built many of us thought it would mean that folk needing full time care would no longer have to leave the Glen. Being admitted to care homes far from friends and family at a most vulnerable stage of your life is not good.’
- \* ‘More facilities in a central location. Land south of the A82 and the Health Centre offers potential to achieve that.’
- \* ‘Access to GP and advanced nurse practitioner. Access to health screening such as heart disease prevention.’
- \* ‘The lack of help for those needing counselling is appalling. Dental and optical services would also be beneficial for those who struggle with commuting.’

- \* ‘There is no overnight help for the elderly and a 24/7 care home would be very welcome. Currently, people needing care have to go to care homes in Inverness or Muir of Ord or even further away. If they have partners, family and friends, it means they are cut off from them, especially if partners are too frail to use public transport. This is a devastating situation for those going into care leaving the Glen and for those left behind.’



**4  
HOUSING**

We asked you about the current provision of housing. A similar proportion of you were negative and mostly negative as were positive and mostly positive, with a slightly larger proportion taking a neutral position. This suggests that there is a significantly divided view on housing provision in Glen Urquhart.

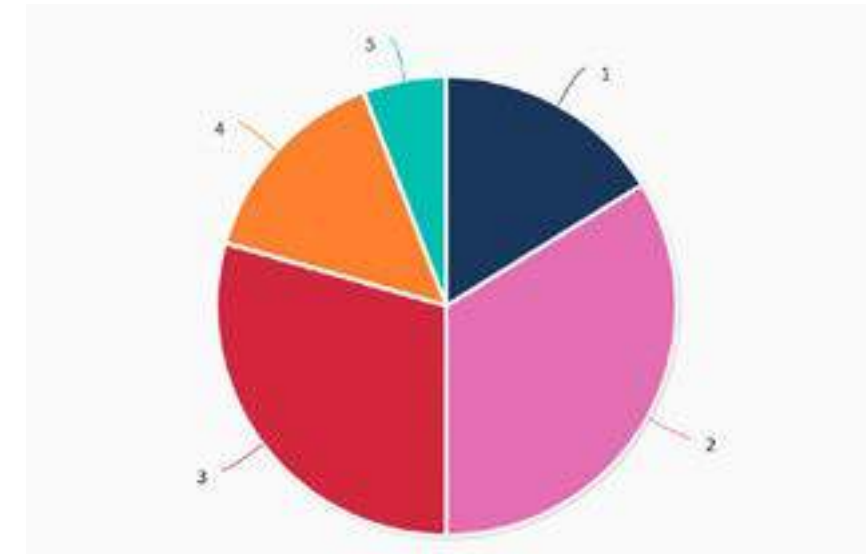


**WHAT YOU TOLD US ABOUT  
THE EIGHT THEMES THAT WE CONSULTED ON**

We asked you about the balance of new developments and existing homes and facilities in the community and if local living and working needs are supported.

1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree.

Half of you said you strongly disagreed or disagreed, more than a quarter were neutral and under a quarter agreed the balance is about right.



**Strengths:**

- \* Recent development of additional housing,
- \* Village character.

**Challenges:**

- \* Springfield development will be the last big development,
- \* Major challenges for those unable to find suitable housing,
- \* No central registers of numbers and mix of tenures of affordable housing in Glen Urquhart.
- \* Insufficient affordable house for young people and key workers,
- \* Ground conditions, difficulties getting services and infrastructure in,

and the amount of land under farming tenure make it difficult to select suitable small-scale housing sites beyond the larger allocations in Drumnadrochit,

- \* Place-making priorities for Drumnadrochit in the IMFLDP 2022 include consolidating the village by supporting the completion of its central development sites.

***Tensions:***

- \* Major contention for those who dislike scale, style and allocation of new housing,
- \* The scale of the IMFLDP2 area delivers only extremely broad place statements. This makes the process for selecting housing sites in a collaborative way outside the Drumnadrochit settlement allocations very challenging. Housing proposals that come forward tend to be driven by individual choice and market forces rather than wider community benefit,
- \* Growth versus services provision,
- \* Over-development and loss of village character,
- \* Springfield development will add to demands on community facilities and services like the public hall, paths and recreational space, and will bring more cars.

***A selection of your comments:***

- \* ‘There has to be an adjustment in the provision of housing for local people. There is not enough affordable housing. Some of the accommodation is being used by Air BnB making the shortages even worse. Former local authority housing has been sold and is being used by summer visitors. The rates for second homes should be increased to discourage investors and speculators from buying in the area.’

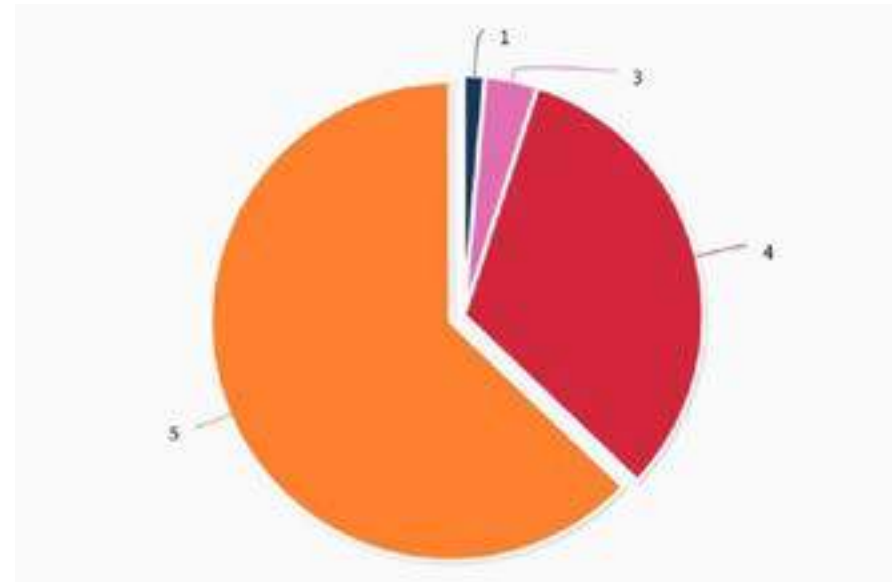
- \* ‘Building more houses just upsets the dynamic of the village with more people coming in. This puts an additional strain on existing services and spoils the environment.’
- \* ‘Too many houses are priced beyond local young family abilities to purchase; older people moving from urban environments or buying for investment (holidays) can pay more.’
- \* ‘Too many high-end houses and not enough accommodation being supplied to locals. One woman advertised accommodation to rent—she stopped counting after more than 40 people applied. Another person sent round a questionnaire about housing—at least 100 people replied who were looking for accommodation. The situation can only become worse when more young people start looking for accommodation.’

## 5 HERITAGE, SPORT AND CULTURE

We asked you how important it is to conserve and improve Glen Urquhart's cultural heritage.

5 = very important, 1 = unimportant.

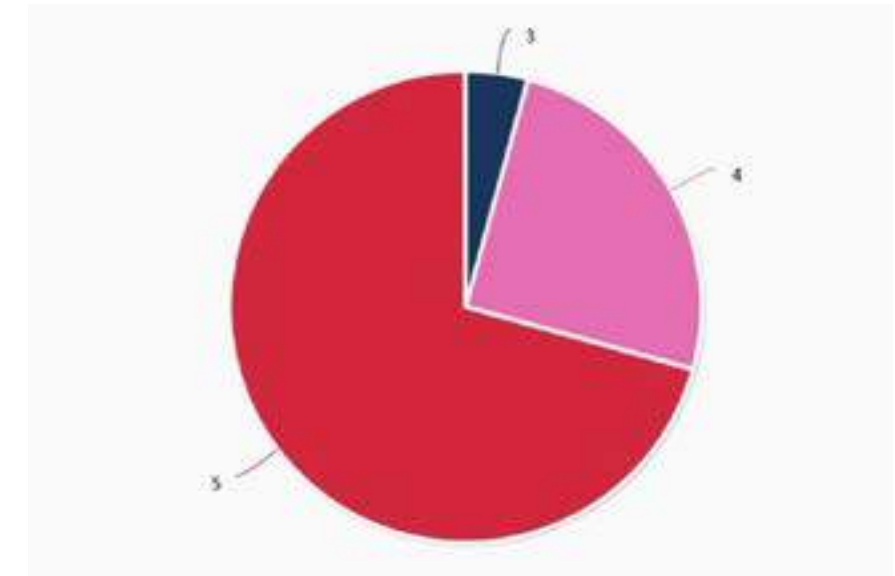
By a huge majority you told us that you think it is very important or important to conserve and improve our cultural heritage.



We asked you how important it is to provide quality, affordable opportunities for sport and recreation.

5 = very important and 1 = unimportant.

By a huge majority you told us that it is very important or important to provide quality, affordable opportunities for sport and recreation.



### **Strengths:**

- \* Shinty is a key stone in our heritage with high youth involvement,
- \* Highland Games important to history and reputation,
- \* Huge amount of history and heritage to be showcased.

### **Challenges:**

- \* Decrease in participation in activities during the pandemic, with a slow recovery in numbers,
- \* Range of clubs and activities exists but they experience challenges around finding and retaining leaders (club officer bearers) and qualified instructors,
- \* Access to facilities, equipment storage and insurance can be an issue,

- \* More could be done to promote the area as an outdoor pursuits location. Loch Ness is a missed opportunity for water sports.
- \* Provision of more traditional music, piping, dancing.

**Tensions:**

- \* Too much emphasis on shinty—some would like to see other sports promoted,
- \* Participation in, and celebration of, our culture is tempered by change—as one respondent put it—‘Folk come in large numbers and live in their own bubble’.

**A selection of your comments:**

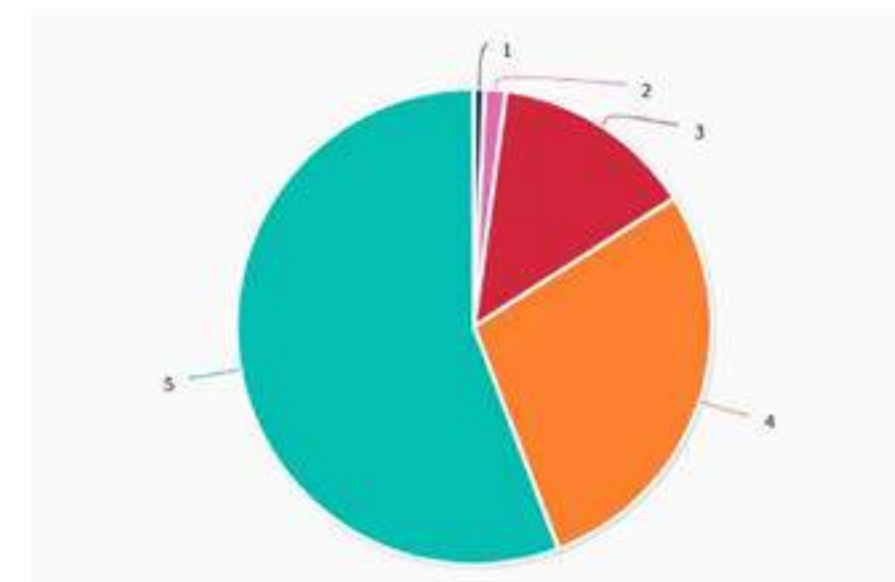
- \* ‘Improved community led sporting facilities—a joint approach to developing facilities at Blairbeg Park for the benefit of all the community (not just shinty).’
- \* ‘Our culture has been swamped and much that was distinctive about the Highlands, e.g. close family ties, Gaelic, and a very strong history, has been diluted. Shinty is very important to the community and is very strongly supported. Gaelic and local history need to be taught in the local schools. Other smaller glens and villages have heritage centres, but not Glen Urquhart.’
- \* ‘High Life Highland’s approach has at times seemed rather institutional—they should seek to support and enable locally run and volunteer-based initiatives.’
- \* ‘Being a shinty focused village there is very little opportunities for other sports.’
- \* ‘There should be a gym for people in the local area and more affordable opportunities to partake in sport. The astro turf isn’t cheap to book and aside from that there is nowhere to partake in any sporting activity.’

