



# 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 Highland 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](#).

## HIGHLAND WARD

The Highland ward covers a large rural and upland area to the north-west of the Council area. The area includes larger settlements including Aberfeldy and Pitlochry where many of the area's services and amenities are located, with smaller settlements interspersed across the rural area. The Cairngorms National Park sits to the very north of the area.

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).

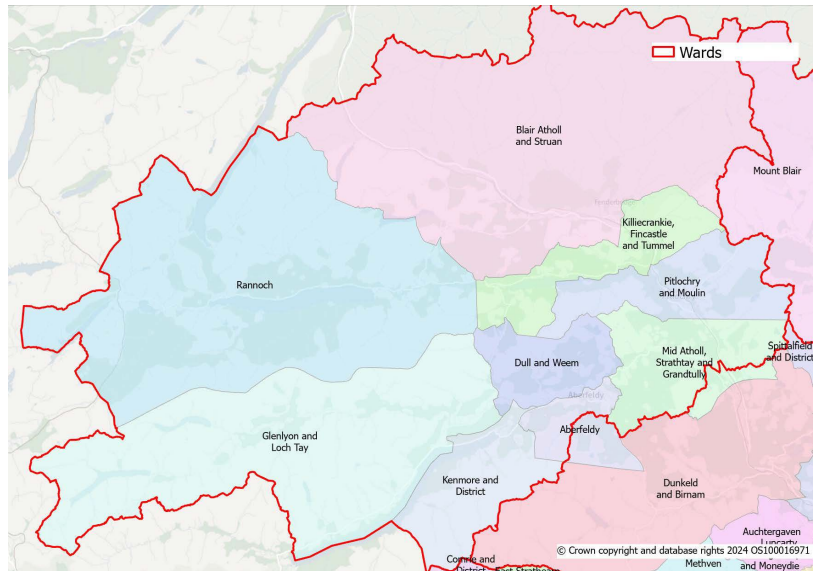
- [Aberfeldy](#)
- [Blair Atholl and Struan](#)
- [Dull and Weem](#)
- [Glen Lyon and Loch Tay](#)
- [Kenmore and District](#)
- [Killiecrankie, Fincastle and Tummel](#)
- [Mid Atholl, Strathtay and Grandtully](#)
- [Pitlochry and Moulin](#)
- [Rannoch](#)

We received feedback from 150 respondents through the online survey or the 12 events in the Highland Ward including two primary school sessions. We received feedback from the public at large and the following groups:

- children and young people
- elderly
- representatives from community council, community development trust, and other community bodies
- disabled
- business representatives
- LGBTQI+
- Women issues

Results from other recent consultations are available for the Highland and Strathtay area, and supplement the findings of the Big Place Conversation:

