Local Place Plan 2024

Crathes Drumoak and Durris Community Council

This LPP has been prepared by Crathes, Drumoak and Durris Community Council.
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Meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month.

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1. The Local Place Plan (LPP) Process

Using public meetings and the Scottish Government Place Planning Tool, the communities of Crathes, Drumoak and Durris identified areas of appreciation and concern. Residents felt fortunate to live in a beautiful and well maintained natural and built environment, but there were also concerns and it is vital these key concerns are respected when planning and development in the area are considered.

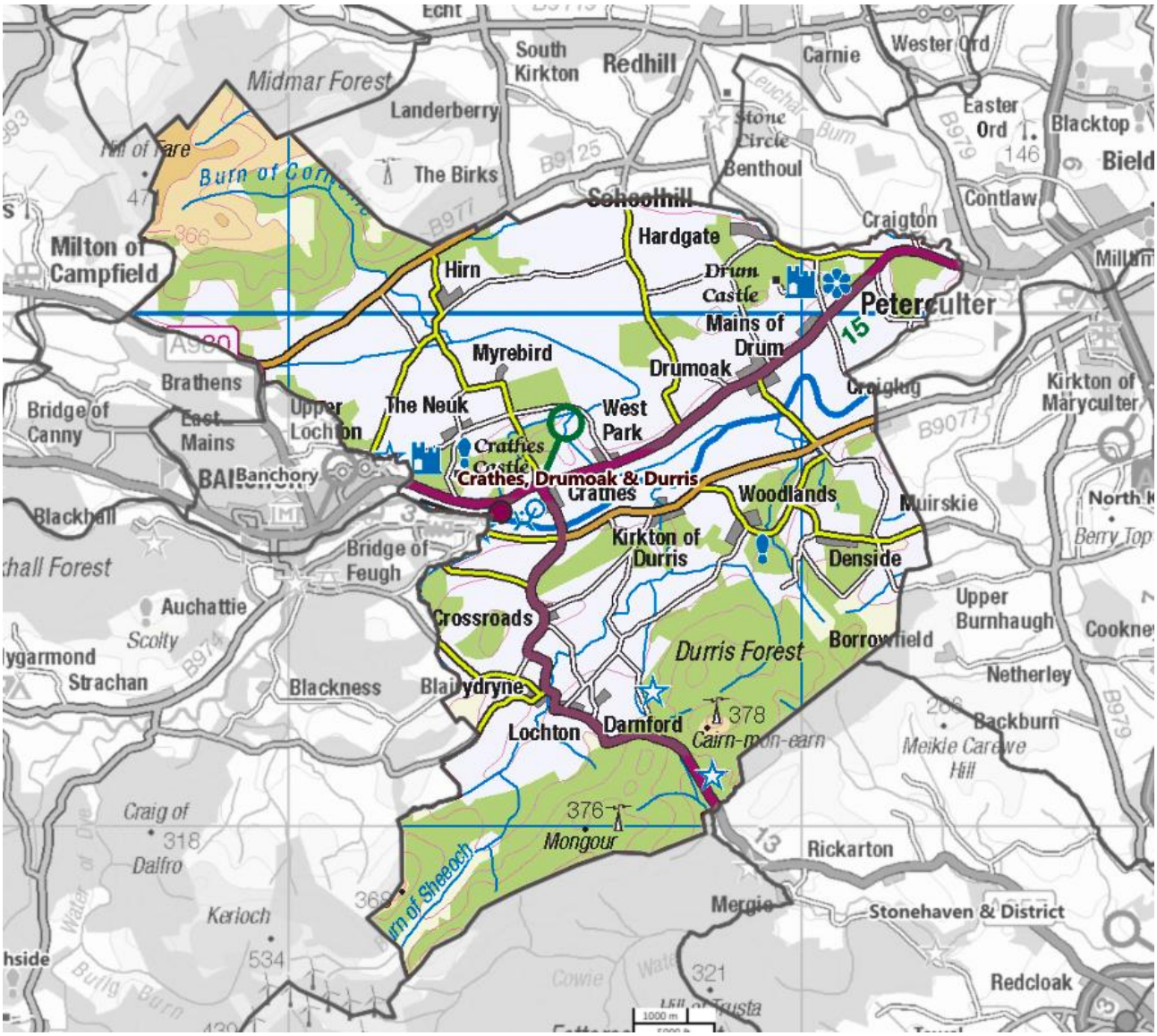


Figure 1 Map of Crathes, Drumoak and Durris Community Council area and LPP area, shown in colour.
The area to the northwest of the River Dee is Crathes.
The area to the northeast of the River Dee is Drumoak.
The area south of the River Dee is Durris.

2. Main concerns in the LPP

2.1 The SSEN proposed pylon route should be stopped in its present overground form.

2.2 Park Bridge should be reopened.

2.3 The Hill of Fare Wind farm, with oversized turbines in a particularly visible location, should be stopped in its present form.

2.4 Housing should be more diverse and respond to actual local needs.

2.5 There needs to be improvement and development in facilities before there are any more new houses approved and built in the Crathes, Drumoak and Durris Community Council Area and in Banchory.

2.6 The local environment, biodiversity and natural beauty should be protected.

2.7 The physical and social character of existing places should be protected.

2.8 There should be better public transport, particularly to the south of the River Dee.

2.9 Speed limits should be reduced on all roads with traffic calming measures in places.

2.10 There should be pedestrian and cycling routes within and between settlements.

2.11 There should be better access to the riverside and large private estates.

2.12 There should be settlement 'hubs' for local shopping, informal socialising etc.

2.13 There should be better facilities for teenagers.

2.14 Proper and respectful use of the Glebe in Drumoak should be encouraged.

3. Main proposals in the LPP

3.1 Proposals for Aberdeenshire Council

3.1.1. Housing should respond to local need and not developers' desire to build large houses.

3.1.2 There should be no more new housing developments until facilities such as Bellfield Surgery in Banchory and Banchory Academy have caught up with the huge population increase in recent years in the area.

3.1.3 There should be better public transport and infrastructure for active travel as people are car dependent.

3.1.4 Local plans should be produced for how each settlement should develop, including what type of housing and where it should be located. These depend on reliable localised information and data which are currently not readily available.

3.1.5 The natural environment is greatly valued and should be preserved. The River Dee and its tributaries are Special Areas of Conservation (SAC).

3.2 Proposals for Crathes, Drumoak and Durris Community Council

3.2.1 Continue the momentum from public engagement with Pylons, Wind farm, Park Bridge and Local Place Plan, so this community involvement can be built upon, where the community receives feedback and sees where changes can be made.

3.2.2 Continue to represent the community in the excellent and appreciated way the Community Council has been doing so far.

3.2.3 To build on this Local Place Plan with future events, and to regard this as the beginning of a process rather than an event.

3.3 Proposals for the community

3.3.1 Continue to engage with community projects and organise new ones, such as litter picking and path clearance.

3.3.2 There is an expressed desire to see the natural environment preserved and old sites and buildings (church, school) to be repurposed for community use. The community could therefore consider actions like community buy-outs and how to organise this.

3.3.3 More community events to bring together all sections of the communities

4. Context

Crathes, Drumoak and Durris Community Council operates in the rural area of Lower Deeside and North Kincardine. It lies either side of the River Dee, north to and including Hill of Fare and south to Darnford. It borders Aberdeen City in the east and Banchory in the west. There are three settlements and outlying houses and farms.

Crathes lies to the north of River Dee between Banchory and Drumoak and is in Marr Area. Drumoak is the largest settlement and should be linked to Durris by Park Bridge, which is currently closed due to deterioration through lack of maintenance.

Durris is the most isolated and scattered part of the community council area, especially with the closure of Park Bridge. It has two main centres, Woodlands of Durris, where the primary school is situated, and Kirkton of Durris.

Drumoak and Durris lie in Kincardine and Mearns area even though communications are mainly up and down the Dee Valley rather than over the Mounth.

In preparing this LPP, we considered the requirements of NPF4 (https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4/), the Local Development Plan (https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning/plans-and-policies/ldp-2023/) and other Aberdeenshire Planning Policies.

NPF4 is based on the UN Sustainable Development goals which aim to create sustainable, livable and productive places with vibrant and inclusive communities. We have used these five themes to frame the LPP.

In the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan 2020 (https://aberdeenshirestorage.blob.core.windows.net/acblobstorage/aaae3f3f-ca28-4c63-b01b-7787867711c7/abdnandshirestrategicdevplanfinal2020.pdf) Crathes, Drumoak and Durris lie outside Aberdeenshire Council's Strategic Growth Areas. Growth is expected to be related to local needs only and the area does not attract investment for new and improved infrastructure. Yet the Community Council area is within the Housing Market Area and is expected to supply housing to support housing needs. There is much frustration in the area that there has been a lot of new housing, particularly in Banchory, but no improvement or development in facilities, especially Bellfield Surgery and Banchory Academy, in whose catchment areas Crathes, Drumoak and Durris lie. We ask for the CC area to have Aberdeenshire Council requirements met for the building of new housing, of impact assessment and potential contribution to local services.

5. Data

5.1 Introduction

We observed that our area does not have a complete co-terminal statistical or data profile. Additionally, there appears to be some absence of commonality of statistical presentation between significant sources of information.

Drumoak, the largest settlement, has some exclusive statistics.

Crathes, Durris, and to some extent Drumoak, have been included with other settlements outwith the CDDCC area, leading to inability to extrapolate pertinent local information.

Most available statistics are not directly co-terminal with the CDDCC area, and even intermediate Data Zones, which are split into smaller Data Zones, incorporate other areas and settlements.
Much of the available local data refers to Drumoak only as data sets refer almost exclusively to settlements of over 500 people.

We also noted that some data sets have been significantly skewed by economic and other measures driven by the COVID pandemic. Therefore, some comparisons with previous years will not be as robust as others.

We have included demographic data in this section.
Other data appears in the appropriate section of this LPP.