**6  
LOCAL ENVIRONMENT**

We asked if you agree that a wider range of people in the community should be involved in, benefit from and support nature.

1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree.

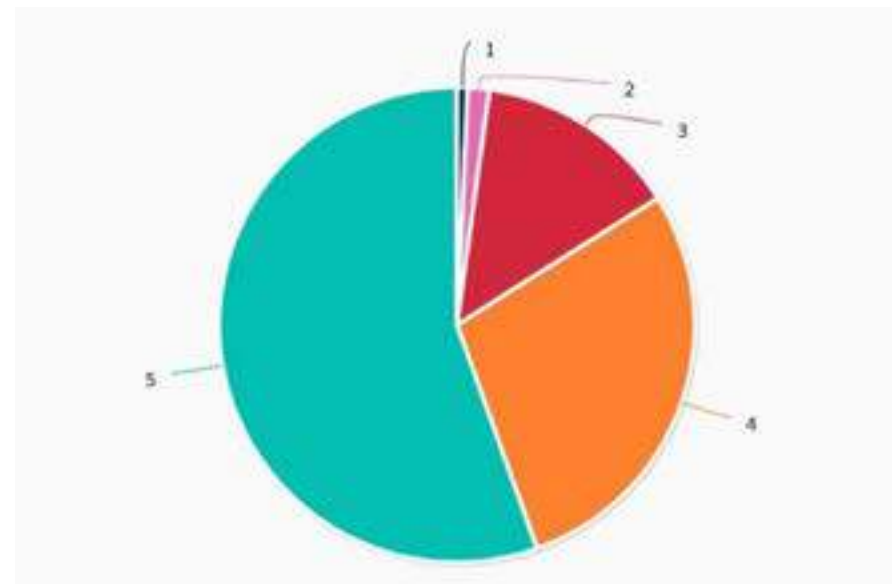
A very large majority of you strongly agreed or agreed that a wider range of people should be involved in, benefit from and support nature in Glen Urquhart.





We asked further asked you about the importance of the community working more closely with farmers, estates, crofts and other land-based businesses to protect our nature and to manage climate change impacts. 1 =unimportant, 5 = very important.

A very large majority of you said it is very important or important to work more closely with Glen Urquhart farmers, estates, crofts and other land-based businesses to protect our nature and to manage climate change impacts.



**Strengths:**

- \* The ways land is owned and used shapes the kind of economy, environment and communities that exist in Glen Urquhart.

**Challenges:**

- \* Green spaces in Glen Urquhart provide many benefits to the community—environmental, social and economic, but they often seem to be taken for granted,
- \* Green spaces need investment to continue to provide these benefits but there is little evidence to demonstrate public perceptions of benefits

- and how green space opportunities can be more innovatively exploited,
- \* Place-making priorities for Drumnadrochit in the IMFLDP2 2022 include preserving the green spaces and green corridors in the settlement and enhancing their role as active travel routes.

**Tensions:**

- \* The concept of ‘rewilding’ as a foundation for investment by the community is not widely understood,
- \* Engagement with the community by farmers, estates, crofts and other land-based businesses is not as good as it could be, and people are generally unaware of ownership patterns, responsibilities and intentions.

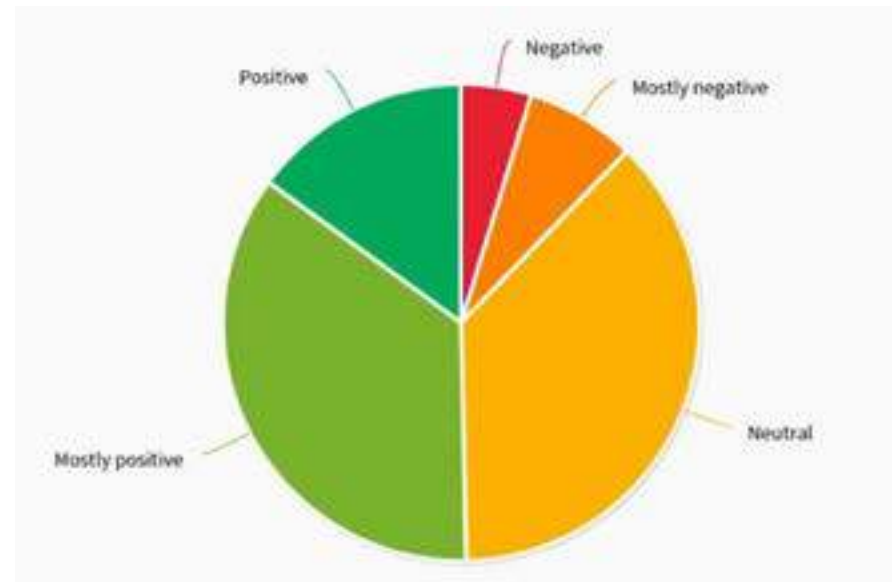
**A selection of your comments:**

- \* ‘Path network and community ownership of green space to facilitate this community development of old shop site in collaboration with shinty and community.’
- \* ‘Community growing project.’
- \* ‘Preserve peat bogs, replace single species with mixed species forest blocks. Reforest.’
- \* ‘Ideas such a local yard for the disposal and collection of timber would seem to have no “downside” in my view. Similarly with a local composting site. This brings me to the opportunities for allotments, community gardens and the like. Ownership of land is overly privileged I believe and a more communitarian spirit would ultimately benefit all residents within Glen Urquhart.’
- \* ‘Landowners involved in locking carbon and rewilding should seek to engage with volunteers and the tourism sector to foster local support and a sense of involvement in promoting land use change and eco-tourism as a potential growth area.’

7

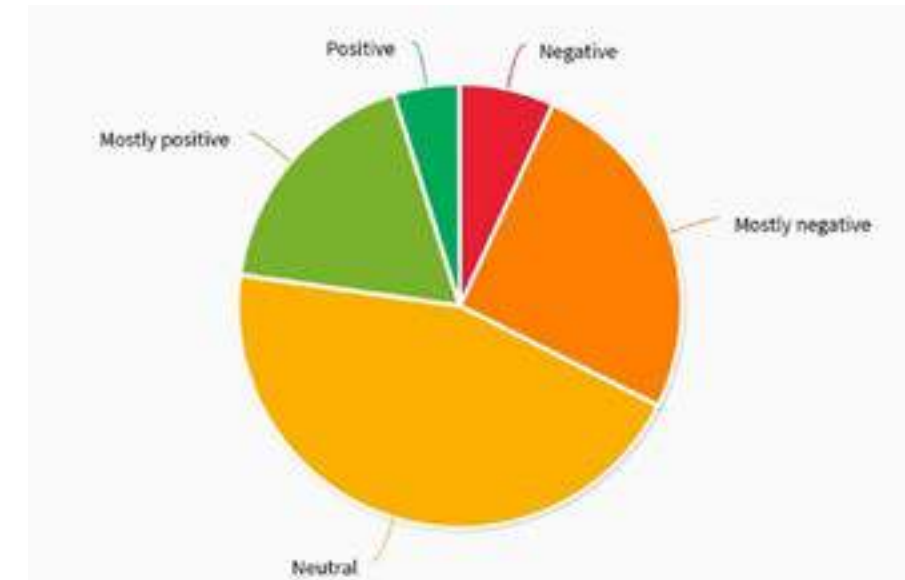
**OUR LOCAL ECONOMY AND JOBS**

We asked you about how you feel about the tourism part of our economy expanding further. Half of you are positive or mostly positive about tourism. A significant minority are neutral, and a small proportion are negative or mostly negative.

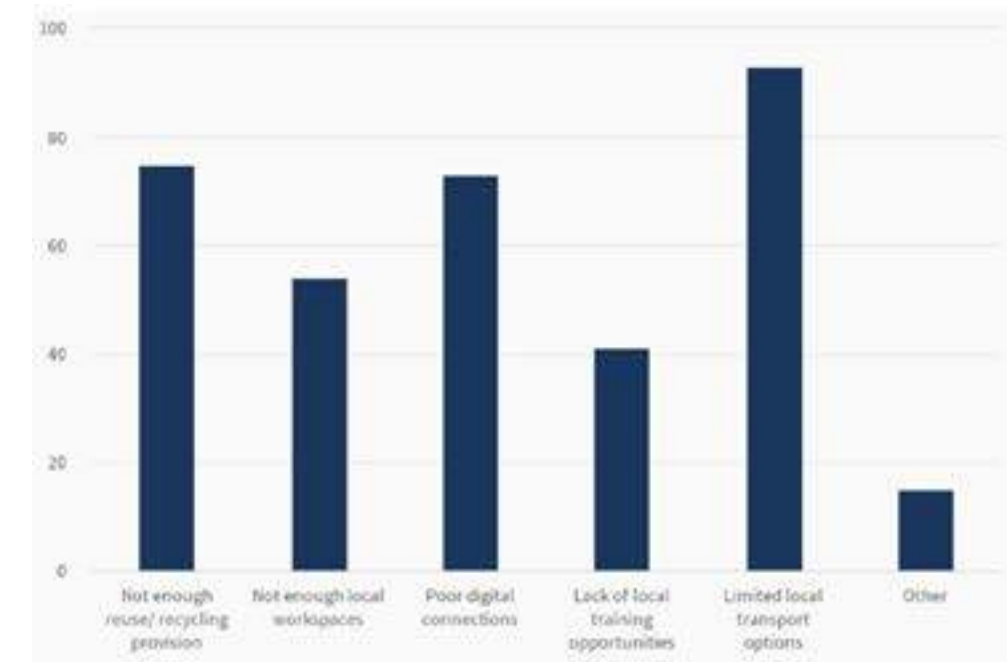


**WHAT YOU TOLD US ABOUT THE EIGHT THEMES THAT WE CONSULTED ON**

We asked you about the support available in the community to deliver stronger and greener economic benefits. We gave you some examples—home working, recycling, and low carbon. Under a quarter of you were positive or mostly positive, with more than a quarter being negative or mostly negative about the support currently available.



You told us that you felt that the following were issues:



**Strengths:**

- \* People are proud of where they live,
- \* Most visitors want the same things as residents despite cultural differences (clean, safe, green, choice, public transport etc),
- \* Most residents see tourism as an opportunity, as long as it is properly managed as it generally gives them better services.

**Challenges:**

- \* Long way to go on 'green' working practices and opportunities, which is worrying given climate and biodiversity emergencies.
- \* Residents must have a voice in reimagining tourism where they live. Businesses, attractions and tourism promotion/development bodies such as *Visit Inverness Loch Ness* need to listen—but are they listening?
- \* Residents expect local tourism leaders to work with them on addressing issues like amenity and environmental care, infrastructure, housing and tourism jobs that pay liveable wages and job security,
- \* Local premises and business facilities are not well-suited to local business needs,
- \* Place-making priorities for Drumnadrochit in the IMFLDP 2022 include securing an improved range, quality and location of commercial facilities.

**Tensions:**

- \* It is imperative that people marketing and managing tourism in Glen Urquhart understand issues like staff housing and provision of basic facilities such as public toilets, paths and car parks,
- \* Destination marketing (Nessie!) has powerful direct and symbolic impacts on Glen Urquhart leading to highly localised pressures.

