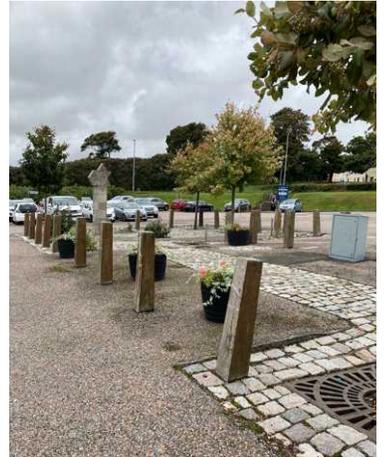




Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL



TOWN CENTRE HEALTH CHECK
SEPTEMBER 2022
BANFF, ABERDEENSHIRE



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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Town centre health checks are a way of analysing the factors that contribute to successful town centres and indicate good standards of vitality and viability. The vitality of a centre is a measure of how lively and busy it is, whilst viability is a measure of its centre's capacity to attract ongoing investment.

Town Centre Health Checks have been completed in Aberdeenshire since 2003. However, in 2021 a new methodology was introduced to showcase a fresh and updated approach for Aberdeenshire.

Aberdeenshire is an extremely attractive area with a variety of coastal and rural environments, commuter towns, high levels of employment, and there is considerable new housing and employment land planned for the near future. Maintaining town centres' attractiveness, activeness, and accessibility is vital for the region to be able to continue to thrive.

BACKGROUND

The importance of town centres is widely acknowledged. Town centres are at the heart of communities, providing a sustainable focus for shopping, business, leisure, services and community life, and shaping their sense of place. The planning system has an important role to play in supporting successful town centres, through influencing the form and type of future development. In order to assess how a centre should be supported, evidence of its current performance is required.

NPF4 notes that policies should 'encourage, promote and facilitate development in our city and town centres, recognising they are a national asset' (NPF4, page 81).

Town centres with a vibrant retail scene, a wide variety of services, attractive buildings and open space create economic growth, attract more people to the region, and promote a sense of well-being and identity.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present the results of the Town Centre Health Check 2022 for Banff. The results are presented to enable an understanding of the vitality and viability of the town centre. The results are not to be considered definitive of the well-being of a town centre, but rather they are intended to provide an evidence-based comparative perspective on this matter and assist in identifying actions that could be undertaken to improve and maintain their status.

WHY COMPLETE A HEALTH CHECK?

Health checks contribute to the planning system's efforts to support successful town centres through giving an overview of their current performance. They provide an analysis of the infrastructure and viability of the town centre which can be used to inform the Local Development Plan and decisions on planning applications. The findings are also utilised to create help a stronger "town centre first principle" policy.

METHODOLOGY

TOWN CENTRE HEALTH CHECKS SHOULD:

- Support implementation of the Local Development Plan
- Add value by collecting data on a wider set of indicators that provide insight into economic, social and environmental factors that play a part in the vitality of a town centre
- Have a clear, easy to follow and accessible format and methodology
- Work collaboratively both within the Council and externally with businesses and the community to collect and share baseline data
- Provide the foundation for other town strategies and plans and any subsequent funding applications

To achieve these results, the following methods of data collection and presentation were utilised:

DESK TOP RESEARCH

Desk top research was completed to provide the critical first step of gathering information for the town centre. Background information on the current situation of the town centre was then analysed further when out on site. Data was gathered from within the Council and from external partners.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

For the principal town centres, the surveys are being conducted every two years as it is considered this would reduce the risk of consultation fatigue and allow for monitoring of any changes within town centres which have occurred in that period. The community survey was designed to gain an understanding of the views of both the residents and visitors of the town centre. The survey was available on Engage HQ in 2021, shared via a press release, advertised on the Council's Social Media and emailed to relevant groups to advertise further. The survey asked questions on several different topics and provided respondents the opportunity to identify what improvements they would like to see to the town centre. The survey was open for three weeks and received 65 responses. A summary of the responses received can be seen on page 43.



Look out for: Quote Boxes. Comments were asked for in both the community and business surveys and a selection have been included in the report to give a flavour of the different responses received.

METHODOLOGY (CONTINUED)

BUSINESS SURVEY

For the principal town centres, the surveys are being conducted every two years as it is considered this would reduce the risk of consultation fatigue and allow for more effective monitoring of any changes within town centres which have occurred in that period. The survey was available on Engage HQ in 2021 and was shared via relevant groups for completion. Several topics were questioned, including the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on businesses. The survey also gave an opportunity to comment on improvements that businesses would like to see to the town centre. The survey was open for three weeks and received 14 responses. A summary of the responses received can be seen on page 43.

FOOTFALL AND TRAFFIC COUNTS

The footfall count was completed at two locations throughout the town centre to gain information on the vitality at different times of the day. Four time slots were selected to gain information of the vibrancy in the morning, afternoon and evening. The counts were completed for 15-minute periods on a weekday and weekend to try and gain an insight into the number of people moving around the town centre. These footfall counts were a team effort and carried out by Aberdeenshire Council Officers and members of the community. In response to feedback received following the Town Centre Health Checks in 2021, traffic counts were also added to the methodology for all towns. Where possible, traffic counts were carried out at the same location as the pedestrian counts and for the same length of time following completion of the footfall counts. Where traffic counts could not be carried at the same location at the footfall counts, these were done at the closest viable point in order to gain information on the number of vehicles using the town centre.

SITE SURVEY

This work was completed on a clear day and provided up to date information on the vitality and viability of the town centre. Several recording methods were used including maps, photographs and written analysis. The Place Standard themes were used to analyse the town centre and allowed for different themes to be analysed on an individual basis but also as a collective.

ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT

During the 2021 survey, supported by Community Learning and Development officers we worked with members of the local community with lived experience to undertake an assessment of the town centre, assessing footway surfaces and obstructions, facilities and signage, maintenance and enforcement, personal security, crossing points and access to buildings. The survey took place on a dry but cold day over two hours. The results from the 2021 accessibility audit were reviewed as part of the survey this year and relevant points updated as necessary. The merits in revisiting the accessibility audit for the principal town centres will be considered in the future to determine the frequency in which they are carried out as part of the Town Centre Health Checks.

How a place looks, its history and what other people think of a place can affect how we feel. A strong local identity can help us feel pride in our place, our community and in ourselves as a result.

Observations: From the 2021 community and business surveys, the majority of respondents who used the town centre felt negatively towards it. This was demonstrated in the comments, where the decline was seen most strongly in the maintenance of buildings, the lack of retail choice and general feel and vibrancy of the town. However, there was also a sense of pride in the heritage and geographical location and some recognition that change is starting to happen. Community spirit was rated poor or very poor by almost half of all respondents.

The growth of Banff: Banff has a rich history. It was a former royal burgh, and is the county town of the historic county of Banffshire. Banff dates from the **1100's** when it was an important port exporting salmon to Europe. It continued to be a key fishing and fish trading port, however the harbour suffered from silting in the **1800's**. Today it is home to small fishing boats and leisure craft. Banff was also well known for high quality silversmithing. The town contains a variety of architecture in a number of contrasting styles, with the highest number of Georgian listed buildings in Scotland outside Edinburgh. Manufacturing and construction are the dominant forms of employment today with health and social work services being particularly active.

Source: Understanding Scottish Places, Undiscovered Scotland and Banff and Macduff Heritage Trail

IDENTITY & BELONGING

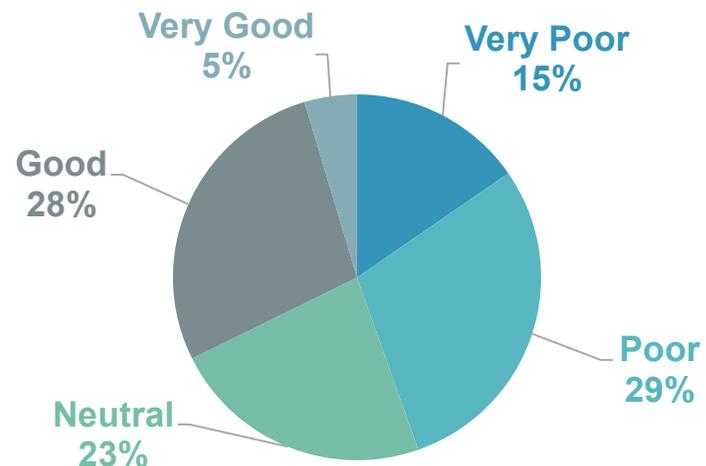


How Do You Feel About Banff Town Centre?



31% Community 69% Community
31% Businesses 69% Businesses

IN YOUR OPINION, COMMUNITY SPIRIT IN THE TOWN CENTRE IS?



“Generally positive but looking rundown in areas.”

“It’s a couthy little town and very friendly.”

“It is certainly starting to improve but still lots to do.”

“Commitment to making improvement is required from the community and community is just not there.”

“I am Banff born and raised, as my family has been for generations... I feel strongly about securing the future of the town centre in terms of employment opportunities, shopping and property maintenance.”

“It has a good range of businesses, and lovely location close to the sea.”

“Inject life back into the town. It is quite a depressing town centre.”

“Banff looks and feels as if it’s lost its soul.”

“Overall I am very positive personally and with customers about the essence of Banff as a place with its history and buildings and its massive potential. But specifically in relation to how it works at the moment and the condition it’s in, I am less positive.”

“Having been brought up in Banff and still live local it’s awful to see things so run down really nothing inspiring...”

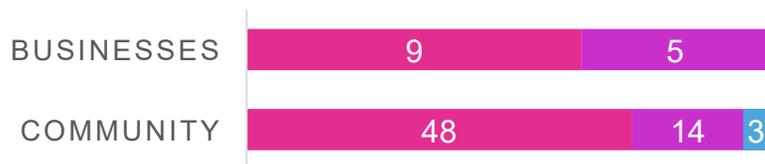
Business and Community Survey, September 2021

Feeling safe in and around the places that we spend time in can have a significant impact on people's activities and on their health and wellbeing. Through their design and maintenance, good places should feel safe and secure for all, and help to minimise crime and antisocial behaviour.

Observations: Safety during the day was the most positive rated category by both businesses and visitors to the town in the 2021 surveys. Safety during the evening was also rated good, but with more neutral responses. This perhaps indicates that people do not go into the town centre at night. Very few comments were received on safety which, coupled with the ratings, could indicate that people are less concerned about this than some other indicators. Lighting is a mixture of both functional and attractive, although some columns, such as those in St. Mary's Car Park for instance, are in need of maintenance. The improvement works to Bridge Street may be highlighted within the surveys for next year as a positive feature, including lighting. There is no CCTV system in place within the town centre.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE: SAFETY DURING THE DAY?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



FEELING SAFE

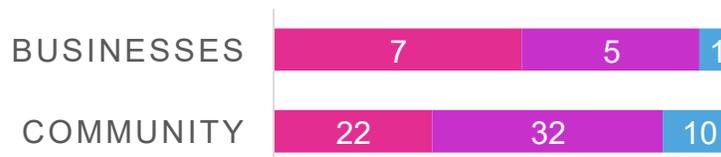


Key Safety Features:

- Lighting styles are mixed to reflect the architectural style of the town and well distributed across the town; most are well maintained
- No central CCTV system in place

HOW WOULD YOU RATE: SAFETY DURING THE EVENING?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



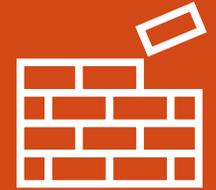
51 Incidences of crime reported
1st September 2021 – 31st July 2022
Police Scotland



Images (Clockwise from Top Left): Traditional style lighting, Bridge Street; Modern style lighting, High Street; Traditional style lighting, Low Street; Lighting column requiring maintenance, St Mary's Car Park.

Places that are well cared for can make us feel better about a place, while those that are neglected can have the opposite effect. Proper maintenance arrangements allow people to feel supported and more positive about where they live.

CARE & MAINTENANCE



Vacant Shop Unit

Weeds in building

Bench requiring maintenance

Weeds in building

Observations: There is a real mix in the upkeep of buildings within Banff. The maintenance of buildings within the town centre was a real concern to a large number of the 2021 survey respondents. Only 6 respondents from both the business and community surveys noted that they would rate the maintenance of buildings within the town centre as good. The topic was rated within the bottom five of all topics surveyed by both the community and businesses.

The images (left) give an impression of the town centre environment.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE: CARE & MAINTENANCE OF BUILDINGS?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor

BUSINESSES	3	11	
COMMUNITY	6	10	48

“Tidying of buildings including gutter cleaning etc.”

“Empty shops should be regenerated.”

“Empty buildings are becoming an eyesore.”

“Derelict buildings and empty shops tidied up to improve the look of the town.”

“Care and maintenance of buildings varies considerably, some well cared - for and some totally neglected.”

People's views about their local area should be heard. Having a voice in decision making and feeling able to make changes can help to build stronger communities and better places. Having a sense of control can make people feel positive about their lives.

INFLUENCE & SENSE OF CONTROL



Town Centre Groups	Banff and Macduff in Bloom	Banffshire Business Forum	Banff & Macduff Community Council
Legal Status	Voluntary Group	Constituted Group	Community Council
Membership	Volunteer committee and helpers	Businesses from the Banff, Macduff and wider Banffshire area (AB44, AB45)	The community; 13* Members
Responsibilities	Community project to enhance the main areas of Banff and Macduff with floral display. The group look after the hanging baskets and tubs across the towns.	Banffshire Business Forum was formed in 2020 to bring together the local business communities in the area. It offers a local business support network and promotes local spend. All business owners in the area are invited to join. Committee meetings are held monthly. The Forum hosts a programme of events and networking opportunities throughout the year. Supporting projects such as Fiver Fest, the Love Banff and Macduff website and the Scotland Loves Local Gift Card.	Community Councils (CC) are the most local tier of statutory representation in Scotland, bridging the gap between local authorities and communities. Key tasks: Representing CCs on other organisations; Campaigning on local issues; Conducting local surveys; Organising public meetings on major development proposals or the Local Development Plan; Statutory Body for public consultation on Planning and Licensing; Representing and providing a platform for public views.
Contact	Banff and Macduff in Bloom	Banffshire Business Forum	Banff & Macduff Community Council

Observations: The Banff & Macduff Community Council was recently re-established (August 2022) and by next year's surveys it may become more evident within the community survey responses. The Business Forum remains a useful addition to the town and the In Bloom group work hard to green the town centre. Town projects are supported by Aberdeenshire Council and cross-sector working through the Regeneration Partnership. Awareness of groups is low so greater promotion could be considered.

“Urgent is the key word here - the opportunity to take action must be grasped. Banff has suffered for too long from plans and promises, but now needs action and opportunity.”
Business and Community Survey, September 2021

38% of community survey respondents were aware of groups that support the town centre.

The word cloud (right) shows responses, from the 2021 surveys, when asked to name town centre groups, with Banffshire Business Forum (6), Regeneration Partnership (5) and In Bloom and the Phoenix Fund (both 4) receiving the most.

Christmas Lights Group
Banff and Macduff in Bloom
Banff Preservation and Heritage Society
Banffshire Business Forum
Banffshire Partnership
Phoenix Fund
Canal Park Group
Regeneration Partnership

Walking and cycling are beneficial for both our health and the environment. Good places can support and encourage people to walk and cycle by providing quality routes and a pleasant and safe experience.

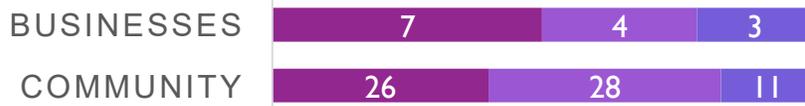
MOVING AROUND



Observations: The town centre is shared by vehicles and pedestrians. Getting around scored as one of the top five best elements of the town for business respondents in 2021. Signage and getting around both had a mix of good and neutral responses, with fewer poor ratings. Signage is considered adequate, however there was no signage near the Trinity Car Park on Castle Street. The disconnect between High Street and Low Street was commented on, with the accessibility of Strait Path raised as a concern.

