



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 Strathtay 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](#).

WARD – STRATHTAY

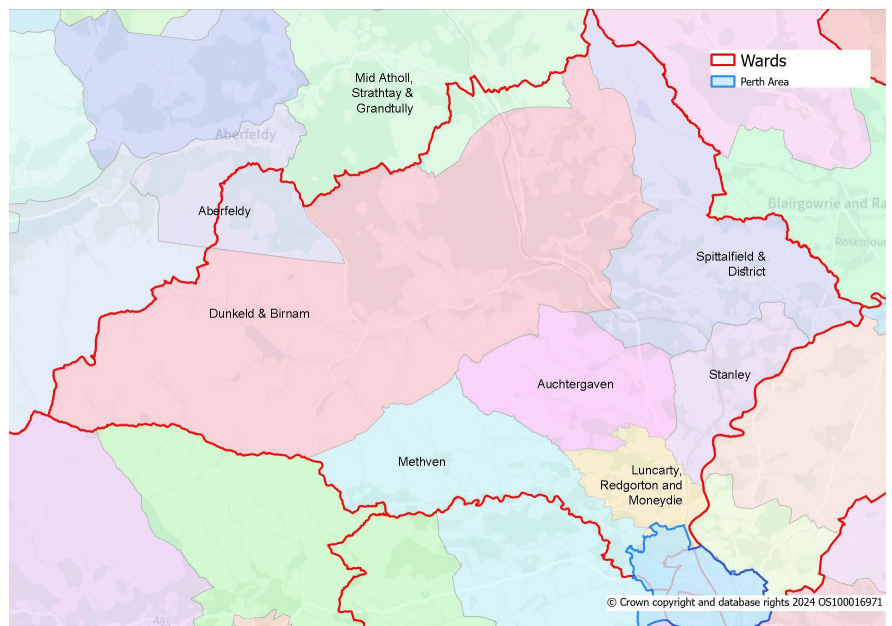
The Strathtay Ward covers a mostly rural area to the north of Perth City defined by the River Tay and includes a number of villages. To the north the ward forms the gateway into Highland Perthshire including Dunkeld/Birnam, and to the south a number of villages are located close to Perth City including Stanley, Luncarty, Bankfoot and Pitcairngreen. The area is experiencing urban growth due to the proximity to Perth City including village expansion and new road infrastructure such as the Cross Tay Link Road.

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.

- [Auchtergaven](#)
- [Dunkeld and Birnam](#)
- [Luncarty, Redgorton and Moneydie](#)
- [Methven](#)
- [Spittalfield and District](#)
- [Stanley](#)

The following Community Councils also partially fall within the Strathtay Ward and have been included in the Highland Ward summary:

- [Aberfeldy](#)
- [Mid Atholl, Strathtay and Grandtully](#)



For those areas within the Strathtay ward that fall within the Perth City boundary (Bertha Park, Almondbank, Huntingtower, and Ruthvenfield) these are included in the Perth City Summary Report.

We received feedback from 117 respondents and carried out or attended 9 events in the Strathtay Ward including a discussion with pupils at Dunkeld primary. We received feedback from the public at large as well as from the following groups:

- children and young people
- elderly
- disabled
- representatives from community council and community development trust bodies
- Women issues

