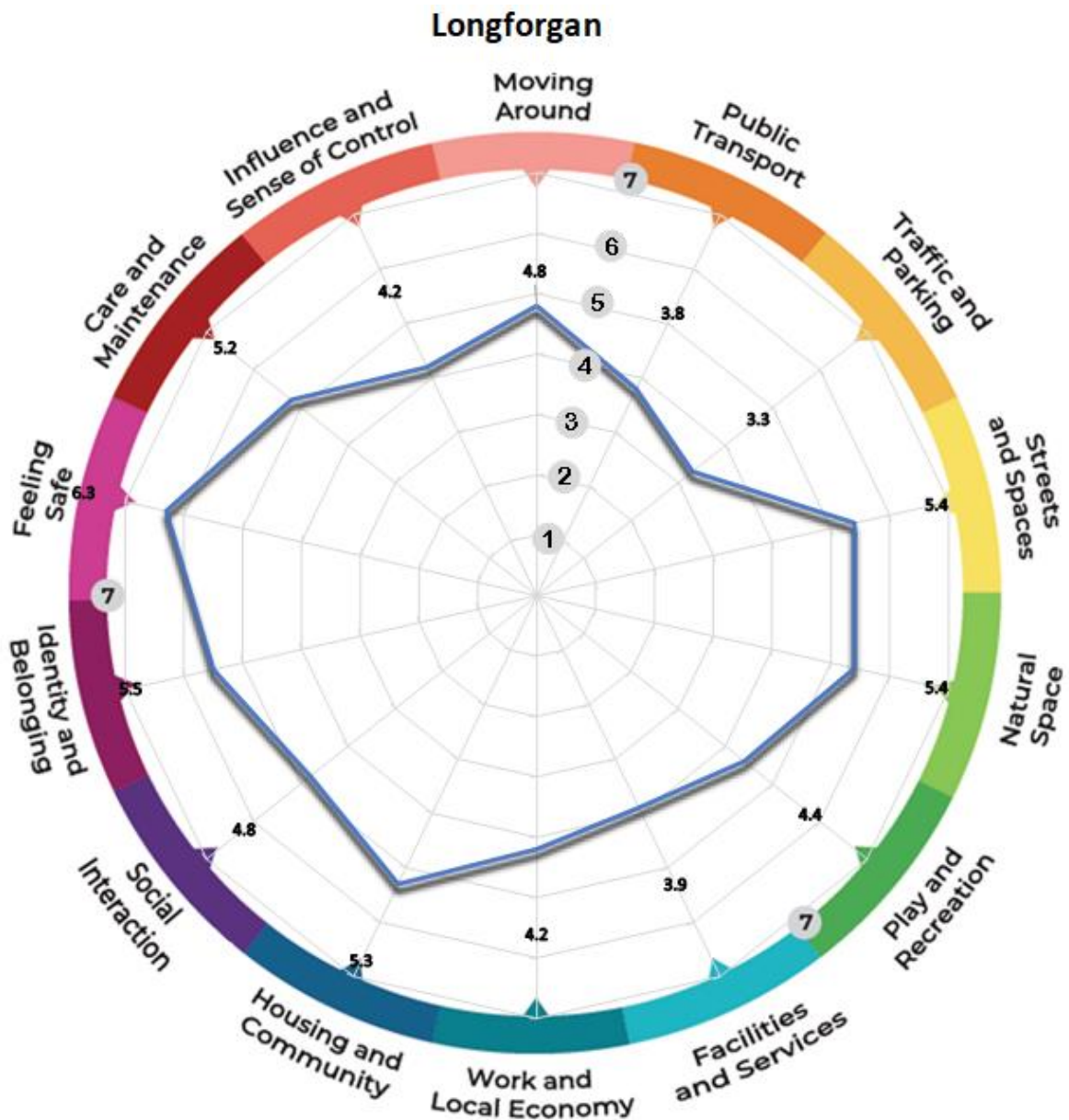


Community Council: Longforgan

Longforgan Community Council area is located in eastern Perthshire along the north shore of the Firth of Tay. It is centred around the town of Longforgan which is situated along the A90 between Inchtute and Invergowrie. This is the only designated settlement in the LDP but there are small residential enclaves across the rural area. There is no published community action plan for the area at present.

There was a total of 16 participants providing feedback during the Big Place Conversation. This consisted of community drop-ins, a public event at Longforgan Bowling Club, and several survey responses. Comments were primarily focused on Longforgan and came from the general public, elderly, young people, and disabled. Only 13 respondents participated in scoring the place standard topics shown below.