- Culture & Sport Engagement, 2022

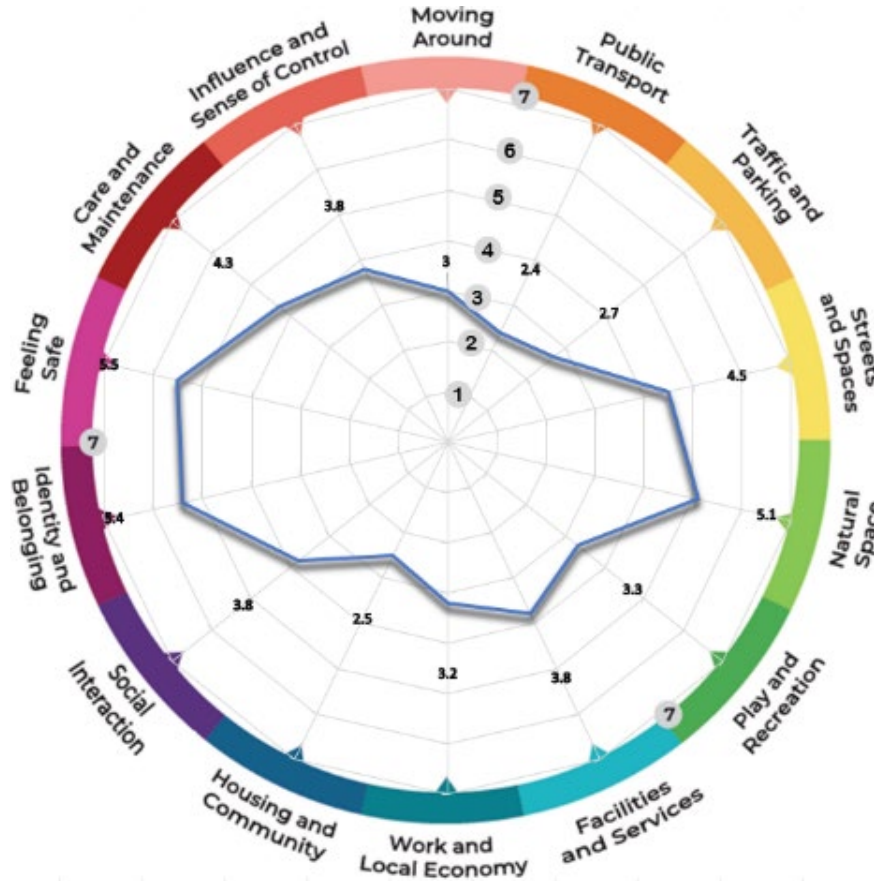


## 2. AREA WIDE SUMMARY

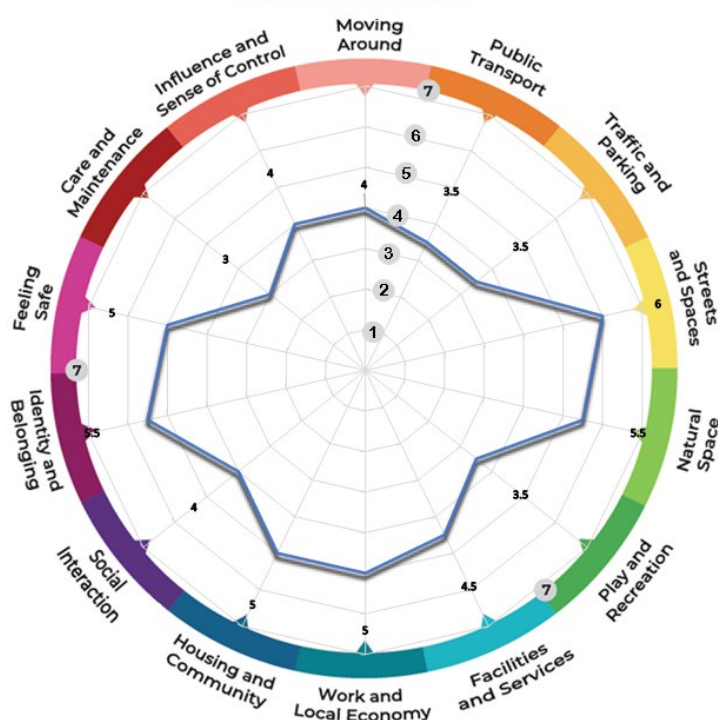
### PLACE STANDARD SCORES

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.

Highland Ward Place Standard Scores



Highland Young People



## SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK AT WARD LEVEL

This section includes a summary of issues noted that relate to the wider area of the Highland 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 (3)

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

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- + Excellent opportunities for walking/wheeling (for able-bodied)
- + For mobility issues, pavements are quite good
- + 20mph speed limits welcomed
- + Within towns walk to shops and services
- Difficulty moving around in rural areas without a car
- Some, lack of, pavements/paths not good for moving around
- Lack of cycle parking & facilities for bikes on buses/trains
- Challenging topography in some instances as well as difficult winter conditions
- Parking on pavements an issue for moving around
- Some feel unsafe walking and cycling around including children/young people and elderly – speeding and too much traffic, lack of appropriate paths
- For disabled users, more dropped kerbs and pavements too narrow at times
- Wade Bridge highlighted as an issue for pedestrians
- o Improve public transport to make it easier for getting around
- o Cycling infrastructure and improved existing facilities e.g. storage/parking, off-road paths
- o Better integrated network of paths to reach services & amenities in, and around, bigger settlements
- o Traffic calming measures / traffic enforcement