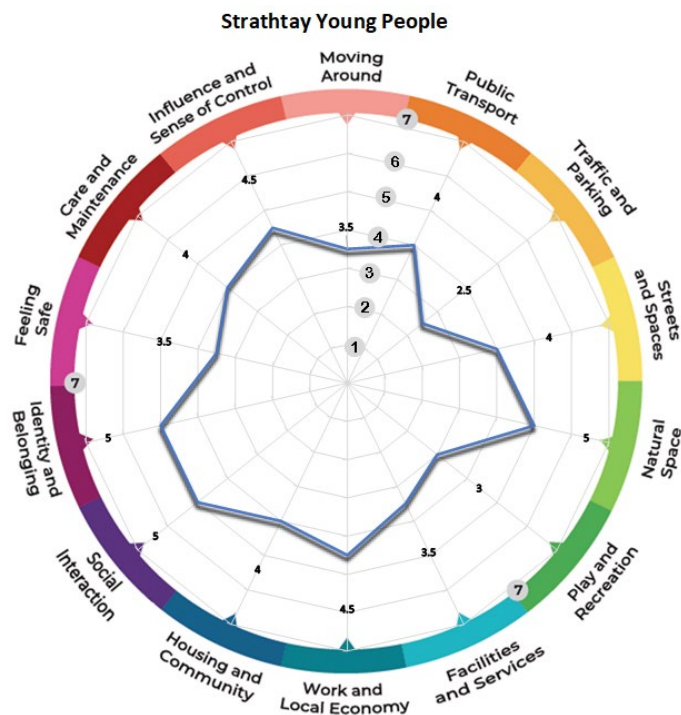
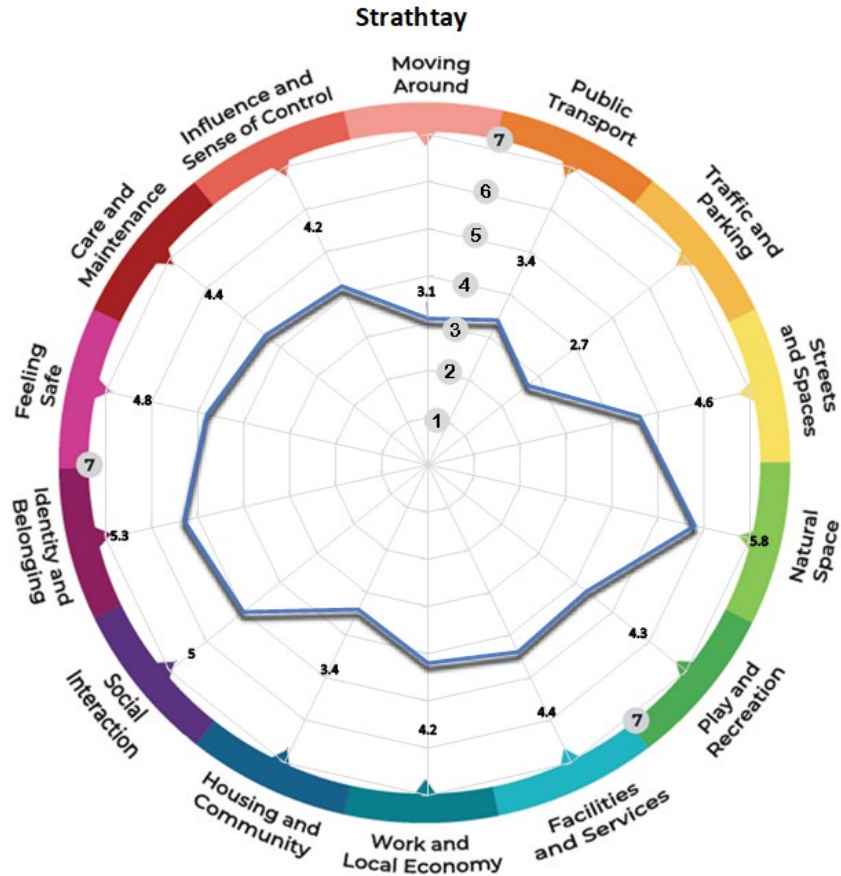
Results from the Culture & Sport Engagement, 2022 are available for the Highland and Strathtay area, and supplement the findings of the Big Place Conversation.

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.

Strathtay Ward Place Standard Scores



SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK AT WARD LEVEL

This section includes a summary of issues noted that relate to the wider area of the Strathtay 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 (3.1)

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

- + Good local path network and access to trails
- + Moving around in villages seen as good by some respondents
- Specific issues highlighted in Dunkeld & Birnam in relation to numbers of visitors/tourists and A9 being dangerous for moving around
- Speeding traffic and limited crossing points makes moving around difficult particularly in villages
- Moving around difficult outwith villages and in countryside – unsafe
- Narrow and limited/no pavements create issues for moving around
- o Improved cycling facilities/infrastructure
- o Improve walking infrastructure including for all users
- o Improved road safety/traffic calming measures
- o Improvements to accessing train services
- o Better path maintenance during winter
- o Importance of active travel route between Stanley/Luncarty and Perth highlighted
- o Children particularly highlighted feeling unsafe getting to school with a need to reduce speeding traffic e.g. Birnam, Murthly