Moving Around

Respondents agree it is generally easy to walk around Longforgan and the introduction of 20mph zones has helped address safety concerns.

Accessibility issues were reported, with degraded pavements (e.g. Station Road) and entrances to buildings being a key barrier to moving around, especially for people with limited mobility. Furthermore, maintenance of vegetation encroaching on paths and poor lighting in some areas are other barriers to active travel. It was noted that there is poor lighting on the western periphery of Longforgan and residents avoid walking here at night without a torch. Increased provision of outdoor seating and furniture was suggested to encourage more people to walk.

Residents still prefer to use vehicles for short journeys due to a poor-quality active travel network in the area. Traffic, particularly on the weekends, makes cycling feel dangerous for residents (e.g. along the Low Road). On-road cycling also is also a safety concern for drivers, who find it difficult to pass cyclists. The community suggest that new routes should be developed along fields and not roads, where possible.

Public Transport

Most respondents agree that public transport provision generally meets the needs of the community. Bus services run hourly and provide links to key destinations such as Dundee City Centre and Ninewells Hospital. The proximity to Dundee provides benefits such as a later evening service and access to Ember buses for direct travel between cities. Residents also benefit from being a short journey from Invergowrie train station. Train services to key destinations run frequently, but ticket pricing is restrictive for some.

Bus timetabling could be improved to encourage more commuters to choose this option. Issues of unreliable services and overcrowded buses at peak times (e.g. school rush hour) discourage commuting by bus. Concerns were raised that bus services are being reduced and becoming increasingly unreliable. Furthermore, it is not easy to get information about cancelled or delayed buses. Live trackers on more bus stops was suggested to address this.

Traffic & Parking

Traffic and parking are the main issues for Longforgan and surrounding area. The community strongly believes that new development will exacerbate the problems if not appropriately addressed.

There are significant safety concerns due to speeding vehicles and frequent lorries passing through the area. Respondents suggests there should be more 20mph zones and increased traffic calming measures in the village, as well as more 40mph limits on surrounding country roads.

Parking is a key issue due to lack of formal spaces and congestion caused by on-street parking. Many houses and key destinations (e.g. bowling club and school) don't have allocated parking spaces, requiring drivers to park on the road. Main Street and Station Road are problem areas where on-street parking often restricts access to buses and lorries, leading to frequent traffic jams. It was suggested the issue could be addressed by implementing more double yellow lines and better utilisation of existing parking (e.g. outside businesses).

School pick-up and drop-off times were also highlighted as a significant issue for both drivers and pedestrians. It was suggested that lorries and buses should co-ordinate their routes and

schedules to avoid using school streets at peak times. Respondents also suggest improved school travel planning would reduce congestion by encouraging more to walk or cycle to school.

Streets, Squares & Buildings

Respondents agree that Longforgan benefits from having a designated conservation area, as this preserves the village aesthetic. However, more consistent application of conservation guidelines was suggested.

It was noted that the square outside of the school requires attention and should be redeveloped to improve this space for the community.

Natural Spaces

Residents have good access to natural spaces given the proximity to both countryside, hills and coast. There are several countryside sites (e.g. Huntly Woods) that are accessible from Longforgan. Access to natural spaces could be improved if more landowners agreed to help improve the path network through their land.

Negative feedback indicates that access to open space in Longforgan is limited to Memorial Park, although this is regarded as a good quality space. Respondents suggest there are pockets of greenspace that could be better utilised to create multi-functional open spaces for the benefit of both community and nature. It was also suggested that more trees within the settlement would be welcomed.

Play & Recreation

Positive feedback for this topic was that current play and recreation provision meets the needs of the existing community, but this will need improved if growth is expected.

The large play area at Memorial Park is well-used and regarded as good quality, but the small play area along Mary Findlay Drive is regarded as poor quality. The loss of informal play space at these sites due to no-mow is a concern, and the community would like to be consulted on changes taking place. Other negative comments indicate a shortage of indoor play provision for children. Suggestions to improve play provision include developing a MUGA in the park or at a new site (e.g. next to the school), and to better utilise the village hall for indoor play.

Positive feedback was also received regarding the local bowling club, indicating this is well-used both for sporting and as a community hub where activities are hosted. Other formal sporting opportunities for adults are limited to the tennis courts, which are reported to be in poor condition.

There are great recreational walks due to the countryside location, such as the walk between Westbank Farm and Castle Road. These paths need upgrading to make them more accessible throughout the year, as it is reported to be almost inaccessible in winter due to surfacing. Respondents suggested there should be improvements to the core path network to improve opportunities for recreational walking. New routes from Longforgan connecting with countryside sites over the A90 (e.g. Huntley Woods and Rossie Priory) should be considered.