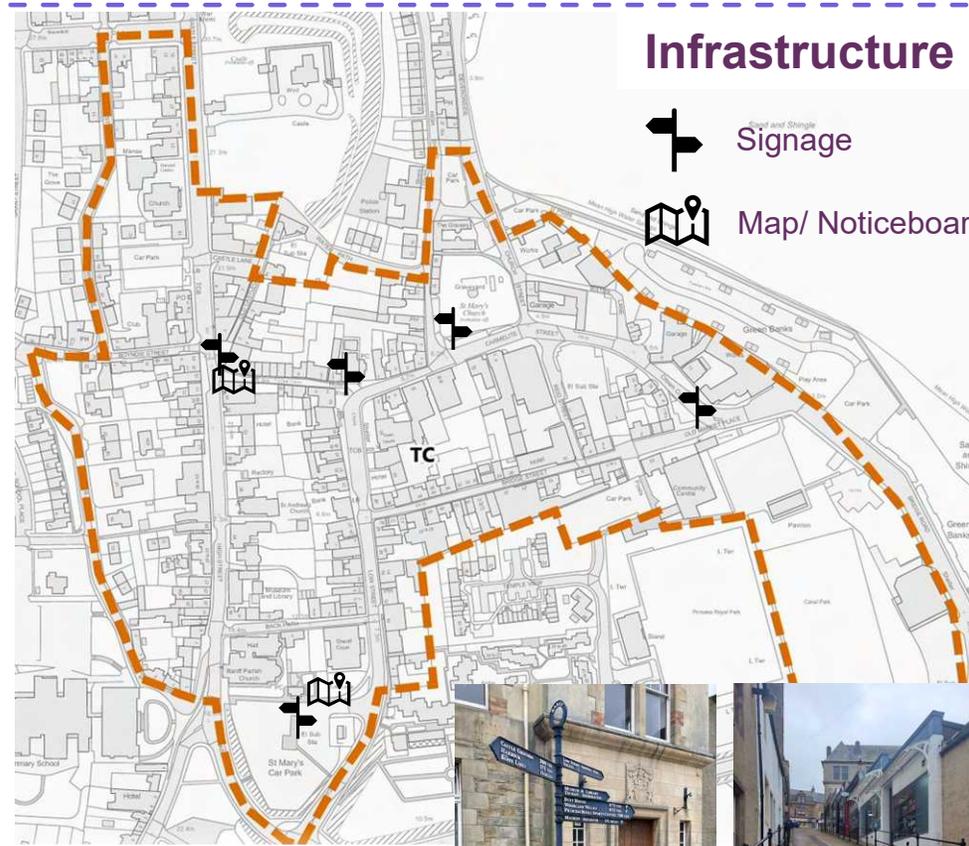
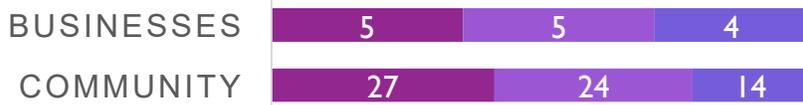
HOW WOULD YOU RATE: GETTING AROUND THE TOWN CENTRE?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



HOW WOULD YOU RATE: SIGNAGE?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



“Need more crossings for pedestrians. Lorries... go too fast on High Street and Sandyhill Road.”

“More signage for the beach, the school. Signage to show local beaches, castles in more detail.”

“The town needs a focal point as it is split in two, Strait Path is useless for anyone with a disability so there needs to be some way of connecting Low St. to High St.”

“Such a divide between High Street and Low Street. Need a strategy to create atmosphere on both streets. A unique town centre with adjoining path ways – great opportunities.”
Business and Community Survey, September 2021

Images (Left to Right): Fingerpost signage, Castle Street/ Strait Path; Strait Path; Town Map, St. Mary's Car Park.



MOVING AROUND: CYCLING

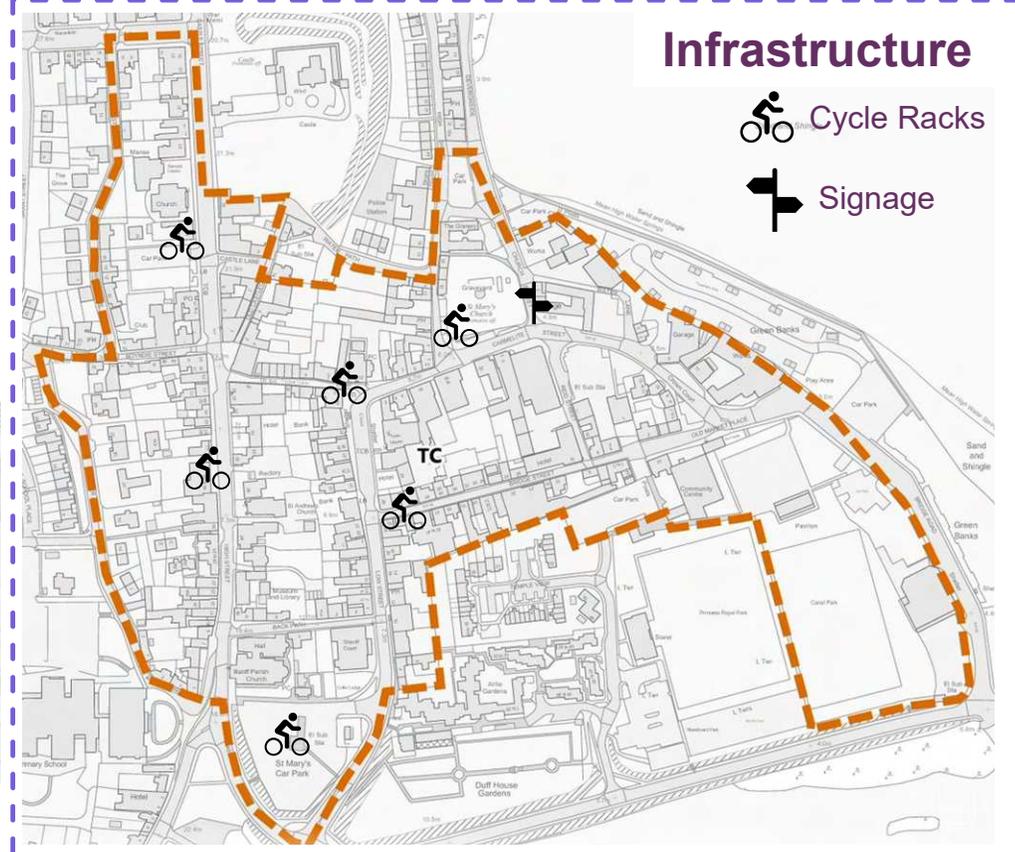
Observations: There are currently no cycle lanes in Banff Town Centre, however the town is on Route One of the [Sustrans National Cycle Network](#). Given the town's location on the route this may be an opportunity that could be explored further to encourage new visitors. There are several locations for cycle parking across the town with some new additions on Bridge Street, of which a feature has been made. However, there are no covered parking areas and some of the freestanding racks are in a poor condition. Survey responses in 2021 showed that most did not have a concern with cycle parking, however there were more poor ratings than good, so this suggests that for some of those who do cycle in the town that they find the experience unsatisfactory. No comments were provided in relation to cycling.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE: CYCLE PARKING?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



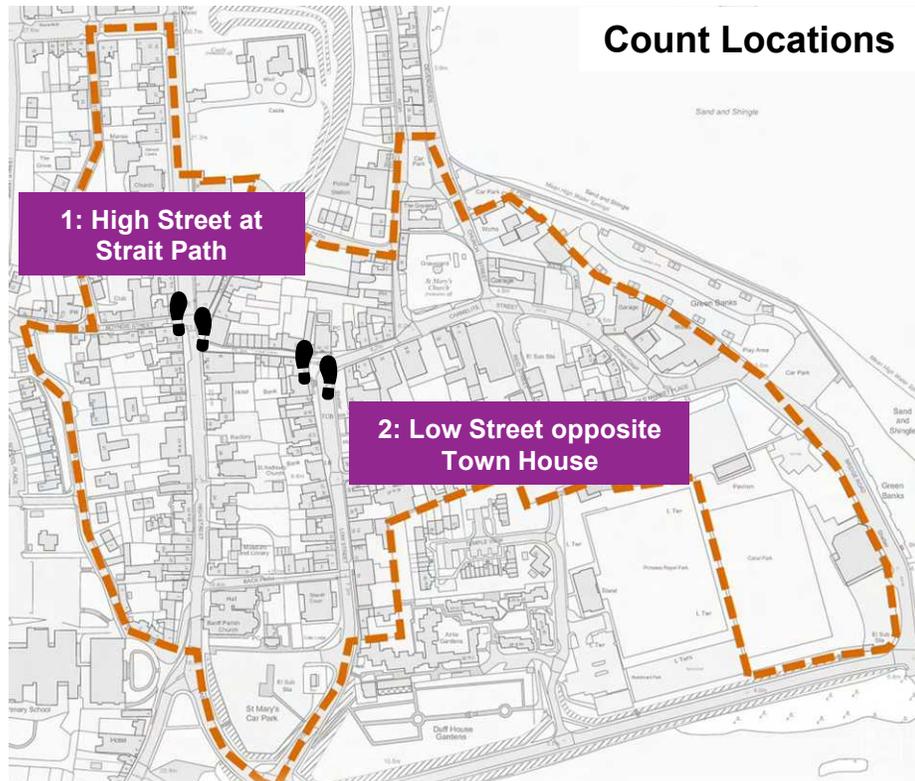
Images (Clockwise from Top Left): Freestanding cycle racks, Trinity Car Park; National cycle route signage, Church Street; Freestanding cycle racks, Bridge Street; Freestanding cycle racks, St. Mary's Car Park.



Infrastructure

-  Cycle Racks
-  Signage

MOVING AROUND: FOOTFALL SURVEY



Day	Time	Location 1	Location 2	Hourly Total	Overall Total
Wednesday 	09:30	30	49	79	353
	11:30	66	62	128	
	14:30	39	54	93	
	18:00	28	25	53	
Saturday 	09:30	66	22	88	336
	11:30	54	31	85	
	14:30	59	37	96	
	18:00	41	26	67	
Totals		383	306	689	

Footfall is a measure of the vitality of the town centre and can be directly linked to economic activity. Pedestrian counts were undertaken on Saturday 3rd and Wednesday 28th September 2022 for a duration of 15 minutes, four times a day, in two locations.

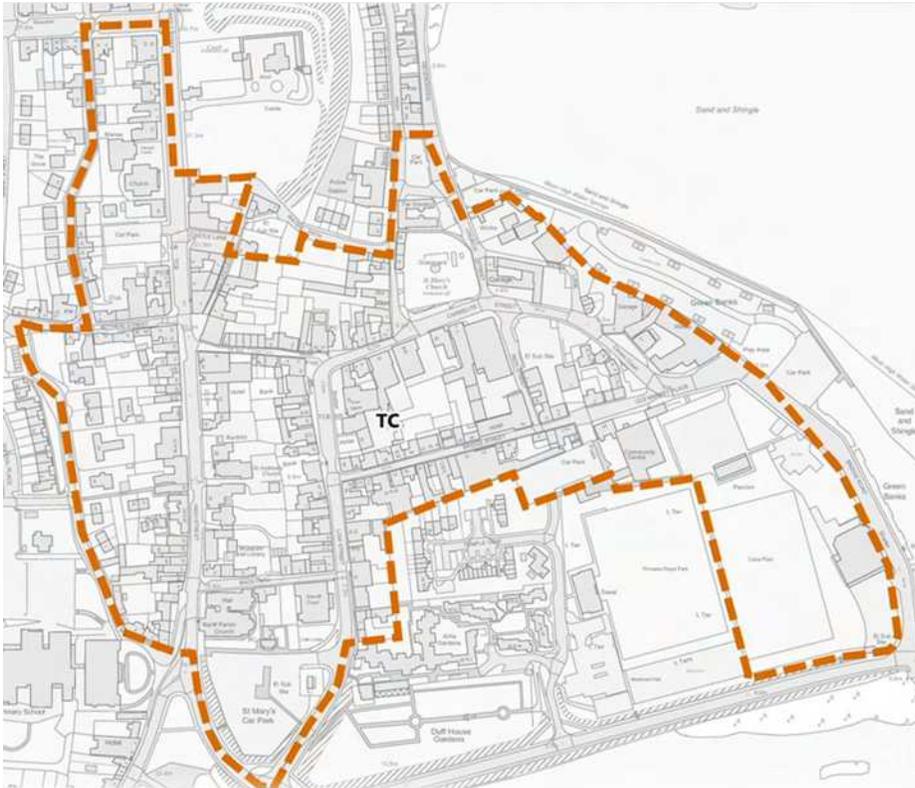
The pedestrian count findings showed the highest footfall count was recorded at High Street on Wednesday at 11.30am and Saturday at 9.30am (both 66 people). It was also the busiest count point in general over the course of the surveys which reflects the same as the previous year. Whilst High Street saw a decrease in footfall numbers from last year, the count on Low Street saw an increase from 234 to 306 people.

HEADLINES

Busiest Location: High Street
Busiest Time: 09:30/ 11:30
Busiest Day: Thursday

Quietest Location: Low Street
Quietest Time: 09:30
Quietest Day: Saturday

MOVING AROUND: ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT 2021



Participants were recruited from the local community to undertake a survey to identify the effect of roads, pavements and the general streetscape on people who use the town centre in order to identify barriers to moving around and enhancement opportunities to improve connectivity, attractiveness and safety.

Volunteers reviewed the following elements, and their comments are noted on the next page:

- Footway surfaces and obstructions;
- Facilities and signage;
- Maintenance and enforcement;
- Personal security;
- Crossing points;
- Access to buildings.

The survey took place on Friday 15th October 2021, 09:30 – 11:30. The weather was dry but cold.

ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT 2021

Observations: Participants identified a number of consistent themes during the audit:

- The geography of the town can be a barrier to people with limited mobility.
- Tactile paving is missing from a number of key crossings as are drop-kerbs.
- Some buildings are difficult to navigate due to stairs or narrow aisles.
- Large vehicles can make High Street feel unsafe.
- Pinch points on several streets were noticed where pavements narrowed and this caused difficulty for pedestrians, particularly at corners.

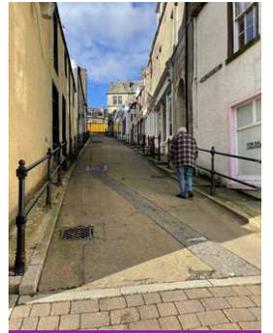


“Busy junction – can be difficult to cross.”



“Tactile paving is missing at some junctions.”

“In larger shops and public buildings there are quite often double doors and its necessary to open both to get a wheelchair through. If you are alone, pushing a wheelchair, it’s almost impossible to try to hold both doors open and push the wheelchair through at the same time.”



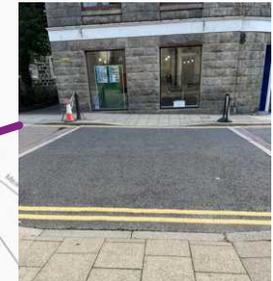
“Strait Path is steep.”



“Narrow pavements (Boyndie Street) can be a hazard for pedestrians.”



“Street furniture and shop signs can be an obstruction to wheelchair users or parents with pushchairs.”



“No tactile paving Low Street.”

“This crossing is missing tactile paving and has no dropped kerb.”



“There is continual use of Disabled Car Parking spaces by people who are not Blue Badge holders.”

“Narrow pavement here can be noisy and feel unsafe when large vehicles such as HGVs and buses go past.”

“Narrow pavement outside the Church.”

“The cobbled seating area in the car park is damaged and difficult to navigate.”



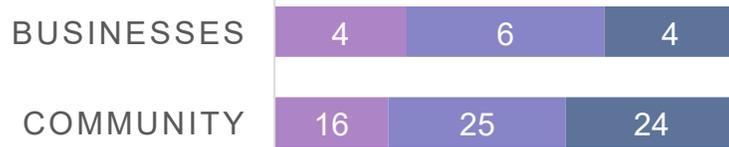
“Store layouts, including in supermarkets, often mean a wheel-chair user cannot access various aisles/product display areas because the shelving/units are so close together the aisle space is not sufficient to get a wheel-chair through.”

Access to an affordable, reliable and well-connected public transport service is important for all communities. Good public transport encourages people to get around in ways that are better for the environment.