**A selection of your comments:**

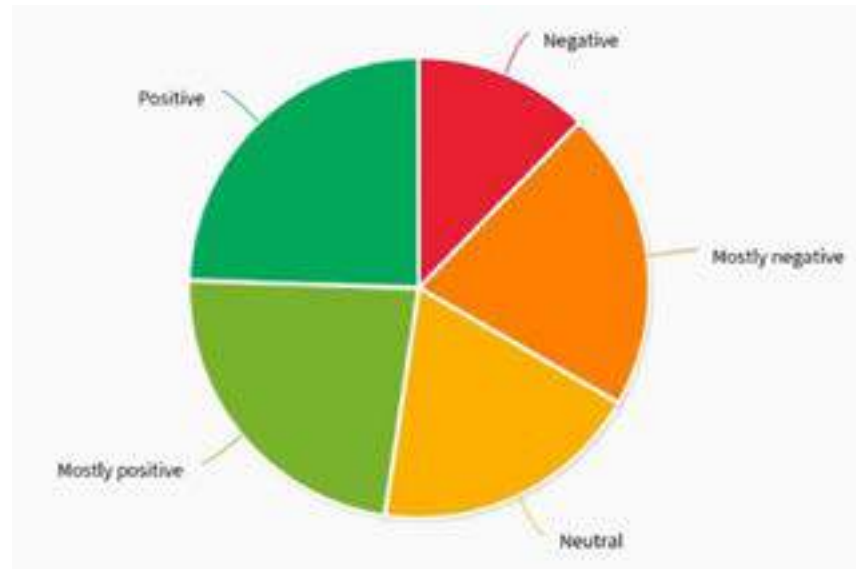
- \* 'Increased encouragement for local businesses to provide apprenticeship opportunities.'
- \* 'We have two rivers, and we should with a combination of hydro power, wind and solar create a self-sufficient town and avoid disastrous poverty (due to) fuel dependence. We need to be in control of our resources.'
- \* 'The local plan makes provision for small workshop/business spaces adjacent to the post office—this should be implemented as soon as possible in an environmentally responsible way.'
- \* 'Whilst tourism is an important source of income, it needs to be carefully managed—currently there is so much accommodation but little to do in the area so many people travel outside of Glen Urquhart for work and shopping. It would be nice to see more retail in the area that is not food or souvenir based—a space for local artists and crafters to exhibit.'
- \* 'I'm lucky to have a home where I can work but would be good to have office space available that local people could use as they wished with digital connections. Of course, sustainable jobs would be good!'
- \* 'More visitors will impact on our carbon footprint. Perhaps we can become an innovative environmentally friendly tourist destination. We already get many walkers and cyclists, but can we encourage environmentally positive tourists by rewarding those who travel by their own steam or on public transport rather than by car?'



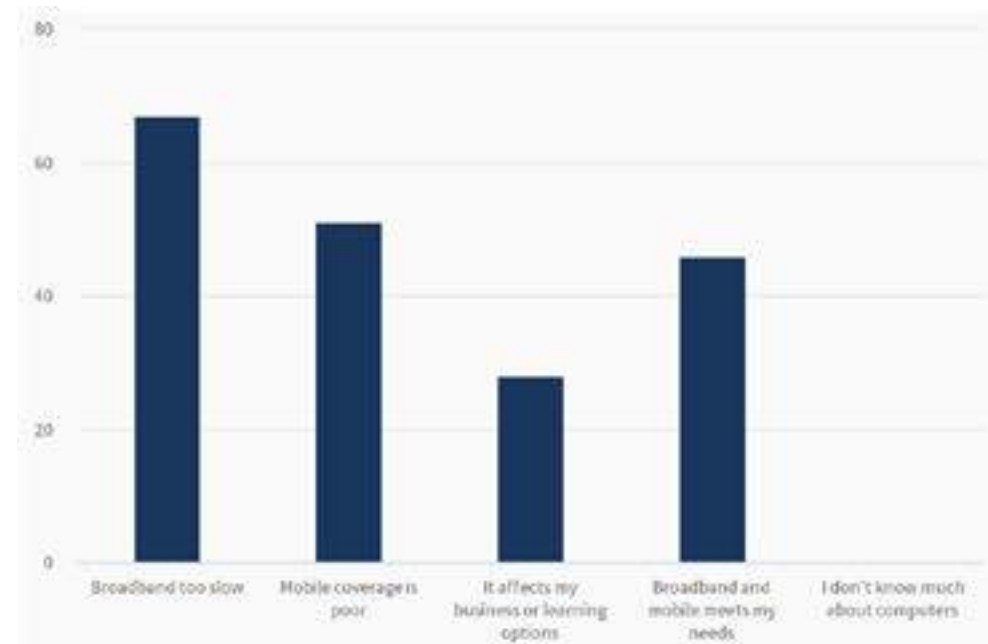
8

YOUR BROADBAND AND PHONE

We asked you if the current broadband provision in Glen Urquhart meets your needs? Almost half of you were positive or mostly positive about provision but a significant minority were negative or mostly negative.

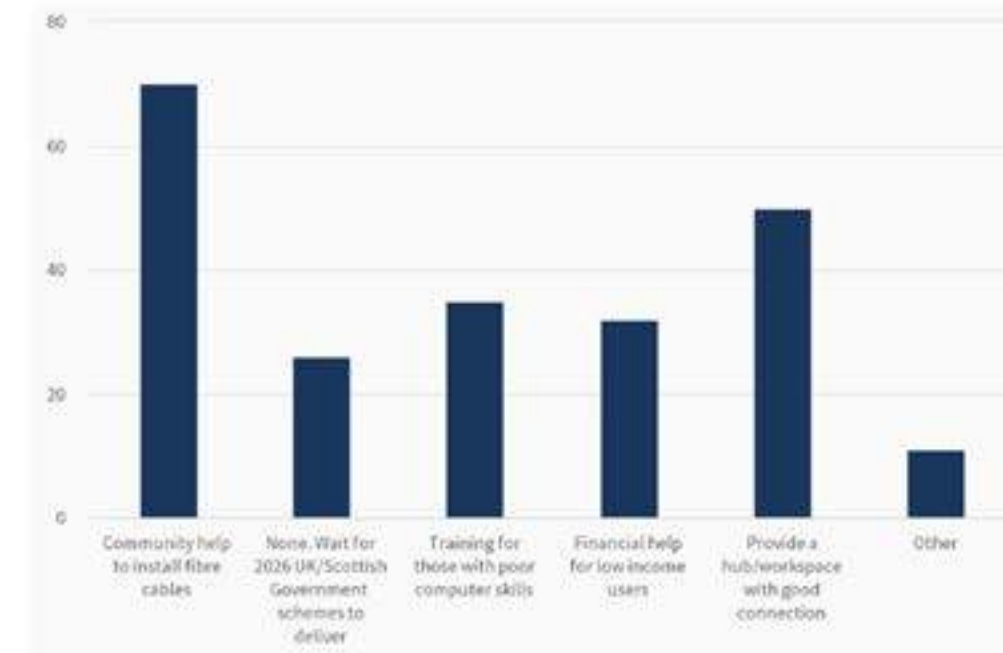


When we asked you to comment further you said:

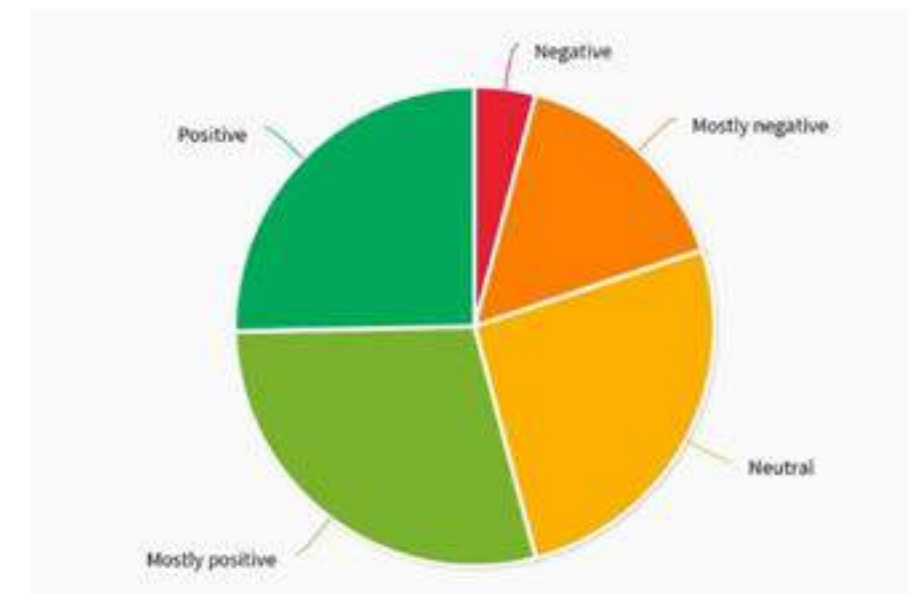


WHAT YOU TOLD US ABOUT THE EIGHT THEMES THAT WE CONSULTED ON

When we asked what should be done by the community to get faster and more reliable broadband, you told us you wanted:



We asked you if the current mobile phone provision in Glen Urquhart meets your needs. Over half of you were positive or mostly positive about mobile provision but a minority (under a quarter) were negative or mostly negative.



**Strengths:**

- \* Current provision suits some residents (a majority) with significant positive survey responses.

**Challenges:**

- \* Major challenges and impacts for those with poor service,
- \* Provision and reliability is patchy dependent on location—some areas are very poor for both broadband and mobile,
- \* Every house should have a fibre connection.

**Tensions:**

- \* Not everyone is able to use/comfortable about using technology,
- \* there are worries about connectivity if power goes off,
- \* there is an impact on tourism businesses when guests are unable to connect to mobile phone or broadband.

**A selection of your comments:**

- \* ‘Scottish Government has a commitment to improve broadband in rural areas and our MSPs should be lobbied to ensure they honour this commitment.’
- \* ‘Our broadband connection can be erratic, particularly in bad weather. This is a big disadvantage for home workers and might discourage them from being part of the community. Working from home was difficult at the start of lockdown due to the internet being unstable, even with a mobile router.’
- \* ‘30Mbps is not anyway good enough, we need at least 100Mbps in order to future proof for businesses and be on the same level as the rest of the country. This would be much more beneficial for rural areas and working from home.’
- \* ‘We use Broadway for our broadband as otherwise the broadband

speed over the phone network would be dire and we are only in Lewiston. Fibre would be great.’

- \* ‘All mobile phone providers should have to provide better rural coverage—it ends up that you only have the choice of one or two providers who actually cover this area well, and they turn out to be more expensive. Cost of both mobile and broadband are becoming a major issue to lots of people, not just those on low incomes. Especially as they are now almost a necessity.’
- \* ‘Future problem is that the analogue landlines get switched off 2025/26? Will EVERYONE have access to broadband or mobile by then and what happens during major power outages?’
- \* ‘I have to drive into the office in Inverness if I want to use video calling’.
- \* ‘The digital connections issue is extraordinarily varied across Glen Urquhart but knowing how well it works down the road but not where one lives is of no compensation to those without.’

