



**Aberdeenshire**  
COUNCIL



# TOWN CENTRE HEALTH CHECK SEPTEMBER 2021

BANFF, ABERDEENSHIRE



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# INTRODUCTION

## INTRODUCTION

A town centre health check is recommended by the Scottish Government as a way of analysing the factors that contribute to successful town centres and indicate good standards of vitality and viability. Within national planning policy, the vitality of a centre is a measure of how lively and busy it is, whilst viability is a measure of its centre's capacity to attract ongoing investment (Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), paragraph 59).

Town Centre Health Checks have been completed in Aberdeenshire since 2003. However, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need for robust baseline data, this report has been prepared using new methodology to showcase a fresh and updated approach for Aberdeenshire.

Aberdeenshire is an extremely attractive area with a variety of coastal and rural environments, commuter towns, high levels of employment, and there is considerable new housing and employment land planned for the near future. Maintaining town centres' attractiveness, activeness, and accessibility is vital for the region to be able to continue to thrive.

## BACKGROUND

The importance of town centres is widely acknowledged. Town centres are at the heart of communities, providing a sustainable focus for shopping, business, leisure, services and community life, and shaping their sense of place. The planning system has an important role to play in supporting successful town centres, through influencing the form and type of future development. In order to assess how a centre should be supported, evidence of its current performance is required.

SPP sets out how successful, sustainable places can be created and maintained in Scotland. It is vital for town centres in Aberdeenshire to be successful and viable in order to provide for their populations and draw visitors.

Town centres with a vibrant retail scene, a wide variety of services, attractive buildings and open space create economic growth, attract more people to the region, and promote a sense of well-being and identity.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present the results of the Town Centre Health Check 2021 for Banff. The results are presented to enable an understanding of the vitality and viability of the town centre. The results are not to be considered definitive of the well-being of a town centre, but rather they are intended to provide an evidence-based comparative perspective on this matter and assist in identifying actions that could be undertaken to improve and maintain their status.

### WHY COMPLETE A HEALTH CHECK?

Health checks contribute to the planning system's efforts to support successful town centres through giving an overview of their current performance. They provide an analysis of the infrastructure and viability of the town centre which can be used to inform the Local Development Plan and decisions on planning applications. The findings are also utilised to create help a stronger "town centre first principle" policy.

# METHODOLOGY

## TOWN CENTRE HEALTH CHECKS SHOULD:

- Support implementation of the Local Development Plan
- Add value by collecting data on a wider set of indicators that provide insight into economic, social and environmental factors that play a part in the vitality of a town centre
- Have a clear, easy to follow and accessible format and methodology
- Work collaboratively both within the Council and externally with businesses and the community to collect and share baseline data
- Provide the foundation for other town strategies and plans and any subsequent funding applications

To achieve these results, the following methods of data collection and presentation were utilised:

## DESK TOP RESEARCH

Desk top research was completed to provide the critical first step of gathering information for the town centre. Background information on the current situation of the town centre was then analysed further when out on site. Data was gathered from within the Council and from external partners.

## COMMUNITY SURVEY

The community survey was designed to gain an understanding of the views of both the residents and visitors of the town centre. The survey was available on Engage HQ, shared via a press release, advertised on the Council's Social Media and emailed to relevant groups to advertise further. The survey asked questions on several different topics and provided respondents the opportunity to identify what improvements they would like to see to the town centre. The survey was open for three weeks and received 65 responses. A summary of the responses received can be seen on page 45.



**Look out for: Quote Boxes.** Comments were asked for in both the community and business surveys and a selection have been included in the report to give a flavour of the different responses received.

# METHODOLOGY (CONTINUED)

## **BUSINESS SURVEY**

The survey was available on Engage HQ and shared via relevant groups for completion. Several topics were questioned, including the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on businesses. It also gave an opportunity to comment on improvements they would like to see to the town centre. The survey was open for three weeks and received 14 responses. A summary of the responses received can be seen on page 45.

## **FOOTFALL COUNT**

The footfall count was completed at two locations throughout the town centre to gain information on the vitality at different times of the day. Four time slots were selected to gain information of the vibrancy in the morning, afternoon and evening. The counts were completed for 15-minute periods on a weekday and weekend to try and gain an insight into the number of people moving around the town centre. These footfall counts were a team effort and carried out by Aberdeenshire Council Officers and members of the community.

## **SITE SURVEY**

This work was completed on a clear day and provided up to date information on the vitality and viability of the town centre. Several recording methods were used including maps, photographs and written analysis. The Place Standard themes were used to analyse the town centre and allowed for different themes to be analysed on an individual basis but also as a collective.

## **ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT**

Supported by Community Learning and Development officers, we worked with members of the local community with lived experience to undertake an assessment of the town centre, assessing footway surfaces and obstructions, facilities and signage, maintenance and enforcement, personal security, crossing points and access to buildings. The survey took place on a dry but cold day over two hours.

How a place looks, its history and what other people think of the place can affect how we feel. A strong local identity can help us feel pride in our place, our community and in ourselves as a result.