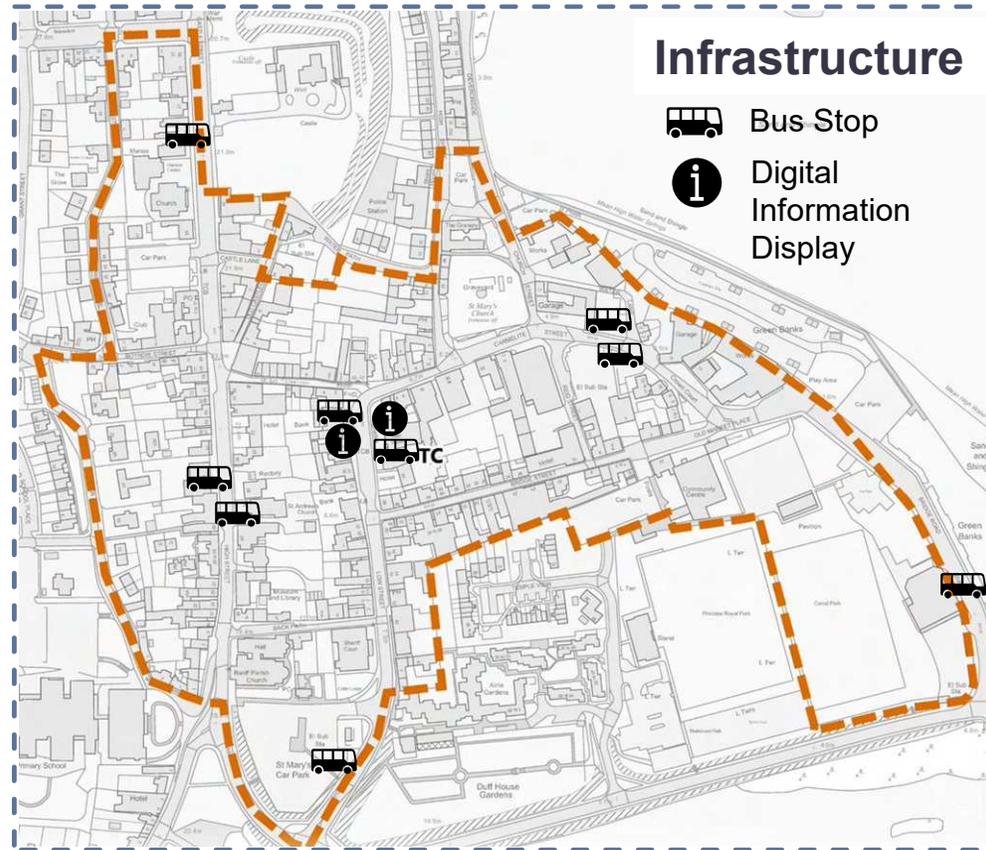
Observations: Banff Town Centre has reasonable bus links to Aberdeen and Elgin, although the journey times are lengthy. There is also a good town service which provides access around the town and to Macduff and a Dial-A-Bus service provided by the Banffshire Partnership. There is a more limited service to other towns/ villages. The main bus interchange is on Low Street with covered waiting facilities and real time information displays. A number of other bus stops are distributed across the town centre. Survey responses showed that most did not have a concern with public transport, however there were more poor ratings than good, so this suggests that for some of those who do, or would like to use public transport, that they found the service unsatisfactory. The prices for buses have also increased since last year.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE: PUBLIC TRANSPORT?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



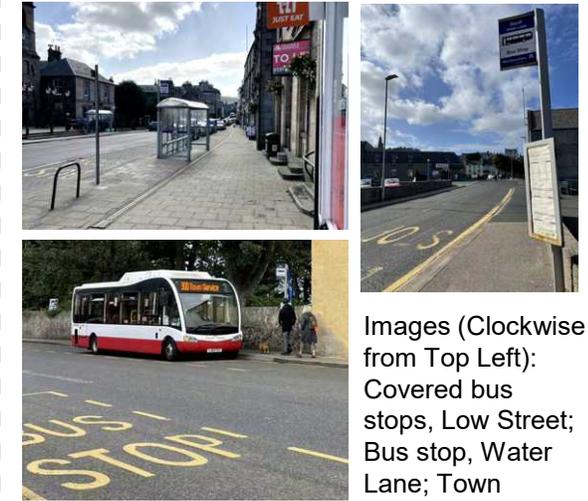
PUBLIC TRANSPORT



Infrastructure

Bus Stop

Digital Information Display



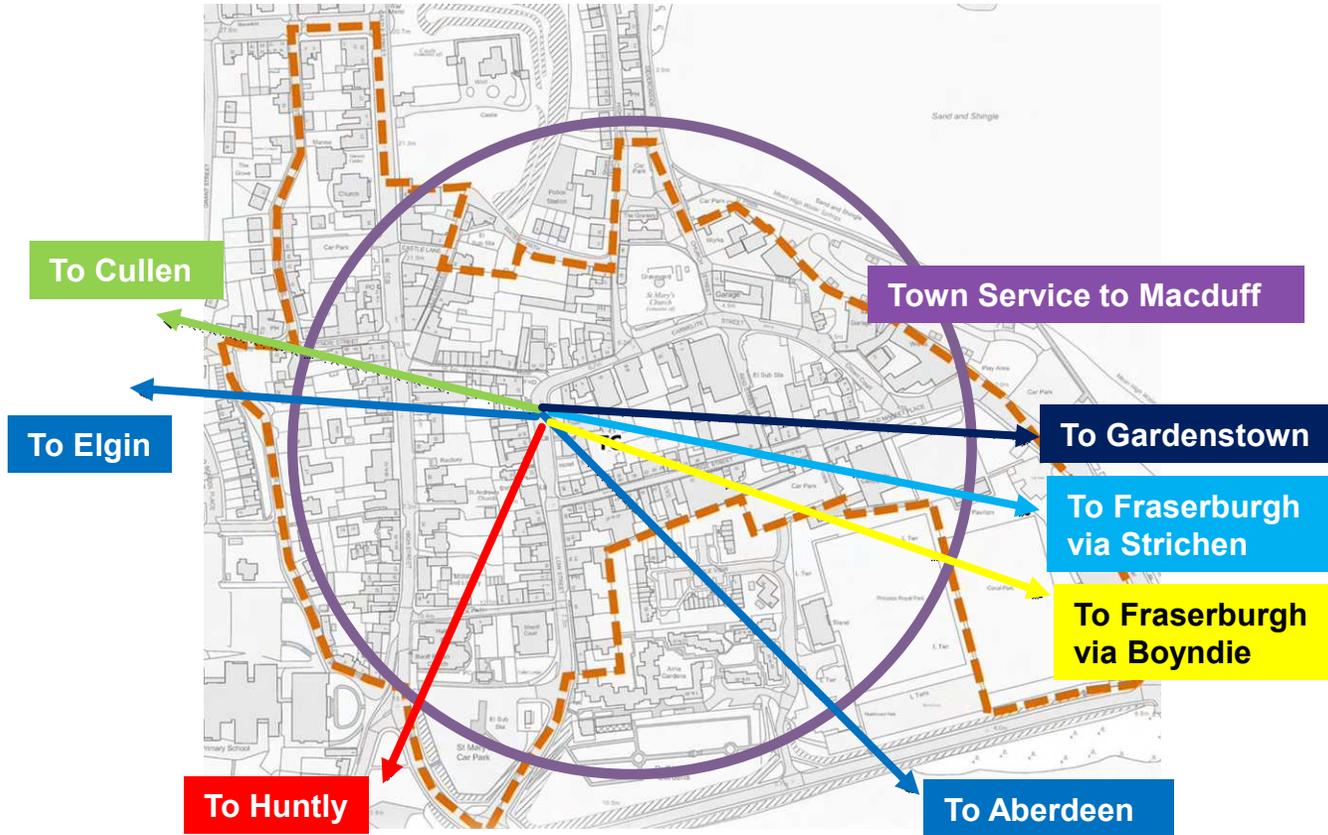
Images (Clockwise from Top Left): Covered bus stops, Low Street; Bus stop, Water Lane; Town service, Castle Street.

“Local bus service is good between the towns, lack of bus connections that are reliable between major towns and the cost and time of transport means you are reliant on car travel to get anywhere.”

“I would really like to see an express bus to Aberdeen. Two hours to get to Aberdeen on the bus is ridiculous. I would certainly use the bus a lot more if it didn't take so much more time than driving.”
Business and Community Survey, September 2021

“Unless travelling to Elgin or Aberdeen, extremely poor public transport.”
Business and Community Survey, September 2021

PUBLIC TRANSPORT ROUTES



Key:

	Bus Route 35		Bus Route 273		Bus Route 271
	Bus Route 272		Bus Route 405		
	Bus Route 301		Town Service 300		

Route (all from Low Street)*	Frequency (per week day)	Fastest Journey Time	Earliest Travel Time	Latest Travel Time	Cost (Single Standard Ticket)
Bus to Aberdeen (35)	25	1hr 55mins	04:19	21:35	£11.50
Bus to Elgin (35)	15	1hr 50mins	05:51	22:41	£11.50
Bus to Fraserburgh (272)	2	55mins	10:57	14:57	£9.50
Bus to Huntly (301)	3	55mins	07:30	15:00	£6.80
Bus to Macduff (300 Town Service)	9	5mins	09:10	17:10	-
Bus to Cullen (405)	2 (Wed/ Fri only)	45mins	09:10	12:30	-
Bus to Fraserburgh (271)	2	47mins	07:35	17:15	-
Bus to Gardenstown (273)	5	28mins	09:15	17:35	-

* Correct at time of survey

A [Dial-A-Bus](#), pre-booked minibus service provided by the Banffshire Partnership is available in Banff. A door-to-door service is provided for those with no access to a car or without easy access to public transport.

Too much traffic can cause problems for people who live and work in town centres as well as visitors. Traffic and parking arrangements that allow people to move around safely can help people to get the most out of a place.

TRAFFIC & PARKING

TRAFFIC



Image: View over St Mary's Car Park.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE: TRAFFIC FLOW?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



"Sort out the horrendous traffic issues."

"Slow traffic on the main street."

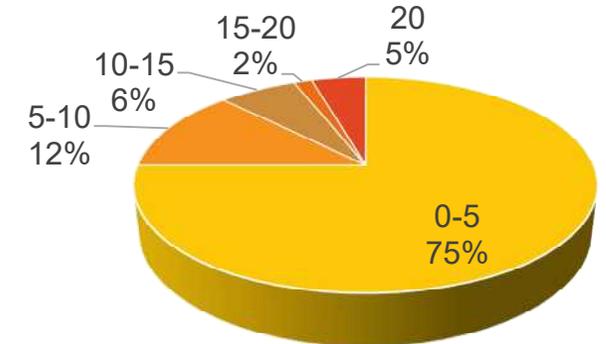
"The traffic is a major problem."

Business and Community Survey, September 2021

Observations: There were only a small number of comments received on this topic through the 2021 business and community survey but those received all noted that the topic was an issue. A number of comments mentioned that there is a lot of traffic within the town centre and there were requests for the speed of the traffic to be reduced.

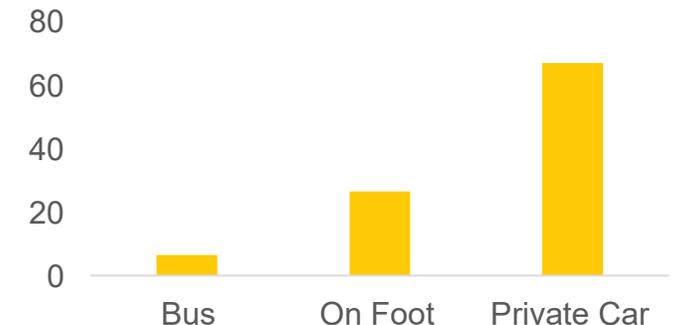
The main users of Banff Town Centre are from the town itself and the immediate local area as 75% of the respondents completing the survey travel 5 miles of less with 87.% of Banff Town Centre users travelling 10 miles or less.

Distance Travelled to Use the Town Centre (Miles)



Source: Community Survey September 2021

How would you generally travel to the town centre:



Source: Community Survey September 2021

MOVING AROUND: TRAFFIC SURVEY

Day		9:45am-10:00am		11:45am-12noon		2:15:2:30pm		5:45pm-6:00pm		Total number of Vehicles
Wednesday	Location 1	Car	103	Car	134	Car	154	Car	181	755
		Buses	2	Buses	1	Buses	6	Buses	0	
		Lorries	12	Lorries	9	Lorries	10	Lorries	1	
		Vans	22	Vans	40	Vans	26	Vans	42	
		Taxis	0	Taxis	5	Taxis	2	Taxis	1	
		Bicycles	0	Bicycles	0	Bicycles	0	Bicycles	1	
		Other	1	Other	0	Other	1	Other	1	
	Location 2	Car	35	Car	44	Car	47	Car	26	182
		Buses	2	Buses	2	Buses	0	Buses	2	
		Lorries	0	Lorries	0	Lorries	0	Lorries	0	
		Vans	4	Vans	1	Vans	9	Vans	3	
		Taxis	0	Taxis	2	Taxis	2	Taxis	1	
		Bicycles	0	Bicycles	0	Bicycles	2	Bicycles	0	
		Other	0	Other	0	Other	0	Other	0	
Hourly Totals (all traffic):		181		238		259		259		937

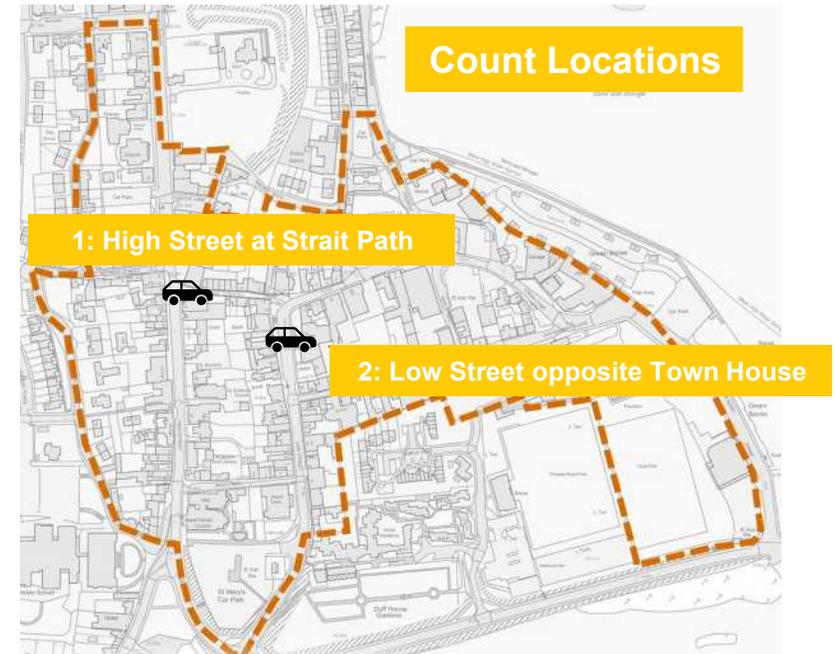


Image: High Street.

MOVING AROUND: TRAFFIC SURVEY

Day		9:45am-10:00am		11:45am-12noon		2:15:2:30pm		5:45pm-6:00pm		Total number of Vehicles
Saturday	Location 1	Car	141	Car	193	Car	141	Car	127	724
		Buses	4	Buses	1	Buses	2	Buses	1	
		Lorries	3	Lorries	1	Lorries	2	Lorries	2	
		Vans	20	Vans	31	Vans	23	Vans	9	
		Taxis	3	Taxis	2	Taxis	0	Taxis	0	
		Bicycles	1	Bicycles	0	Bicycles	0	Bicycles	2	
		Other	4	Other	6	Other	2	Other	3	
	Location 2	Car	31	Car	35	Car	34	Car	35	154
		Buses	0	Buses	2	Buses	0	Buses	1	
		Lorries	0	Lorries	0	Lorries	0	Lorries	0	
		Vans	5	Vans	1	Vans	5	Vans	2	
		Taxis	1	Taxis	0	Taxis	0	Taxis	0	
		Bicycles	0	Bicycles	0	Bicycles	2	Bicycles	0	
		Other	0	Other	0	Other	0	Other	0	
Hourly Totals (all traffic):		213		272		211		182		878

HEADLINES

Busiest Location: High Street
Busiest Time: 11:45
Busiest Day: Saturday

Quietest Location: Low Street
Quietest Time: 17:45
Quietest Day: Wednesday

Observations: Vehicle counts were undertaken on Saturday 3rd and Wednesday 28th September 2022 for a duration of 15 minutes, four times a day, in two locations. These give information on the number of cars that are passing through the town centre. It cannot be confirmed whether these cars have all contributed to the local economy but were in the town centre at the time of the count.

The vehicle count findings showed that Location 1, High Street was significantly busier than Location 2 on Low Street both during the week and also at the weekend. Although in both locations there was a steady amount of traffic at each location throughout the day.

TRAFFIC & PARKING

CAR PARKING AVAILABILITY



Image: St Mary's Car Park Sign.

"There are hardly any disabled parking bays within the car parks with the town centre."

"There should be an additional car park."

Business and Community Survey, September 2021

HOW WOULD YOU RATE: PARKING AVAILABILITY?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



Spaces

60

No. of Free Spaces

117

No. of Paid Spaces

9

No. of Disabled Spaces

0

No. of EV Charging Spaces

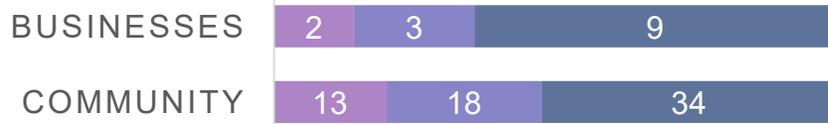
Observations: The main theme that became apparent through the comments to the 2021 surveys related to the affordability of parking. There is a strong community desire to see more free parking within the town centre. This was for a variety of reasons but the main reason noted by respondents was that the parking charges deter people coming into the town centre whereas people should be encouraged to shop local.

As for the availability of parking there were less comments received on this theme but generally it was noted that there is a requirement for more disabled parking within the town centre. It was also requested that there was an additional car park. However, during the survey it was noted that the parking on offer throughout the town centre was well spread geographically throughout the town.