2. PUBLIC TRANSPORT (3.4)

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

- + Some feel public transport serves the local area well
- Some feel public transport services are limited - availability of weekend/evening/commuting services
- Evidence of cancelled services
- Particular issue at Birnam Station in relation to accessibility/safety
- Rural public transport particularly a challenge with car use expected/needed to access services
- Reduced bus services in recent years
- o Include better cycling facilities/infrastructure to be able to use public transport
- o Potential for community bus
- o Suggestion for public transport to be improved including more services, evening/weekend times, services for commuters, and better integration
- o Improved train connectivity e.g. reopening of stop(s) between Perth and Birnam

3. TRAFFIC & PARKING (2.7)

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

- Range of issues highlighted in Dunkeld and Birnam e.g. high numbers of visitors/tourists, HGVs running through the village, traffic speeding through the village, and parking issues
- Crossing the A9 dangerous around Dunkeld and Birnam including for those needing to access services
- Speeding traffic a common issue including around schools
- High amount of traffic also an issue on some roads
- Impact from larger vehicles
- Narrow roads can cause safety issues

- Number of solutions proposed to address specific traffic/parking issues in Dunkeld and Birnam e.g. new visitor car park, parking restrictions
- Traffic calming measures suggested to reduce speeding/dangerous driving
- Additional cycling infrastructure
- Additional parking to alleviate on-street parking in number of villages including Dunkeld/Birnam, Pitcairngreen and Stanley
- Improve road surfaces

4. STREETS, SQUARES & BUILDINGS (4.6)

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

- + Positive features across the area including historic buildings, work done by ‘Bloom’ groups, limited evidence of derelict buildings, people taking good care of their homes
- + Children in Dunkeld and Birnam particularly like the historic buildings in the villages
- + Key buildings in rural areas/villages highlighted as important for communities e.g. Amulree Church/village hall
- Some evidence of dereliction and buildings needing care and maintenance including buildings in village centres
- Improved care and maintenance of buildings/features in a number of villages
- Improved signage for visitors/walkers
- Opportunity for the re-development of Birnam Train Station and Stanley Sports Hub highlighted within respective communities

5. NATURAL SPACES (5.8)

HOW WELL AM I CONNECTED TO NATURE IN MY PLACE?

- + Excellent access and connectivity to nature and the natural environment
- + Good range of paths for walking, cycling, horse-riding, etc
- + Abundance of wildlife and access to local woodlands
- + Children in Dunkeld and Birnam particularly highlighted the natural assets in the local area
- Limited access for those with mobility issues
- Dog fouling and littering an issue
- Lack of path connectivity in some places
- Concern around impact on natural environment from new developments
- More bins for dog fouling and littering
- Further improvements to the natural environment including native tree planting, work of West Stormont Woodland Group
- Retaining wild areas, and rewilding
- Improve path connectivity to improve access to nature

6. PLAY & RECREATION (4.3)

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

- + Facilities generally good for younger children, and in some cases, older age groups
- + Local groups supporting provision of play in communities
- Limited/lack of facilities for older children and young people
- For those living more rurally, travelling to main settlements by car is required
- Lack of lighting at facilities/parks
- Upgrade play equipment for all age groups/users in play parks
- Improved public transport to enable access
- Make more use of existing facilities e.g. Birnam Arts
- Improved walking/recreational paths including reduced speeding on roads

7. FACILITIES & SERVICES (4.4)

WHAT IS MY PLACE LIKE FOR ACCESSING SERVICES WE NEED?

- + Good range of facilities in main service centres and in some villages e.g. Dunkeld, Perth, Bankfoot
- Demand often not met by existing facilities/services e.g. medical, dentist, retail/grocery shopping, banking, educational facilities, social care
- Need to travel by car to access services/facilities, particularly for rural communities
- Poor mobile/broadband in rural areas and in Stanley
- Lack of 'big shop' in the Strathtay area – need to travel
- Particular issues highlighted in Dunkeld and Birnam in response to visitor/tourist economy
- Infrastructure at capacity would limit any further development
- o Improved provision across a range of services
- o Need for mobile phone mast to serve Stanley area a common issue
- o Improved public transport including for rural areas
- o Actions to support local workers including housing and childcare