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) does not include information on settlements smaller than 500 people yet we know rural poverty is an issue. It considers car ownership to be a sign of wealth, whereas, as this report shows, a car is a necessity in a rural area with poor public transport.

Last year's report on mental health and well-being in the Banchory area (McArdle, K., and Briggs S. (2024), “Suffering Quietly, Wellbeing of Individuals and Community in the Banchory Area, Research report for Banchory Community Trust” revealed many problems which are not made apparent by public and government data and information.

We observe that, given this lack of specific local data, it is difficult to plan for the actual needs of these local communities. If it is not known what local housing needs are, housing developments cannot be said to satisfy local housing needs.

5.2 Demographics

Under 5000 people live in the CDDCC area. There were 2258 people on the electoral roll for the 2024 General Election (source: Grampian Assessors).

Drumoak has a population of 1006 (2022 Census)
Data for the rest of the area is not available.
A local Durris history website notes that Durris has approximately 495 electors and 252 households.

Noting difficulties in obtained area-specific statistics, the following percentages have been gleaned from the SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) 2021 demographic data:

- An increase of 2.9% in population between 2014 and 2021.
- 91.7% of people living in the area were born in the UK (2011 Census).
- 98.3% of people living in the area identified as white (2011 Census)
- Social grades A-B 37.1%
- Social grades C1 26.4%
- Social grades C2 26.6%
- Social grades DE 9.8%

Social grades information is based on the Household Reference Person (HRP).

Drumoak, Crathes and Durris have a generally older, relatively affluent demographic.
1.9% of residents earn less than £10,000 per annum.
There is a very low crime rate; however, local Police statistics do not separate the area from Portlethen, a town outwith the area.

SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) 2020 (https://simd.scot/#/simd2020/)
Drumoak (includes Kirkton of Durris and Woodlands of Durris) and Crathes (1 is low and 10 is high)

	Drumoak	Crathes
Income	10	10
Employment	10	10
Health	10	10
Education	10	10
Geographical access	1	1
Crime	8	5
Housing	8	8

SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) 2020 Actual figures

	Drumoak	Crathes
Income deprived	35	12
Employment deprived	8	6

SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) 2020
In terms of food vulnerability, the longest distance to a food bank is 12km. However, food banks may deliver to vulnerable households, depending on individual circumstances.

SIMD scoring for food vulnerability in 2020 was over 165, demonstrating significant vulnerability for people in our community.

SIMD Loneliness Prescription Index also demonstrated high risk, which has been borne out by some comments in survey responses.

Age distribution of population
0-15 years 19.8%
16-64 years 61.5%
65+ years 18.7%

Percentage Rate of change per age group from 2014 to 2021

Age group	Rate of change %age minus	Rate of change %age plus
0-9	3.2	
10-19		6.5
20s	15.1	
30s		25.1
40s	20.6	
50s		5.9
60s		4.9
70s		38.2
80s		16.3
90s		122.2

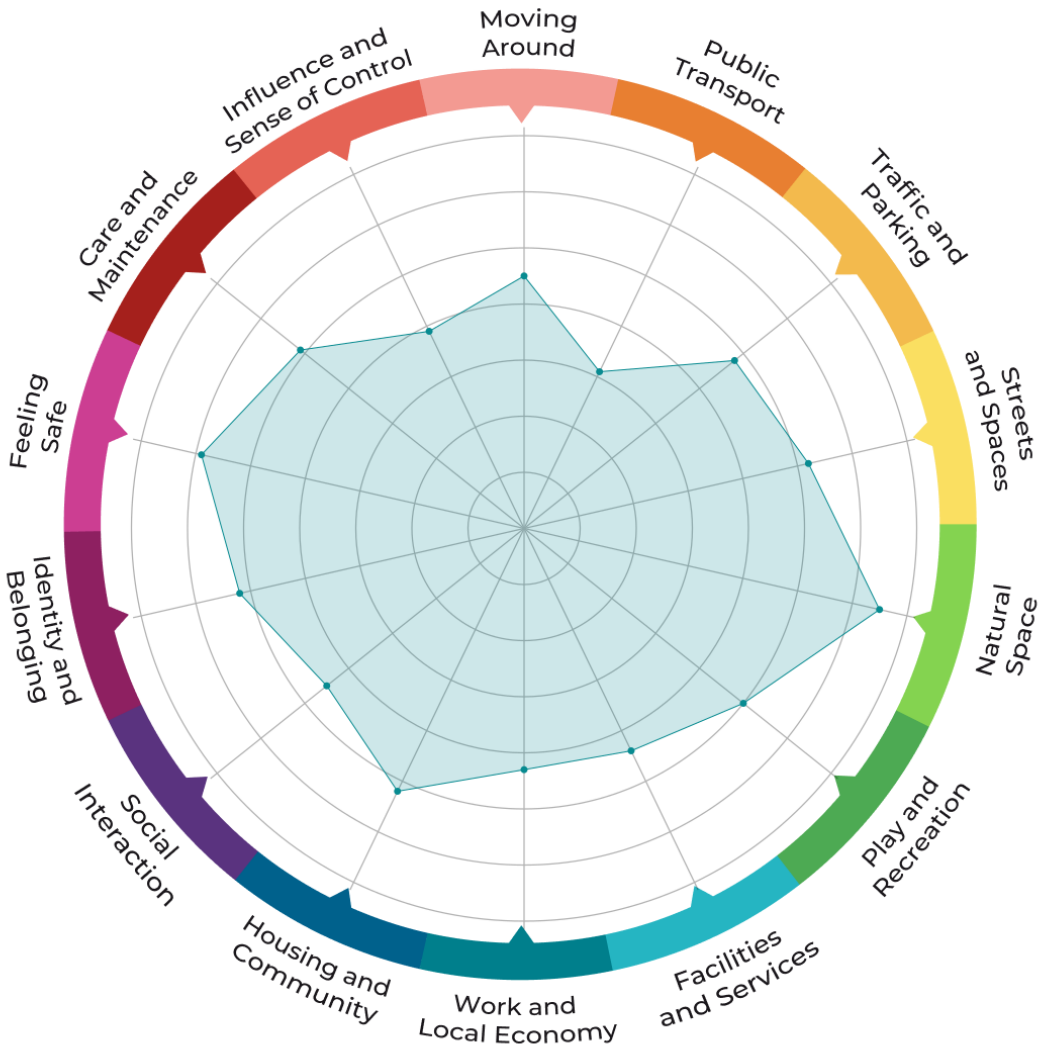
6. Engaging with the public

We engaged with the public by using the Scottish Government Place Standard Tool online survey and by public engagement events. While we have a wide range of responses, which are all largely in agreement, it is important to remember those whose voices we have not heard and what has not been said, and to consider how to have a wider reach in future consultations.

6.1 Online survey

We used the Scottish Government Place Planning Tool and had 639 online responses. This is approximately 14% of residents in the area. The survey has 14 topic areas and responses under these 14 headings are detailed in Appendix 1. The results are summarised in the graph below. The closer to the centre the points are, the less satisfaction there is with that particular topic.

Figure 2 Results of the Plane Standard Tool Questionnaire



6.2 Public meetings

- 3 public meetings in Drumoak
- 3 public meetings in Durris
- 3 public meetings in Crathes
- Attendance at 4 SSEN consultation meetings in Durris and Drumoak
- Attendance at Crathes Fly x 3 (monthly community coffee morning in Crathes Hall)
- I public meeting and discussion at Warm Spaces project in Drumoak

Responses are detailed in Appendix 2.

We asked the questions:

What's great about where you live?
What do you want to keep and where?
What do you want to change and where?
What community projects would you like to see?

6.3 Social Media

We used social media, making use of existing community social media sites and groups and the Community Council website.

6.4 Press Releases

We had items published regularly in the local press; Deeside and Donside Piper and Herald, Press and Journal and Evening Express.

6.5 Additionally, regular LPP progress reports were made to and minuted by the monthly (CDDCC) Community Council meetings, attended by Aberdeenshire Council elected members.

7. Results: Pylons

The Scottish Government has introduced this Local Place Planning process to allow communities to voice their aspirations and priorities for their local areas. Despite this initiative, there is a high degree of concern within the community as the Government has set ambitious net-zero targets, now being pursued by upgrading the energy network infrastructure, part of which is the route between Kintore and Tealing. The approach by Scottish and Southern Energy Network (SSEN) appears to disregard the input and wishes of the community, creating an obvious disconnection between the Government's commitment to local empowerment and its actions that impact on our communities with what is perceived as insufficient and dismissive consultation.

This is a main cause for concern for this area, particularly Drumoak and Durris as the proposed route passes through Drumoak and Durris. This issue is causing significant local anxiety, nervousness, stress and mental health issues for people. It has dominated local discussion. This is set to be one of the most significant and motivating planning issues for this area, on a scale previously unseen.

Respondents were united in their opposition to this scheme. Almost without exception, respondents raised concerns about:

- the effect on mental and physical wellbeing, citing examples of this stress affecting local children and vulnerable people (especially in Drumoak)
- the impact on, and damage to, the environment, wildlife, and plant life
- the huge scale of the project and its component parts
- the visual impact of the height of the proposed pylons and the consequent industrialization of the local area
- the impact on local agriculture and the potential destruction of sensitive local infrastructure
- significant potential for financial loss, with concern that such loss will affect end of life care for many older respondents and equity in homes for younger respondents, as personal assets are affected
- the disruption of construction, heavy vehicles, and the environmental impact of delivery of construction materials
- their anger and dismay at their views being dismissed and the powerlessness they felt at the lack of proper consultation

Respondents expressed concern that the locality will be negatively affected by this project, which promises very little actual benefit to the area. In addition to pylons and transmission lines, respondents expressed disappointment at expected significant associated work to local roads to allow construction materials to be delivered, access routes for future maintenance, construction of sub-stations and large battery installations. They did not want the pylons to go elsewhere, they wanted the route to be reconsidered for subsea or underground wherever possible. Several cited examples in Denmark, Germany, Belgium, and the Netherlands.