## ANYTHING ELSE WE SHOULD CONSIDER

### ***A selection of your comments:***

- \* 'There is a missed opportunity here to consider the relationship between sustainability and food security. The focus on buildings as development ignores the potential for employment in agriculture. Technology to improve sustainable farming methods is just as worthy for development as broadband and mobile coverage.'
- \* 'Extend the main car park—we lost several spaces last year—and install more charge points.'
- \* 'Improve the A82 ... it is a disgrace ... potholes, not aligned well, poor curvature in bends and lay-bys for tourists are too narrow and short.'
- \* 'More events in the hall to bring people together and provision of talks on things like saving energy, cooking on a budget etc. Community transport scheme. Ways to encourage younger people to get involved in volunteering and community leadership—this can involve mentoring.'
- \* 'The Bunloit plans for an estate which is intended to sink carbon—not produce it—while offering opportunities for sustainable woodland craft workshops and affordable housing looks like an exemplar of how local moorland could be managed.'
- \* 'Would it be feasible to consider building low-rise self-contained accommodation for elderly on the site of the old Scotmid building? It's handy for the bus stop, the surgery and the new shops and it has a pleasant outlook?'
- \* 'A community-run Post Office would be a great start, then allotments and community growing space, affordable housing etc. Developments Trust Association Scotland and Soirbheas would be able to help. Let's get Drum back as a community rather than an extension of Inverness.'
- \* 'Keeping the village services open out of tourism season. It is great when various cafés/shops remain open outside of the peak season; it

stops the village feeling dead/lonely in winter. However, it also means locals should support such businesses.'

- \* 'Make an area in the village where campervans/motorhomes can park overnight. These will encourage more to visit, stay and spend in local businesses. Provide an area for them rather than the constant negative 'bashing' that occurs of these visitors because there is nowhere for them to park overnight. The aire system works brilliantly across French villages in attracting tourism.'

## PART 6

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*How we intend  
to respond*

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**W**e have a common desire to protect and develop our community in sustainable ways, but we cannot do everything by ourselves. Some projects are large, complex or extend out of the Glen Urquhart area—creating a safe active travel route along the A82 to Inverness, for example. In order to meet the priorities in our Action Plan, we have identified the different roles and approaches we propose the community should take.

**1**

**RESEARCH AND DATA COLLECTION**

We should develop the capacity to systematically research and gather relevant data and evidence. Data in a useable form empowers communities, strengthens negotiating positions, unlocks funding and identifies trends and risk.

Data collection draws people together, enables them to better identify their needs and contributes to defining priorities and to support more effective lobbying and campaigning. Data helps us to understand how we have progressed over time, to strengthen our identity and distinctiveness and rediscover a collective sense of purpose. Data can also close off unsubstantiated discussions and going over old ground.

At the local level, research also means understanding the current public sector plans, strategies and policies that relate to our community and generally dictate public spending.

**2**

**LOBBY AND INFLUENCE**

Public bodies and public funds have a key role in enabling our community wellbeing and inclusiveness. Our decisions around the priority of local needs can be difficult to implement effectively when key levers like

planning, transport, education, health and finance etc operate from a more central position.

If we better understand public policy and present community views and evidence in support, we can push and lobby our public representatives and influence how our money is spent so that it is used more effectively.

**3  
PROVIDE LEADERSHIP**

Leadership in, for and by the community already takes place through bodies like Soirbheas, GUCC, GURCA, LNH, GCP and the Childcare Centre plus a range of other groups and organisations. Each body has their own objectives, core commitments and priorities but their influence comes from an ability to understand, deliver, and drive social change, not because of any official authority. Uncertainty and a squeeze on resources over the coming years means more synergies and common purposes will be required.

**4  
DELIVER**

Our community is already delivering social and environmental beneficial projects and you have suggested others. There are some things we can deliver at our own hand if we can secure resources and show that the available income exceeds the costs of the social benefit provided. Larger, long-term or more complex projects need sound governance, leadership, and the right resources.

**5  
PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

Much can be gained by partnership working. Some projects will only work as joint ventures. We don't always have the capacity to deliver at scale.

Limits on volunteer time and energy, professional skills, and dedicated resources and the institutional landscape and boundaries make projects like affordable housing, broadband installation and major path builds challenging. Sharing expertise and resources can add immense value and reduce risk to community bodies.

But there are opportunities for partnership working at a local scale too as evidenced during the pandemic. Longer term, resilience in social interactions, energy, food, and transport will rely more heavily on these partnerships.

**6  
RAG AND 'PLAN DO REVIEW'**

RAG (Red/Amber/Green) is clear visual traffic light approach to individual project progress. 'Plan Do Review' is a simple cycle for the continual improvement of our Action Plan. We will review what has happened and what can be learned from the situation. We will address the challenges and any criticism faced first-time round and adapt accordingly. Additionally, we will report publicly on progress towards the Action Plan outcomes with a more detailed review every five years.

**7  
ASSESS THE RISKS AHEAD**

Looking forward 20 years, we know we will face numerous risks. In Figure 6 we have identified some risks to our community that are already evident in 2022 and looked at what we might do in response.



**FIGURE 1:** Risk and mitigation

STRATEGIC RISK	WHAT WE CAN DO
<i>Declining population of working age</i>	Make more suitable housing (affordable and mid-market rent) available for working age people.
<i>A decline in the number of young people</i>	Make available more housing and facilities which are attractive to young people and families.
<i>Reduction in investment in affordable housing</i>	Reduce costs by purchasing/ utilising publicly-owned/ community-owned land and sites for more housing. Seek out more innovative and diverse funding packages eg businesses contributing to worker housing provision.
<i>Unsustainable public transport service</i>	More low carbon transport choices. Reduce travel demand by providing more home working opportunities and essential services locally.
<i>Under-utilised and/or dated assets</i>	Refurbish our public hall and use our publicly-owned land and assets for the common good

and as an enabler for a vibrant, democratic community.

<i>Market forces and service delivery increasingly requiring the highest level of digital connectivity</i>	Investment to deliver higher and more widely available broadband speeds. Increased mobile phone network coverage and competitive choice of providers.
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COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE RISK	MITIGATION
<i>Concerns from non-statutory bodies over available funds and worries over innovation which can include failure</i>	Clearly defined roles with a community mandate and transparent decision making. Identifying interdependencies for maximising resources.
<i>Communication—especially social media</i>	Clear approach to communication and joint messaging with the community.
<i>Attracting volunteers and over-reliance on a small number of key individuals</i>	Training in member roles and advocacy skills in particular, evidence gathering, policy formulation and shaping, lobbying, campaigning, including training about local government and public agency structure and policies and

how to engage with them more effectively.  
 Requirement for new members / member rotation in community organisations to continually provide 'fresh' perspectives.

*Skills and administrative capacities*

Employing professional staff to help deliver projects.

*With only short-term resources and funding, vital long-term community assets can become a liability rather than an opportunity.*

Demonstrating competence and good governance to win confidence of funders.  
 Securing revenue income for community assets.

Unknown risks over the next 20 years are, as the name suggests, difficult to predict. But using experience gained from the pandemic resilience planning is something the community could do collectively.

**EXAMPLE 1  
 PARTNERSHIP WORKING ON RESILIENCE PLANNING**

The impacts of climate change have already been felt across Glen Urquhart, from damage to infrastructure, to disruption of vital services and demands on emergency services. The A82 is vulnerable to serious damage from slope instability, effectively cutting off Glen Urquhart, while flooding from rivers/loch and wildfires can damage buildings and property. The closure of Urquhart Castle due to more rapid or unexpected deterioration of its building fabric is another example.

**EXAMPLE 2  
 LEAD ON SECURING  
 LONGER-TERM COMMUNITY RESERVES  
 TO HELP FUND ESSENTIAL SERVICES  
 OVER SHORT-TERM DOWNTURNS**

In addition to renewable energy community benefits, carbon markets could be a future source of financial reserves for our community assets and service. However, without careful design and meaningful engagement there is a risk that benefits may flow mainly to others while opportunities to build community reserves will be missed.



## PART 7

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*The Community Action Plan—  
making things happen*

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## WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE FOR THE COMMUNITY ?

**O**ur long term vision is for a successful, diverse place, leading to a resilient and distinctive community that is self-directed through enthusiastic, skilled and well supported volunteers and activists.

- 1.** A place that people want to live in, work in and visit and is enjoyed by all through a thriving community that works for people and nature.
- 2.** Inequalities people experience whilst trying to achieve good physical and mental health are removed. Care services for children and the vulnerable are high quality. There is a good balance of affordable and open market homes, not in fuel poverty, to support the local population and new residents and to meet local employment needs.
- 3.** A greener, fairer, and more inclusive sustainable economy that works for all the people of Glen Urquhart.
- 4.** A place where people can easily choose walking and cycling or public transport over the private car, where children can get to school safely, and where local businesses can use more sustainable transport for reliable delivery of goods and services.
- 5.** Local culture, sport and heritage are successfully interlinked with the economy and people's wellbeing.
- 6.** Every resident, organisation and business can access superfast broad band (fibre to premises) and 4G signal regardless of geographic location in Glen Urquhart.
- 7.** A nature-rich and climate-conscious place with improved and more resilient ecosystems.

## WHO WILL DELIVER THE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN ?

Oversight of the Community Action Plan is by the Steering Group and will consist of Soirbheas, GUCC, GURCA and, additionally, the Loch Ness Hub. The Steering Group will meet biannually or more regularly as required, to drive the action plan, agree a pipeline of priority projects and monitor progress.

Open and transparent management structures with clear points of contact, reporting and review systems will give confidence to community members that work is being carried out with their interests to the fore. Navigating communications challenges has its problems as people have different levels of engagement and policy knowledge and understanding.

**Soirbheas** is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status, set up in 2009, to disburse the funds received by the community from operators of renewable energy schemes. Run by trustees, with two members of staff, its overriding objective is to strengthen and support the communities in both Glen Urquhart and Strathglass. Grant funding requests and project proposals must satisfy the charitable purposes of the Trust.

**Glenurquhart Rural Community Association (GURCA)** has been operational for many years and was constituted as a Two-Tier SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation) in 2012. GURCA is registered as a Scottish Charity (SC020223) and its constitution provides Purpose and governance. SCIOs have a legal form, unique to Scottish charities, and GURCA is allowed to enter into contracts, apply for grants and loans, employ staff, incur debts and own property. SCIO status provides its trustees with a high degree of protection against liability. It has 350 members and one part-time member of staff.

**Glen Urquhart Community Council (GUCC)** is a statutory body set up by the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973. GUCC acts as a voice

for the local area, articulating the views and concerns of local people on a wide range of issues of public concern; and making representations to the Highland Council, other public sector bodies and private agencies on matters including planning and licensing applications, and road safety. Volunteer councillors are elected or co-opted by the community—usually on a 4/5 year term.

**The Loch Ness Hub (LNH)** is a community benefit company which puts any profits from its operations, back into the local community. The Hub comprises a Visitor Information Centre incorporating Loch Ness Travel and is a Community Transport Hub.

The trustees (directors) and councillors of these and other community bodies like the Glen Urquhart Care Project and Childcare Centre give freely their own time, energy and expertise in the community interest and are governed in what they can do by charity and company law and Codes of Practice.

Looking forward, new people, enthusiasms and skills will be required so planning for succession in running our community bodies as people retire or step down is essential. The Steering Group will be keen to hear from people who want to be involved.

## WE WILL ALSO LOBBY AND SEEK SUPPORT AND FUNDING FROM OUR MAIN PUBLIC BODIES

Glen Urquhart is served by:

- \* Council area: Highland Council Ward 12: Aird and Loch Ness—four elected members
- \* UK Parliament constituency: Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey

- \* Scottish Parliament constituency: Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch
- \* Scottish Parliament region: Highlands and Islands

**The Highland Council** decides on where our houses are built, how our children are educated, when our bins get emptied, how our vulnerable people are cared for, when the potholes on our streets where we live are fixed, and if the arts, culture and sport will get any support, amongst other things. Highland Council established High Life Highland in 2011 as a charity to deliver their arts, sports, libraries and culture responsibilities.