Buildings, landmarks, greenery, views and natural landscape can all help to create an attractive, distinctive place that people enjoy. These features can also help people to find their way around.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE: ATTRACTIVENESS OF TOWN?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



STREETS & SPACES

ATTRACTIVENESS OF TOWN CENTRE



Observations: The topic of the attractiveness of the town received a very mixed response through the 2021 business and community surveys with 15 respondents noting the topic as good and 43 noting it as poor. During the site visit, areas were identified where improvements could be sought to improve the overall attractiveness of the town. There has been work completed since the 2021 site survey work as some of the empty buildings have now got pictures highlighting what the local area has to offer which is a great improvement.

There are a number of listed buildings which do contribute to the overall attractiveness of the town. However, maintenance of the vacant units within the town centre would help to improve the overall look of the town. The seating within St Mary's Car Park would also benefit from some maintenance.

“Regardless of how much money is spent on the town, it's the people within it which help make it attractive.”

“A benefit to the town centre would be for it to be tidied up and the appearance improved.”



Attractive Listed Building



Run down Shop Front



Bench requiring maintenance

STREETS & SPACES: HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

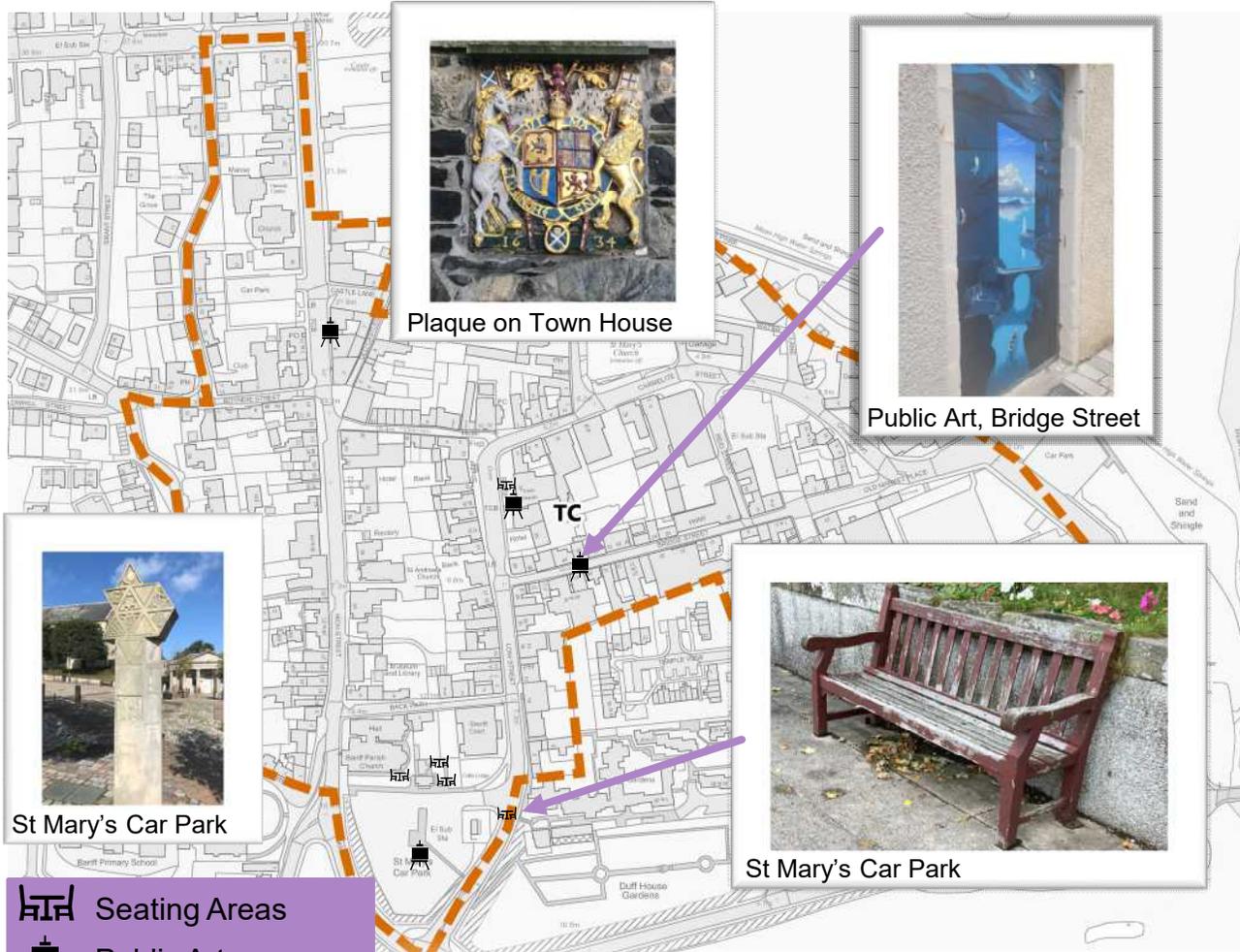
Observations: There are 135 listed buildings within Banff Town Centre covering all listing categories. There are 46 Category C listed, 79 Category B listed and 10 Category A listed buildings.

Unfortunately, within Banff there are a number of properties on the Buildings at Risk Register and of the listed buildings there are 5 on the register which means 3.7% of listed buildings are at risk and require attention. Care and maintenance are required to a number of other buildings, a common concern raised through the surveys, to ensure they also don't end up on the register.



Images (Left to Right): Town House and Fife House, both Low Street.

STREETS & SPACES: SEATING AND PUBLIC ART



Plaque on Town House



Public Art, Bridge Street



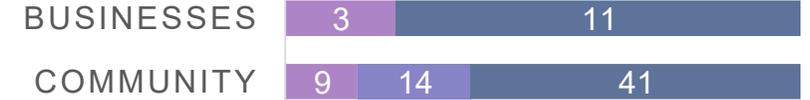
St Mary's Car Park



St Mary's Car Park

HOW WOULD YOU RATE: SEATING/ AREAS TO CONGREGATE

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



"Provide more seating."

"Some outdoor seating – look to see how other towns do it."

"Little places for seating apart from St Mary's carpark."

"The lack of benches in Banff especially around the high street are terrible."

"There is just one seat on Low Street in an area covered with bird droppings."

"There should be more benches within the town centre."

Business and Community Survey, September 2021

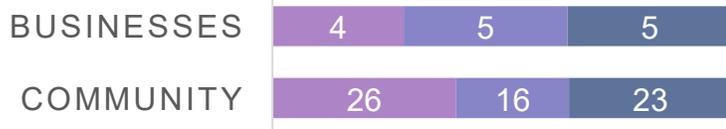
Observations: There was generally a lack of seating within the town centre, with the majority of seating at the St Mary's Car Park. This was something that was widely commented on through the 2021 surveys and the topic was rated within the bottom five out of all topics in both the community and the business survey. The available seating was in good condition however it was noted that one of the benches in St Mary's Car Park would be improved by some maintenance.

Within Banff Town Centre there is limited public art within the town centre as observed through the site visits. However, it should be noted that there are a number of historic assets including the Banff Mercat Cross and the Water Fountain on Low Street. These are additions that help to provide a sense of place along with the public art. Additionally, new for the 2022 site visit there has been the introduction of some mural pieces within the town centre which brighten up the surrounding area. These form part of the Mural Trail which is running across Banff and Macduff.

STREETS & SPACES: PAVEMENTS

HOW WOULD YOU RATE: PAVEMENT CLEANLINESS?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor

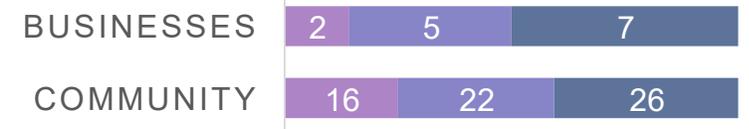


Observations: The topics relating to pavement cleanliness and quality attracted a large number of comments through the 2021 community and business surveys with the majority of comments being of a negative nature.

The main themes related to the pavements needing to be cleaned to remove the moss, weeds and seagull mess. In addition, the topic of maintenance was also raised on several occasions with a desire to see improvement.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE: PAVEMENT QUALITY?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



“Clean the pavements.”

“A seagull population that is creating health and safety challenges as well as ruining the pavements.”

“The pavements are disgusting with green slime and weeds.”

“The pavements need washed.”

Business and Community, September 2021



“The pavements need weeding – especially on Low Street.”

“There are broken pavements.”

“The council should remove weeds from pavements.”

“The main streets are in bad repair.”

“There needs to be better maintenance.”

Business and Community, September 2021

“Better maintenance by the council and enforcement orders on building owners who neglect their properties. Broken windows, weedy gutters and general dereliction should be improved, making the areas more welcoming.”

“There needs to be more investment in the empty units.”

“There needs to be less vacant shop units.”

“Try to encourage re-use of vacant shop units to create a town centre worth visiting and exploring.”

“Need to try and fill the empty shops.”

“Businesses should be supported to open up in the empty units.”

“Regenerate the empty shop units.”

Observations: The number of vacant units is something that was highly commented on through the 2021 community and business surveys with the majority of comments noting there were far too many vacant units within the town centre. The vacancy rate within the town centre at the time of survey was 21% which is the same as the 2021 survey. It is also still significantly higher than the Scottish average of 15.7% (Local Data Company). The condition of these buildings was also something that attracted a large number of comments.

Vacant Retail Units:

22 Vacant Units in the town centre **22%** Vacancy Rate at time of survey

STREETS & SPACES: VACANT RETAIL UNITS



Natural space includes parks and woodlands, fields, streams and rivers, green space alongside paths and roads, and tree-lined streets. These can be good for wildlife, improve air quality and benefit our health and wellbeing.

Observations: Banff's location next to the coast and other natural spaces is undoubtedly an asset for the town, contributing to parks and green spaces being in the top five best features for both business and community respondents in the 2021 surveys. There is a variety of well-maintained planting within the town centre including planters, hanging baskets, verges and leisure spaces. Some respondents noted they would like to see more green space and planting.

NATURAL SPACE



Planters and hanging baskets soften the hard landscaping in Low Street



Banff has great natural spaces on the town centre boundary such as the beach, golf club and Airlie Gardens

HOW WOULD YOU RATE: PARKS & GREEN SPACES?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor

BUSINESSES	7	4	3
COMMUNITY	34	14	17



Lanes benefit from greenery



The Kirkyard adds to the green feel of the town

"The golf course, Canal Park and Princess Royal Park form a magnificent entrance to the town 🌳."

"Excellent leisure facilities, parks and local attractions."

"Plant trees, flowers, shrubs."

"More flowers to brighten it up."

"More green space and better links to the coast."

Business and Community Survey, September 2021

Banff and Macduff in Bloom, are a group of volunteers working to enhance the main areas of the two towns with floral displays. Visit their [Facebook](#) page to find out more.



Planting in St. Mary's Car Park welcomes visitors to the town



Canal Park



Good public places and facilities encourage children to play and allow adults to enjoy leisure and sporting activities. Opportunities for play and recreation can improve the quality of our lives and our health.

PLAY & RECREATION



Observations: Banff has sports facilities within the town centre boundary and there are also a number of facilities on the boundary of the town centre. Canal Park is located within the town centre as recreation space, although it is noted that there are proposals being developed for this site. However, at the time of the survey no decision had been made. There were a mix of comments received to the 2021 survey but generally comments focused on desire to see indoor facilities within the town centre. Additionally, there are a number of play/leisure facilities within one mile of the town centre.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE: LEISURE AND PLAY FACILITIES?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor

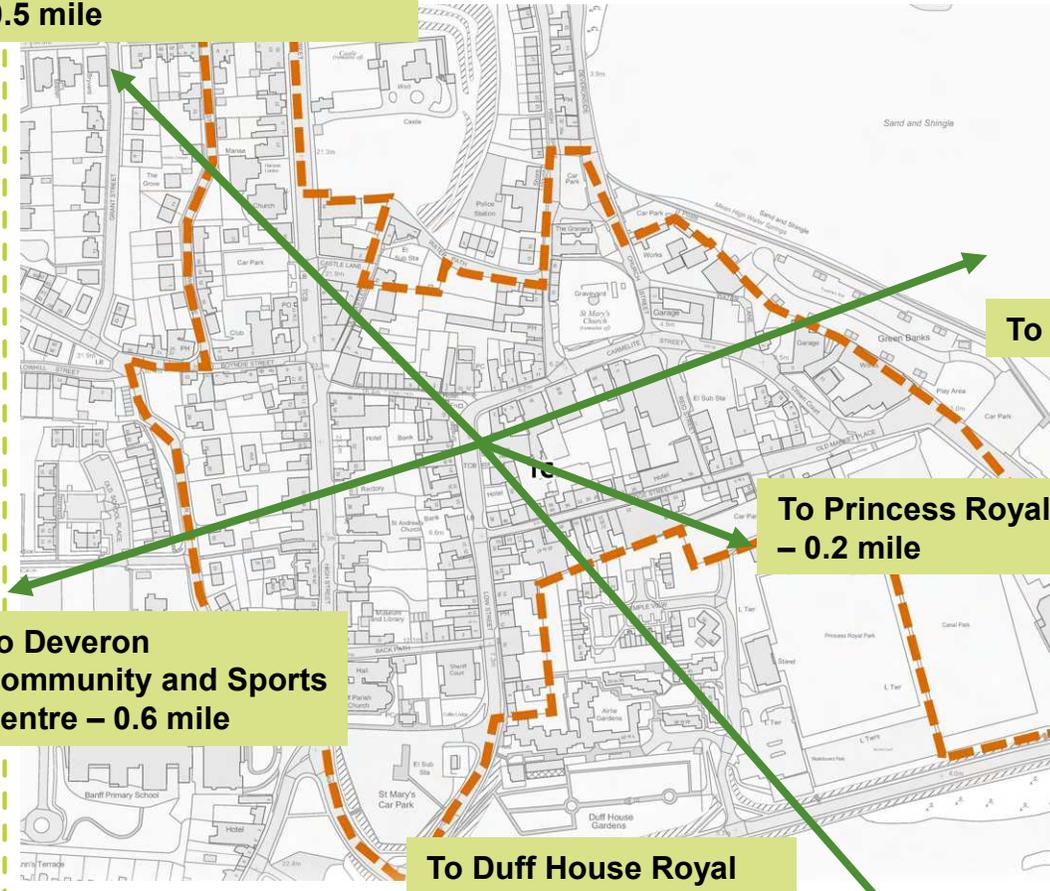
BUSINESSES	4	5	5
COMMUNITY	20	21	24

“Be good to have things to bring people into the town centre more.”

“Canal Park offers a magnificent entrance to the town.”

“Would be great to see a soft play within the town centre.”

To Banff Bowling Club –
0.5 mile



To Banff Beach – 0.5 mile



To Princess Royal Park
– 0.2 mile

To Deveron
Community and Sports
Centre – 0.6 mile

To Duff House Royal
Golf Course – 0.3 mile



FACILITIES & AMENITIES: RETAILER REPRESENTATION

Retailer Representation

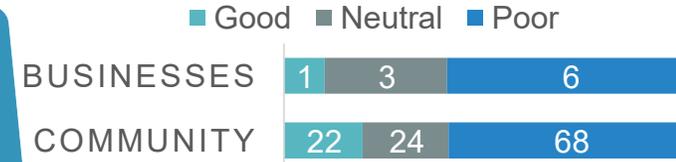
58% of businesses in the town centre are independent retailers

50% of businesses in the town centre are Class 1: Shops

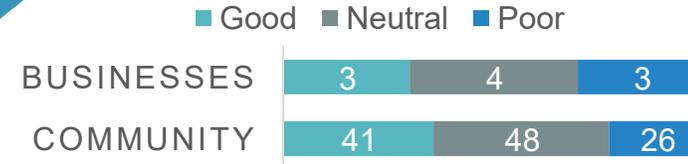
13% of businesses in the town centre are Class 2: Financial, Professional and other services



HOW WOULD YOU RATE: VARIETY OF SHOPS?



HOW WOULD YOU RATE: QUALITY OF SHOPS?



“More variety of shops would be good.”

“More variety of nice little quirky shops would be an improvement.”

“Banff has very little choice and variety.”

“The town needs more variety.”

“Need to encourage people to set up quality businesses within the town centre.”

“There is not enough variety.”



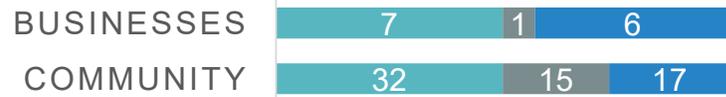
Image (Top to Bottom: Low Street and Bridge Street

Observations: There is a good distribution between independent and multiple (chain) retailers within the town centre. However, a large proportion of the comments received through the 2021 surveys related to the lack of variety within the town centre, the topic actually ranked within the 5 lowest ranked topics through both the community and business surveys. A number of comments were received noting that encouraging start-up small businesses would help improve the offering available.