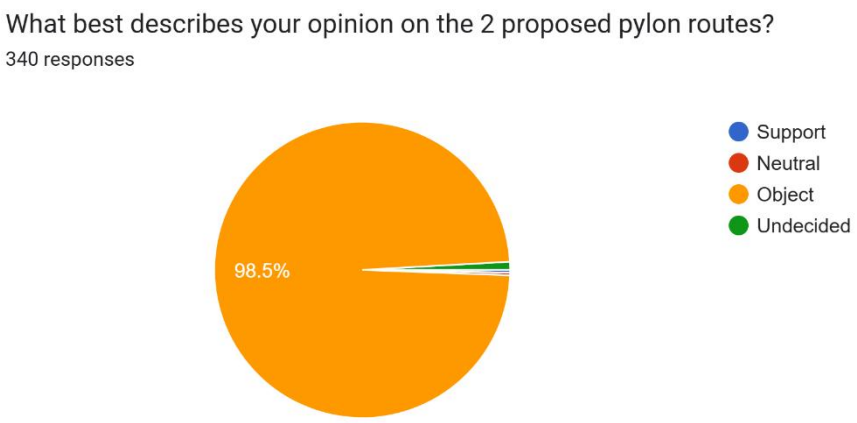
The Community Council has been proactive in surveying residents' views, to determine the strength of local objection to the proposed route. The overwhelming opposition is demonstrated in the graphs on page 16.

Respondents complained that the SSEN consultation process was merely complying with legal requirements. They were concerned that private companies are deciding the future of the area. They wanted the issue to be referred back to the National Grid for a proper investigation into the route, especially whether transmission could be subsea or underground, which so far has apparently neither been considered nor costed.

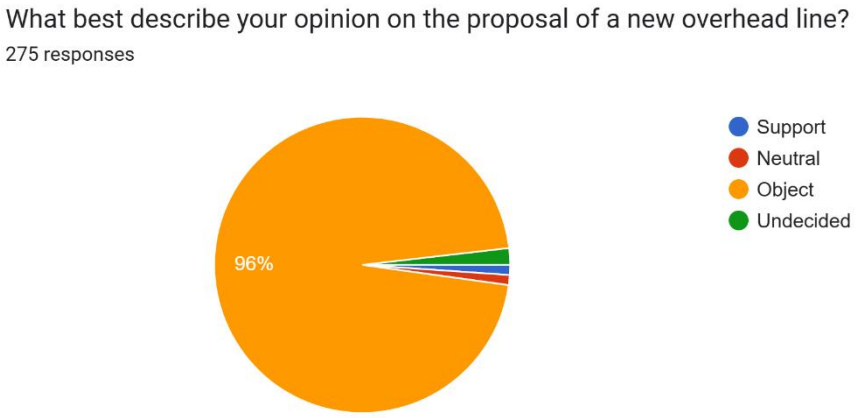
This issue has left many people without motivation and considerable cynicism, to participate in another consultation, such as this one for the LPP.

On the positive side, particularly in Drumoak, people felt that activism against the proposed pylons route had brought the community together. People were appreciative of the work of both Deeside Against Pylons (DAP) and the Community Council, and felt they represented the views of the community.

Figure 3. Graph results of Community Council questionnaire carried out at the SSEN public events



SSEN Questionnaire Oct 2024



SSEN Questionnaire Jan 2024

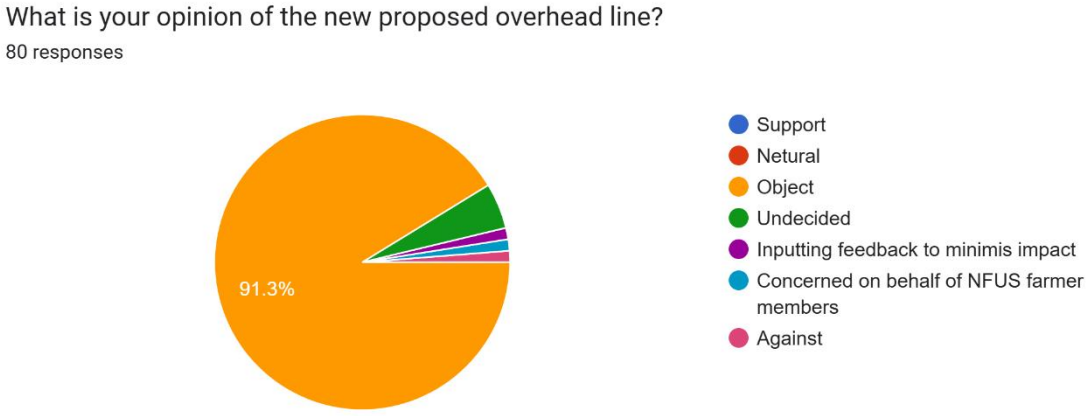
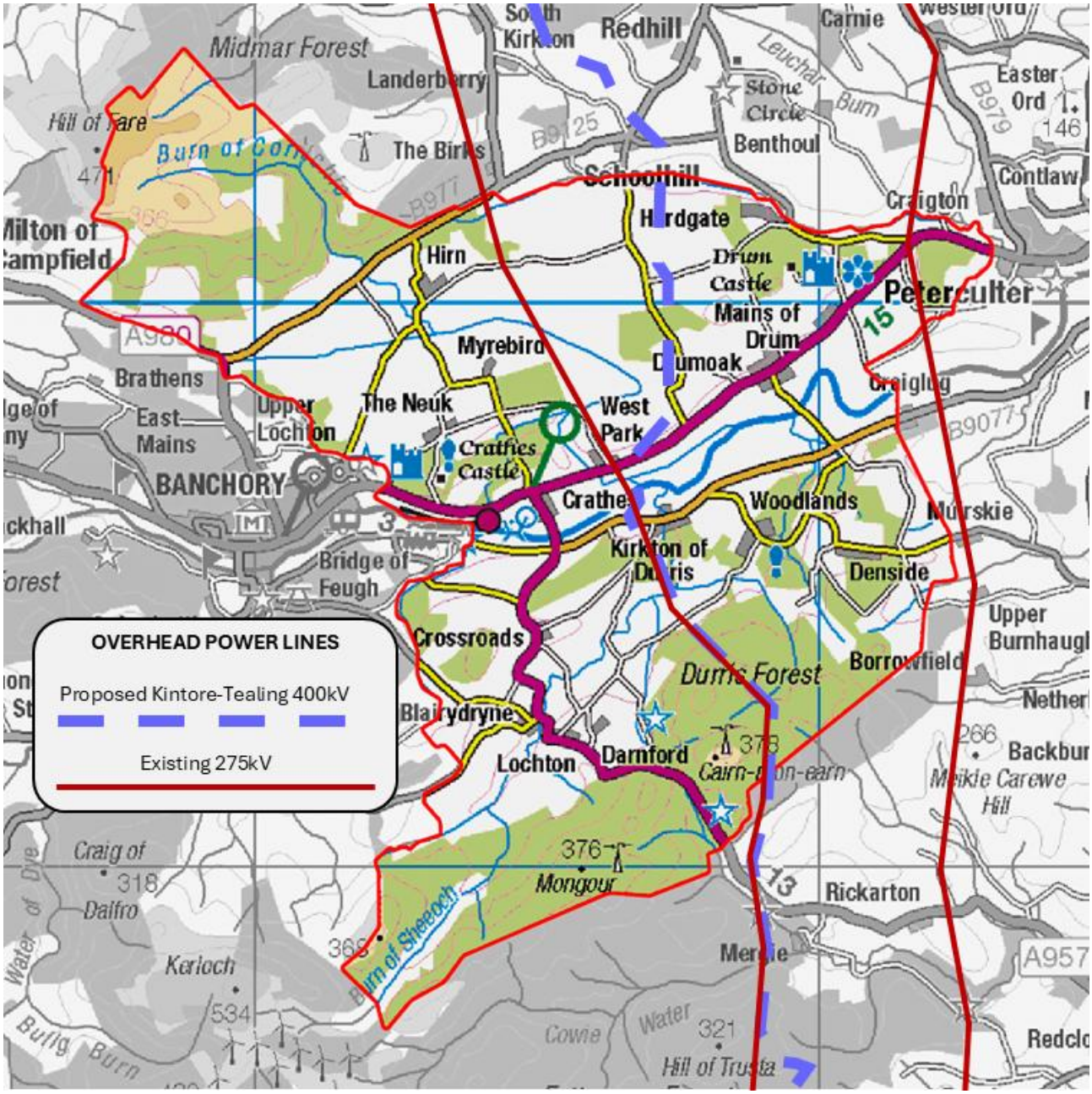


Figure 4. Map showing SSEN proposed and existing pylon routes



8. Results

Comments from the online survey and public engagement events have been grouped under five headings, which correspond to the UN aims as follows:

Vibrant Inclusive Communities
Connected Places
Liveable Places
Productive Places
Sustainable Places.

8.1 Vibrant Inclusive Communities

Community Council

The work of the Community Council is much appreciated.
People think the Community Council is approachable, active and represents the views of the local community.

Action groups

The work of action groups Deeside Against Pylons (DAP) and HoFWIG (Hill of Fare Wind farm Information Group) is much appreciated.
People think the two action groups are doing great work and represent the views of local people.

Pylons and windfarms

The SSEN pylon route and the Hill of Fare Wind farm proposals have led to much more community involvement in planning issues, but necessarily reactively, and in future it would be good to see this momentum and involvement continued in a proactive way. This LPP is just the start.

Feedback

Some people felt there had been a lot of surveys and no action and welcomed the opportunity to take part in the LPP
People expect to see follow up with feedback and actions and to know how their input has in fact influenced the LDP.

Community information

People want community information to be more readily available, via community hubs, a newsletter and social media. For example, a monthly 'what's on' emailed to subscribers.

Sense of community

In general, people thought their community was open, welcoming, friendly and non-judgmental.

