



# THE BIG PLACE CONVERSATION

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Throughout 2023 Perth & Kinross Council carried out a large scale community engagement called the Big Place Conversation. We asked communities what is good about their place and what could be improved. The main purpose of these conversations was to help shape the next Local Development Plan and our [Mobility Strategy](#). The evidence however is valuable for teams throughout the Council and for communities to help them with their own local plans.

This report provides a summary of area wide and common ideas across the community councils that make up the Blairgowrie & the Glens Ward. Summary reports are also available for the whole of Perth and Kinross and for each Community Council. Community Council reports provide greater detail of specific issues, often to settlement level. All reports are available on the Big Place Conversation [Results Page](#).

## BLAIRGOWRIE AND GLENS WARD

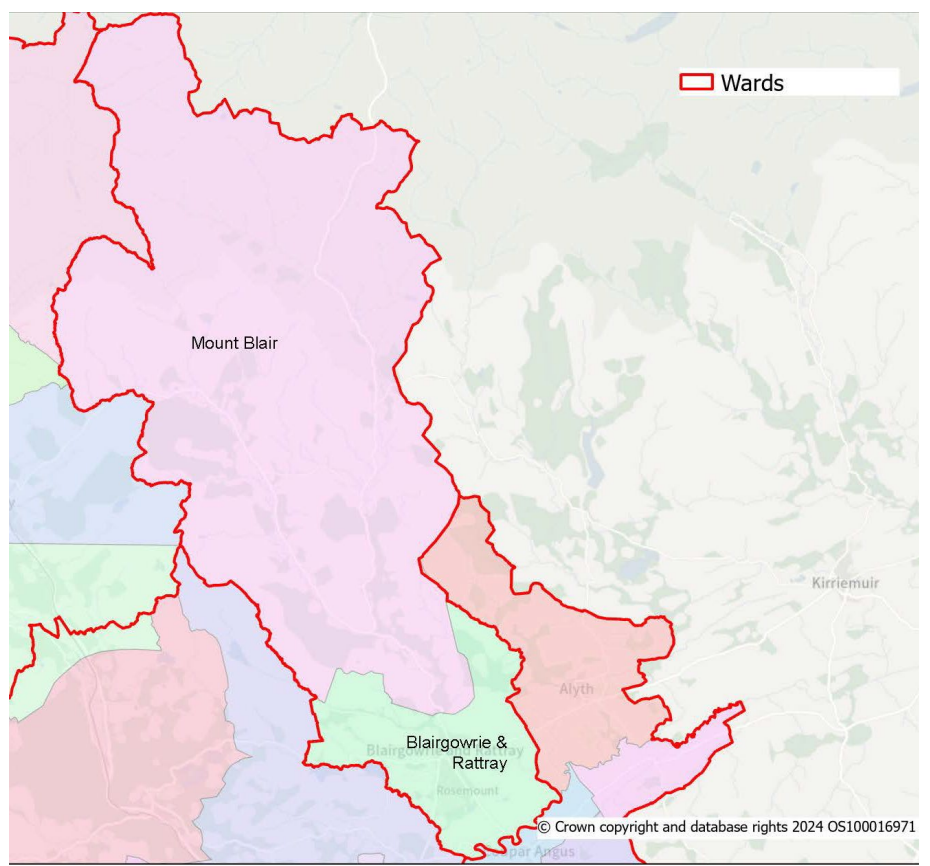
Located in the northeast of Perth and Kinross, Blairgowrie and Glens is primarily a rural area that features the town of Blairgowrie, the local hub for facilities and services. The ward extends northward into the scenic Highlands and encompasses part of the Cairngorms National Park.

The ward includes the following Community Councils. We have summarised comments for each of the Community Councils in the following reports available on the Big Place Conversation Results Page at [www.pkc.gov.uk/bigplaceconversation](http://www.pkc.gov.uk/bigplaceconversation).