**Observations:** The majority of those respondents who use the town centre feel negatively towards it. This is demonstrated in the comments, where the decline is seen most strongly in the maintenance of buildings, the lack of retail choice and general feel and vibrancy of the town. However, there is a sense of pride in the heritage and geographical location and some recognition that change is starting to happen. Community spirit is rated poor or very poor by almost half of all respondents.

**The growth of Banff:** Banff has a rich history. It was a former royal burgh, and is the county town of the historic county of Banffshire. Banff dates from the **1100's** when it was an important port exporting salmon to Europe. It continued to be a key fishing and fish trading port, however the harbour suffered from silting in the **1800's**. Today it is home to small fishing boats and leisure craft. Banff was also well known for high quality silversmithing. The town contains a variety of architecture in a number of contrasting styles, with the highest number of Georgian listed buildings in Scotland outside Edinburgh. Manufacturing and construction are the dominant forms of employment today with health and social work services being particularly active.

Source: Understanding Scottish Places, Undiscovered Scotland and Banff and Macduff Heritage Trail

## IDENTITY & BELONGING



### How Do You Feel About Banff Town Centre?



31% Community

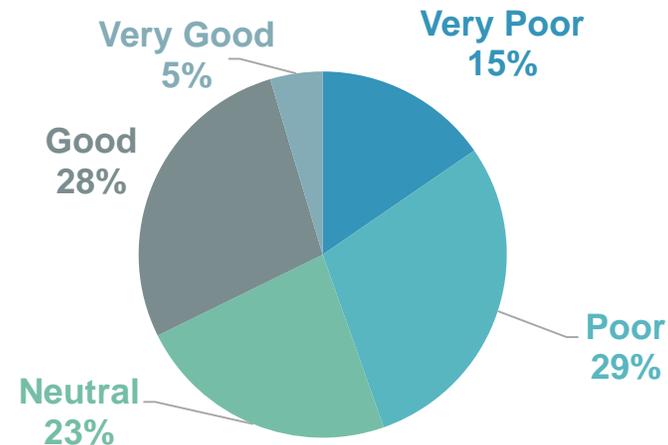
31% Businesses



69% Community

69% Businesses

### IN YOUR OPINION, COMMUNITY SPIRIT IN THE TOWN CENTRE IS?



*"Generally positive but looking rundown in areas."*

*"It's a couthy little town and very friendly."*

*"It is certainly starting to improve but still lots to do."*

*"Commitment to making improvement is required from the community and community is just not there."*

*"I am Banff born and raised, as my family has been for generations... I feel strongly about securing the future of the town centre in terms of employment opportunities, shopping and property maintenance."*

*"It has a good range of businesses, and lovely location close to the sea."*

*"Inject life back into the town. It is quite a depressing town centre."*

*"Banff looks and feels as if it's lost its soul."*

*"Overall I am very positive personally and with customers about the essence of Banff as a place with its history and buildings and its massive potential. But specifically in relation to how it works at the moment and the condition it's in, I am less positive."*

*"Having been brought up in Banff and still live local it's awful to see things so run down really nothing inspiring..."*

Feeling safe in and around the places that we spend time can have a significant impact on people's activities and on their health and wellbeing. Through their design and maintenance, good places should feel safe and secure for all, and help to minimise crime and antisocial behaviour.

# FEELING SAFE



**Observations:** Safety during the day was the most positive rated category by both businesses and visitors to the town in the surveys. Safety during the evening was also rated good, but with more neutral responses. This perhaps indicates that people do not go into the town centre at night. Very few comments were received on safety which coupled with the ratings, could indicate that people are less concerned about this than some other indicators. Lighting is a mixture of both functional and attractive, although some columns, such as those in St. Mary's car park for instance, are in need of maintenance. There is no CCTV system.

## Key Safety Features:



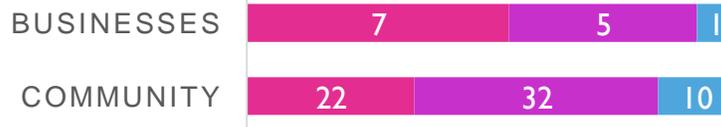
Lighting styles are mixed to reflect the architectural style of the town and well distributed across the town; most are well maintained



No central CCTV system in place

## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: SAFETY DURING THE EVENING?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: SAFETY DURING THE DAY?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



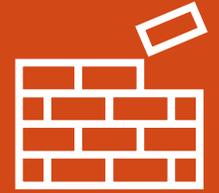
**48** Incidences of crime reported  
1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 – 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021  
Police Scotland



Images (Clockwise from Top Left): Lighting, Low Street; Lighting, High Street; Lighting, St Mary's Car Park; Lighting, Strait Path.

Places that are well cared for can make us feel positive, while those that are not looked after properly can have the opposite effect. Proper maintenance arrangements allow people to feel supported and more positive about where they live.

# CARE & MAINTENANCE



Weeds in building



Weeds in building

**Observations:** There is a real mix in the upkeep of buildings within Banff. The maintenance of buildings within the town centre was a real concern to a large number of survey respondents. Only 6 respondents from both the business and community surveys noted that they would rate the maintenance of buildings as good. The topic was rated within the bottom five of all topics surveyed by both the community and businesses.