Community spaces

People wanted more community spaces, inside and outside, for all age groups to meet, and specifically for teenagers.
They wanted existing spaces, such as the astroturf pitch at Drumoak Primary School, to be more accessible.
People wanted a community hub, such as a pub, and a designated village hall in Drumoak.
People wanted more community events in the village halls and other places, to bring different parts of the community together. In some places it was felt there was a divide between old residents and new residents, but there was desire to bridge this gap.

8.2 Connected Places

Roads

People thought that in general roads were well maintained but potholes are a problem, particularly on the back roads.

Flooding

Flooding is an issue, particularly on the roads in Durris and in certain areas of Drumoak, and people would like the problem addressed rather than just responding to it each time there is a flood.

Park Bridge

The closure of Park Bridge has had a huge effect and is isolating communities. Drumoak and Durris are separated, often separating families. The required detour increases fuel costs and pollution.

It takes longer for people in Durris to drive to the North Deeside Road to catch the bus.
Bogenraith Equestrian, the largest such centre in Scotland, and Durris' main employer, has staff having to travel via Crathes or Maryculter bridges, adding tens of miles to journeys.

Gritting and snow clearing

Some people thought that gritting and snow clearing could be more prompt in winter. There is an ongoing issue with access to Drumoak Primary in winter as it is not on a major road with priority for gritting but is a steep hill and this causes problems with children getting to school safely in snowy and icy weather. There is a high potential of an incident as cars are unable to stop as the crossing point when the road is untreated and public intervention is being used to keep the children safe.

EV Cars

People would like more EV charging points, for locals and for visitors.
We were unable to ascertain how many electric vehicles there are in the area. However, given the demographic data, we might surmise that there could be a higher-than-average ownership.
There are 4 EV charging points at Mains of Drum Garden Centre, but we were unable to ascertain the number of privately owned EV charges in the CDDCC area.

Car dependency

A high proportion of households have vehicles. People in the area are car dependent.
Public transport is perceived to be unreliable. Iln many cases public transport is too far from rural residences to be useful or accessible. Car ownership is not a luxury. In rural areas like ours, a vehicle is a necessity to access shopping, medical care, schools, work, social life and community events.

The SIMD accessibility score in 2023 was 0.9, on a scale from 1 to 10. This is a very low score in terms of remoteness indicators and among the poorest in Aberdeenshire.

Those who do not have access to a vehicle or who are no longer able to drive experience isolation. The SIMD loneliness perception index 2020 supports this, showing high risk for some individuals. 4.4% of households did not have access to a car or van in 2023.

Public transport

Respondents appreciate that there is a bus route into Aberdeen and west along the valley and that bus travel for children and people over 60 is free. However, the buses are expensive, unreliable, frequently break down, and two have caught fire recently. The use of public transport, for example for a night out in Aberdeen, proves almost impossible due to irregular and limited timetabling.

People would like bus services along other routes, particularly to Westhill and Stonehaven. Relocation of many services from Banchory to Westhill and Stonehaven supports this potential development as both Westhill and Stonehaven are difficult and expensive to access without a car.

People want a bus service reinstated serving the South Deeside Road. Since the withdrawal of the 204 service, 24 houses have been built in Woodlands of Durris; 13 houses are currently being built, and another 30 houses are approved for the next stage of the Local Development Plan. When combined with 50 houses recently completed at Blairs on the South Deeside Road, this volume of people should not be car dependent.

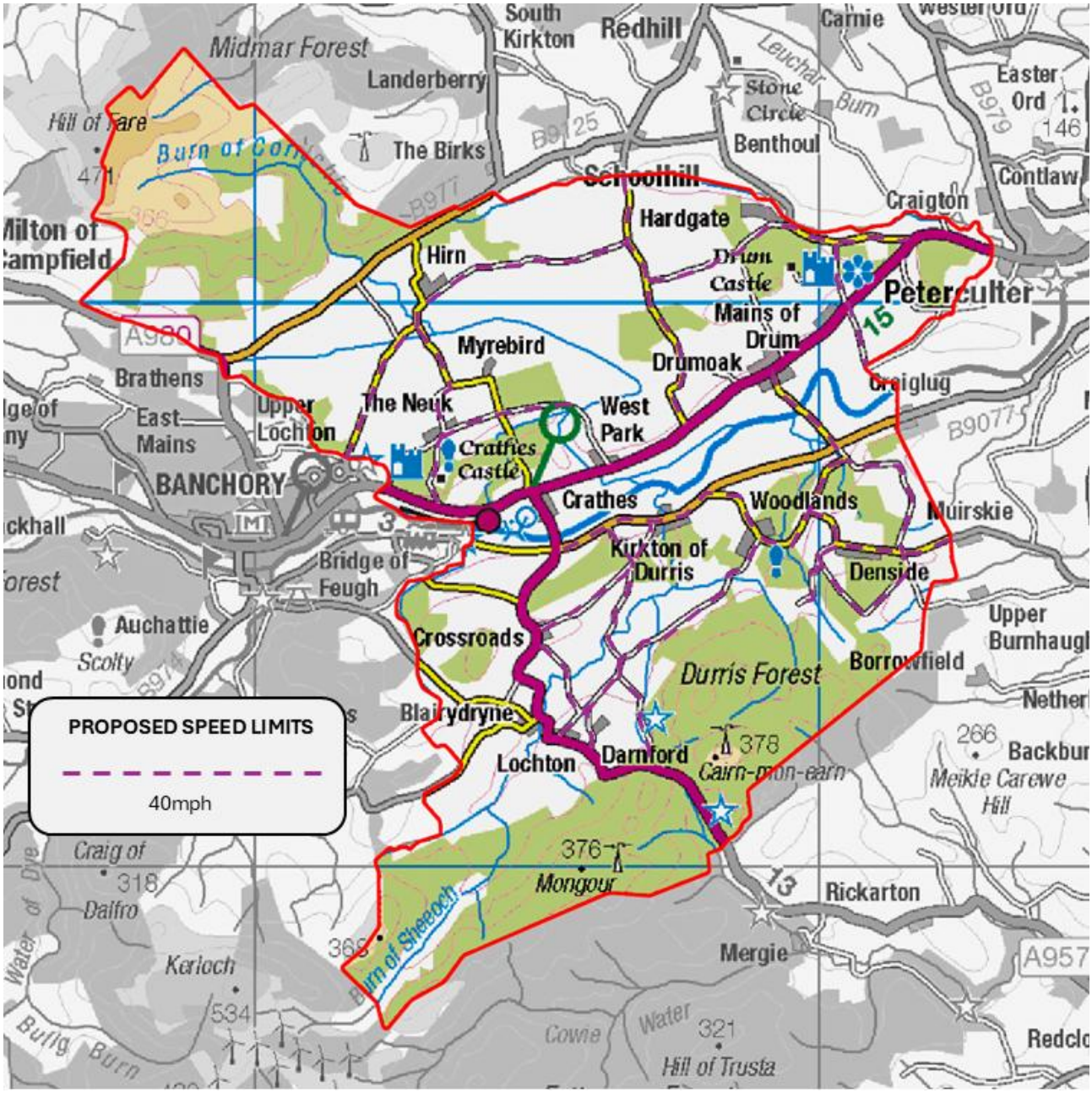
On a positive note, the construction of a proper bus stop at the bottom of the Myrebird Road had been welcomed and a further one at Park Smiddy was strongly suggested.

Respondents suggested a local bus service for the elderly and those with mobility issues, as in Banchory. This was also raised by Warm Space volunteers, who had met difficulties for people willing to attend the group but who were potentially excluded because they did not have access to transport.

Road safety

There is good access to paths for recreational walking but not for active travel.
Respondents said cycling and walking on the country roads was dangerous, especially in rush hour, and would like to see walking and cycling routes within and between settlements be developed and constructed. They noted the excellent example of the path between Hirn and Crathes School.
The widened path between Crathes Hall and the bus stop was also positively commented upon.
People would like the reinstatement of old rights of way and new paths in cultivated areas.
Respondents said that they wanted to see reduced speeds on local roads, especially single-track, narrow roads.

Fig 5 Reduced speeds on local roads, especially narrow rural roads



Footpaths

There are hopes and plans in the community to build a path network specifically linking Woodlands of Durris and Kirkton of Durris and then out to Crathes, Drumoak and the Deeside Way. This project has made significant development during the Spring of 2025 and a consultation regarding proposals for progress was completed in August 2025, when a local group commenced fundraising for this paths network.

8.3 Liveable Places

Built environment

People appreciated the built environment.
The housing is low density, well maintained and there is a lot of greenery.
People are close to walks (Deeside Way, National Trust for Scotland at Drum and Crathes)
People want the peace and beauty of the area to be preserved.

Housing in the future

People thought new housing developments should be smaller and have a mix of housing, not just large executive housing.

There should be housing to cater for a greater range of needs, such as people with mobility issues, on low incomes, wanting to downsize and so on. This would truly be housing responding to local housing needs.

Social and affordable housing should be included as an integral part of any housing development. Planned additional housing at Woodland of Durris, identified on the latest Local Development Plan, should not progress until local infrastructure issues are resolved e.g. drainage, water supply, footpaths. Respondents from each settlement raised this issue and declined further development until facilities and amenities were assured as part of development. Additionally, respondents did not want a new village at Kincluny, between Crathes and Park villages, which they feared may be raised again as the Quarry comes to the end of its useful life; instead, they wanted the continuance of the reinstatement of the site.

Much of the housing that has been built in recent years has not intended to satisfy local housing needs but to provide homes for people who work elsewhere, often in Aberdeen, and who commute to work by car. Increasing car-based commuting is against Aberdeenshire Council and Scottish Government Policy.

Developers should contribute properly to amenities, facilities and more importantly infrastructure e.g. footpaths.