- [Blairgowrie and Rattray](#)
- [Mount Blair](#)

A total of 79 participants from this ward took part in the Big Place Conversation through the online survey or at one of the 8 events including a conversation with Kikmichael Primary School students. We received feedback from the public at large and the following groups: Public at large

- Children and young people
- Business representatives
- Disabled
- Community Council
- Community Body
- Women issues

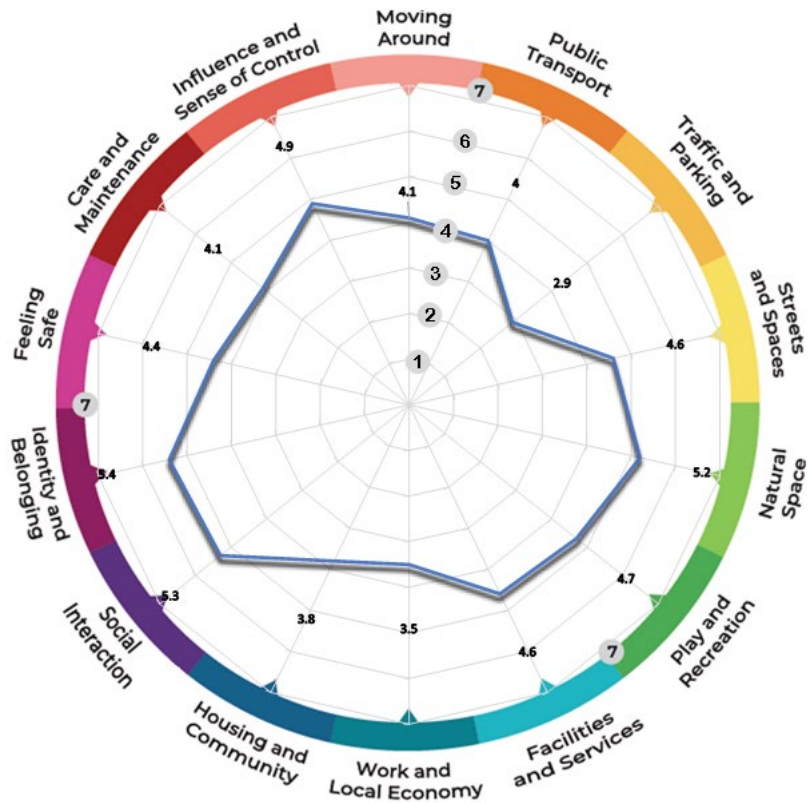


## 2. AREA WIDE SUMMARY

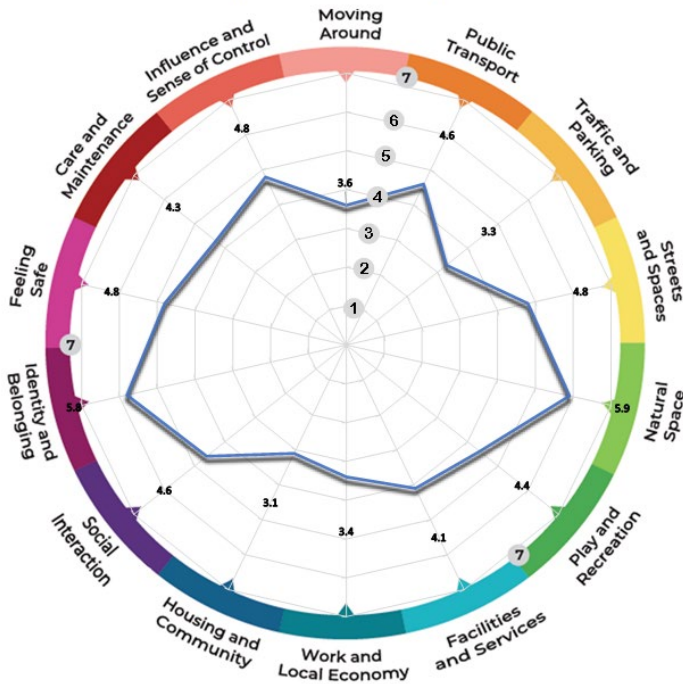
### PLACE STANDARD SCORES

We used the [Place Standard](#) approach for our community engagement, a tool widely used across Scotland. The Place Standard includes questions on 14 themes. Participants provide comments and scores out of 7 for each theme. Seven is where the least improvement is needed, and 1 the most. Note that due to the tailored nature of conversations not all participants completed scores.