FACILITIES & AMENITIES: CAFÉ AND RESTAURANTS

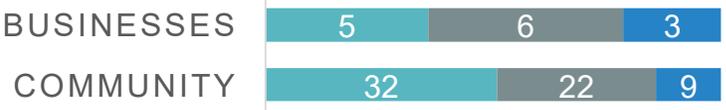
HOW WOULD YOU RATE: CAFÉ/ RESTAURANT CHOICE?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



HOW WOULD YOU RATE: CAFÉ/ RESTAURANT QUALITY?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



“There are almost too many cafés in the town centre.”

“Need more of a range of cafés and restaurants.”

“Deveron side could be improved and be a vibrant place for cafés.”

“Pedestrian areas to promote café culture.”

“It would be good to have access to outdoor café facilities when weather permits.”

“Would be nice to have more choice in cafés and restaurants.”

Business and Community Survey, September 2021



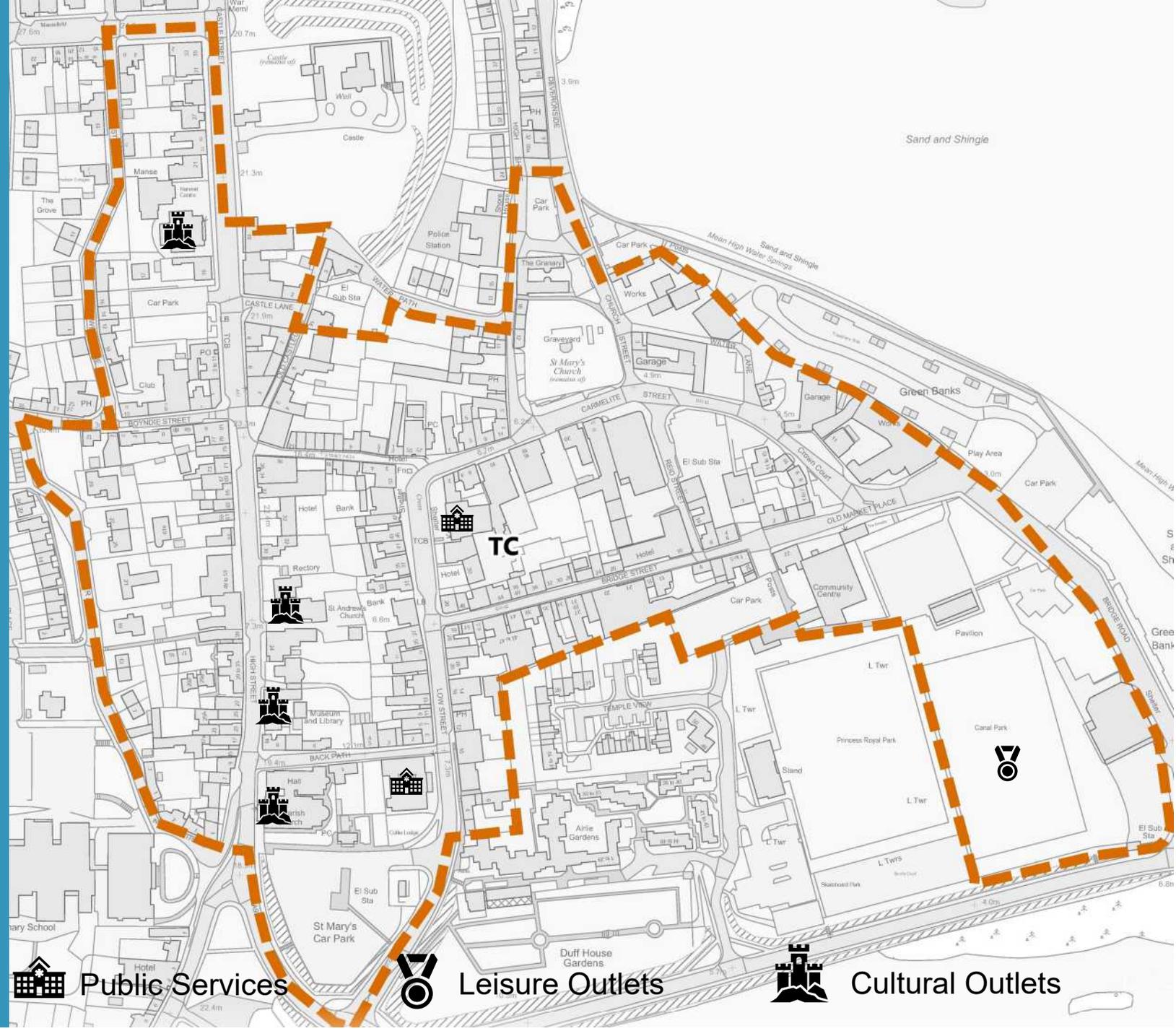
Observations: The choice of cafés and restaurants and the quality of them were rated within the top five of all the topics within the 2021 community survey and café choice was rated within the top five of the business survey. A number of comments were received noting that it would be good to see more cafés and restaurants within Banff Town Centre, including introducing a café culture.

FACILITIES & AMENITIES: CULTURAL AND LEISURE OUTLETS, AND PUBLIC SERVICES

Observations: There is a good selection of different cultural, leisure and public services within the town centre. There is a range of uses from Council Offices, Churches, Library and Museum and leisure space.



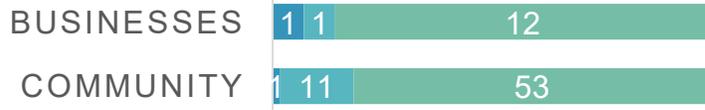
Images (Left to Right): Banff Museum and Library and Banff Parish Church.



FACILITIES & AMENITIES: EVENING ECONOMY

HOW WOULD YOU RATE: THE VIBRANCY IN THE EVENING :

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



“Would be nice to see more things to do in the town centre in the evening.”

“More good food places for the evening.”

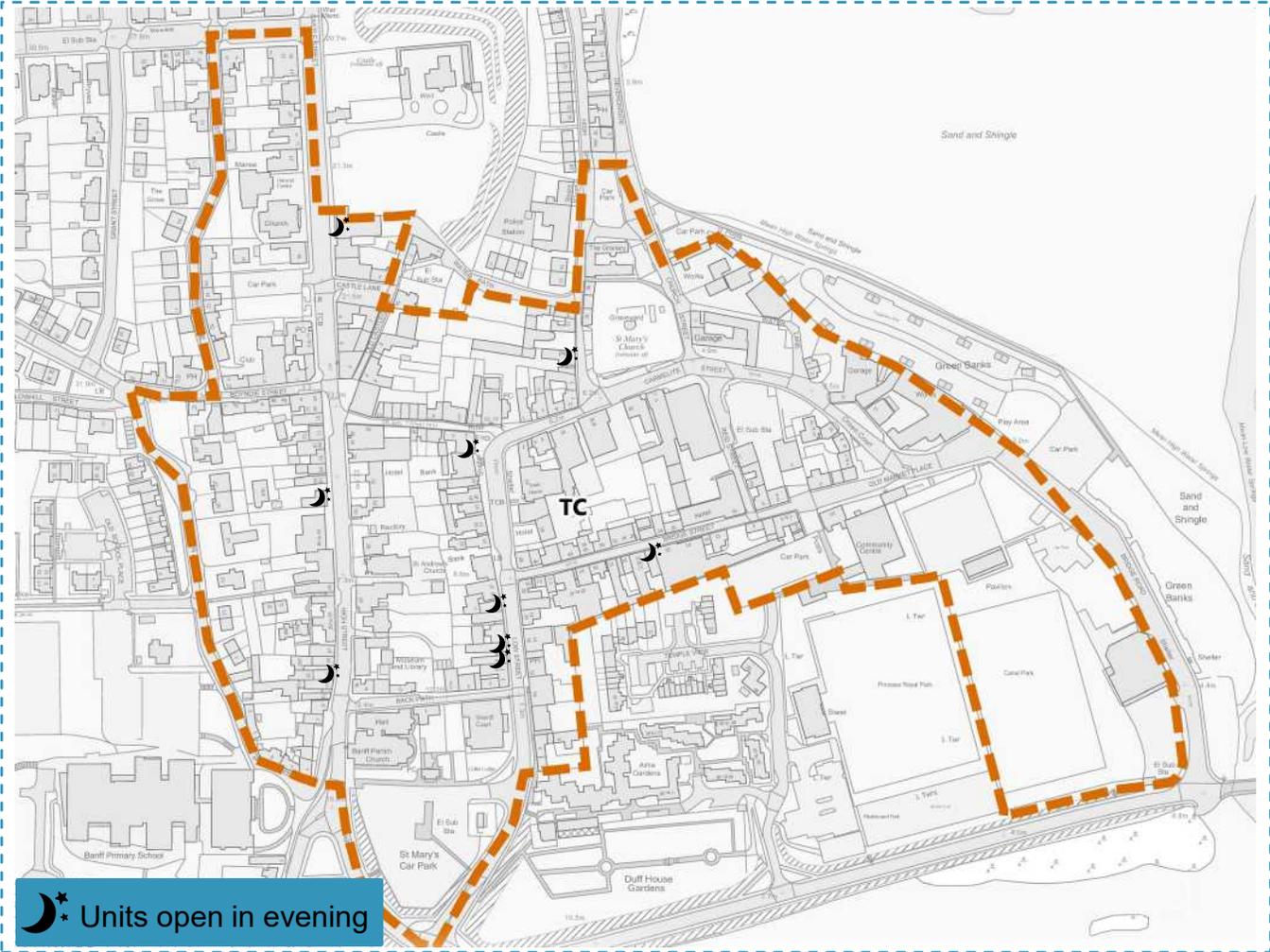
“There's no vibrancy in the evening because nothing is going on unless you want to go to a pub.”

“Banff is great during the day but needs more in the evening - good quality restaurant for example.”

Business and Community Survey, September 2021

Observations: There are a number of units open within the evening but the majority of these are takeaways. A number of comments were received to the 2021 surveys noting that there needs to be more open within the evening and that this would help with the vibrancy within the evening.

These comments are reflected through the ratings, with the majority noting vibrancy in the evening as poor and it also ranked within the bottom five topics for both the community and businesses.



FACILITIES & AMENITIES: COMMUNITY AND VISITOR SATISFACTION

HOW WOULD YOU RATE: VALUE FOR MONEY?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



“There needs to be more affordable shops within the town centre.”

“Need to offer a wider variety of shops within the town centre.”

“Banff has a unique offering and could really be a all round inspiring destination.”

“There is limited retail choice and it is expensive.”

“There is a poor choice available in terms of products and they can be quite expensive.”

Business and Community Survey, September 2021

Town Centre Offer:

26%

of the community agree that Banff offers all services expected (retail, café, pubs etc)

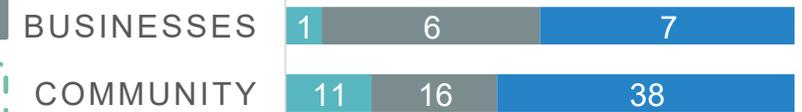
Business and Community Survey, September 2021

Observations: Almost three quarters of respondents to the 2021 community survey thought Banff did not have all the services expected.

The standard of service in shops was rated in the top five themes through the surveys. Conversely, the majority of respondents said that the variety of goods available was poor. The variety of goods attracted a number of comments through the surveys.

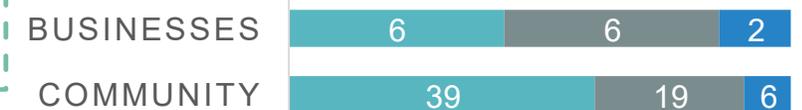
HOW WOULD YOU RATE: VARIETY OF GOODS AVAILABLE?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



HOW WOULD YOU RATE: STANDARD OF SERVICE IN SHOPS?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



Tourism: Data provided by VisitAberdeenshire shows the number of page views received for Banff in the ‘Towns and Villages’ section of their website:

3,830 Jan-Dec 2019

2,602 Jan-Dec 2020

3,716 Jan-Dec 2021

FACILITIES & AMENITIES: ONLINE SHOPPING

Online Offering

92% of businesses surveyed have online presence

50% of businesses surveyed sell online

50% of the businesses surveyed that sell online make 25% or less of their income from this

48% of the community surveyed said they are more likely to shop online rather than going into the town centre for the same item

62% of the community survey noted that their attitude towards online shopping had changed because of the COVID-19 pandemic

75% of the community survey noted that their usage of the town centre had decreased because of the COVID-19 pandemic

Business and Community Survey, September 2021

Observations: Within the 2021 community survey there was a real mix of responses to the questions about shopping online.

A number of respondents noted that they would rather shop local rather than buying online. Whilst others noted that convenience, pricing and variety of goods were the main reasons for online shopping.

"It's quicker, there is more variety and less travel to shop online."

"I always want to shop local when ever I can."

"Online is cheaper than local."

"I prefer to shop in person."

"I order goods online that are not available in Banff."

"More choice online."

Business and Community Survey, September 2021



Image: Low Street.

FACILITIES & AMENITIES: CONNECTIVITY

Observations: Mobile coverage within Banff Town Centre is very strong with all of the top networks being able to be connected to at a 4G level and there is currently no coverage of 5G within the town centre.

Broadband coverage is also strong with fibre and superfast broadband being available within the town.

There is no free public WIFI available within the town centre.

Broadband Coverage in Banff Town Centre:

	FTTH/FTTP	✗
	Ultrafast Broadband (>=100 Mbps)	✗
	Superfast Broadband (>24 Mbps)	✓
	Fibre (FTTC or FTTH or Cable or G.Fast)	✓
	Wireless	✗
	LLU	✓
A+	ADSL2+	✓
A	ADSL	✓

Mobile Coverage in Banff Town Centre:

		Voice	3G	4G	5G
Three	Indoor	✓	✓	✓	✗
	Outdoor	✓	✓	✓	
O2	Indoor	✓	✓	✓	✗
	Outdoor	✓	✓	✓	
EE	Indoor	✓	✓	✓	✗
	Outdoor	✓	✓	✓	
Vodafone	Indoor	✓	✓	✓	✗
	Outdoor	✓	✓	✓	

 Good coverage
  You may experience problems
  No coverage

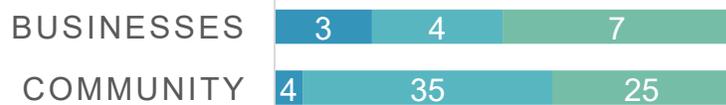
FACILITIES & AMENITIES: OTHER SERVICES

Observations: Banff Town Centre is well serviced by ATM machines. Additionally, there are three defibrillator units within the town centre. One is located on High Street and another on Reid Street which can be used by anyone within the town centre should the need arise. There is also one on Low Street in the Town House but this is only available for use when the building is open as it is located inside.

There is currently no farmers market within the town centre, which is why there was a mix of ratings within the 2021 surveys. The closest farmers market is in Macduff. However, there were a large number of comments received noting the communities aspiration to see a farmers market within the town.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE: THE MARKET?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



“A decent farmers market would be a boost to the town centre.”

“There should be a proper outdoor market.”