8. WORK & LOCAL ECONOMY (4.2)

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

- + Range of jobs available in the local area, dominated by Perth and hospitality/tourism sectors for Northern Perthshire area
- Particular issues highlighted in Dunkeld and Birnam in response to visitor/tourist economy including lack of (affordable) housing
- Need to travel to bigger settlements for work – usually by car with public transport limited
- Lack of opportunities for younger people, particularly in rural areas
- Some feel that opportunities for volunteering/training are limited
- o Improve housing situation to enable workers to stay in the area
- o Improve public transport to support workers/commuters
- o Better advertising of opportunities

9. HOUSING & COMMUNITY (3.4)

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

- + Some local communities consider housing needs met
- Availability of housing in Dunkeld and Birnam highlighted as a significant issue
- Over-provision of second/holiday homes and short term lets exacerbating situation
- Lack of housing impacting on other parts of community life e.g. availability of workers
- Lack of affordable housing across the local area
- o Range of measures suggested to improve housing situation in Dunkeld and Birnam area including delivery of affordable housing, and restriction on short term lets/holiday and second homes.
- o Any new housing development needs to consider infrastructure upgrades and environmental impacts e.g. from flood risk
- o Increase level of affordable housing across the area
- o Improve quality and mix of housing as part of new developments

10. SOCIAL INTERACTION (5)

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

- + Generally good range of places to promote social interaction
- + Strong sense of community in rural villages e.g. Amulree, Murthly
- + Many groups in the local area supporting range of age groups/needs
- Some groups didn't restart following COVID
- Cost of Living Crisis impacting on participation

- Improved opportunities for young people to meet up
- Support for maintaining community groups
- Improved public transport/active travel opportunities

11. IDENTITY & BELONGING (5.3)

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

- + There is a strong sense of identity in communities across the area including children in Dunkeld and Birnam.
- + Good range of groups to get involved in although dependent on volunteer time
- In Dunkeld and Birnam, numbers of visitors/tourisms highlighted in terms of impact on daily life in the villages
- Environmental concerns around wildlife decline and impact from new development
- Culture and heritage of area not celebrated enough in some places
- Improvements to care and maintenance in the area could improve sense of belonging

12. FEELING SAFE (4.8)

HOW SAFE DO I FEEL IN MY PLACE?

- + Generally feel safe in the area
- Road safety and experiences as pedestrians/cyclists are an issue for some across the local area – speeding traffic and unsafe conditions
- Children in Dunkeld and Birnam highlighted a number of concerns about feeling unsafe in the community including road safety
- Birnam station building and crossing the A9 highlighted as being unsafe by many in the community
- Some feel unsafe at the risks from flooding (Dunkeld/Birnam, Murthly, Bankfoot)
- Lack of mobile signal a safety concern for some including rural areas/Stanley
- Traffic calming measures and road safety enforcement
- Off-road trails
- Dual A9/improve road safety
- Local policing

13. CARE & MAINTENANCE (4.4)

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

- + Lots of evidence the area is already well looked after and maintained including ‘Bloom’ groups
- Number of concerns raised including need to improve specific buildings/features in the area, too much littering and dog fouling, poor play equipment, vandalism/graffiti
- Improved litter picking (villages and on roads)
- Improved maintenance of buildings
- Improvements in playpark equipment
- Enhanced visitor facilities including toilets, road maintenance
- improved vegetation maintenance in summer months and deal with invasive species
- Redevelopment of key derelict/vacant buildings
- Stronger enforcement of building maintenance
- Building on brownfield sites rather than greenfield

14. INFLUENCE & SENSE OF CONTROL (4.2)

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

- + Lots of opportunities to have your say
- + Children in Dunkeld and Birnam would like to be more involved in decision making

- + Mostly positive experiences with local representatives
- + Role of Community Groups including Community Action Plans in Dunkeld/Birnam, and Stanley
- Concerns around being listened to and action being taken
- Too many surveys/consultation fatigue
- Lack of community council representation an issue for some
- o Some improvements suggested for local representation
- o PKC could improve community engagement and ease of access to services
- o Not everyone uses social media – alternative outreach methods needed