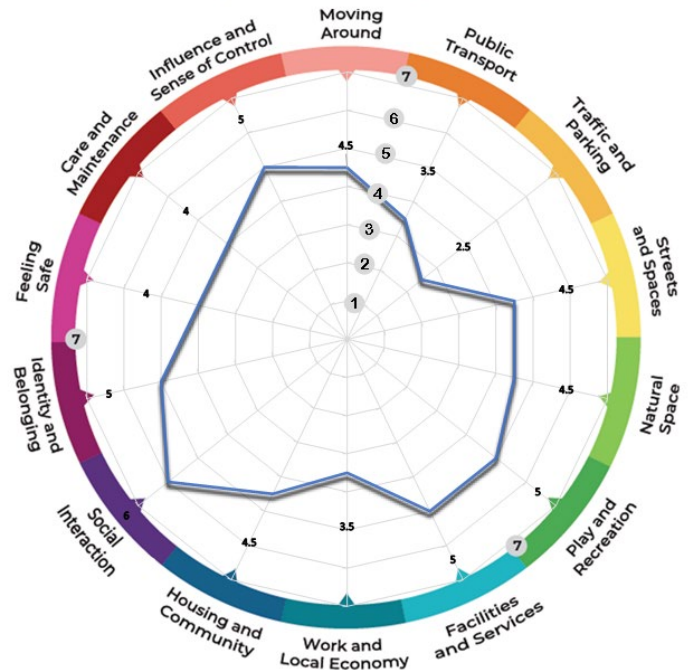
**Blairgowrie & Glens**



**Blairgowrie & Glens >16 years**



**Blairgowrie & Glens Young People**



## SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK AT WARD LEVEL

This section includes a summary of issues noted that relate to the wider area of the Blairgowrie & Glens Ward and issues common across the community council areas. Place standard scores are given for each category. Comments are recorded as positive (+), negative (-) or suggestions (o).

### 1. MOVING AROUND (4.1)

#### HOW EASY IS IT TO WALK, WHEEL OR CYCLE TO PLACES I NEED TO AND WANT TO GO?

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- + Good recreational walking and cycling routes
- + Plenty of benches to rest in Blairgowrie
- + Easy for children to walk or cycle to school in Kirkmichael
- Lack of a cohesive active travel network
- On-road cycling is dangerous due to traffic, speeding and large vehicles
- Children feel safer cycling off-road
- Potholes are a safety hazard, causing cyclists and drivers to swerve
- Narrow, uneven or missing pavements
- Key areas lack safe crossings (e.g. near schools and shops)
- Pavement obstacles (e.g. lampposts) hinder wheelchair users
- Insufficient wheelchair ramps and dropped kerbs
- Parked cars often block dropped kerbs
- Limited buses with bike storage
- o Develop safe off-road active travel routes to key destinations
- o Pedestrianise Blairgowrie town centre
- o Build a new footbridge connecting Blairgowrie and Rattray
- o Improve the Blairgowrie to Dunkeld cycle route

### 2. PUBLIC TRANSPORT (4)

#### HOW EASY IS IT TO GET TO WHERE I NEED TO OR WANT TO GO BY BUS, TRAIN, OR OTHER FORMS OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT?

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- + Good bus service options in Blairgowrie
- + N63 is well used in Blairgowrie and Rattray
- + Bus passes for the elderly and youth encourage use
- + Live tracking apps make bus travel easier
- No train access in the area
- Poor connections to rural areas
- Limited evening services to Perth and Dundee
- Poor access to Dunkeld, Spittalfield, and Pitlochry
- Buses sometimes leave ahead of schedule
- Insufficient bus stops in Rattray
- Expensive tickets for non-passholders
- Few sheltered or well-maintained bus stops
- Bus timetables can be difficult to read for dyslexic users
- o Expand N63 service to include more stops in Rattray
- o Provide live departure times at bus stops
- o Develop a car share scheme
- o Ensure all school bus stops are sheltered
- o Explore adding a train station or halt in the area