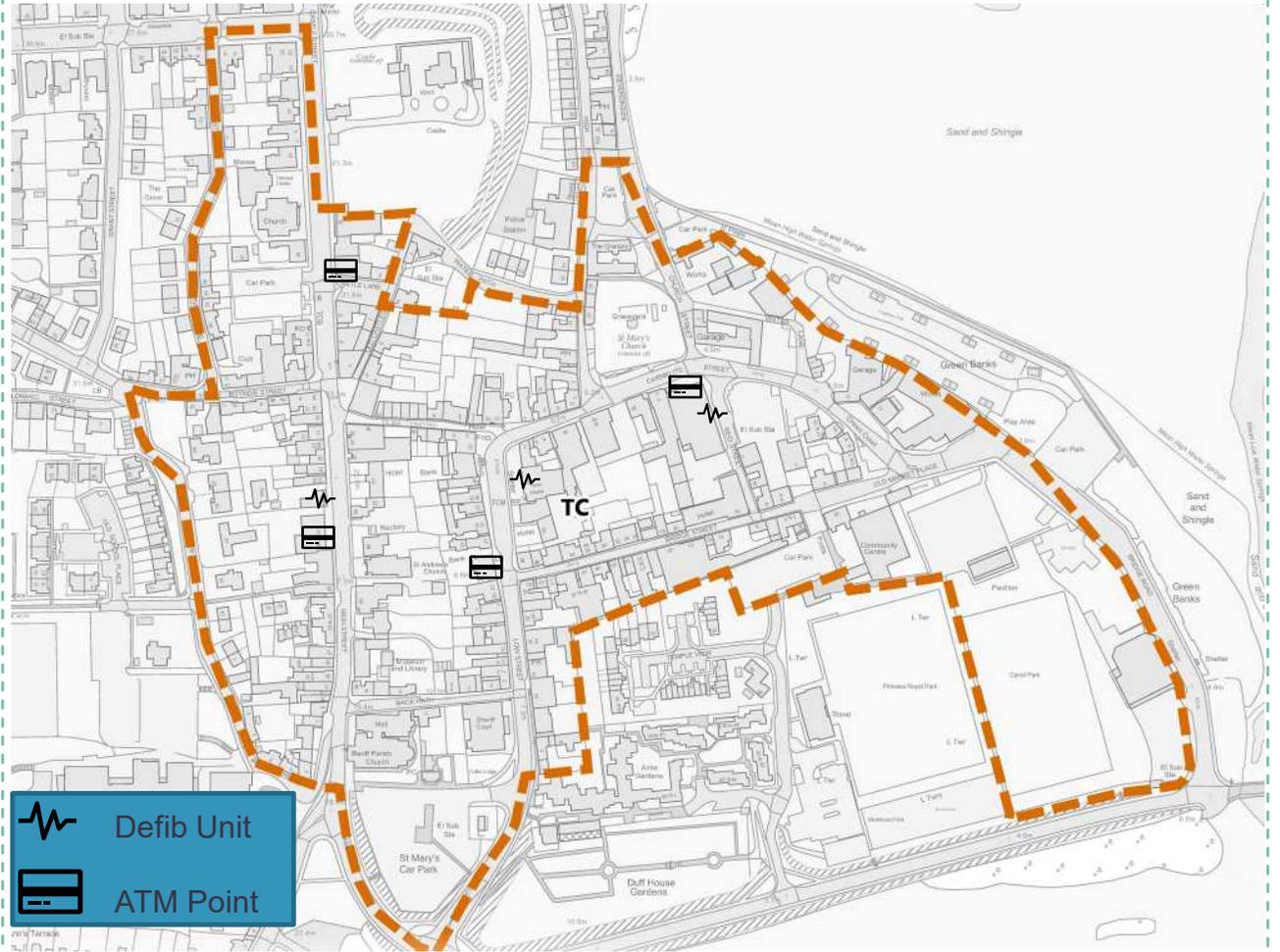
“There should be street markets for local food producers.”

“There should be seasonal markets.”

“The nearest farmers market is good and held in Macduff.”

“There is no farmers market within Banff.”

Business and Community Survey, September 2021



Good-quality work offers important benefits through income, activity, social contact, sense of identity and job satisfaction. A thriving local economy can provide work opportunities and help create lively places where people want to spend time.

WORK & LOCAL ECONOMY



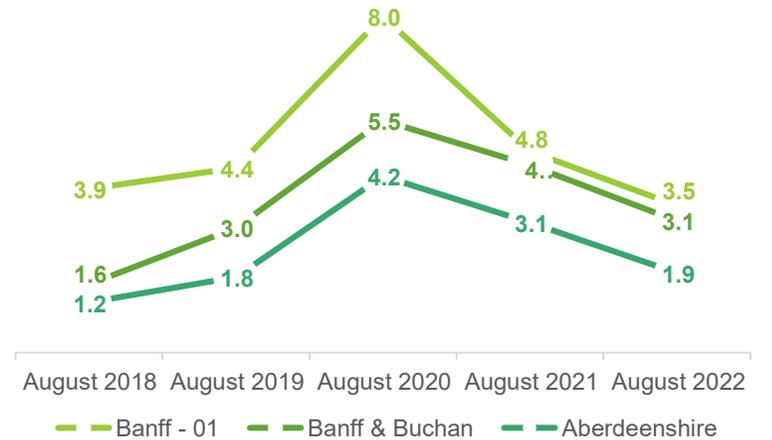
Observations: Banff is a designated Regeneration Priority Area and the indicators illustrate why this intervention is required. The latest employment picture is reflective of the town's position as a remote town that serves as an administrative centre with a high proportion of public sector jobs, along with the expected retail and hospitality jobs. The significant jump in the claimant count rate between 2019 and 2020 likely reflects the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the retail and hospitality sectors but the fall back to below pre-COVID levels is encouraging. Household income is low in comparison with the locality and very low in the Aberdeenshire context.

Top 5 Employment Sectors 2021 Banff Town Centre Data Zone*



Source: Business Register and Employment Survey 2021

CLAIMANT COUNT RATE^ (%)



^Includes people claiming Universal Credit or Jobseekers Allowance
Source: ONS Crown Copyright Reserved

Settlement Type: Remote Small Town

(Settlements of 3,000 to 9,999 people, and with a drive time of over 30 minutes but less than or equal to 60 minutes to a Settlement of 10,000 or more)

Scottish Government's Urban Rural Classification, 8-fold

Median Household Income 2021 Town Centre Data Zone*

£22,504

£28,987 Banff & Buchan;
£36,899 Aberdeenshire



Source: © CACI Limited 1996 - 2021 This report shall be used solely for academic, personal and/or non-commercial purposes.

Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020

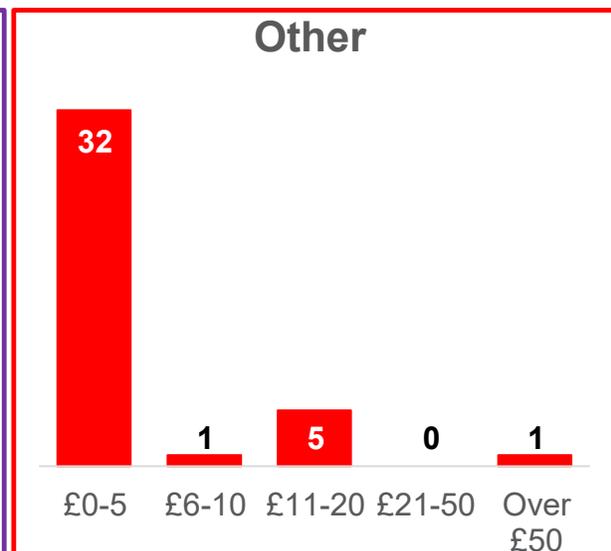
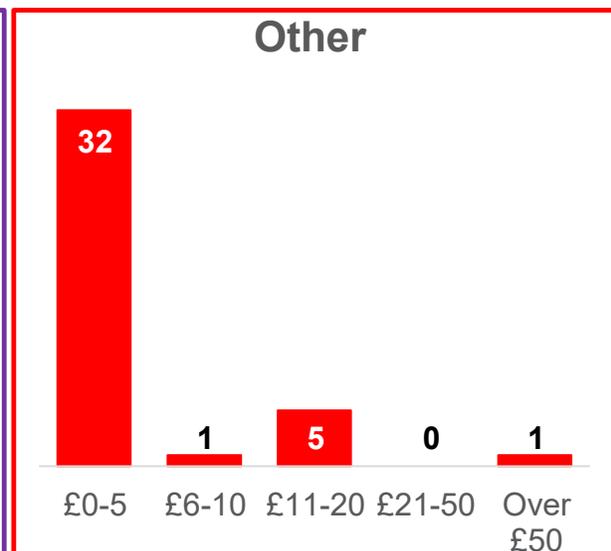
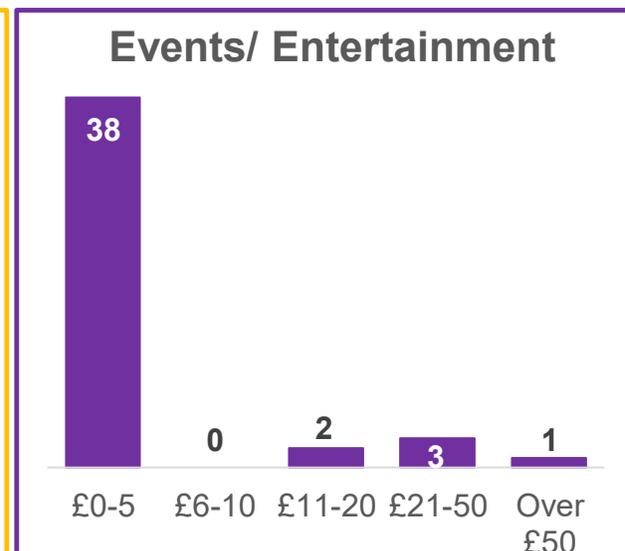
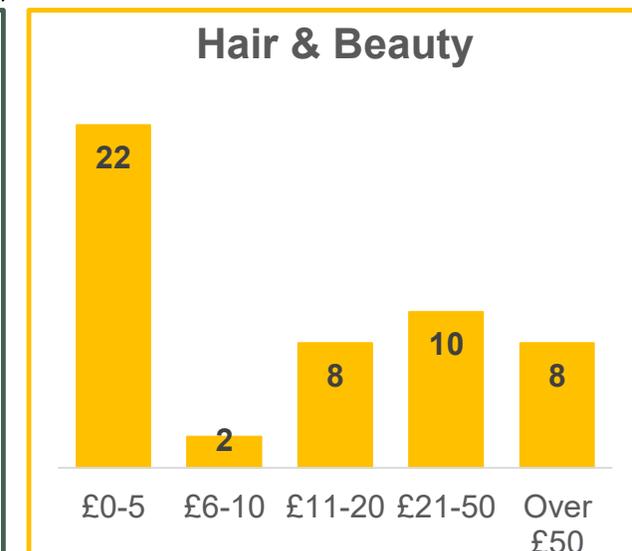
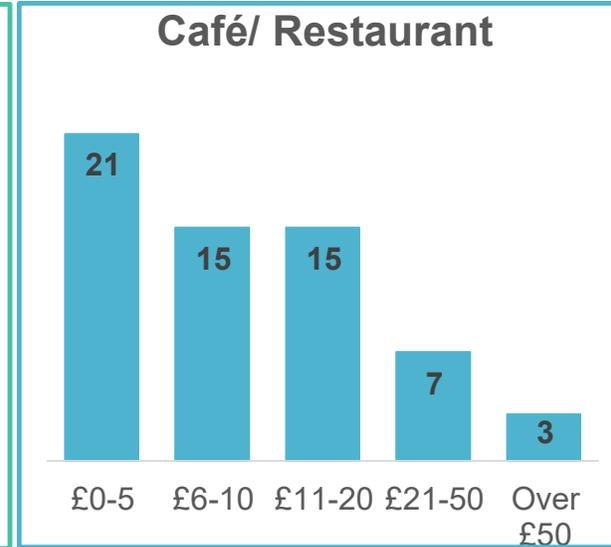
Town Centre Data Zone*:

30-35% most deprived in Scotland

* The data zone (S01007032) that makes up the majority of the town centre.

WORK & LOCAL ECONOMY: AVERAGE CONSUMER SPEND 2021

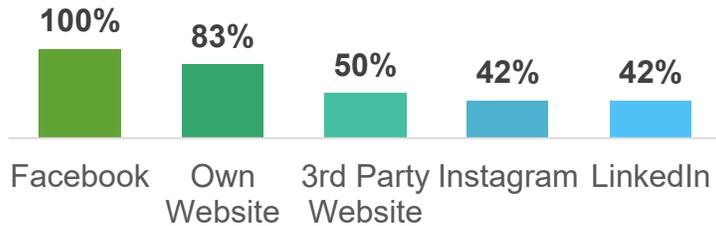
Observations: The graphs show the outcome of the community survey from 2021. They show that Food Shopping accounted for the highest value of spend in the town centre. Other Shopping and Takeaways were seeing most spend in the mid to lower levels, with £11-20 the most popular spend level. Café/ Restaurant spend was predominantly at the low to mid level, which suggests it is more likely cafés than restaurants that people are visiting. Hair and Beauty was also in the mid-range but at much lower numbers. There was very little spend on Events/ Entertainment, perhaps illustrating the lack of opportunities in this area.



WORK & LOCAL ECONOMY: BUSINESS SURVEY 2021 HIGHLIGHTS

Observations: 14 businesses responded to the 2021 survey and provided a very mixed outlook for the town, with some businesses increasing turnover, whilst others were seeing a fall. When looking at the more recent impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, this was more obviously impacting on profits. This mixed picture was illustrated further when looking at both business confidence and plans for growth. Businesses were making good use of online tools, but could consider widening their usage of different platforms.

Top 5 Online Marketing Tools Used



“There is a long way to go but private businesses are progressing.”

“See the empty shops regenerated. Hopefully some independent retailers would then rent/buy shops.”

“We are establishing a reputation for independent shops and tourism is on the up with more accommodation on offer that is of a higher quality.”

Business and Community Survey, September 2021

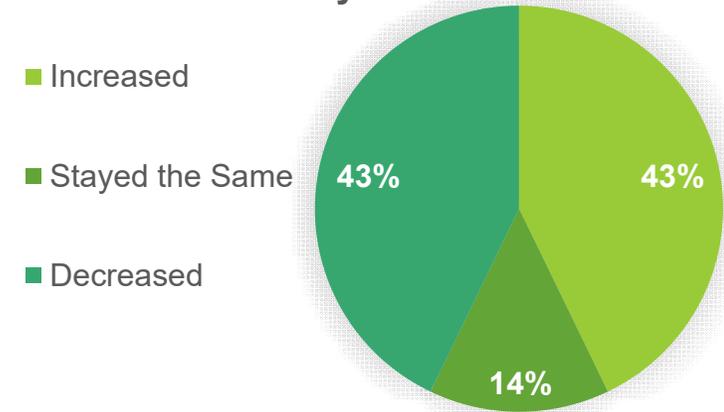
79% of business owners surveyed were **established** businesses in the town centre, **14%** **start-ups** and **7%** were ready to **sell/ retire**

93% of business owners surveyed were **independent** businesses

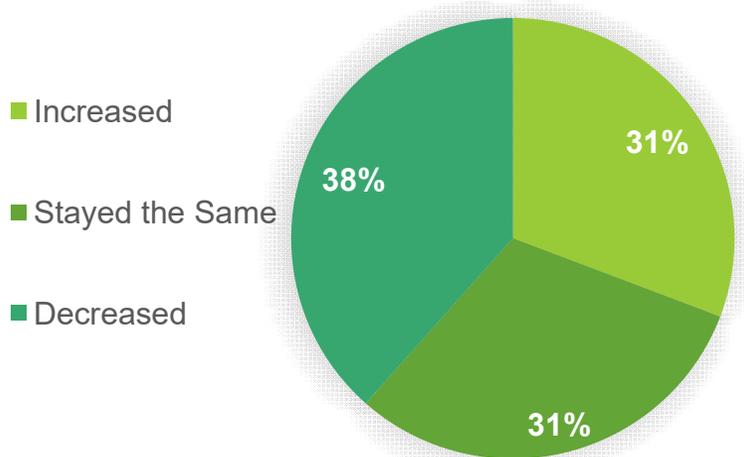
29% of business owners surveyed were **confident** or **extremely confident** about future business performance, **29%** were **unconfident** or **extremely unconfident** and **42%** were **neutral**

39% of business owners surveyed were looking to **grow** or **expand** in the next year. **23%** were **not** currently considering growth or expansion, with **38%** **unsure** at the time

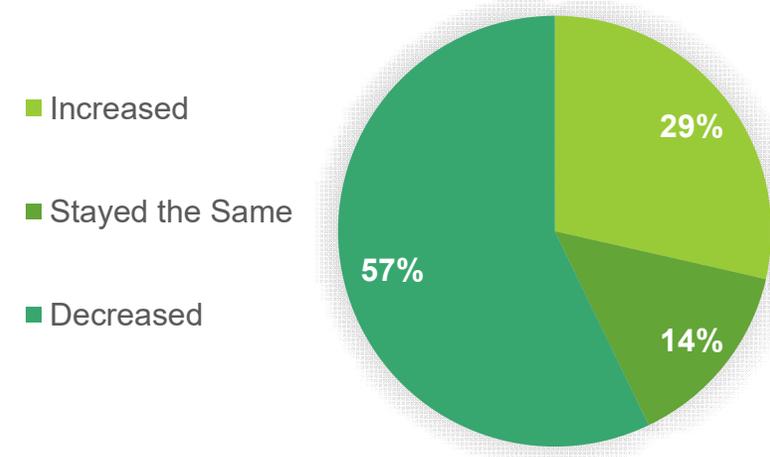
How has turnover at your premises changed in the past five years?



Has employment at your premises changed in the past five years?



What difference have the COVID-19 restrictions had on turnover during the period March 2020 to April 2021?



WORK & LOCAL ECONOMY: PROPERTY

Observations: The business survey response from 2021 showed that there was an even split in ownership of premises. In line with the indicators in the previous section, businesses had a mixed outlook for investment in premises. Encouragingly, a fifth of respondents had confirmed that they were looking to invest in their premises within the next year.

In comparison to the previous year, fewer planning applications were approved within the town centre. However, it is encouraging to see businesses investing in improvements to their buildings in terms of repairs and alterations, in addition to some change of uses.

Comments received in the surveys suggested that affordable space for start-up's, improvements in building maintenance and incentives such as rent or rate relief would be welcomed.