### 2. PUBLIC TRANSPORT (2.4)

#### 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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- + Train services available in bigger settlements (Perth, Pitlochry) – connect to other key places
- + Train services clean/fast/reliable
- + Public transport experience generally good for children/young people
- + Free bus pass for under 22s a positive
- Rural bus transport services not accessible for those with mobility issues
- Need to drive to get trains – not integrated
- Rural school bus service limited
- Bus service provision reduced
- Park & ride facilities used but must drive to use them
- Public transport not integrated, particularly for workers/commuters
- Remote rural areas – no/limited public transport, need to use a car
- o Review of public transport subsidies required
- o Improved bus services needed – better frequency, weekend/evening services, access for rural communities
- o Increase use of lift share website
- o Improved bike storage facilities on public transport and at stops/stations
- o Improved EV and e-bike charging infrastructure
- o Reduced car use would be a benefit of better public transport
- o Demand-led buses
- o Park and ride facility at Ballinluig

### 3. TRAFFIC & PARKING (2.8)

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

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- + A9 reliable from Pitlochry
- A9 is dangerous road with lots of traffic and instances of accidents
- Too much traffic in key settlements (Pitlochry, Aberfeldy) as a result of visitors/tourists
- Impact from visitors/tourists in scenic spots during high season e.g. Loch Tay, Kenmore, Loch Rannoch
- Lack of parking in popular towns
- Parking in centres always a problem for those with mobility issues
- Speeding traffic through villages/towns, issue with parked cars
- Narrow roads and large vehicles (HGVs, campers, forestry lorries, delivery drivers) is an issue, including where passing places are limited
- Limited access to use trails due to lack of parking/public transport
- o All settlements should be 20mph
- o Traffic calming measures needed to improve situation
- o Improved rural parking for bikes/cars
- o A9 dualling needed
- o Out of town parking for visitors/tourists
- o Parking restrictions in village/town centres including ticketing
- o Additional parking for those with mobility issues
- o Less/limit development around Loch Tay

### 4. STREETS, SQUARES & BUILDINGS (4.5)

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

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- + Lots of nice buildings across the area – characterful
- + Examples of local investment in and repurposing of older buildings e.g. Moulin Heritage Centre
- + Examples of well-looked after buildings e.g. Birks cinema, Kenmore
- Lack of accessible toilets – only 1 ‘changing places’ toilet in Highland Perthshire
- Evidence of poorly maintained/care for buildings including in town centres
- Too much dog fouling
- Loss of important community assets e.g. hotel, post offices, shops.
- Poor/lack of street lighting
- o Address buildings in town/village centres including landmark and derelict buildings – incentives?
- o Strategic approach to town centre management
- o More greenery in town/village centre(s)
- o Improved street cleaning
- o Strong planning in force for new development

### 5. NATURAL SPACES (5.3)

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

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- + Excellent accessibility to natural environment – walking, experiencing nature
- + High quality natural environment
- + Examples: Ben Vrackie, Faskally, Birks, River Tay, Loch Tay, Glen Lyon, local woodlands
- + Rob Roy Way popular with visitors
- + Lots of wildlife
- Litter and dog fouling
- Landowner restrictions accessing trails
- Concerns around over-development at Loch Tay
- Lack of parking to access natural environment in some instances
- Access around Taymouth Castle also highlighted as a concern

- Need space for community allotments
- Need careful planning/enforcement of policies protecting environment
- Improved signage to promote local environment
- Improved path network and parking availability
- Access to funding for community-based initiatives
- Mixed opinion about increasing parking for visitors in rural areas and associated impacts
- Increase in bins for littering/dog fouling
- Ensure Loch Tay is not over-developed
- Facilities for campers/tourists