### 3. TRAFFIC & PARKING (2.9)

#### HOW DOES TRAFFIC AND PARKING AFFECT ME WHEN I AM OUT AND ABOUT IN MY PLACE?

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- + Free parking in Blairgowrie town centre
- + 20mph speed limits in place
- + EV charging points available
- Speeding is an issue in settlements and rural roads
- Large agricultural vehicles, HGVs and campervans frequently on roads
- Narrow roads make it difficult for vehicles to pass
- On-street parking leads to congestion
- Illegal parking on double yellow lines and near exits is common
- Blairgowrie town centre feels pedestrian unfriendly due to traffic
- Lack of clear signage to parking in Blairgowrie
- The one-way system in Blairgowrie is confusing
- o Consider a Park and Ride for Blairgowrie in LDP3
- o Add more traffic calming measures, particularly near schools
- o Provide more designated free parking spaces
- o Increase parking capacity at Blairgowrie High School

### 4. STREETS, SQUARES & BUILDINGS (4.6)

#### WHAT ARE THE STREETS, SQUARES, AND BUILDINGS LIKE IN MY PLACE?

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- + Shop Front Improvement Scheme in Blairgowrie
- + Historic buildings and monuments add character
- + Wellmeadow in Blairgowrie is a well-used community square
- Some streets and buildings appear neglected
- Prominent buildings need maintenance
- Vacant and derelict buildings detract from the area
- o Improve signage to local attractions
- o Use public art to make spaces more vibrant
- o Incorporate more green infrastructure

### 5. NATURAL SPACES (5.3)

#### HOW WELL AM I CONNECTED TO NATURE IN MY PLACE?

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- + Scenic landscapes, hills, rivers, and lochs
- + Easy access to countryside walks, such as the Catevan Trail
- + High-quality parks and greenspaces
- + Strong biodiversity in rural and urban areas
- + Local volunteers enhancing biodiversity
- Loss of natural spaces due to development
- Limited accessibility to natural spaces for those with poor mobility
- Insufficient seating and shelters in natural areas
- o Better promotion of natural assets in the area
- o Protect more sites against development in LDP3
- o Enhance biodiversity in urban greenspaces
- o Promote outdoor education to foster connections with nature

### 6. PLAY & RECREATION (4.7)

## WHAT ARE THE SPACES (PARKS, PITCHES ETC) LIKE FOR PLAY, RECREATION, SPORT, AND SPENDING TIME WITH FRIENDS IN AND AROUND MY PLACE?

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- + Wide range of clubs and activities for all demographics
- + Facilities such as skatepark and 3G football pitch in Blairgowrie and Rattray
- + Youth groups like SCYD are highly valued
- + Good formal and informal play areas
- + Great recreational walks in area
- Limited opportunities for young people, leading them to travel to Perth or Dundee
- Inadequate leisure facilities for disabled individuals
- Few indoor recreational options
- Some recreational options are expensive
- Limited formal play and sporting options in rural areas
- o Better utilise river for recreation and leisure
- o More free activities, especially young people
- o Create more challenging and diverse play opportunities
- o Develop formal bike tracks to prevent informal biking on nature trails
- o Develop more recreational cycling, skating, and scootering routes

## 7. FACILITIES & SERVICES (4.6)

### WHAT IS MY PLACE LIKE FOR ACCESSING SERVICES WE NEED?

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- + Good access to facilities and services in Blairgowrie
- + Mobile services like the library and fish van support rural areas
- + Village shops providing essential goods in rural areas
- + Good access to fresh local produce
- + Good provision of care homes
- Poor healthcare access in rural areas
- Frequent power cuts in rural areas
- No police station
- Limited cultural facilities (e.g. gallery or museum)
- Poor broadband service
- Limited restaurant or takeaway options and shortage of healthy options
- Blairgowrie High School in need of modernisation
- Limited support for young people with mental health challenges or neurodivergence
- Poor access to facilities for wheelchair users
- o Develop more facilities to accommodate population growth
- o Improve access to services in rural area

## 8. WORK & LOCAL ECONOMY (3.5)

### ARE THERE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE TO WORK, TRAIN OR VOLUNTEER LOCALLY?

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- + Good range of employment opportunities across area
- + Strong potential for tourism growth
- + Wide variety of volunteering opportunities
- + School and youth groups help young people gain work experience
- Many residents commute outside the area for work
- Limited job opportunities for young people, leading to outward migration
- Shortage of skilled tradespeople