“A lot of empty buildings that are falling into disrepair. People are moving into Banff and more holiday homes are being bought but there is no investment into these neglected buildings. Owners should be given incentives to repair and rent/sell.”

“Encourage people to set up a quality business by a rates/ rent amnesty.”

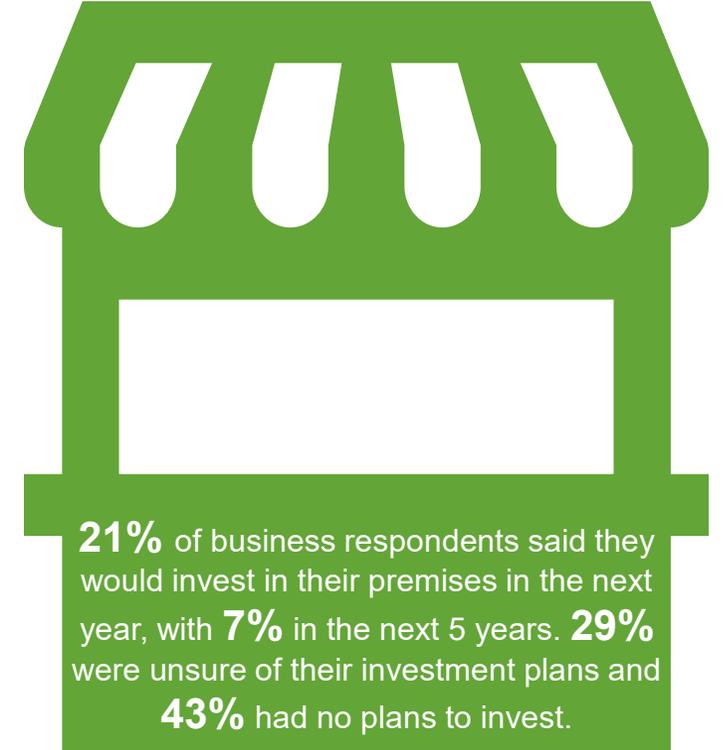
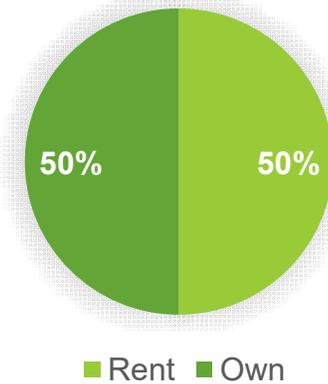
“Investment needs to be done to encourage growth. Ideal place Deveronside could be improved and be a vibrant place for cafes etc.”

“Town needs investment.”

“The empty buildings given the chance of grants to regenerate, encouraging businesses to move into the empty shops.”

Business and Community Survey, September 2021

Do you rent or own your premises?



Planning Applications:

Within the town centre 14 planning applications were approved between August 2021 – August 2022. Of note were:

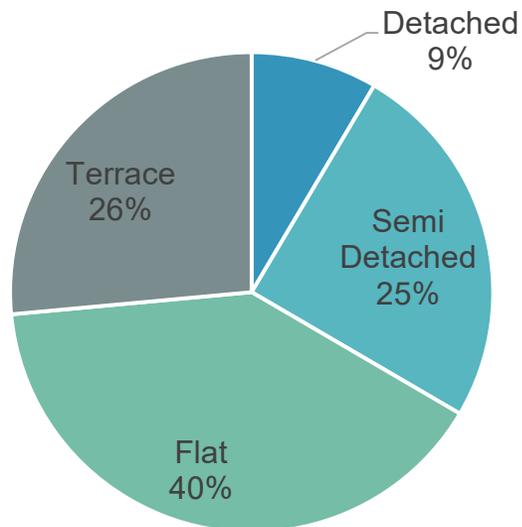
- Change of Use of Shop (Class 1) to Tattoo Parlour (Sui Generis);
- Internal Alterations to Court House;
- Change of Use from Care Home (Class 8) to Dwellinghouse (Class 9);
- External Repair Works to Class 2 business.

Housing is central to people's lives and helps to shape the appearance and character of places. Good places provide a mix of housing that supports a socially balanced community and meets people's needs throughout life.

HOUSING & COMMUNITY



Dwelling Type



The mix of dwelling types within the town centre is shown above. The largest proportion of the dwellings are flats with 40% of all dwellings.

Of these dwelling types within the town centre the main tenure is properties either being owned outright 30% of all properties or owned with a mortgage 23%. The other 47% is made up from people renting either from the Council, Social Landlord or Private Landlord.

Housing Profile and Population

The overall population total for Banff in 2020 was 4,000 and it is estimated that approximately 540 people live within the town centre.

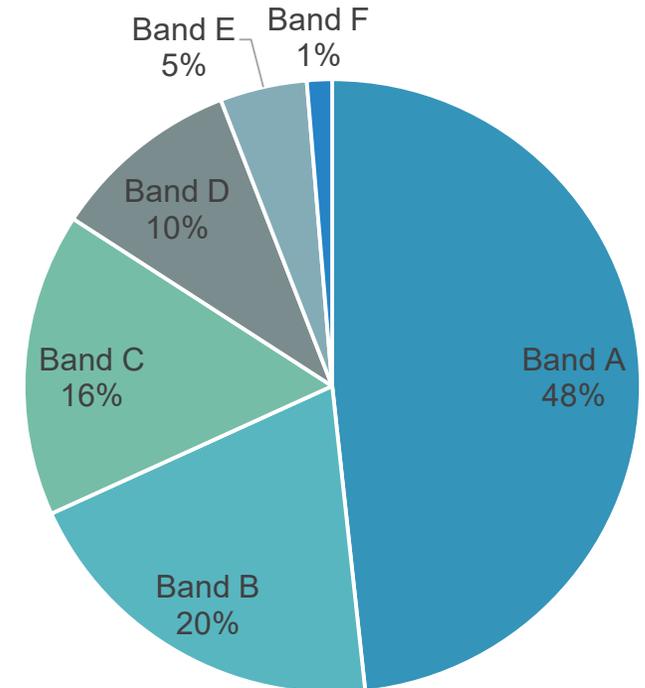
The average house price for dwellings within the town centre boundary in 2018 was £108,896 compared with the average house price in Aberdeenshire of £230,038.



Image: High Street Streetscape.

In terms of Council Tax Bands (2021), Banff Town Centre has dwellings in Bands A-F on the scale of the Council Tax Bands. The majority 48%, are located within the first, Band A.

Council Tax Band

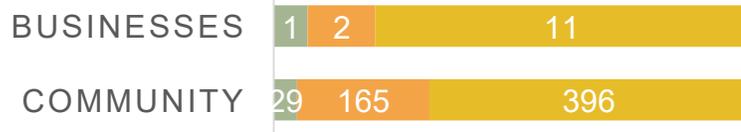


Feeling isolated can be damaging to our health and wellbeing. Good places provide a variety of spaces to meet and spend time with others.

Observations: Range of events was scored relatively poorly in both surveys, resulting in it being in the bottom five topics in both the 2021 community and business survey but this could have been influenced by the COVID-19 restrictions at the time of the survey. There are a number of venues that are available for social interaction in the town centre, including a number of cafes, but the desire to have more events was highly commented on.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE: RANGE OF EVENTS?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



SOCIAL CONTACT



Venue	Indoor / Outdoor	Opening Times
Banff Library	Indoor	Tues 13:00 – 17:00 Wed 14:00 – 18:30 Thurs 09:00 – 13:00 Sat 09:00 – 11:30
Banff Museum	Indoor	Thurs & Sat 10:30-13:00 (Apr-Sept) Sat 10:30-13:00 (Oct-Mar)
Banff Parish Church	Indoor	Sun 11:00 Service, Sun 18:00 Evening Service (1 st of each month)
St Andrew's Church	Indoor	Thurs 09:30 Mattins and Holy Communion (3 rd Thurs of Month) Fri 11:00 Holy Communion Sun 09:50 and 11am Morning Prayer and Communion (1 st and 3 rd Sun of the Month) Sun 09:50 Parish Eucharist (2 nd , 4 th and 5 th Sun of the Month)
River Church Banff	Indoor	Tues & Thurs 09:00-13:00 Wed & Fri 09:00-14:00 Sun 10:00 Worship

“There are very few events.”

“There are no events taking place.”

“Lots more family friendly weekend events.”

“Markets, car boot sales, a cinema, community bingo and other events would be brilliant.”

“More events especially in the summer months.”

“There should be more social spaces.”

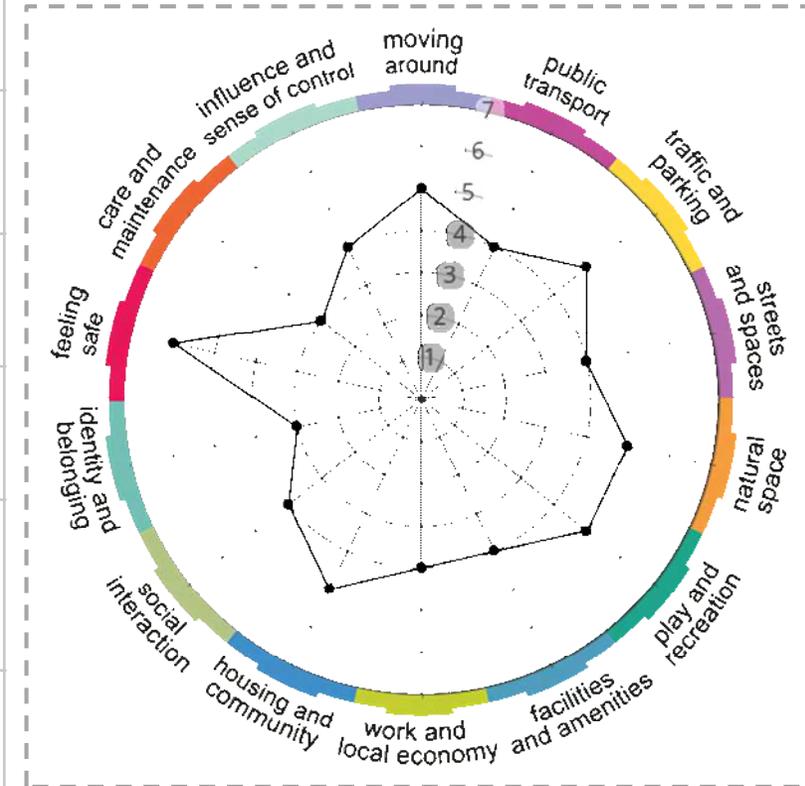
Business and Community Survey, September 2021



Images: Far Left, Banff Museum and Library, Left, St Andrew's Church; Right, Banff Parish Church.

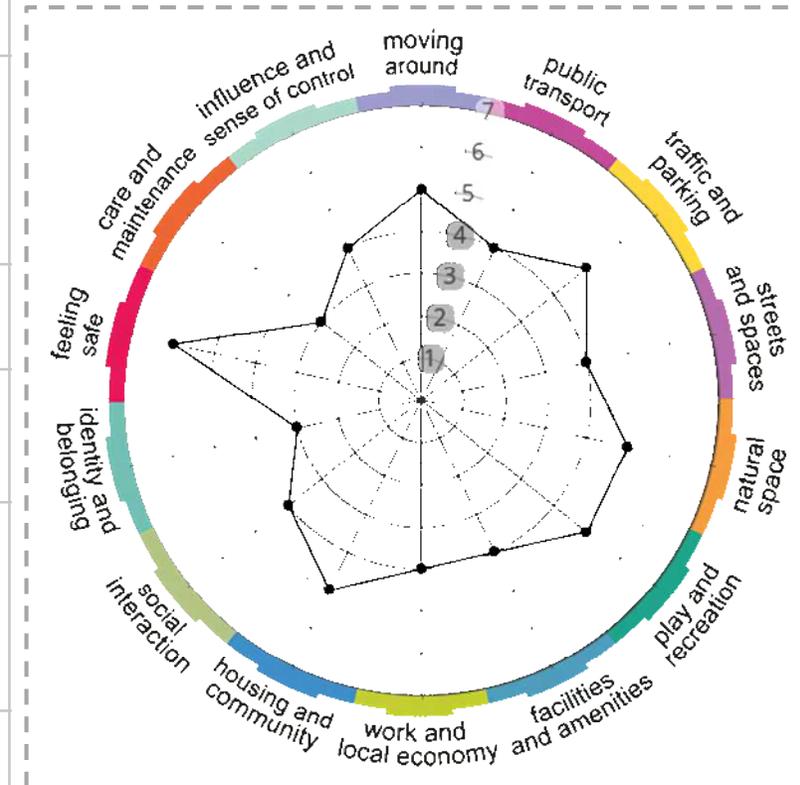
KEY CONSIDERATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

Theme	Key Improvements
Identity and belonging Rating: 3	Businesses and the community feel negatively towards the town centre, commenting on its decline over a number of years. Community spirit is seen to be lacking for many respondents, however there is pride in the towns heritage and natural assets. There is some recognition that the town centre was starting to improve.
Feeling safe Rating: 6	Overall a very positive indicator for the town centre, particularly in relation to safety during the day. Safety during the evening is rated neutral perhaps indicating that less people use the town in the evening. Maintenance of lighting could be beneficial.
Care and maintenance Rating: 3	The overall perception of the care and maintenance of buildings within Banff Town centre was poor. This ranked within the bottom five topics within the surveys. Interventions looking at improvement works to buildings would be welcomed by the local community.
Influence and sense of control Rating: 4	There are a limited number of groups supporting the town centre and a lack of awareness of the groups that are in operation. However these groups are contributing to activity that benefits visitors and businesses.
Moving around Rating: 5	Although this scored well overall, facilities for cyclists could be improved such as covered parking areas and dedicated cycle routes. There are concerns about busy roads and the disconnect between High Street and Low Street. Signage was generally well placed and informative.
Public transport Rating: 4	Banff has reasonable public transport links when looking to travel east or west however journey times to Aberdeen and Elgin are lengthy. It is more difficult to travel to other main towns and settlements but there is a good local service connecting Banff and Macduff and a Dial-A-Bus service.
Traffic and parking Rating: 5	Traffic and parking received a mixed response through the surveys. A couple of themes that would be welcomed by the community would be additional free parking spaces and more disabled parking spaces.



KEY CONSIDERATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES (CONTINUED)

Theme	Key Improvements
<p>Streets and spaces</p> <p>Rating: 4</p>	Both the community and businesses felt negatively towards aspects contained within this topic including the attractiveness of the town, the lack of seats and the amount of vacant units within the town centre.
<p>Natural space</p> <p>Rating: 5</p>	Banff Town Centre is situated next to excellent natural, open space and has some good green areas within the centre itself. There is a variety of well-maintained planting including trees, verges, planters and hanging baskets. There are spaces within the town centre that could be enhanced further and improved links between the town centre and the coast could be explored.
<p>Play and recreation</p> <p>Rating: 5</p>	There are play and leisure facilities within the town centre boundary and additionally there are a number of facilities within 0.5 miles of the town centre.
<p>Facilities and amenities</p> <p>Rating: 4</p>	The services you would expect to find in a town centre can be found in Banff but there was considerable support for increasing the variety and quality of the offering. A number of times it was mentioned that this could be achieved through filling the vacant units.
<p>Work and local economy</p> <p>Rating: 4</p>	Work is generally low paid but the claimant count rate is reducing. Businesses have a mixed outlook in terms of confidence, investment and growth. Consumer spend is generally at mid to low levels. Affordable space for start-up's, maintenance and renovation of redundant premises and incentives such as rent or rate relief would be welcomed.
<p>Housing and community</p> <p>Rating: 5</p>	There is a good mix of tenure and type of dwellings within the town centre. There is a majority of terraced houses within the town centre. The mix of tenure should be maintained so that the town centre provides for all.
<p>Social contact</p> <p>Rating: 4</p>	There are a number of venues for people to meet within the town centre but there was a large demand to see additional events happening in the town centre through the surveys. Notably events that will bring people into the town centre including a market.