## 6. PLAY & RECREATION (3.3)

### 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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- + Lots of social/sports activities across Highland Perthshire including formal/informal opportunities
- + Lots of organised activities especially outdoor
- + Good opportunities for children/young people including informal play e.g. swimming
- + Positive impact from community activity/involvement
- + Village halls well used e.g. Fearn Village Hall
- + Wind farm money (£300-500k) support local organisations through seed funding
- + Lots of accessible paths and play areas
- In winter, harder for clubs to access sports hall, gyms, etc to keep fit
- Limited opportunities for play & recreation for older children / young people (>12 years)
- Limited facilities for children in inclement weather
- Term time access to facilities can be an issue
- Impact on accessing facilities when roads are closed
- Rural communities tend to have to drive to access facilities e.g. Glen Lyon
- Improvement for communities – both facilities/equipment and public transport availability to access facilities
- Improve awareness of what's on and available
- Grants and funding for improvements to existing facilities
- Campuses could be more user-friendly/accessible for range of activities
- Restricting access on Loch Tay to motorised vehicles
- Potential for community allotments/growing

## 7. FACILITIES & SERVICES (3.8)

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

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- + Good range of facilities in main service centres
- Demand often not met by existing facilities/services e.g. medical, dentist, retail/grocery shopping, banking, educational facilities, social spaces, car repair/fuel garages
- Need to travel by car to access services/facilities, particularly rural communities
- Access to shops/facilities can be difficult for those with mobility issues
- Emergency response times not good – limited facilities/services
- Poor broadband service in rural areas – affect public services & homeworking
- Poor mobile service in rural areas
- Risks from power cuts
- Lack of amenities for children and young people
- Loss of community assets/facilities in rural communities e.g. hotels, post offices, shops
- Lack of public toilets for visitors/tourists
- Concerns around impact on services/amenities in Kenmore as a result of the Taymouth Castle development
- Scope for Highland Perthshire to celebrate 'food' from the area as an attraction

- Need for minor injuries unit
- Better use of community first responders
- Improved broadband/mobile services particularly for rural areas
- Improvements across range of services/facilities (see comment above)
- Increased support for lonely/isolated people
- Stronger planning protections for community assets/facilities
- More frequent availability of library service(s)

## **8. WORK & LOCAL ECONOMY (3.2)**

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

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- + Opportunities to volunteer and participate
- + Good range of organisations supporting communities
- + Opportunities for part time jobs for young people in main settlements
- Significant issue of lack of housing undermining local economy and opportunities for workers
- Local economy dominated by certain sectors e.g. tourism/hospitality/retail
- Lack of further/higher education
- Homeworking an issue for jobs which require interaction with others
- No job centres
- Limited volunteering opportunities for young people to help with their career(s)
- Demand for low skilled/skilled trades work but lack of housing
- Lack of professional jobs outwith state sector – need for travel or homeworking, lots of professionals moved to the area during COVID
- Concern about impact from Taymouth taking local workers – potential for business closures
- Loss of young people moving elsewhere – should be retained
- Poor broadband
- Increase affordable housing provision
- Improve training opportunities including to access professional jobs
- Improve childcare availability to support working families
- Likely to be single dominant employer (Taymouth) - need to engage with local businesses
- Simplify planning process including time-limited permissions
- PKC assist with business start-ups including more affordable units
- Strategic approach needed for rural communities/business needs
- Improve broadband

## **9. HOUSING & COMMUNITY (2.5)**

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

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- + Supportive communities
- + Reference to community development work in relation to housing (Pitlochry, Aberfeldy, Rannoch)
- Significant lack of housing in the local area to meet a wide range of needs e.g. affordable, social, down-sizing, families, key-workers, and rental
- Proliferation of second/holiday homes and short term lets – impact on wider housing market
- Lack of supported accommodation in communities
- Lack of independent living housing
- Housing estates not good for rural communities
- Land constraints an issue in Highland Perthshire for housing delivery
- Challenges around maintaining older properties including those in conservation areas/listed buildings
- Fuel poverty
- Difficulty implementing low carbon heating solutions in remoter rural areas
- Increase housing availability through new house building for range of tenures/types to meet community needs