- Vacant shop premises hinder economic growth
- o Improve coordination and promotion of the tourism sector
- o Develop remote work hubs with high-speed internet
- o Provide more support for small businesses
- o Promote volunteering opportunities more effectively
- o Increase work experience opportunities for young people

## 9. HOUSING & COMMUNITY (3.8)

### DO THE HOMES IN MY AREA SUPPORT THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY?

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- + Strong sense of community and neighbourliness
- + Diverse housing mix and age demographics
- + Good housing mix
- + Most homes are warm and comfortable
- Few options for smaller households (e.g. flats, bungalows)
- Limited affordable housing
- Air BnB's and holiday homes reducing housing availability
- Inadequate wheelchair-accessible housing
- Lack of temporary supported accommodation for vulnerable individuals
- Older housing stock requires significant maintenance
- o Prioritise development on brownfield sites
- o Build affordable and social housing to retain young residents
- o Offer grants for home energy improvements and essential maintenance

## 10. SOCIAL INTERACTION (5.3)

### ARE THERE PLACES WHERE I CAN GO TO MEET AND TALK WITH FRIENDS AND OTHER PEOPLE?

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- + Frequent opportunities for socialising
- + Good variety of venues in Blairgowrie (e.g. churches, cafes, pubs)
- + Outdoor and market events foster community spirit
- + Ample opportunities for the elderly to socialise
- + Strong youth engagement through organisations like AYP and SCYD
- Limited social opportunities for disabled and young people
- Rural areas have fewer venues for socialising
- Isolation is a concern for some residents
- Limited free and inclusive spaces for all age groups
- Difficult to access information on local events and activities
- High costs for booking venues, particularly those managed by PKC
- Insufficient volunteers to run clubs and activities
- o Create and promote a central register of groups and activities
- o Schedule more evening activities for working adults
- o Provide free, accessible spaces with heating and Wi-Fi
- o Offer more free activities for young people
- o More seating and sheltered areas outdoors for socialising

## 11. IDENTITY & BELONGING (5.4)

### HOW PROUD DO I FEEL ABOUT MY PLACE, AND DO I FEEL I BELONG?

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- + Rich local heritage and history

- + Strong community spirit
- Difficulty integrating new residents into the community
- Expansion in Blairgowrie is altering its character and identity
- Young people feel excluded and lack knowledge of the area's history
- o Share local history in public spaces to foster pride in place

## **12. FEELING SAFE (4.4)**

### HOW SAFE DO I FEEL IN MY PLACE?

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- + Residents generally feel safe
- + Sheltered accommodations provide a secure environment
- Traffic-related safety concerns are the main issue
- Young people feel unsafe, particularly at night
- Poor lighting in certain places (e.g. paths)
- Growing vandalism and drug-related issues
- Teenagers loitering in spaces meant for younger children (e.g. playgrounds)
- Flooding presents safety risks in some areas
- o Install more CCTV at anti-social behaviour hotspots
- o Increase police and community warden presence

## **13. CARE & MAINTENANCE (4.1)**

### ARE THERE SPACES OR BUILDINGS THAT NEED CLEANING UP OR FIXING IN THE AREA?

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- + Blair in Bloom enhances the town's appearance
- + Parks and public spaces are generally well-maintained
- Litter, fly-tipping, and dog-fouling are common
- Graffiti, vandalism, and hazardous waste in public spaces
- No-Mow grassland management changes regarded as poorly delivered
- Roads, pavements, paths and signage in poor condition
- Historic buildings require better maintenance
- Concern bridge to Rattray is at risk from erosion
- o Increase road gritting in winter
- o Designate spaces for young people to practice street art

## **14. INFLUENCE & SENSE OF CONTROL (4.9)**

### WHEN THINGS HAPPEN IN MY PLACE, HOW EASY IS IT FOR ME TO SAY WHAT I THINK AND BE LISTENED TO?

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- + Local Councillors maintain good communication
- + Community Councils provide platforms for residents to raise concerns
- + Sheltered housing provides good support for residents
- + Schools support pupil engagement
- People don't feel listened to despite various local engagement opportunities
- Children and young people want more input on decisions affecting them
- Lack of clarity about who to contact at PKC for reporting issues
- o Better promote engagement opportunities
- o Use digital engagement tools for increased public participation