Housing now

There are 0.09 houses per hectare on average.
There were approximately 2200 houses in the CDDCC area in 2022.
62.1% of houses are in Council Tax bands F-G, the highest proportion in Aberdeenshire.
24.7% of houses are in Council Tax bands D-E.
13.2% of houses are in Council Tax bands A-C, which is among the lowest in Aberdeenshire.

The median house price in 2022 was £325,000, approximately £114,000 higher than the Aberdeenshire average.

Average house resale prices were £252,130 in Drumoak 2023/24 with 12 sales.

Mains gas pipelines traverse the area, but many homes are off the gas grid, depending on electricity, oil, LPG, solar panels, wind turbines, solid fuel stoves, wood and solid fuel burners, wood pellet/log boilers and generators for domestic and agricultural purposes.

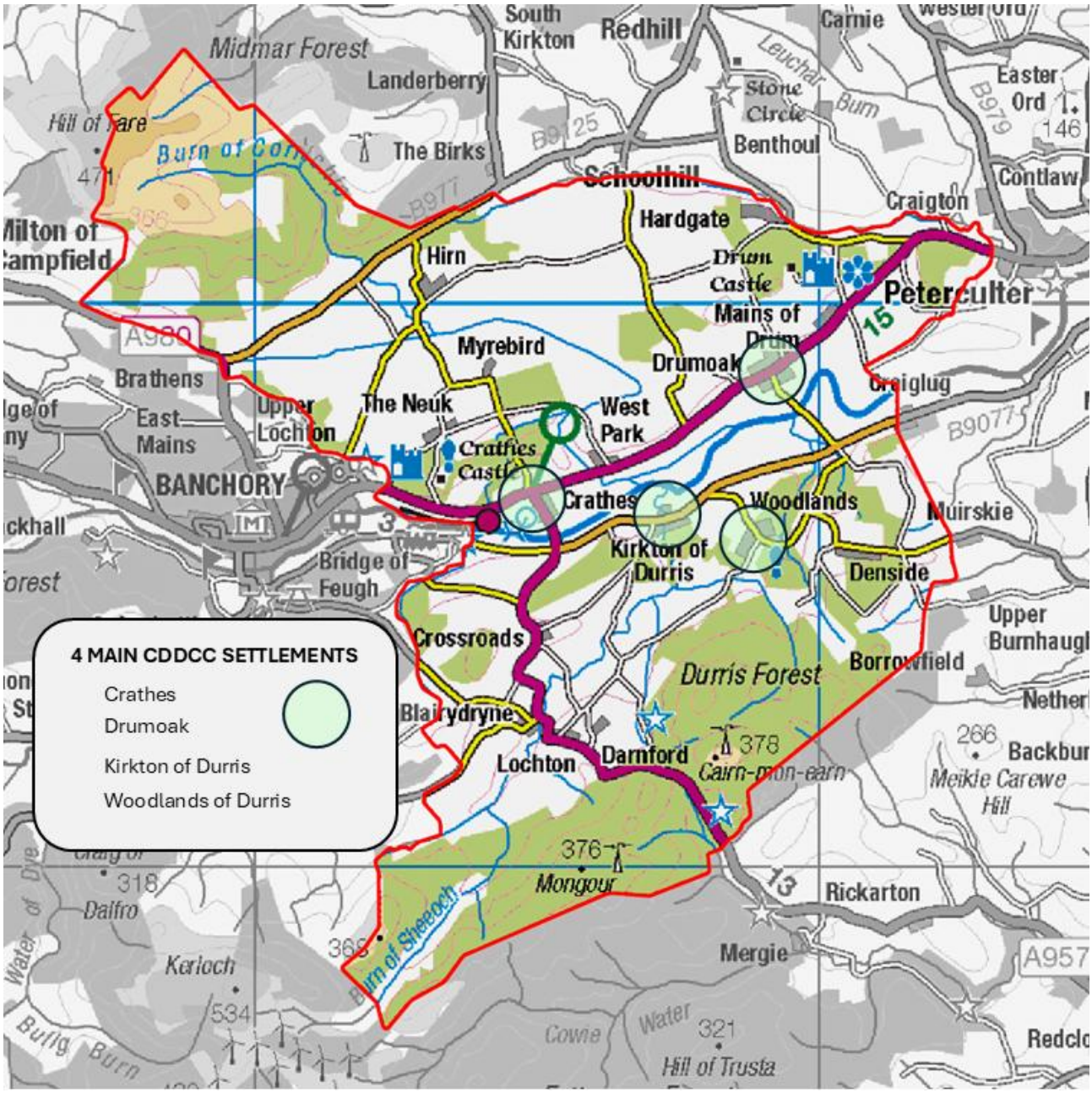
2020 figures (the latest available)

23.7 % of households were in receipt of Single Person Discount for Council Tax.
1.6% of households are in receipt of Housing Benefits.
3.3% of households were overcrowded.
88.3% of addresses had private outdoor space.
51.9% did not have access to super-fast broadband, which SIMD notes as 'sub optimal'. But in terms of digital vulnerability, the area scored -1.1, indicating very low vulnerability, high digital skills and access to computing devices.

We were unable to determine

- How many affordable homes there are in the CDDCC area
- How many houses have heating
- The energy efficiency ratings of homes

Fig 6 Main settlements in CDDCC area



Social Housing

Number of council house properties in each settlement			
	Crathes*	Drumoak	Durris
1 bed		29	4
2 bed		13	
3 bed	2	5	4
total	2	47	

* Very rural: Crathes is the nearest settlement

Housing developments

There has been construction of a small number of individual new-build houses, conversions, upgrades and agricultural buildings scattered throughout the area since 2022.

There have been no new-builds in the Drumoak settlement in 2023-2024.

There have been no larger developments since the James Gregory development in Drumoak 2014/5 and the Stuart Milne development in Crathes 2015/6. It is noted that that development in Crathes of 45 houses effectively doubled the number of houses in the settlement.

Health services

There is no GP practice in the CDDCC area. The area is served by Banchory Group Practice at the Bellfield Surgery in Banchory to the west of the area and by Peterculter Medical Practice in the Aberdeen suburb of Peterculter to the east of the area.

Banchory Group Practice serves 13,200 patients over a wide rural area. There are 13 doctors, 5 community nurses, 5 practice nurses, 2 community treatment and care nurses, 1 urgent care practitioner, 1 pharmacist, 1 physician associate, 18 practice management and administrative staff, 2 secretaries. Health visitors operate from an adjacent building to the practice. Source: Banchory Practice Website.

Peterculter Medical Practice serves over 8000 patients. There are 6 doctors, 2 advanced clinical practitioners, 1 nurse practitioner, 3 practice nurses, 2 healthcare assistants, 1 practice manager, 7 in the care management team, 1 link practitioner, 2 pharmacists, 2 health visitors. The practice links with social work departments and occupational therapy departments in Aberdeen City to provide additional services. Source: Peterculter Medical Practice website.

Community respondents expressed a level of bewilderment about the changes in Primary Health Care service delivery since the COVID pandemic. Therefore, key to our community health and wellbeing is assurance that capacity within healthcare provision for the area is met before allocation for new development. Several respondents raised concerns about access to health services and expressed dismay at perceived reduction in services and healthcare professionals and dissatisfaction with some elements of the service at Peterculter.

Care services and care needs

There are no care homes in the area. There are several in Banchory, Torphins, Kincardine O'Neil, Westhill, Milltimber and Peterculter, all within 15 km of the main settlements in the community council area.

We were unable to find projections of need for care facilities in the area but given the increasing age of the local population, it is highly likely that such facilities will be necessary.

We were unable to determine the number of carers in the area.

Approximately 1.9% of households have Limited Work Capability (LWC). People identified as LWC may apply for additional benefits to assist with living expenses and assisting services.

1.6% of the working population aged 16-64 are in receipt of Personal Independence Payments (PIP). PIP payments help with some of the additional costs associated with ill health, long term disability or terminal ill health.

Health domain data

According to the SIMD 2020 Health Domain Indicators (HDI), the CDDCC area is among the least deprived in Scotland. However, we note the slightly higher proportion of live singleton births of low birthweight babies born in this area compared to the rest of Aberdeenshire.

In comparison with Aberdeenshire statistics the area fares well, as can be seen from the table below. Scotland = 100 in the table.

The Standardised Mortality Ratio (SMR) compares the rates of death with a larger known and stable population, in this case, the whole of Scotland.
The Comparative Illness Factor (CIF) is a health indicator used by SIMD to measure chronic health conditions, specifically by counting the number of individuals receiving benefits for chronic diseases.

HDI	CDDCC	Aberdeenshire	Scotland
CIF	27.5	58	100
Emergency hospital stays	66.5	71.5	100
Hospital stay due to alcohol misuse	16.5	45.4	100
Hospital stay due to drug misuse	0	30	100
Proportion of live singleton low birthweight births	4.8%	4.0%	xx
Proportion of people prescribed drugs for anxiety, depression, or psychosis	10%	15.6%	xx
Standardised mortality ratio	64	85	100

Facilities

People thought there should be an improvement in facilities and services, such as Bellfield Surgery and Banchory Academy, before any more new housing developments.
Some residents of the CDDCC area are now in the catchment area for Peterculter Surgery, and there is dissatisfaction with this surgery and the services it provides.

Traffic

People would like a reduction in speed limits, with traffic calming measures in some places.
60 mph is too high a limit on country roads, with some of them treated as a rat run in rush hours.
Many respondents suggested a 40mph limit on single-track roads with passing places, as a preliminary step. The road near Bogenraith Equestrian Centre towards Netherley was particularly noted as dangerously busy at certain times, requiring speed restrictions there
The speed limit should be 30 mph within settlements and the extent of speed limit areas increased, so that the speed limit does not start at the entrance to the settlement, but some way out.
People would like safe crossings in settlements such as Drumoak, e.g. a pedestrian crossing with traffic lights.

