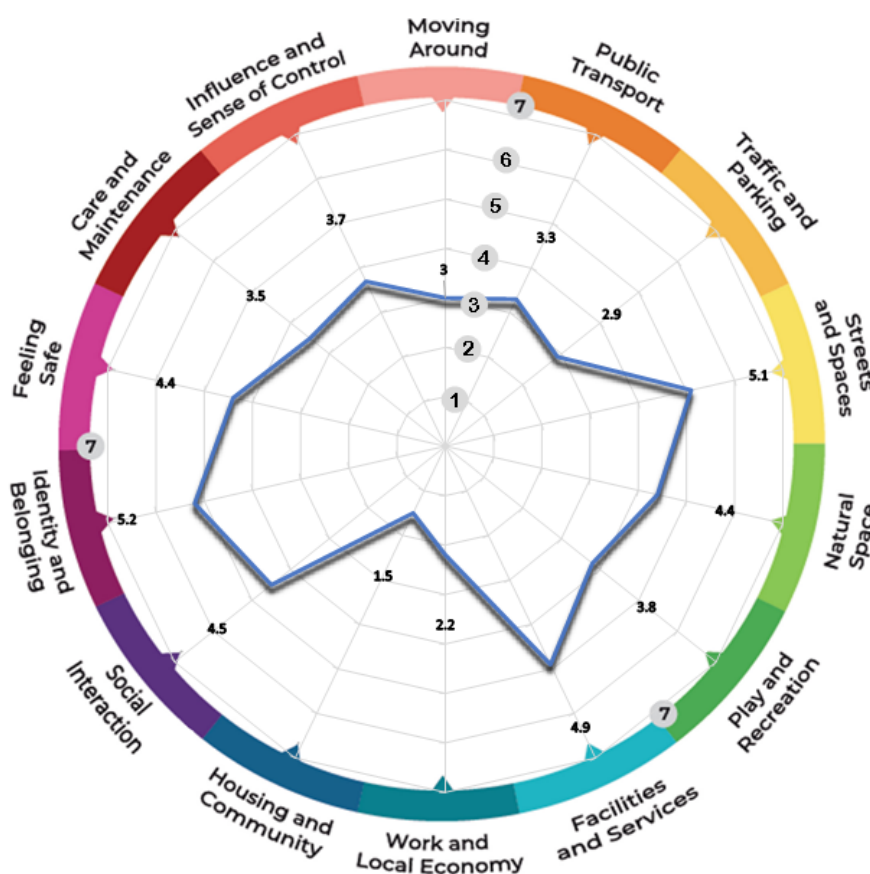# Community Council: Aberfeldy

Aberfeldy Community Council covers the key settlement of Aberfeldy as well as a rural area of to the south. Aberfeldy is a key centre for the area hosting many facilities and services including community campus, hospital, and retailing. The River Tay forms an important feature in the local area, and the area is a popular visitor destination.

A place standard event (including drop-in) was held in Aberfeldy as well as sessions with primary school pupils at Breadalbane Community Campus and the VisionPK group in Aberfeldy. A total of 33 people attended an event or responded to the survey, including 9 primary school pupils and 7 disabled people. A Community Action Plan is being developed for the Community Council area.

## Place Standard Scores

Note that due to the tailored nature of conversations not all participants completed scores, this includes drop in events. Note that place standard scores are out of 7. Seven is where the least improvement is needed, and 1 the most.

**Aberfeldy Place Standard Scores**



## 1. Moving Around (3)

Mixed feelings about ease of walking around Aberfeldy and the general state of pavements and safety of existing path infrastructure. Difficulty to access services in Aberfeldy for those living more rurally. Concerns raised about ease of using Wade Bridge, with no traffic lights for

pedestrian use. Not many children walk to school which can make school drop off and pick up times busy. Good mix of walking and cycling trails available.

Cycling can be difficult and unsafe due to road surfaces, topography, and traffic. Suggestions for improved opportunities for off-road cycling and bike storage in Aberfeldy.