**NHS Highland** provides our main medical and care services; **Scottish Water** provides most of us with drinking water and wastewater treatment while **Transport Scotland** is responsible for the A82. **Historic Environment Scotland** operates Urquhart Castle on behalf of the **Scottish Ministers (the Scottish Government)** who are also responsible for **Forestry and Land Scotland. Directorates of the Scottish Government** provide our farmers, crofters and land managers and our affordable housing builders with significant levels of grants and subsidies. This income provides local jobs and spending. **Highlands and Islands Enterprise** supports our businesses and our community enterprises.

Regulators like the **Scottish Environmental Protection Agency** and **NatureScot** are responsible for protecting and improving our environment.

The public sector spends millions of pounds each year in our community, employs many people (education and care are big employers locally and provides salaries and pensions) and owns a range of assets (schools, health centres, forests and roads etc). Public bodies cannot prioritise everything and, over the next five years at least, public spending will fall in real terms.

We must be open to new types of joint ventures and partnership models involving community, private and public partners. We need creative ways of involving others and influencing projects partner to

better tackle strategic issues. Community bodies may need to employ more people.

## PROGRESSIVE FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

To finance the Community Action Plan, local groups and partnership projects will seek capital funding from the public sector, charitable bodies, private sector funds and philanthropic donations and contributions. Project revenue streams will be sought from conventional sources such as sales, charges and fees.

Sources of capital funds include the Scottish Land Fund which supports purchase or transfer of community assets generally, up to £1 million. Subject to meeting its priorities, the National Heritage Lottery Fund in Scotland also supports place-based projects (£250,000 to £5 million) and the Heritage Enterprise Scheme. The Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund and other schemes support locally developed, place-based regeneration projects within local communities that help to support and create jobs and build sustainable places.

We wish to use the economic levers available through the Scottish Government, Highland Council (and High Life Highland) and other 'Anchor Institutions' including NHS Highland, Forestry and Land Scotland, education institutions, such as UHI, private sector organisations, and charities to support our community. For example, Council planning policy means applicants may need to agree financial payments towards service and infrastructure provision where there is insufficient community capacity to support future development. These payments are known as 'developer contributions' and are regularly used to support education, transport facilities and affordable housing provision. Guidance is provided by Highland Council policy<sup>15</sup> and community action planning could help to determine priorities.

15. Development guidance—Developer Contributions | The Highland Council



However, we may also need to consider sources of more innovative finance opportunities and joint ventures to support our larger assets and projects. This includes social facilities with ongoing and rising costs but limited revenue generating capacity. Longer term, we need to strengthen our reserves to make Glen Urquhart more resilient to future challenges in the economy and climate and better able to achieve our potential. The *2018 Local Energy Plan for Drumnadrochit* and the *2019 Transport Plan* identified local needs and resources.

The community, through Soirbheas, have experience of negotiating innovative community benefit packages with renewable energy projects. Further opportunities will arise over the coming decade if new renewable energy and low carbon projects in and around the Glen Urquhart area are given approval.

As a baseline, the Scottish Government's *Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits*<sup>16</sup> suggests that project developers deliver £5,000 per installed megawatt to affected communities in addition to wider benefit packages, such as providing local jobs and creating paths for recreation. Other arrangements like shared ownership may also be possible. This is only voluntary guidance and there is no legal entitlement for communities to receive a benefits package from renewable projects. However, some developers go beyond installed megawatt payments. SSE, a Scottish based energy company, operate a Highland-wide sustainable development fund, with priority funding themes around:

- \* creating opportunities for education and employment
- \* empowering communities—long term resilience
- \* sustainable places—infrastructure, biodiversity, heritage etc.

16. Supporting documents—Community benefits from onshore renewable energy developments—[gov.scot](http://gov.scot) ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

## PART 8

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*The way ahead*

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**G**len urquhart has achieved much in recent years, but more is still needed to meet community aspirations. What does taking a strategic approach to changing community planning and delivering the community interest look like in practice? It will include:

- \* Community-supported recovery post-COVID and into an uncertain future,
- \* collaboration and hearing different views in a respectful setting about making our community a better place,
- \* a need to design shared platforms and approaches which add capacity within the community and allow more people to learn about the issues,
- \* change the engagement narrative from one where residents say 'you should' to one where the community says 'together we can',
- \* maintaining momentum and keeping the community engaged,
- \* winning hearts and minds—this really matters if we are to achieve the changes we need to make,
- \* progressive finance,
- \* regular review.



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*Glossary of terms and definitions  
used in the  
Community Action Plan*

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## GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

**20-minute neighbourhoods**—places that are designed so that residents can meet their day-to-day needs within a 20-minute walk or cycle of their home.

**Active travel**—making journeys in more physically active ways, such as walking, using a wheelchair or mobility aid, cycling, or scooting.

**Affordable housing**—defined in the Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) as housing of a reasonable quality that is affordable to people on modest incomes, including social rented accommodation, mid-market rented accommodation, shared ownership, shared equity, discounted low-cost housing for sale including plots for self-build, and low-cost housing without subsidy.

**Biodiversity**—the variety of plant and animal life in the world or in a particular habitat, a high level of which is usually considered to be important and desirable.

**Carbon footprint**—an estimate of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emitted to, or removed from, the atmosphere over a set period of time and is expressed in units of CO<sub>2</sub>e. A carbon footprint of a place refers to the sources within the place boundary and is likely to cover energy in buildings, waste, land management activities and travel but could also include other emission sources. The carbon footprint in Glen Urquhart will be dominated by road traffic using the A82.

**Charitable status**—the legal framework within which charities and the Independent Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator OSCR must operate, as set out in the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005.

**Circular economy**—an economy in which products, services and systems are designed to maximise their value and minimise waste. It

is an all-encompassing approach to life and business, where everything has value, and nothing is wasted. In simple terms, it can be explained as ‘make, use, remake’ as opposed to ‘make, use, dispose’.

**Community adaptation**—the adjustment in our community systems (economic, social, or natural) in response to actual or expected climatic change, to limit harmful consequences and exploit beneficial opportunities.

**Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015**—helps to empower community bodies through the ownership or control of land and buildings, and could facilitate a more local, community needs-based approach to housing needs in some of our communities.

**Community Resilience**—how a community deals with external shocks.

**Councillor Code of Conduct**—for Community Councillors is based largely on the Code of Conduct for local authority councillors and relevant public bodies as provided for in *The Ethical Standards in Public Life etc* (Scotland) Act 2000.

**Cycling by Design**—provides guidance (2021) for cycling infrastructure design on all roads, streets and paths in Scotland.

**Fuel poverty**—if, in order to maintain a satisfactory heating regime, a household would be required to spend more than 10% of its income (including Housing Benefit or Income Support for Mortgage Interest) on all household fuel use.

**Green Improvement District (GIP)**—Improvement Districts, formerly Business Improvement Districts, were launched in 2006. With approximately forty in existence across Scotland, they have a strong track record of delivery over the last ten years. The new model is a more innovative, flexible, and holistic approach, which leverages greater corporate-community-public partnerships, to deliver the ambitions of local businesses and communities. [About Us—Scotland’s Improvement Districts](#)

**Home Energy Scotland**—a network of local advice centres offering free, impartial advice on energy saving, keeping warm at home, renewable energy, greener travel, cutting water waste and more.

**Inner Moray Firth Active Travel Network**—HITRANS identified a future active travel network connecting the main settlements within the Inner Moray Firth (IMF) Region.

**Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan 2 (IMFLDP2)**—sets out the policies and land allocations to guide development in the Inner Moray Firth area over the next 20 years.

**Local Place Plans**—community-led plans providing proposals for the development and use of land. Introduced by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 these plans will set out a community’s aspirations for its future development and the Act says planning authorities should ‘have regard to’ these Plans when forming their own plans.

**Mobility as a Service (MaaS)**—integrates various forms of transport and transport-related services into a single, comprehensive, and on-demand mobility service. MaaS aims to provide an alternative to using the private car that may be as convenient, more sustainable, help reduce congestion and constraints in transport capacity and be even cheaper.

**Mid-market rent**—a form of affordable housing. Tenants generally pay a lower rent than their area’s market rent level, but more than local social housing tenants.

**Natural capital**—the world’s stock of natural resources, which includes geology, soils, air, water, and all living organisms. Natural capital ‘assets’ such as habitats and ecosystems provide a wide range of benefits to human wellbeing, known as ‘ecosystem services’.

**Net Zero**—where the total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions put into the atmosphere would be equal to or less than the emissions removed from the atmosphere.

**R100 programme**—a commitment by Scottish Government to provide access to superfast broadband of 30 Megabits per second to every home and business in Scotland.

**Scottish Land Fund**—a government programme which supports community organisations across Scotland with capital funding to own land, buildings, and other assets.

**Slow tourism**—characterised by reducing mobility and by taking time to explore local history and culture, while supporting the environment and the community.

**Wellbeing economy**—a new economic model that puts the wellbeing of people and planet first. Rather than pursuing economic growth through narrowly defined indicators such as GDP, a wellbeing economy monitors and values more fundamental areas such as health, nature, education, and communities.

**ORGANISATIONS AND GROUPS  
MENTIONED IN THIS PLAN**

**Soirbheas**—see Part 5.

**Glen Urquhart Rural Community Association (GURCA)**—see Part 5.

**Glen Urquhart Community Council (GUCC)**—see Part 5.

**Glen Urquhart Care Project**—the Charity which oversees the operations of the organisation, including the main functions—The Glenurquhart Centre and housing. Their aim is to care for the elderly and vulnerable in the community through the provision of day care at the Centre, housing, and the related services.

**Glen Urquhart Childcare Centre**—offers wrap-around care for children aged 3–13 years inclusive. This includes breakfast club, government funded nursery sessions for 3–5-year-olds, day care, out-of-school clubs and holiday clubs.

**Loch Ness Hub Ltd**—a community benefit company which puts any profits from its operations, back into the local community. The Loch Ness Hub is a Visitor Information Centre incorporating a shop selling local crafts, tickets and tours plus Loch Ness Travel, offering Great Glen Way Baggage and Shuttle Transfers and transport timetables. It is also Community Transport Hub promoting health walks and greener modes of transport, e.g. E-Bike hire and community E-bike trials. The Hub has public toilets, notice board, recycling facilities car parking and a motorhome waste disposal point.

**PUBLIC BODIES  
MENTIONED IN THIS PLAN**

**The Highland Council (HC)**—responsible for providing education, social

care, roads and transport, economic development, housing and planning, environmental protection, waste management, cultural and leisure services. Governed by a council Highland Council must take corporate decisions. Core funding is from the Scottish Government and the balance come mainly from our council tax and business rates. In 2022/23 the Council will have £642m in revenue to invest across the Highlands.

**NHS Highland**—responsible for the protection and the improvement of their population’s health and for the delivery of frontline healthcare services.

**Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE)**—the Scottish Government’s economic and community development agency for the Highlands and Islands region with a role to develop sustainable economic growth.

**Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership (HITRANS)**—the statutory regional transport partnership covering Highland and other local authority areas in the north and works with transport operators and other stakeholders to improve transport services and infrastructure.

**Scottish Water**—provides most of us with drinking water and wastewater treatment

**Transport Scotland**—responsible, through BEAR Scotland, for the A82 and other trunk roads. Transport Scotland is the national transport agency for Scotland, delivering the Scottish Government’s vision for transport.