The Glebe in Drumoak

This is a major issue.
Parking should be limited to those with mobility issues.
The Glebe should be more accessible for wheelchair users and pushchairs.
There could be a central picnic area with shade or shelter.
Problems with dirty campers and toileting by the river concerned people very much but they wanted to allow the use of the Glebe if it could be done in a more respectful way. There should be safety equipment in the Glebe, such as a defibrillator and buoyancy aids in case people fall in the River Dee.

Nature and recreation

Respondents were hugely appreciative of living in a green, quiet and beautiful area.
The CDDCC area, approximately 120km^2, has only 0.09 houses per hectare and is one of the most rural in Aberdeenshire.

Half the area is forested, a mixture of commercial woodland, mixed woodland and shelter belts. There are many farms, with arable land and grazing. The area has a diverse variety of birds, animals, plants, invertebrates and environments.

In 2020 88.3% of addresses had access to private outdoor space.
In 2020 the average distance to a public park/garden or public playing field was 1.6km.

Quiet country roads encourage cyclists and walkers to use the area for recreation, although many are discouraged from using the roads due to speed of traffic.

The Deeside Way is used regularly by walkers, cyclists and runners and on occasions for walking and running events run by CLAN and The Kilt Walk and other organisations. Cars and other vehicle clubs make regular 'runs', especially when taking part in organised activities at Milton of Crathes.

National Trust properties at Drum Castle and Crathes Castle welcome people to use their facilities, land and woodlands for recreation.

Village halls

Crathes and Durris have well supported and well-used village halls at the heart of their settlements. Respondents were very appreciative of the work of the hall committees and the services offered but would like to see more community events that would bring all parties and all ages of the communities together.

Drumoak no longer has a village hall, although its importance is noted in the current LDP, but community activities are encouraged at the Drumoak Bowling Club, the former Church Hall and the Primary School. Respondents had suggestions about the potential use of the Bowling Club, especially acoustics and improved access.

Crathes Hall is one of the busiest village halls in Aberdeenshire. It has good parking adjacent and is on the bus route. Activities include a wide range of sporting and health classes for all ages including yoga, pilates, Zumba, morris dancing, dog training, football training for small children, circuit training, TRX and table tennis. There is a monthly community coffee morning and other community events including regular music events as well as private hires. It has an active hall committee whose members are committed to the upkeep and development of the hall.

Durris Hall is supported by an enthusiastic hall committee and local volunteers. It has good parking adjacent, shared by the local Rifle Club. It is used by the Bowling Club, WI, Young Farmers, Scouts, Durris School, Forestry and Land Scotland and private hires.

Children

People thought children were well catered for with good play parks.
People would like more outdoor spaces for older children and teenagers to meet and play sport.
Respondents felt that the football facilities needed to be upgraded and expanded, especially in Durris.

Pubs, cafes and restaurants

Respondents were appreciative of Park Shop in Drumoak but would like a pub and cafe for local socialising and community building, possibly some form of community enterprise.
In Crathes there is a restaurant at Milton of Crathes and a cafe at NTS Crathes Castle.
In Drumoak there is one restaurant and one seasonal cafe.
In Durris there is one restaurant within an equestrian centre.

8.4 Productive Places

Local businesses and entrepreneurship

People would like to see more support for entrepreneurship, with supported re-use of derelict buildings or sites. This would help young people, provide employment opportunities and enhance local communities. There are a few small local businesses but mostly people go to Banchory or further afield for work. There are a lot of opportunities for volunteering.

Tourism

People would like to see more tourist accommodation with a broader range (hostels, bunk houses, camp sites)
Respondents did not want to see a huge increase in tourism, although they acknowledged its importance to the local economy.

Household income

The CDDCC area has one of the highest average household incomes in Aberdeenshire.
2023 median annual income £57,369, £15,613 higher than the Aberdeenshire average.
Approximate 1.9% of households in this area earn less than £10,000 a year. In an affluent area, this poverty can remain hidden.

July 2023

50 people (1.5%) were claiming Universal Credit while unemployed.
80 people (2.4%) were claiming Universal Credit and in employment.
The unemployment rate was 0.6%.
These rates have steadily declined since the end of the COVID pandemic.
The proportion of children living in poverty is among the lowest in Aberdeenshire, but the figures increased in 2023. The actual figures for the area are not separate from the total Aberdeenshire statistics.

Employment

There is not one dominant industry in the CDDCC area.
Jobs tend to be spread out among a number of industries, including an increasing number of businesses with a turnover of over £0.5M

Employee qualifications. SIMD estimates for the CDDCC area 2023:

There are approximately 1500 employees
10% no qualifications
21% level 1 (e.g. NVQ)
15% level 2 (e.g. apprenticeships)
10% level 3 (Certificate and Diploma)
44% level 4 and above (e.g. advanced learning)

Crathes businesses (12):

Tourism and heritage: retail and tourist gifts
Funeral care
Farming and agriculture
Arboriculture
Fishing, angling and casting
Restaurants and cafes
Photography
Farm and garden retail
Art gallery
Individual sole traders / limited companies in technical consultancies
Forestry and land management
Examples of business include NTS Crathes Castle, Leys Estate, Milton of Crathes, Royal Deeside Railway, Baldarroch Crematorium.

Durris businesses (5):

Equestrian and other animal services
Sole traders / limited companies in technical consultancies
Farming and agriculture
Forestry and land management
Examples of businesses include Bogenraith Equestrian (restaurant, specialised equine and pet shop)

Drumoak businesses (41):

Leisure caravans and vehicles
Vehicle repair garages
Garden and home retail; Garden services and design
Cafe / artisan retail
Builders and domestic repair services; Stonemasonry
Animal, including dog services; Equine therapy and health
Forestry, forestry supplies and land management
Vehicle rental and vehicle recovery
Quarrying
Farming and agriculture
Fuel distribution
Personal and beauty mobile services
Tutoring
Tourism and heritage
Sole trader / limited company consultancies
Examples of businesses include SSPCA, Mains of Drum Garden Centre and Restaurant, NTS Drum Castle, Paradigm, and East Mains, Alan Sangster, and Coalford Vehicle Repair Garages.

8.5 Sustainable Places

Natural environment

The area includes many areas of forestry, both private and belonging to Forestry and Land Scotland, including the large Durris Forest.
There are also many small areas of deciduous woodland, including ash trees as yet unaffected by ash die-back.
There are areas of forest with Hyacinthoides non-scripta, an indication of ancient forest areas.
There are many other important habitat areas as identified by Nature Scot and NESBReC (Northeast Scotland Biological Records Centre).
There are also large areas of private estate, some now owned by NTS (Crathes, Drum). These areas are all much appreciated by local people and they would like them protected from developers.

Built environment

People would like derelict sites such as the old primary school and pub in Drumoak to be redeveloped, maybe as sites for artists workshops or for entrepreneurs and start-ups.

Existing facilities

Sustainable communities need facilities and places where people can meet and socialise. People would like a local shop in each settlement and pub or community hub to shop and meet others.
People appreciated the local primary schools.
People appreciated places such as Park Shop and Bogenraith in Durris and the Warm Space Project in Drumoak where people can meet.
However, the closure and sale of the Church of Scotland churches in Durris and Drumoak has had a large effect on the communities. The future of the village (former church) hall in Drumoak is uncertain. In the current LDP, the church, hall and Post Office in Drumoak are identified as important facilities in the village that should be maintained.
The Post Office in Drumoak closed in 2023 and has been replaced by a 2-hour session one day per week in the Bowling Club. Other than this, there is no post office between Banchory and Aberdeen.

Shops

There are no everyday grocery shops for essential shopping and people would like a local shop, maybe community shop, for local shopping.
Peterculter, Banchory and Westhill are the nearest shopping centres.
According to SIMD 2020, the average drive to local amenities was 8.6 minutes, regarded as high.
According to SIMD 2020, the average drive to local amenities using public transport was 24.2 minutes, regarded as extremely high.
The area generally scored highly with regard to remoteness factors.

Employment opportunities

Sustainable communities also need employment opportunities but there are not many employers in Crathes, Durris or Drumoak.
People would like to see support for local businesses and start-ups and artists workshops.

Litter

Litter was identified as a problem, along roadsides and in woodland walks, but it was also thought that local volunteers could get together to deal with this problem.

Access to the countryside

People would like improved access for walkers and cyclists, especially on large private estates and to the riverside.

Climate crisis and biodiversity crisis

The twin focuses of NPF4 are the climate crisis and biodiversity crisis and it is important that both are addressed together; any development should protect and enhance biodiversity and help create and maintain biodiversity corridors.

Although not directly mentioned in most responses, the responses suggest that future developments need to take the environment into account.

Therefore, new housing should be zero-carbon ready and there should be projects to retrofit older houses (which would also support local training and employment).

Just transition

This is an area heavily dependent on oil and gas, but also with many jobs on estates in fishing and shooting. These jobs are all under threat due to a move away from fossil fuels and due to climate change and evolving ideas about land management.
A Just Transition needs to take this into account and provide training and opportunities for people involved in these industries to be able to adapt to this new environment and create or find new jobs which recognise and utilise their skills and knowledge.

Voluntary groups

Respondents noted the abundance of voluntary groups and opportunities for volunteering and were appreciative of this.
In March 2025 there were 52 voluntary groups registered with OSCR covering the CDDCC area, and 13 of these were registered in Drumoak, Crathes or Durris.
There are a further 8 community groups operating under ordinary governing documents.

OSCR registered groups:

2 environmental
3 pre-school and special needs educations
2 heritage
9 sport and fitness
1 armed forces
14 children and young people uniformed organisations
5 religious
9 individual and community benefit
4 arts and music
3 external or overseas benefit

Groups operating under ordinary governing documents:

4 individual and community benefit
1 sport
2 environment
1 pre-school and special needs education

Education

Crathes, Drumoak and Durris each have a primary school, all in the catchment area of Banchory Academy.
People felt there should not be an increase in housing until facilities such as the Academy have caught up with the increase in population over recent years.