BUSINESS & COMMUNITY SURVEY RESPONSES: How Would You Rate? Top 5 Highest and Lowest Scoring Categories

Community

Top 5 Highest Scoring Categories:

1. Feeling of Safety During the Day
2. Standard of Service in Shops
3. Parks/ Green Spaces
4. Café/ Restaurant Quality
5. Café/ Restaurant Choice

Top 5 Lowest Scoring Categories:

1. Vibrancy in the Evening
2. Variety of Shops
3. Range of Events
4. Care and Maintenance of Buildings
5. Seating/ Areas to Congregate

Business

Top 5 Highest Scoring Categories:

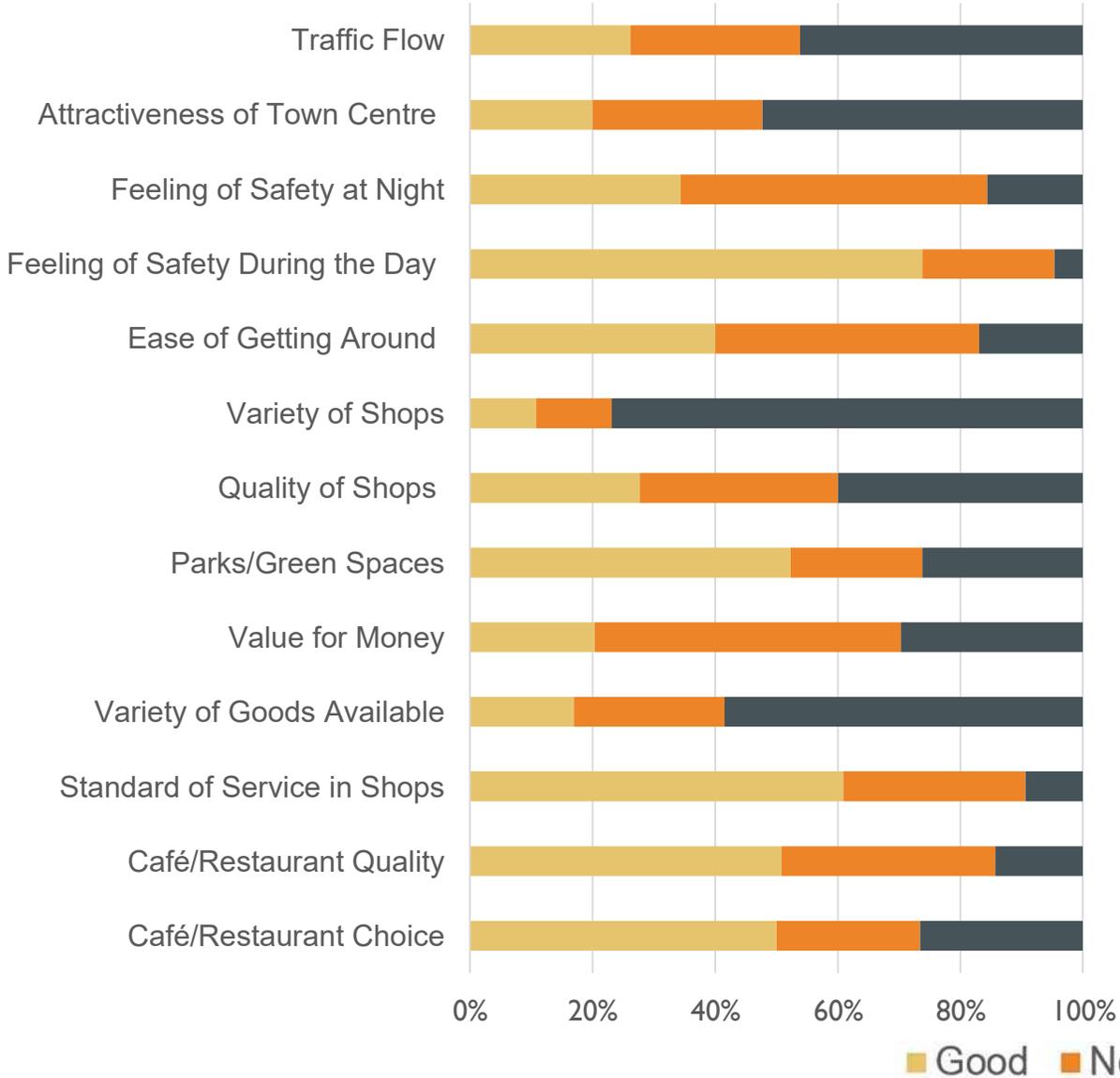
1. Feeling of Safety During the Day
2. Feeling of Safety at Night
- =3. Parks/ Green Spaces
- =3. Ease of Getting Around
4. Café/ Restaurant Choice
5. Standard of Service in Shops

Top 5 Lowest Scoring Categories:

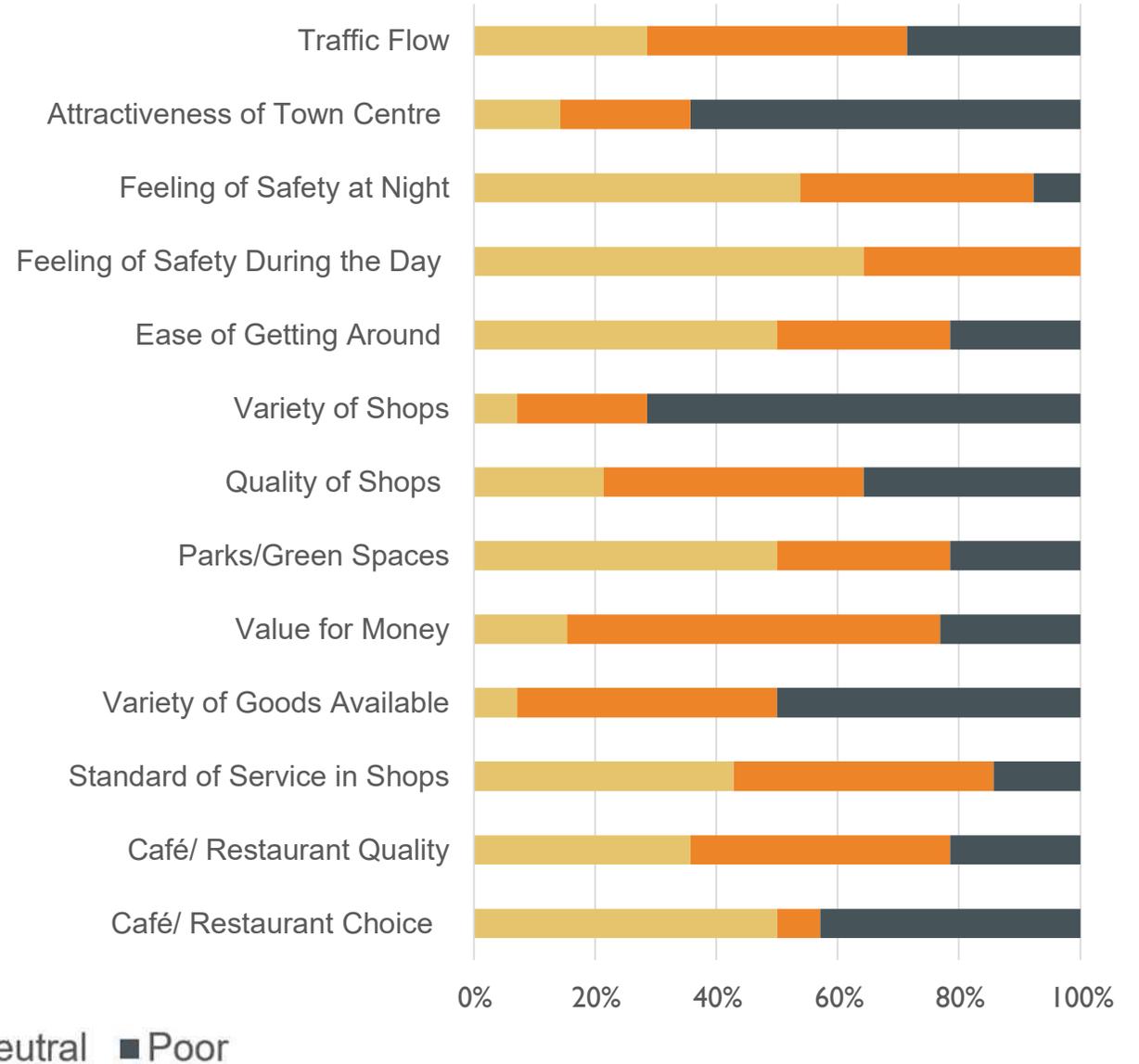
1. Vibrancy in the Evening
2. Care and Maintenance of Buildings
3. Seating/ Areas to Congregate
- =4. Range of Events
- =4. Variety of Shops
5. Vibrancy During the Day

BUSINESS & COMMUNITY SURVEY RESPONSES: How Would You Rate?

Community Responses:

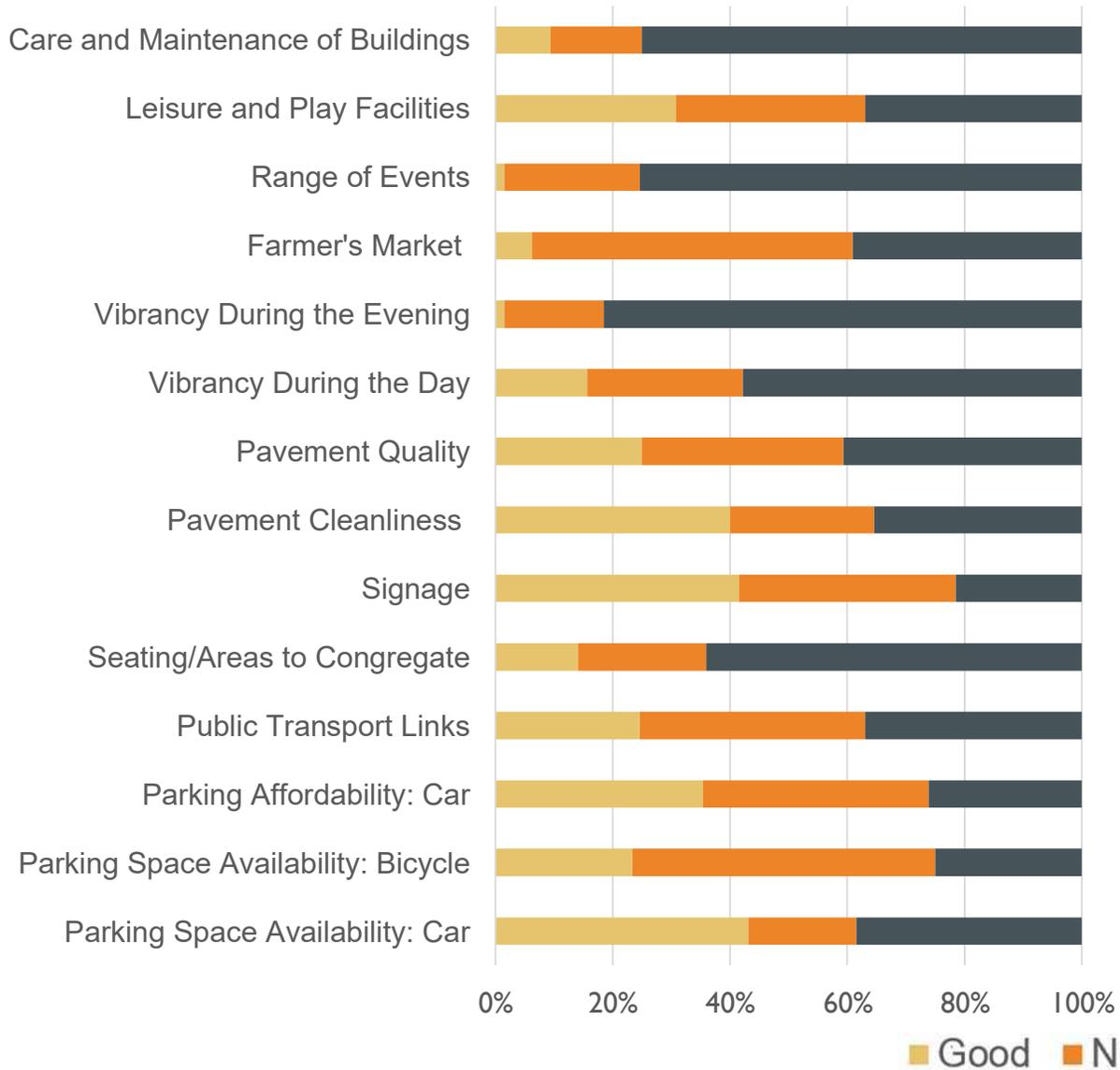


Business Responses:

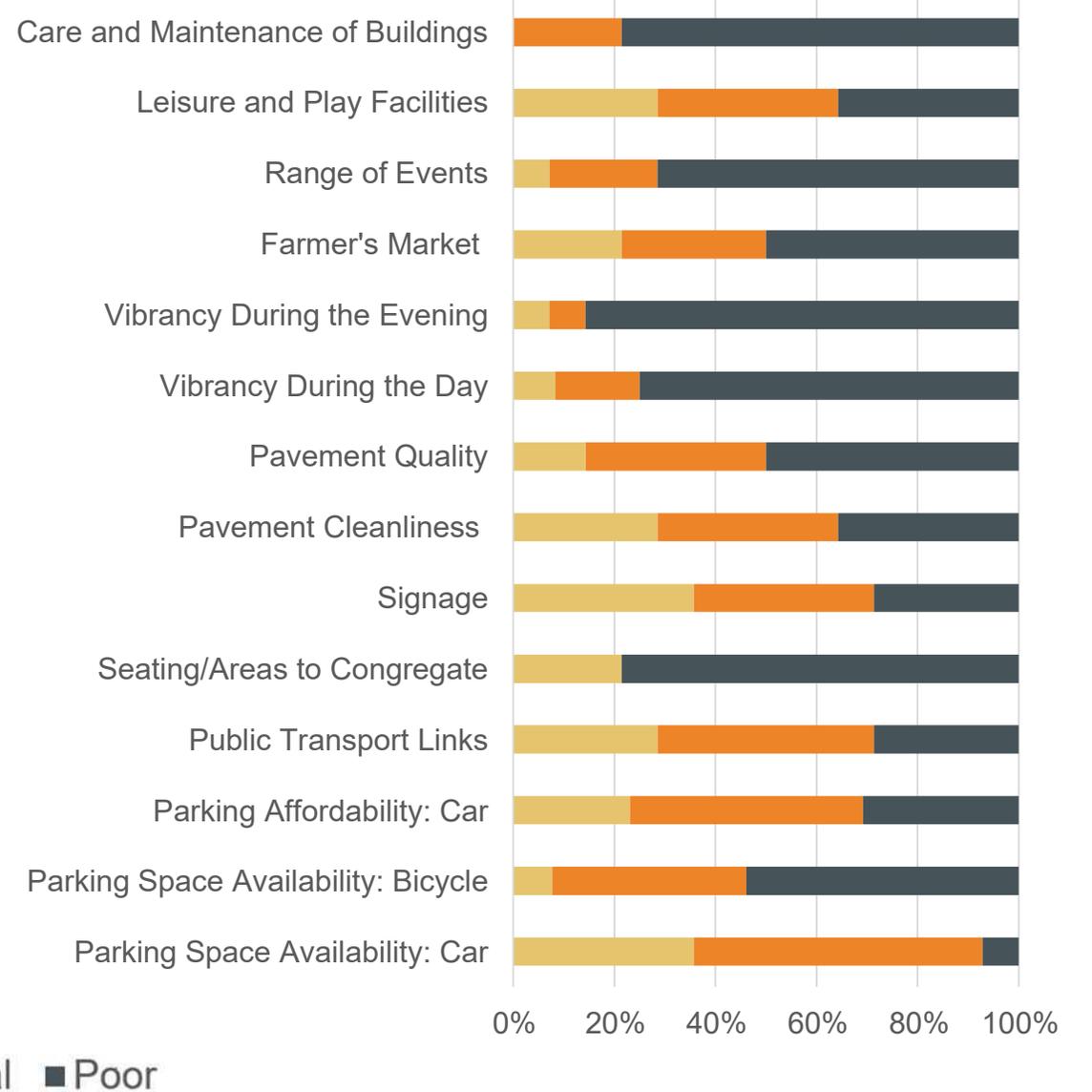


BUSINESS & COMMUNITY SURVEY RESPONSES: How Would You Rate? (Continued)

Community Responses:



Business Responses:



A PARTNERSHIP APPROACH: WORKING TOGETHER FOR THE BENEFIT OF OUR TOWNS

A key element of the new approach to undertaking Town Centre Health Checks in Aberdeenshire is to work in partnership with stakeholders with an interest in the success of our town centres to collect and share knowledge, information and opportunities. This has added an extra dimension to the health checks, providing a base from which future, plans, strategies, engagement and collaboration can be built upon. A big 'thank you' goes to the following teams, organisations and individuals in 2021 and 2022 for their contributions to the project:

Business and Community:

Banffshire Business Forum

Vinery Reference Group Members

Footfall Count Volunteers

Accessibility Audit Volunteers

**Banffshire
Business Forum**



Partner Organisations:

Sergeant Walker, Partnerships,
Preventions and Interventions, Police
Scotland

Elaine Bisset, VisitAberdeenshire



Council Teams:

Planning Information and Delivery

GIS Team

Community Learning and
Development

Banff and Buchan Area Office

Community Payback Unpaid Hours
Service

Community Engagement and
Equalities

Transportation

Economic Development

Customer and Digital Services

Planning Policy

Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL



Aberdeenshire

COUNCIL



TOWN CENTRE HEALTH CHECK
SEPTEMBER 2022

REPORT PRODUCED BY THE PLANNING INFORMATION AND DELIVERY TEAM
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