**Historic Environment Scotland (HES)**—the lead public body set up to investigate, care for and promote Scotland’s historic environment.

**Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS)**—manages forests and land owned by the Scottish Ministers in a way that supports and enables economically sustainable forestry; conserves and enhances the environment; delivers benefits for people and nature; and supports the Scottish Ministers in their stewardship of Scotland’s national forests and land.

**NatureScot (NS)**—formerly known as Scottish Natural Heritage,

NatureScot is the public body responsible for Scotland’s natural heritage, especially its natural, genetic and scenic diversity.

**Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)**—the regulator responsible for protecting and improving the quality of our air, water, and land.

**Agriculture and Rural Economy Directorate of the Scottish Government**—provide our farmers, crofters and land managers with Direct Payments (Pillar 1) and SRDP (Pillar 2), including Agri-Environment, Forestry and other schemes.

**Local Government and Housing Directorate of the Scottish Government**—oversees local government finance, functions, and performance, acting as a centre of expertise on local government and community planning, ensuring everyone in Scotland has access to quality sustainable homes.

**Developing the Young Workforce (DYW)**—a dynamic initiative designed to build strong working partnerships between education and industry, to inspire confidence in young people to gain relevant skills, access workplace opportunities, and build careers in local businesses.

**University of the 3rd Age (U3A)**—a nationwide network of learning groups aimed at encouraging older people to share their knowledge, skills, and interests in a friendly environment. There are no exams and no homework, just regular lessons, or study groups. It’s learning for fun, not with the aim of gaining qualifications.

**High Life Highland**—a charity registered in Scotland, formed in 2011 by The Highland Council to develop and promote opportunities in culture, learning, sport, leisure, health and wellbeing throughout the Highlands, for both residents and visitors, across nine services: adult learning, archives, arts, leisure facilities, libraries, music, museums, sport, outdoor education, and youth work. The Board consists of eight independent



Directors and four Directors nominated by the Highland Council. It has one subsidiary company—High Life Highland (Trading) CIC, a Community Interest Company whose principal aim is to generate funds which will be utilised by the charity in pursuit of its charitable objectives.

### KEY POLICIES

Public sector funders will require projects to demonstrate alignment with key policies and legislation.

#### *National*

Scotland 2045 National Planning Framework (NPF) 4—  
Northern Revitalisation (draft)

National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET), March 2022

The Wellbeing Economy Monitor, June 2022

Delivering Scotland’s Circular Economy, A Consultation on Proposals  
for a Circular Economy Bill, May 2022

Review of the Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement,  
November 2021

Securing a green recovery on a path to net zero: climate change plan  
2018–2032

Community Wealth Building—  
bill planned for this parliamentary session (May 2022)

Land Reform in a Net Zero Nation—  
bill planned for this parliamentary session (July 2022)

#### *Regional*

Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan 2

The Highlands and Islands Regional Economic Partnership

Highland Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan,  
February 2022

Highlife Highland Business Plan 2019–24

Forestry and Land Scotland—

Glen Urquhart Land Management Plan to 2026

Highland Community Learning and Development Plan 2021-2024

NHS Highland Health and Social Care Strategic Plan

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## *Appendices*

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**APPENDIX 1**  
**GUCAP SURVEY STRUCTURE**

**W**e used a mix of methods to carry out research for the Action Plan, including an online survey for the community (with a printed version of the survey form available as an alternative to the digital version); focus groups which explored specific issues such as housing and care; semi-structured interviews with stakeholders, and a range of activities with local schools. This mix of research methods enabled us to gather and analyse a wide range of views.

We used the Commonplace Survey Platform<sup>17</sup> which hosts open digital conversations that are easy to participate in and representative of the whole community and energise local democracy in the social media age. They have over 1,500 separate engagement sites and are used by bodies such Highland Council and Cairngorms National Park Authority.

***Survey Participation***

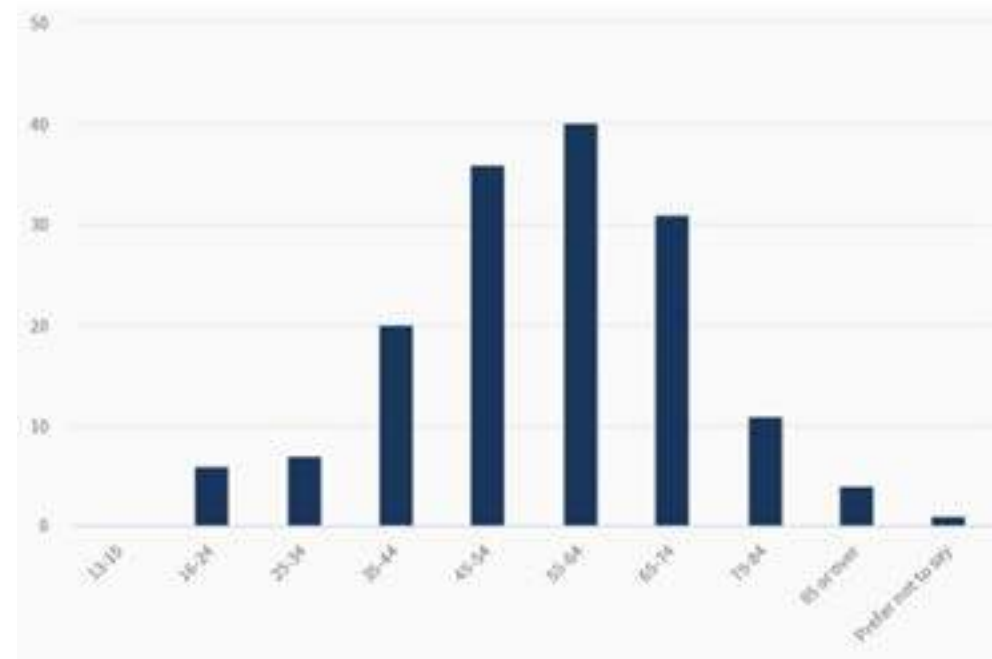
<b>LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION</b>	<b>PEOPLE</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Contributed (completed some or all of the survey)	238	16.14%
Informed (read four or more pages but opted not to comment)	291	19.73%
Aware (read two pages but opted not to comment)	292	19.80%
Clicked on the survey link but opted not to enter the survey	654	44.34%
<b>TOTAL PARTICIPANTS</b>	<b>1,448</b>	<b>100%</b>
Total number of individual contributions in the form of comments	471	

<sup>17</sup>. <https://www.commonplace.is/about>

People were asked questions to ensure the survey results were as representative as possible of sex (respondents were 43% male, 57% female), age, and geographic representation from the different parts of Glen Urquhart. The work status of survey respondents and their property arrangements are shown below.

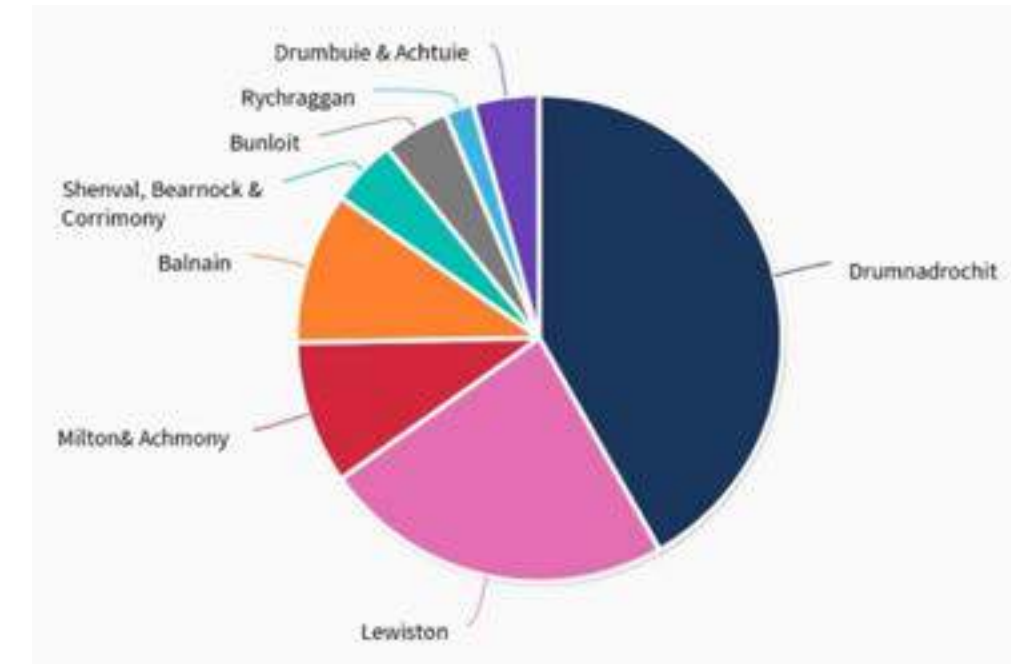
In broad terms, the sex and age profile of survey respondents matches that of the total population in Glen Urquhart taken from data zone.<sup>18</sup>

Age spread of participants that replied to the question:

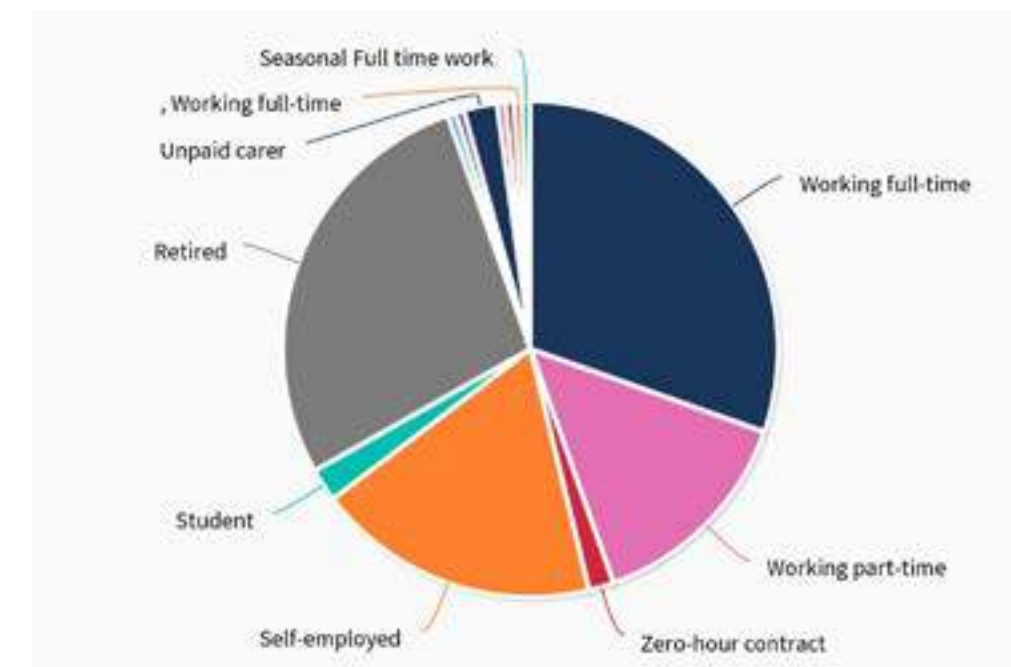


18. From the Small Area Population Estimates of Scotland—National Records of Scotland (shinyapps.io).

Where respondents said they lived:

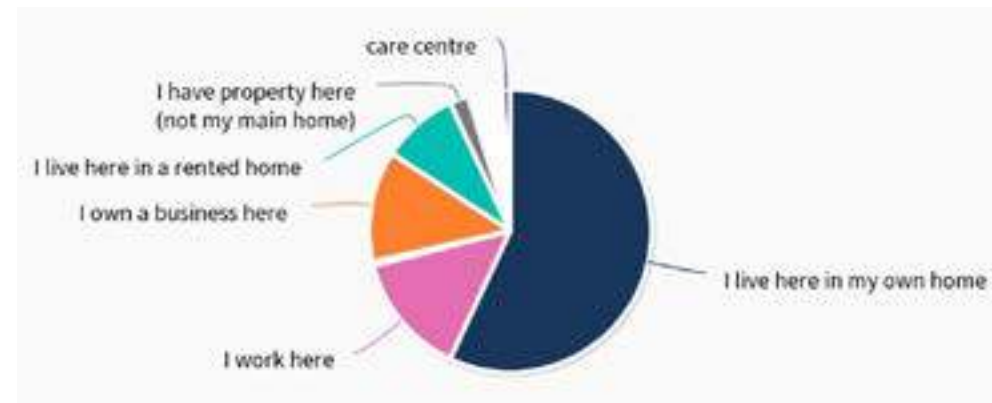


Respondent employment status:





Type of link with Glen Urquhart:



### ENGAGEMENT WITH LOCAL SCHOOL CHILDREN

Three different exercises aimed at giving school aged children—primary and secondary—the opportunity to feed in their views and ideas were undertaken. The forms used, and responses are attached below.