- Retain new housing for local population/workers
- Restrictions/control on second/holiday homes and short term lets e.g. higher taxes/control area(s)
- Need accommodation for carers to support people with additional needs
- Need for improved information about accessing independent living panel
- More houses built by local people rather than developers intending on making profits – suggestion for charges for developers per plot or provide plots for local builders
- Community-led approach to delivering housing

## 10. SOCIAL INTERACTION (3.8)

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

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- + Range of opportunities across Highland Perthshire for social interaction – across age groups
- Lack of accessible toilets – only 1 ‘changing places’ toilet in Highland Perthshire
- Lack of places for meeting up in the evenings that aren’t pubs
- Loss of community facilities
- Social events often wholly reliant on volunteer time
- Improved opportunities for children and young people including indoor places/campus facilities
- Improve public transport to enable better social interaction, particularly for rural communities
- Improve recreational/cultural opportunities available
- Relax planning rules to make it easier for people to start/grow new initiatives and enterprises

## 11. IDENTITY & BELONGING (5.4)

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

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- + Windfarm funding supports communities
- + Generally strong identity across communities including reference to events/traditions, access to groups/volunteering opportunities, being proud of natural environment
- Suggestion to change narrative from ‘belonging’ – means different things to different people
- Some evidence of non-inclusive behaviour towards certain people
- Taymouth Castle development showing that there are differing views amongst the community
- Access to windfarm funding for more communities – empowerment
- Striking a balance between celebrating traditions and embracing modern way of life – some young people feeling disconnected
- Support wider appreciation of heritage of local area
- Promote more family-friendly events
- Improved care and maintenance of buildings and the local area/town
- Protect against loss of community assets/facilities
- Improvements suggested for local democracy and role of community councils
- Improve public transport to enable better participation in community events/activities
- Focus on community needs rather than what visitors/tourists need
- Focus/support for community based work – Aberfeldy, Pitlochry, Rannoch

## 12. FEELING SAFE (5.5)

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

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- + Many feel safe in their communities
- Some don’t feel safe in their communities
- Some (including children and young people) highlighted concerns around anti-social behaviour
- Evidence of graffiti/vandalism across Highland Perthshire – Aberfeldy, Pitlochry
- Environmental anxiety around climate change
- Danger of not having mobile phone coverage
- Unsafe walking/cycling on local roads
- Need better access to out of hours/urgent services for Highland Perthshire area



- Re-introduction of local/community policing
- Enforcing road safety

### 13. CARE & MAINTENANCE (4.3)

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

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- + Bloom Groups are great
- + Evidence of older buildings being well looked after
- + Evidence of well-looked after parks and paths e.g. Riverside Path (Aberfeldy)
- Quality of roads poor
- Evidence of older buildings not being well looked after
- Litter along the A9 and other key tourist/busy roads
- Drains blocking up and causing flooding in rural areas – lack of maintenance
- Dog fouling and littering
- Impact from wild campers/lack of public toilets
- Improve facilities for campervans/tourists
- Improve appearance of – and stronger enforcement around - key buildings and land within settlements (especially in conservation areas/listed buildings) including re-use of derelict/vacant properties
- Coordinated town centre management approach
- Improved street cleaning/litter picking
- Improve road surfaces across the area
- Need for glass recycling roadside collection
- Public toilets
- Wild camping byelaws

### 14. INFLUENCE & SENSE OF CONTROL (3.8)

#### 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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- + Over 300 local groups
- + Easy to have a say
- + Evidence of community empowerment – getting things done
- Perceived PKC focus on Perth – needs of Highland Perthshire less important
- More difficult to have your say on complex matters
- Not always listened to and lack of action delivered on feedback given
- Improve impact/influence of Community Councils
- Need more social prescribing – deprivation scores not high enough to attract funding
- Communities need to be more resilient
- Consolidation of some CC areas
- Plans and policies should be more geared towards rural communities
- Continuous / early engagement with communities including for new developments
- Better coordinated council service provision
- Delivery of key objectives through Community Action Plans
- Involve children and young people in local decision making
- Improve transparency of decision-making including planning
- Locality-based commissioning to support communities