## 2. Public Transport (3.3)

Mixed feelings about adequacy of public transport in the area. Free buses for under 22s a positive for young people in the area. Bus times often not suitable for evening or commuting times with suggestions for extended hours/frequency. Bus service provision also not serving wider rural community sufficiently, with need for integrated public transport system and connections with other bigger settlements needing improved e.g. Perth, Crieff.

Suggestions for integrated transport system, park and ride facility, and bike storage in Aberfeldy to support reduced car use.

## 3. Traffic and Parking (2.9)

General consensus that there are parking issues in Aberfeldy caused by large numbers of tourists and inappropriate parking e.g. on pavements/blind-spots. Aberfeldy centre can be problematic with parking, with additional parking suggested as well as improved signage for tourists to use alternative parking places. Concern around loss of parking as a result of square redevelopment, including for disabled users, as well as parking pressures around the Co-op store.

Evidence of speeding on local roads and large vehicles on narrow rural roads e.g. tractors, HGVs, logging lorries. Parking for local trails can also be an issue for some.

## 4. Streets, Squares and Buildings (5.1)

Mixed feelings about buildings in Aberfeldy, particularly around the town square area. Some feel that landmark buildings and features are well maintained and are important to the local area including the town hall, Locus centre, cinema, local stone bridges, and lower Birks. Local events are also important to the town including farmers' market. Some buildings are poorly maintained/derelict, and the town centre suffers from some units being closed. There are also issues with too much signage and dog fouling.

Suggestions for improvement include a more proactive, 'collective' approach to the town square including temporary use of empty units, proactive approach from Council in relation to street signage, waste storage, and empty units, and more greenery in the square.

## 5. Natural Spaces (4.4)

General consensus from those living in Aberfeldy and surrounding rural area that there are lots of natural spaces to visit including accessible walks, and that the area is well connected to the natural environment. Examples of natural assets in the area include: the Birks, Victoria Park, golf course, local woodlands, paths along the river, Weem rock. There is also lots of wildlife in the area and access to local woodlands.

Litter and dog fouling is seen as an ongoing problem in popular spots including the Birks. Issues are also raised around accessing some paths due to landowner restrictions as well as some paths not being accessible for all users.

There are a number of suggested improvements including improving some paths to make more accessible, more bins for dog fouling/littering, cleaning the Moness Burn, and improved parking availability at popular spots.

## 6. Play and recreation (3.8)

Generally there are good opportunities for play and recreation for young children including various parks around the town (Victoria Park, Moness Crescent), good walks in the area, bike park, golf course, cricket, skate park and rafting. There are playgrounds in housing estates, an outdoor nursery and opportunities for informal play at the Birks and the river.

There is generally a consensus that opportunities for younger people are more limited and could be improved. Opportunities for those living in rural areas are limited and require driving to Aberfeldy. The Breadalbane Campus is also highlighted as being expensive for some activities. Litter and vandalism of existing facilities is also raised as an issue.

Some also feel that opportunities could be improved including developing a 'Sports Hub' for the town, better maintenance of existing facilities including the smaller playgrounds, providing more bins, and improved awareness of what's available.

## 7. Facilities and Services (4.9)

There is a mix of feeling about the facilities and services on offer in the area. Some feel that the town and surrounding area is well served by existing facilities and services whilst others feel that the current situation needs improvement.

Some have expressed concern and suggest improvements in relation to: medical & dentist facilities, shop provision, banking access, care home/sheltered housing accommodation, education provision and difficulty recruiting staff, campus facilities, social spaces other than pubs, and maximising participation in community groups. In rural areas social care, broadband and mobile phone coverage are noted concerns. The development of Taymouth Castle is also highlighted as a concern in relation to availability of workers.

## 8. Work and Local Economy (2.2)

It was highlighted that whilst there is a range of existing jobs operating the area (e.g. retail, education, agriculture, hospitality & tourism) the local economy is held back by a number of important factors including lack of housing (of a range of types), lack of further education in the area and relocation of young people elsewhere, lack of small business spaces/units, lack of support/training services, poor broadband, and lack of childcare facilities. The development of Taymouth Castle is also highlighted as a concern in relation to availability of workers.