#### A 'PICTURE THE FUTURE' EXERCISE AIMED AT PRIMARY-AGED CHILDREN

Pre-printed forms went to all pupils in Glenurquhart and Balnain Primary Schools. Children were invited to draw a picture or tell in words 'what would make Glen Urquhart a better place for children 20 years from now' and to write some words/phrases to describe 'the three most important things for children (in Glen Urquhart) in 20 years. As an incentive, prizes were offered. Out of a combined school roll of around 160, 63 forms were returned—a response rate of 39%. Suggestions for improvements to school dinners and other purely school-related matters are not included in our analysis.

#### AN ONLINE SURVEY FOR P6-7S

This survey was circulated on Google Forms so that P6-7 pupils at Glenurquhart Primary School could access it on their school Chromebooks. It did not explore every theme in the public consultation survey. Instead, themes which we thought children would be more likely to engage with were selected. A total of 34 responses were received.

#### A GROUP SESSION WITH PUPILS FROM GLEN URQUHART HIGH SCHOOL

A discussion with the Pupil Parliament was conducted by the Deputy Head teacher.

**APPENDIX 2  
FEEDBACK**

**SCHOOL PUPIL VIEWS**

**FINDINGS  
'PICTURE THE FUTURE' EXERCISE**

*'Well, I think it is nice how it is but it could be a bit better.'*

There was a good spread of responses in terms of age across the two primary schools, with 27 nursery and P1–3 children (43% of total) taking part, and 36 P4–7 children (57% of total).

This was a totally unprompted survey i.e. we did not use the same themes as in the community survey or make suggestions of what could be provided. To analyse the ideas/suggestions made by the children, we grouped them into the following themes some of which are similar to the survey themes:

- \* Sports and leisure facilities,
- \* activities/clubs,
- \* getting around,
- \* housing,
- \* greener living/environment,
- \* shops, cafés,
- \* visitor attractions,
- \* miscellaneous.

There were also quite a number of school-specific suggestions (e.g. swimming lessons, more music classes, no homework) which we have not included in the analysis for this report as they come under the remit of the school or local education authority.

### ***Sports and leisure***

Suggestions for better sports and leisure facilities were the most common response with a request for a swimming pool being most popular (mentioned by 31%) of respondents, followed by ‘a better/bigger park/more parks’ (17%), trampoline facilities (15%), a skate park (8%), water sports, including on local lochs (7%), tennis facilities (6%), more/better facilities for shinty (5%), more/better facilities for football (5%), leisure centre (5%), astro turf (4%), an ice rink (3%), and more/better facilities for rugby (2%).

In addition to the 17% asking for better park provision, 5% asked for toilets to be provided in or close to parks and there were also requests for litter bins at parks, for play equipment to be fixed, and for first aid equipment to be provided.

### ***Activities/clubs***

14% of respondents said that they would like to see more clubs, including toddler groups/clubs (8%), after school clubs (5%), with crafting clubs and fishing also being mentioned. All the respondents asking for more toddler group/clubs and after-school clubs attended Balnain Primary School.

### ***Getting around***

11% of respondents (all attending Balnain Primary School) said they would like to see more buses and bus stops. 6% wanted to see more electric vehicle charging points, and 5% wanted more road crossings or wider pavements.

### ***Housing***

24% of respondents (all attending Balnain Primary School) said that they wanted to see more houses being built, with one P2 pupil summing things up by asking for ‘more houses so that we can live here when we are older’.

### ***Greener living/nature***

23% of respondents mentioned bird/animal/nature reserves, bird watching

and things to attract/help nature (e.g. more trees), and 21% (almost all of whom attended Balnain Primary School) said that they would like to see a community vegetable and fruit garden.

### ***Shops and cafés***

Requests for more shops and cafés were the most common requests overall in the survey, with many children specifically asking for particular High Street chains. 6% asked for more charity shops.

### ***Visitor attractions***

Requests falling into this category included a zoo, an aquarium, botanic gardens, a rollercoaster park and Legoland.

### ***Miscellaneous***

Suggestions in this category were quite wide-ranging and included cinema/movie watching, a riding school, den building, a hospital and, interestingly, several requests for a vet (8% of respondents).

### ***Conclusions***

The main feedback from this survey exercise was that the children would like to see facilities for play and sport locally improved. Some improvements could be relatively low-cost ‘quick wins’—for example, repairing play park equipment, providing litter bins (though arrangements for emptying might prove trickier), and providing first aid equipment if there is indeed a need for this, and organising more clubs and activities. Other aspirations may be more difficult/expensive to achieve—for example, swimming pools, more astro turf, etc. However, especially after two years of lockdown when opportunities for play and sport were limited, investment may not only improve the physical and mental well-being of local children but also help re-build community cohesion in this age-group.

The children in Balnain seemed to be particularly aware of the

need for more housing in their neighbourhood. There was also interest generally for more protection of/learning about nature and in community food growing.

The interest in having more shops, including national chains, was quite striking and there is perhaps a perception amongst some children locally that they are ‘missing out’ on what children in larger settlements take for granted. However, against this must be set the benefits which many of them enjoy in terms of access to the outdoors and nature.

## FINDINGS ONLINE SURVEY FOR P6-7S

This survey attracted 34 respondents, with the vast majority responding to all the survey questions. Topics explored in the survey were:

- \* Getting around,
- \* sports and outdoor activities,
- \* heritage and culture,
- \* environment and nature,
- \* employment opportunities,
- \* connectivity (internet and mobile phones),
- \* happiness/wellbeing.

### *Getting around*

Almost 91% of respondents said that it was very easy or quite easy to get around Glenurquhart, with the rest saying that it was quite difficult (6.1%) or very difficult (3%). When we asked what would make it easier to get around more easily without a car, the three most commonly selected answers were:

- \* more road crossings (zebra and pelican crossings)—13%
- \* more footpaths and cycle routes to places I want/need to go—12%
- \* somewhere local that would lend me a scooter or bike—10%.

### *Sports and outdoor activities*

Two-thirds (66.7%) of respondents said that children in the Glen Urquhart area had enough opportunities at present to play sports and do outdoor activities with only 9.1% saying that they didn’t have enough opportunities. However, quite a significant proportion (24.2%) said that they didn’t know or were not sure. (These may be children who are not particularly interested/engaged in sports or outdoor activities.)

### *Local heritage and culture*

Just over 40% of respondents said that they thought local children had enough opportunities to learn about and enjoy local heritage and culture, with 9.4% saying that they thought that there were not enough opportunities. A very sizeable proportion (50%) said that they didn’t know/were not sure. All of those who said that there were not enough opportunities mentioned that they would like to learn more about local history.

### *Local environment and nature*

Almost two-thirds of respondents said that they thought local children had enough opportunities to learn about the local environment and nature, and to get involved in activities to help protect them for the future. However, 15% disagreed, with a further 21% saying that they were not sure/didn’t know. Of those who disagreed, three suggested more outdoor learning time, one asked for more school trips to the woods, and one suggested bird-watching times and crafts such as making bird feeders.

### *Employment opportunities*

Just over half (53%) said that they thought that there was a good enough



selection of jobs available to children in the local area when they grew up. 6% disagreed, and just over 40% were not sure/didn't know.

### **Connectivity (internet and broadband)**

45% of respondents said their broadband speed at home was fast enough, but an almost equal number (42%) said that it wasn't. 9% said that they weren't sure/didn't know, and 3% said that they didn't use the internet at home.

In relation to mobile phone signal at home, just over half (51.5%) said that the signal was good enough with 21% saying that it was not good enough. 15% said that they weren't sure/didn't know, and 12% said that they didn't use a mobile phone at home.

### **Happiness/wellbeing**

Almost two-thirds (62.5%) of respondents said that they were very happy living in the Glen Urquhart area and just over a third (34.4%) said that they were fairly happy but thought that some things could be better.

When asked about the things they liked best about living in Glen Urquhart, there was a range of different responses, but many centred on friends, sports/activities, school and the outdoors.

## **FINDINGS SECONDARY PUPILS**

### **Health and wellbeing**

- \* More support needed for mental health as well as eating disorders.

### **Heritage, sport and culture**

- \* More cultural opportunities needed for all (music, art, drama, dance),
- \* the shinty pitch is well-used and accepted as part of the community.

### **Local environment**

- \* Local walkways and recreational spaces have been welcomed,
- \* the Pupil Parliament have respect for the local community and what it can offer.

### **Local economy and jobs**

- \* Very much reliant on the tourist trade—how can we move beyond that? Can we? Discussion on aspirations of young people and what would make them stay (wider jobs—better cultural attractions etc).

### **Broadband and mobile phone**

- \* On the outskirts of the village the broadband reception is dire. During lockdown it had an impact on learning and teaching and emphasised how important connectivity is for young people.

When asked what they thought would make life better for children in the future, answers were many to do with having a bigger/better playpark, new sports/activity facilities such as a swimming pool, skate park or pump track, and better internet.

### **Conclusions**

Responses in this survey indicated that most children were relatively happy with the current situation in each of the themes explored, with the exception of broadband services where there seem to be significant problems and also, to a lesser degree, dissatisfaction with mobile phone signals, although there were quite high levels of 'not sure/don't know' responses for many questions which perhaps need further exploration. However, there were some areas where aspirations for improvement matched with the school 'picture the future' exercise (see above)—especially the demand for increased/improved play and sports facilities and also an interest in learning more about the area's natural environment/wildlife. This survey also showed significant interest in learning more about the area's history.