A known issue with school roll forecasting is that young people leave the area for education and work in their late teens and twenties when single and return in their later 20s and 30s with families, as the area is highly valued for quality of life. Local doctors note that because of the disproportionate dip in people between the ages of about 18 and 30 or 35, projections do not consider these later population returns and historically underestimate the capacity forecast.

All schools encourage parent helpers (volunteers).

According to the Improvement Service COCP Tool, educational attainment in the area is highly ranked to 6.09.

School roll

	Drumoak School	Crathes School	Durris School
Capacity	155	50	60
Pupil roll 2023	134	40	43
%age of capacity 2023	86%	80%	72%
Pupil roll forecast 2028	107	23	59
%age of capacity forecast 2028	69%	72%	98%

Crathes Primary School

The school is situated in a very rural area between the A93 and the B977.
The catchment area extends to Brown Hill in the north, Greendams and the Cunnach Moss in the east, including NTS Crathes Castle and Leys Estate to the west and Crathes, south to the River Dee.
There is 1 full time teacher and 4 part time teachers.

Durris Primary School and Crossroads Nursey

The school is situated in Woodlands of Durris.
The catchment area extends from the River Dee in the north to Durris Forest and Fetteresso Forest in the south, to Northbrae Plantation, Mulloch and Garrol Hill in the west and Craiglug, Corsehill and Trees in the east.

There are 6 part time teachers, 2 early years practitioners, 1 early years lead practitioner, and 0.5 early years senior practitioner attached to the nursery, which is situated at Crossroads on the Slug Road between Durris and Stonehaven. During the production of this Plan, Aberdeenshire Council announced that Crossroads Nursery was to be mothballed from July 2025. Following a robust local campaign, this decision has been reversed in favour of community consultation.

Drumoak Primary School and Nursery

The new school opened in 2016 in a prominent position overlooking Drumoak and serves a large rural community.
The catchment extends to the A944 in the north, River Dee in the south, Crathes in the West and Peterculter in the east.
School staff: 1 head teacher, 3 full time teachers, 6 part time teachers, 2 full time pupil support assistants, 4 part time support assistants, 2 part time support learning staff, 2 par time visiting specialist teachers.
Nursery staff: 3 full time and 3 part time early years practitioners, 0.5 early years senior practitioner.

Source: School websites

Appendix 1

Summary of results from the Place Standard Tool Questionnaire

Moving around

What's good:
Local roads are good for driving, mostly well maintained and not busy.
The Deeside Way.
The widened path from the bus stop to Crathes Hall and the improved street lighting.

What could be improved:
Repairing potholes, especially on back roads, recurring problem every winter.
Some roads in Durris and Drumoak flood in heavy rain; preventative measures needed.
Flooding in Drumoak has increased since recent clear felling of plantations.
Lack of prompt snow ploughing and gritting in winter is a problem in some areas.
More public grit stores would be useful.
A vehicle is essential to get around.
More electric charging points are needed.
Cycling on local roads is dangerous due to traffic speed, especially in rush hours.
Walking on local roads is difficult due to lack of pavements.
More separate cycle and footpaths within communities and between communities, especially between Drumoak and Mains of Drum.
Bike safe in Drumoak for those who can cycle from Durris to get the bus.

Park Bridge:

The closure of Park Bridge has had a huge effect and is isolating communities.
Drumoak and Durris are separated, often separating families.
The required detour increases fuel costs and pollution.
It takes longer for people in Durris to drive to the North Deeside Road to catch the bus.

Public transport

What's good:
Having a bus service (Crathes and Drumoak).
Free bus travel for children and people over 60.

What could be improved:
The bus service is inadequate (unreliable, confusing timetable, lack of buses in the evening, buses often break down, people end up driving if they need to be somewhere on time or get to work.
The bus service is expensive.
There should be a wider variety of bus routes, not just up and down the valley, for example regular buses to Stonehaven, Westhill, Inverurie.
Local bus service for the elderly and those with reduced mobility.
Bus stops at Myrebird Road and Park Smiddy.
Bus stops should have the glass side facing the road.
The timetable should be in larger print so partially sighted people can read it.
There should be information at the bus stops in braille.
The information in bus stops should be placed at a reasonable height.
Bus service along the South Deeside Road (Durris).
Space on buses for bikes for those who want to cycle in Upper Deeside.
Link housing development to improvement in public transport.

Traffic

What's good:
Traffic is generally not too bad outside rush hours.
The Netherley Road is quieter since the opening of the Aberdeen Peripheral Route (APR).

What could be improved:
Speeding is a key concern, along the A93, South Deeside Road and the back roads.
Walking and cycling need to be made safer because of speeding.
The route from Netherley to Durris is a bit of a rat run.
60mph was too high a speed limit for country roads.
30mph limit in settlements.
Some want 40mph limit outside settlements, including the South Deeside Road.
Some want speed cameras and traffic calming measures.
Speed limit signs to be placed further outside the settlement envelope.
People in Drumoak would like a pedestrian crossing with traffic lights.

Streets and spaces

What's good:
Low density housing with a lot of greenery.
Proximity to Deeside Way, walks, NTS properties Drum and Crathes.

What could be improved:
Protect the environment from developers apparently just doing as they please.
Renovation of unused plots e.g. site of Irvine Arms and the old school (Drumoak).
Housing plans should include amenities and not just houses.
There could be information boards about the history and geography of the place.
Public toilets.
Indoor community or public spaces.

Natural spaces

What's good:
People realise they are fortunate to live in a beautiful part of the world.
Good access to natural spaces (woodland, private estates, forestry, riverside, NTS).

What could be improved:
Preserve the beauty and peace of the area.
Developments should not endanger the quality of the natural environment.
You really need a car to be able to reach many places where it is nice to go for a walk.
Improve access to private estates and riverside walks (there are specific examples)
Reinstatement of old public rights of way.
New paths in cultivated areas.
More footpaths on the model of those made by Leys estate from Crathes School to Hirn.
Paths could be made more accessible and maintained for wheelchair access.
Paths in the woodlands of Durris could be kept clear of fallen trees and shrubs.
The historic Elsick Mounth path could be unblocked of fallen trees.
People were keen to point out volunteers could help with or undertake this work.
Littering, by the road and in woodlands, is a problem but volunteers could deal with this.

Play and recreation

What's good:
Parents of young children thought there were plenty of play parks in the area.

What could be improved:
Better sports facilities for children and teenagers.
Publicly available astroturf area.
Facilities for older children and teenagers, inside or outside, as there is nothing for them.
Football facilities are oversubscribed and out of date.

The Glebe in Drumoak is a major issue:
Parking should be limited to those with mobility issues.
The Glebe should be more accessible for wheelchair users and pushchairs.
Central picnic area with shade or shelter.
Problems with dirty campers and toileting by the river concerned people very much.
Allowing use of the Glebe if it could be done in a more respectful way.
Safety equipment in the Glebe.

Facilities and services

What's good:
Local primary schools.
Local businesses e.g. Park Shop (Drumoak), Bogenraith (Durris).
Warm Spaces initiative (Fridays in Drumoak throughout the cold months).
Village Halls and their activity programmes.

What could be improved:
More facilities and services in the villages.
People have to go to Banchory or elsewhere for most things, necessitating driving or use of unreliable buses.
Upgrade Banchory Academy and Banchory Bellfield Surgery to keep up with huge increase in population.
No more housing without an improvement in facilities and services.
More state nurseries and improved childcare. There is limited and expensive availability.
The library in Banchory should be open six and not four days per week.
Library van would be appreciated.
A convenience store, local pub, cafe and/or community hub would enhance local life and social interaction.
There were various ideas about where and what this would look like.
More activities and events in village halls to bring different groups and ages together.
Uplift of garden refuse and glass for recycling, to reduce trips to the recycling centre in Banchory.

The last LDP noted that the hall and Post Office in Drumoak should be maintained as they enhance the village and also noted the importance of the church. Durris and Drumoak have lost their churches. Drumoak Hall has a question mark hanging over it. The Post Office has gone and there is no post office now between Banchory and Aberdeen.

Work and local economy

What's good:
There are some local businesses.
There are plenty of opportunities for volunteering.

What could be improved:
Most people work in Banchory and Aberdeen.
Vacant sites to be developed as local shops or workshops to help the local economy.
There could be more of an evening scene, such as a pub might offer.
Tourism is important but people did not want over-promotion because it would have negative effect on the area.
Greater range of tourist accommodation: bunk houses, hostels, campsites.
Local directory of skills of potential volunteers.

Housing and community

What's good:
An attractive built environment with a range of housing styles and ages, well maintained.

What could be improved:
Housing developments should be smaller.
Housing developments should have a greater variety of housing size.
Housing should reflect local housing needs (affordable and social housing, downsizing, reduced mobility and bungalows rather than large executive housing).
Housing should be resilient in terms of energy, utilising
There should not be any more new housing until facilities catch up with the huge increase in population in recent years.
Developers should have to contribute properly to amenities and facilities.
In Drumoak thought that vacant sites, especially the church and old school, could be developed.
There is a range of ideas.

Social interaction

What's good:
Local communities are diverse, friendly, welcoming and open-minded.
People are friendly across age groups.
People in Drumoak felt you could be yourself without judgement.
Park Shop provides a space for informal social interaction.
The monthly Crathes Fly in Crathes Hall was also appreciated.
There are a lot of community groups and social media groups.

What could be improved:
Some people in Durris said there was a divide between 'old Durris' and incomers but people were not unfriendly.
More opportunities for informal interaction (shop, pub or cafe).
Evening classes in the local primary schools.
More opportunities for people and groups to get together.
More events in village halls.
Keeping in touch and finding out what's on. Local newsletter, email, WhatsApp etc.

Identity and belonging

What's good:
People felt that the place they lived has a sense of identity and history.
People are proud and happy to live where they do.
There is a strong community spirit.

What could be improved:
Settlements lack a focal point.
Feeling safe

What's good:
People feel safe.
People thought the crime rate seems to be low.

What could be improved:
In Durris some people were concerned about the rise in rural crime.