It was noted that during COVID a lot of professional people moved to the area where they could work from home.

Main suggestions for improvement centre around delivering more housing (primarily affordable units), additional space/units for business use, improving broadband access, and supporting young people to stay and work in the local area including having access to appropriate support/training.

## 9. Housing and Community (1.5)

A significant issue highlighted by the local community is the availability of housing, including affordable units, in the local area. A range of house types is suggested to help meet local needs which has been evidenced through work of the Aberfeldy Development Trust. Issues of second

homes and short term let housing is also highlighted as an issue, driving up house prices and resulting in few houses being available at affordable prices for local people.

Concerns highlighted around cost of maintaining older properties particularly those listed and/or in conservation areas. Due to lack of housing available this creates problems for the local economy as well as driving local people elsewhere.

It is recognised that the community is very friendly and welcoming, with strong links to various groups.

Suggestions include a more community-centred approach to housing delivery including delivering a range of house types to meet local needs. Restrictions on second/holiday homes and short term lets also suggested to support housing market for local people.

### 10. Social Interaction (4.5)

There are mixed feelings about the opportunities for social interaction in Aberfeldy and the surrounding area. Some feel that there are a range of good opportunities for interacting with others including volunteering opportunities, horizon lunch club, the Birks, roastery, Feldy-roo, the workshop, the library, village hall activities across the area.

Improvements are suggested to improve social interaction including having other options in the evenings (not just pubs), improving the offer of facilities from the campus, improved offerings for younger people, opportunities for a community sports hub, and improved social prescribing schemes. Improving opportunities for those living in rural areas also highlighted where current activities are none/limited.

### 11. Identity & Belonging (5.2)

Generally there is a good sense of community and belonging in the local area. This includes being proud of the town and surrounding natural environment and the sense of community.

One respondent notes feeling that the community is not what it used to be, and another noting that disruptive neighbours makes it difficult to feel proud of the place.

Suggested improvements include promoting more family-friendly events, tidying-up the town and poorly maintained buildings, improved food shop offerings and evening economy, and a strategic approach to help prioritise what locals need rather than what visitors want i.e. through local place plan or community action plan.

### 12. Feeling Safe (4.4)

Respondents note a number of instances where they feel unsafe including anti-social behaviour in the evenings/weekends, people congregating in housing areas, fires and vandalism in park areas, and instances of non-inclusive behaviour towards certain groups of people. Children (aged under 12) particularly highlight instances of not feeling safe including smoking/vaping behind school, school and park vandalism, burglary in rural area, and walking around in the evenings.

Suggested improvements include providing better housing opportunities giving people flexibility on where they may want to live.

### 13. Care & Maintenance (3.5)

There is a mix of feeling in terms of how well cared-for and maintained the town and local area is. Some feel that there are good examples of buildings and streets being well cared-for

including Victoria Park, the riverside path and areas of planting around the town. Others feel that there are a number of concerns and suggested improvements including: more bins for littering and dog fouling, road surfaces and potholes including the road to Kenmore, and stronger enforcement for building maintenance. Breadalbane Hotel is noted as being a building in need of some care. A strategic approach to town centre management is also suggested.

## 14. Influence & Sense of Control (3.7)

There is a mix of feeling in terms of influence and sense of control over decision making in the local area. Some feel that the community voice is powerful and gets things done in the area particularly if there is an issue that needs dealing with. Others note that they feel as though they are not listened to or don't know where to find information including for example during consultations on the square redevelopment and the Taymouth castle project, accessing Council services, or certain voices within the community not being listened to. Children and young people also note that they have not been asked about anything outwith the school, but engagement within the school is generally good.

Suggested improvements include more opportunities within the community for sharing ideas and talking, an 'Aberfeldy app' to share what's going on, and improved involvement with children when things are happening.