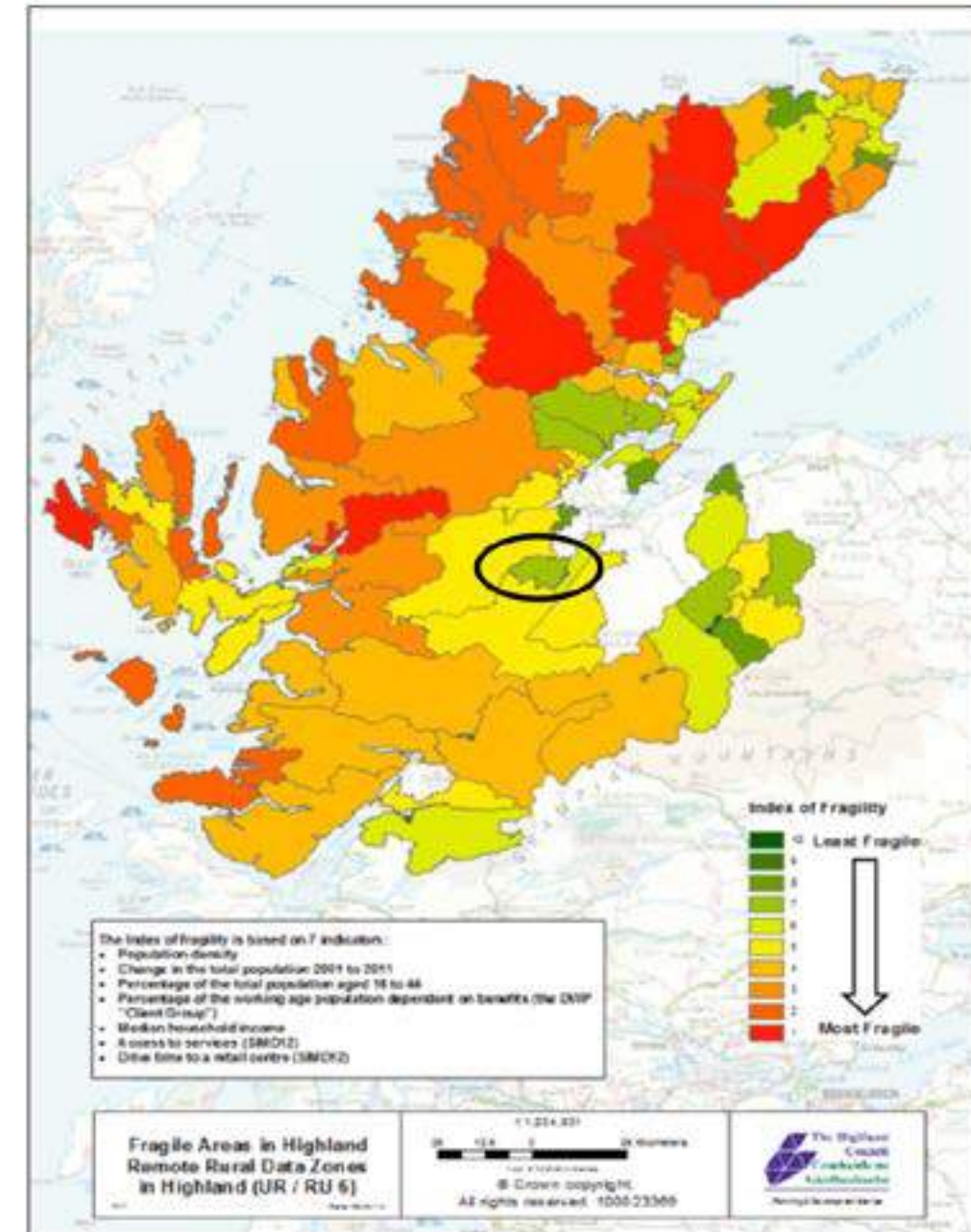
**PRIORITIES SURVEYS—  
MARKET ON THE GREEN AND IN LIBRARY**

Once COVID-19 restrictions eased, we organised informal consultation events at the Market on the Green and in the local library. Participants were asked to place sticker dots on a board to indicate the issues listed on the table below which concerned them most. The right hand column below shows the overall score for each issue. As can be seen, safe travel on foot/cycle etc, community events and facilities, and improved health and wellbeing were the three issues of highest concern.

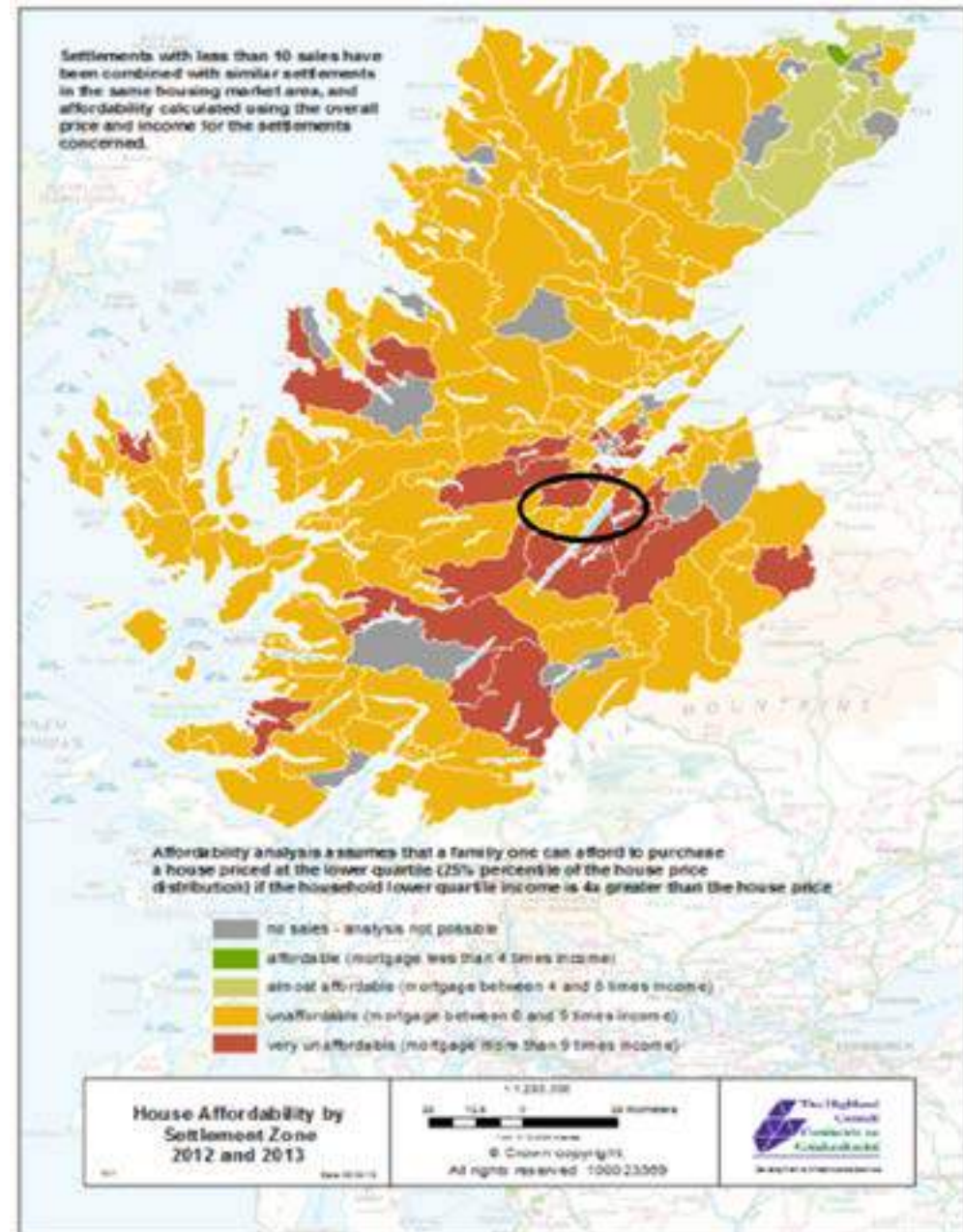
ISSUES	no. of dots Market on the green	% Market on the green	no. of dots Library	% Library	Total dots	% Overall
Safe travel on foot cycle etc	15	19	7	18	22	18.3
Community events and facilities	15	19	3	8	18	15.0
Improved health and wellbeing	9	11	8	21	17	14.2
Broadband/mobile coverage	9	11	7	18	16	13.3
Local environment and climate	10	12	6	15	16	13.3
Affordable housing	10	12	4	10	14	11.7
Local economy and jobs	9	11	3	8	12	10.0
Emphasis on heritage, sport, culture	4	5	1	2	5	4.2
<b>Total dots</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Total people</b>	<b>27</b>		<b>13</b>		<b>40</b>	

**APPENDIX 3  
OUR COMMUNITY**

**FRAGILE AREAS IN THE HIGHLANDS**



**HOUSING AFFORDABILITY  
IN THE HIGHLANDS**



**APPENDIX 4  
COMMUNITY GROUPS, TOOLS, REFERENCES  
AND TOOL KITS**

**COMMUNITY GROUPS**

**Wellbeing**

- \* Friends of the Glenurquhart Centre
- \* Glen Urquhart Health Walks
- \* The Highland Mindfulness Group
- \* Patient Participatory Group
- \* Laddies Night (Weekly men's mental health night)
- \* Knit and Knatter Groups

**Childcare**

- \* Drumnadrochit Toddler Group
- \* Cheuman Beaga Dhruim na Drochaid
- \* Upper Glen Urquhart Playgroup
- \* Glen Urquhart Childcare Centre

**Churches**

- \* Glenurquhart & Invermoriston Church of Scotland
- \* Glen Urquhart Free Church
- \* St Ninian's Episcopal Church

**Community**

- \* Balnain Hall Committee
- \* Glenurquhart Public Hall Committee
- \* Glenurquhart Ladies Group
- \* Men's Shed
- \* Monthly Community Lunch
- \* Weekly 'Bite and Blether' lunch



**Culture**

- \* Glenurquhart Heritage Group
- \* Drumnadrochit Piping Society
- \* Claire Bryce School of Highland Dancing
- \* Glen Urquhart Highland Gathering
- \* Art group

**Emergency resilience**

- \* Drumnadrochit Community First Responders Group
- \* RNLI Loch Ness
- \* Fire and Rescue

**Environment**

- \* Woodland Trust
- \* Craigmonie Woodland Association
- \* Glen Urquhart Horticultural Society

**Sport**

- \* Glen Urquhart Shinty Club
- \* Drumnadrochit Badminton Club
- \* Glen Urquhart Football Club
- \* Black Dragon Martial Arts
- \* Glen Urquhart Bowling Club
- \* Glen Urquhart Indoor Bowling Club
- \* Glenurquhart Karate Club
- \* Great Glen Outdoor Club
- \* Walking Football

**Youth**

- \* 1st Glenurquhart Boys Brigade
- \* 1st Glenurquhart Brownies
- \* 1st Glenurquhart Guides
- \* Glen Urquhart Youth Club/ High Life Highland Youth Development

**TOOLS, REFERENCES  
AND TOOL KITS**

**Housing**

- \* [Housing availability \(prospects\)](#)  
[Highland Housing Register Prospects](#)
- \* [Highland Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2015](#)  
[Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2015](#)

**People**

- \* [Quality of life—My life survey](#)  
[Highlands and Islands Enterprise | HIE](#)
- \* [Developing the Young Workforce—DYW—](#)  
[Inverness and Central Highland \(dywich.co.uk\)](#)

**Land**

- \* <https://myland.scot/communityaction/>

**Energy**

- \* [Scottish Central Government Energy Efficiency Grant scheme: form and guidance—gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

**Progressive Finance**

- \* [Community Wealth Building: plural ownership for a better Scotland CEIS](#)
- \* [PowerPoint Presentation \(socialinvestmentscotland.com\)](#)



**Environment**

- \* [Publications—Finance Earth](#)
- \* [nature.scot-NatureScot-Research-Report-1272-Facilitating-Local-Natural-Capital-Investment-project-report.pdf](#) (finance.earth)
- \* [INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUTHORS OF SNH COMMISSIONED RESEARCH REPORTS](#) (finance.earth)
- \* [Natural-Capital-Brochure.pdf](#) (cumulus-consultants.co.uk)
- \* [About Improvement Districts—Scotland's Improvement Districts](#)