Care and maintenance

What's good:
The general area and houses and gardens seem well looked after.

What could be improved:
In Durris gorse along the road could be trimmed to improve visibility for drivers.
Litter is problem with people throwing rubbish out of car windows.
Local people plant rough areas in the settlements but sometimes these areas get sprayed by the council and the hard work is destroyed. Co-ordination with Aberdeenshire Council roads department is necessary.
A lot of the care and maintenance could be done by volunteers - litter picking, planting, path clearing, pavement clearing where they have become overgrown.
The council needs to deal with potholes, places that flood every time it rains, snow ploughing and gritting.

Influence and sense of control

What's good:
People were very appreciative of the Community Council. They are active on issues people care about, approachable, and people know how to contact members.
People appreciated being consulted for the LPP.
The community has worked well together reactively on the issues of Hill of Fare Wind farm proposal and SSEN Kintore to Tealing route.

What could be improved:
Some felt there have been a lot of surveys and consultation but no action. It is vital that this LPP is built upon by the CDDC and that it is seen to genuinely influence planning in the area.
SSEN pylon route should not be granted planning permission. Subsea or underground options should be considered.
The community has worked together on the SSEN pylons issue but is it being listened to? People felt SSEN and the Scottish Government did not care about NE Scotland.
Communities should continue to work proactively for their betterment. There should be greater consideration of local issues and more long term planning. Those who make decisions locally tended to be retired and rich, therefore decision-making should be widened to include all age groups and backgrounds.

Appendix 2

Summary of comments from public engagement events

What's great about where you live?

Activities, amenities and facilities:
Sid Bichen's night for music (Drumoak)
Pylons issue has brought the community together (Drumoak)
Pretty good pavements for those who are not disabled or wheels users (Drumoak)
Warm Space and Friendship Club (Drumoak)
Grass now being cut / maintained (Drumoak)
Good schools and nurseries
Bowling Club
Bus Routes
Dial-a-bus
Deeside Way
Lack of pylons
Village Hall - classes, Fly, wedding and party venue, plays (Crathes)
Supportive community

Environment:
Lots of green spaces and beautiful countryside
Peaceful
Space
Wildlife
Room for activity development
Natural beauty, forests, walks, generally peaceful
Beautiful area
Dog walking
Natural space
Good walking paths
Feel very safe, safe area, feels very safe (other than roads)

Social:
Slow to integrate but get solid friendships
Diverse population
Good and friendly neighbours
Friendly community. Community togetherness
Community council has good, accessible members.
National Trust attractions

What do you want to keep? Where?

Good play areas for small children
Bowling Club and Warm Space
Friendship Club
School
Post Office
Grass throughout the community
Views
Keep fit
Pilates
Community shops
Facilities / services
Trees plus more deciduous trees
Natural space
Quietness
Diversity
Village halls
Strong communities
Social Interaction
Reinstate Park Bridge. Especially important for families that are separated

What do you want to change? Where?

Transport
Buses/Old stock/Service needs to be much better
More frequent/Reliable and on time
Live time updates for all buses

Route from Stonehaven to Westhill: many services have left Banchory and have been located in Stonehaven and Westhill, which are difficult to reach by public transport (have to go into Aberdeen and out again)

Can't reliably get back from Aberdeen, especially in the evening
People boarding westbound buses in Aberdeen who are getting off before Peterculter take up room from people travelling further along Deeside
Alternative bus routes not just into Aberdeen

Public transport to connect local towns and villages
Better access to public transport
Bust Stop at Park Smiddy
Public Transport on the South Deeside Road

Cycling and walking

Dedicated cycle routes separate from traffic to connect local towns and villages
Quiet lanes on back roads
Treat icy pavements promptly in winter which are often left untreated, a hazard for older people,
Potholes and poor road surfaces
Reinstatement of old rights of way
More parking near woodland for dog walking
New footpaths in cultivated areas
More footpaths, on the model of the excellent paths at Hirn
Footpaths along roadsides
Access to Park Estate around the Park Bridge -estate management has put in measures to stop access and make it clear walkers are not welcome
Reinstate the bridge over the Burn at the border Dunecht and Park Estates, under the pylons
Reinstate access to the Park Estate through the gate opposite the end of the Myrebird Road

Traffic

Traffic speeds are improving but speeding remains problematic
Drumoak. At the east entrance to the village, traffic is still too fast on reaching the 40mph sign. Signs should be further back so traffic is going at the reduced limit when they enter the village. Traffic island to slow traffic needed.
Generally, reposition the speed limit signs and warning signs to calm traffic before it reaches the speed limit at the entrances, from all directions to every village and settlement.

30 mph limit through all settlements e.g. Drumoak, Crathes, Kirkton of Durris
Review of speed limits on main roads
Crathes: Permanent flashing lights at the entrance to the village to warn of speed limit
Bogenraith Road is dangerous - it needs traffic calming and speed limits 40mph
Reduce roadkill of cats, squirrels, deer
Better road maintenance
Pedestrian crossings
Electric car charging points
Re-open Park Bridge

Housing

More solar panels
Quality of house insulation
Really affordable in places accessible to public transport
Council housing
Low cost housing
Not just large, detached houses, but houses for young people, less well-off people, older people wanting to downsize
Proper consultation on potential new housing
Developers should contribute properly to amenities and facilities e.g. huge amount of development locally but surgery and academy in Banchory are struggling and badly in need of new premises
Housing development should truly reflect local housing needs (downsizing, social, affordable)

Developments

The pylons issue is causing anxiety and nervousness
If the power lines were subsea and/or underground, there would be very little objection, and work could progress much more quickly
People do not want the pylons and do not want other communities to have them instead

Community

Newsletter or email, timely distribution
What's on sheet monthly
Improve the acoustics in the bowling club Drumoak
Warm space. Great idea. More days?
Wild Camping in the Glebe in Drumoak is a problem. Provide facilities. People felt most of the wild campers knew how to behave.

General

More for tourists
Mini supermarket/Community shop
Local pub or restaurant/Community Cafe
Mental wellbeing hub
Need public transport, shops, church, pub, medical practice, chip shop, post office
Activities for teenagers. Youth Club?
Keep Fit Classes
More community police

What community projects would you like to see?

The village needs a heart (Drumoak)
Community hub with pub, coffee shop, community hub, meeting place etc.
Community buyout of the land set aside for the pub to build a pub and community facility (Drumoak)
Promotion of who James Gregory was and his achievements (a road is named after him) (Drumoak)
Park Bridge to reopen to cars. The community is split. It costs so much in time and money to detour.
Could be slow traffic e.g. a quiet lane
Allow Crathes to have its own identity
Warm Space in Crathes
New village hall in Crathes
Additional football pitch with facilities in Banchory to match the rugby facilities
Community communication could be better
30mph speed limit in villages and hamlets. Monitor speed limits and speed hotspots
Community composting
Community recycling facility
Local directory of skills for volunteering action
Reinstate the Elsick Mounth Path in Brachmont Wood

Appendix 3

Wider context of community involvement and Local Place Plans

UN Sustainable Development Goals

No poverty
Zero hunger
Good health and well-being
Quality education
Gender equality
Clean water and sanitation
Affordable and clean energy
Decent work and economic growth
Industry, innovation and infrastructure
Reduced inequalities
Sustainable cities and communities
Responsible consumption and production
Climate action
Life below water
Life on land
Peace, justice and strong institutions
Partnerships for the goals

OECD Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

Regional Development Policy Committee - Working Party on Rural Policy.
Has climate change as a priority.

Principles on rural policy include:

Deliver policies at the right geographic scale
Align strategies to deliver public services
Strengthen social, economic, ecological and cultural resilience
Promote inclusive development
Monitor policy outcomes

Scottish Land Commission (SLC)

Scottish Land Commission polices on *Delivering Community Benefits from Land*, (https://www.landcommission.gov.scot/) and *Just Transition* (https://movementgeneration.org/justtransition/)include guidelines for landowners, investors and government to follow in order to deliver on the Scottish Government's clear expectation that investment in Scotland's land will deliver community benefit.

Making the most of Scotland's land means involvement of communities in decision-making about land and also considering the many ways in which the community can benefit from the way land is owned, managed and used. This goes beyond engagement to empowerment.

The SLC also 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.

The drive to a net zero economy is bringing significant land use change. In Scotland this has already begun. This change brings both risks and opportunities, and there are important questions that must be answered about who makes decisions, who benefits, and how they benefit.

A more collaborative approach to place-making is needed in which the public and private sectors share risks and reward to deliver the places Scotland needs.

National Planning Framework 4

Six key outcomes for NPF4:

1. strong and flexible development plans
2. delivery of more high quality homes
3. **i**nfrastructure-first approach to planning and development
4. **e**fficient and transparent development management
5. Stronger leadership, smarter resourcing and sharing of skills
6. Collaboration rather than conflict - inclusion and empowerment

Climate crisis and biodiversity crisis are given equal emphasis, and all development must take these two equally into account.

Major principles are:

- Human rights and equality
- Community wealth building
- Design, quality and place
- Nature-based solution

Planning is about communities and people.
Things should not happen to communities but with proper consultation with communities, before any plans have been made. In 2024 the Planning Minister said that it is crucial that the system in front loaded and that the public is engaged as early as possible.

Annex D Six qualities of successful places:

- Healthy
- Pleasant
- Connected
- Distinctive
- Sustainable
- Adaptable

Local Development Plan (LDP)

In the NPF4, LDPs must address the global climate emergency and nature crisis by ensuring that the spatial strategy will reduce emissions and adapt to current and future risks of climate change by promoting nature recovery and restoration in the area.

Policy impacts must consider:

1. Just transition
2. Conserving and recycling assets
3. Local living
4. Compact urban growth
5. Rebalanced development

Rural revitalisation: Housing should be plan-led and not developer-led, to deliver the right housing in the right place, aiming for sustainable homes rather than expensive speculative homes in the green belt.