Facilities & Services

Longforgan benefits from being close to Dundee where there is good variety of facilities and services. Positive feedback was received regarding the local village shop in Longforgan as well as the mobile services visiting the area (e.g. Library and Fishmonger). The village shop also provide post office services that are well-used by the community.

Negative feedback focused on the limited facilities and services within Longforgan. Poor access to healthcare services and community facilities were the main issues raised, along with the lack of public toilets. Poor public transport provision was raised again as a barrier to accessibility. There is growing concern that any new development will increase pressure on what limited facilities and services there are.

Suggestions provided here include improving mobile services, renovating the church into a multi-functional community space, and opening toilets in the park changing rooms during public events.

Work & Local Economy

Being located between Perth and Dundee there are a good range of opportunities for those able to travel. However, bus timetabling was brought up again as a barrier to accessing opportunities for those who rely on public transport.

Longforgan is commuter village, with most residents working out the area. There are limited employment opportunities besides some farming and other rural industry. Respondents suggest new businesses should be encouraged and supported in the area, with specific reference to utilising vacant sites (e.g. former Scot Herbs site).

Housing & Community

Longforgan is fortunate to be a mostly affluent village with low levels of deprivation. Respondents agree that there is a good sense of community spirit and neighbourliness that goes beyond the settlement boundary to include rural residents.

The main issue raised is the lack of affordable and social housing. Housing in Longforgan is expensive and what was originally built as affordable is no longer, due to council houses being bought over. Where there is new affordable or social housing, it is important these developments are designed cohesively to avoid creating feelings of segregation in the community.

Respondents do not wish to see large-scale housing developments. They would like a cohesive approach to planning new developments, that will sustainably grow Longforgan while maintaining its character.

Social Interaction

Positive feedback was that there are enough social opportunities to meet the needs of the current community. Those mentioned include the pub, bowling club, church and Memorial Park. The park is an important space used for community events, such as Gala Days, that bring people together. Respondents suggest this space could be better utilised throughout the year if there was a sheltered area to host activities.

Negative comments highlight the lack of community spaces and raise concern that further provision is required if population growth is expected. Young people were reported to have the least opportunities available to them, with very limited spaces or activities specifically for this demographic.

The Village Trust seeks to improve opportunities by redeveloping the church as a community hub, similar to the Madoch Centre. Suggestions include support for the Village Trust's project and making the school hall accessible for clubs and activity groups.

Identity & Belonging

The community of Longforgan has developed a unique identity due to being on the fringe of Dundee yet still in Rural Perth and Kinross. Community events have helped develop a strong sense of belonging by making residents feel welcomed and a part of the community.

Some respondents highlight the lack of community space as a barrier to improved sense of community, but suggest that more events can address this in the meantime.

Feeling Safe

Positive comments indicate the area feels safe to residents. Some areas are reported to have poor lighting, but respondents still feel safe going out at night. Transport related hazards and increased flood risk due to climate change were raised as safety concerns.

Care & Maintenance

Generally, Longforgan was agreed to be in a good state of repair.

Greenspace maintenance is the key issue raised. Residents are unhappy with PKC's no-mow scheme and think there could be a better solution to the grassland management (e.g. wildflower meadows). Hedges, verges, pockets of amenity greenspace, and graveyards were all listed as needing more regular maintenance. It was also noted that the trees along the dual carriageway are coming to the end of their life, and it is important to residents that the landscape barrier is maintained to reduce noise impact.

Litter, fly-tipping and dog-fouling were other key concerns raised. Suggestions to address these include installation of more bins in problem areas, and improving access to recycling centre by lifting restrictions.

Other maintenance requirements were the repainting lampposts, ditch clearance to mitigate flooding, and pothole and pavement repairs.

Influence & Sense of Control

Positive feedback suggests that the local community have reasonable control over life and living conditions in Longforgan. The Village Trust and Community Council have played an important role in this by raising awareness of important issues, making information available, improving communication with PKC, fundraising and more.

Negative feedback was that the community does not feel the school development was done collaboratively with the community. From this experience, there is scepticism that engagement events are more about informing, rather than collaboration.

Suggestions received here were to improve transparency and communication from the Village Trust, Community Council, and PKC. Reinstating a village notice board was also suggested to improve communication and information sharing. Lastly, it is important to the community that their voices are heard, and they are involved in the collaborative preparation of LDP3.