The images (left) give an impression of the town centre environment.

## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: CARE & MAINTENANCE OF BUILDINGS?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



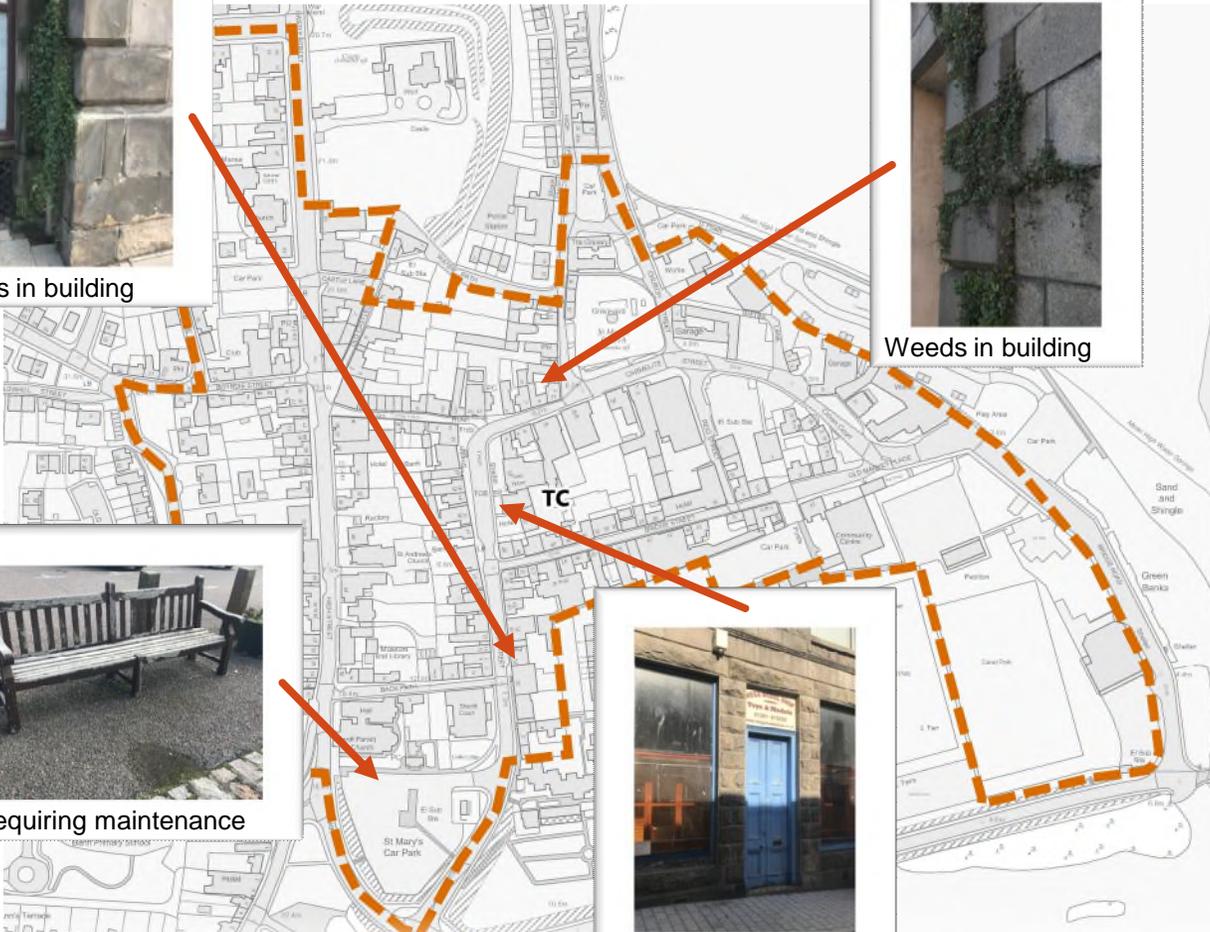
*“Tidying of buildings including gutter cleaning etc.”*

*“Empty shops should be regenerated.”*

*“Empty buildings are becoming an eyesore.”*

*“Derelict buildings and empty shops tidied up to improve the look of the town.”*

*“Care and maintenance of buildings varies considerably, some well cared - for and some totally neglected.”*



Bench requiring maintenance



Vacant Shop Unit

People's views about their local area should be heard. Having a voice in decision making and feeling able to make changes can help to build stronger communities and better places. Having a sense of control can make people feel positive about their lives.

## INFLUENCE & SENSE OF CONTROL



Town Centre Groups	Banff and Macduff in Bloom	Banffshire Business Forum
Legal Status	Voluntary Group	Constituted Group
Membership	Volunteer committee and helpers	Businesses from the Banff, Macduff and wider Banffshire area (AB44, AB45)
Responsibilities	Community project to enhance the main areas of Banff and Macduff with floral display. The group look after the hanging baskets and tubs across the towns.	Banffshire Business Forum was formed in 2020 to bring together the local business communities in the area. It offers a local business support network and promotes local spend. All business owners in the area are invited to join. Committee meetings are held monthly. The Forum hosts a programme of events and networking opportunities throughout the year. Supporting projects such as Fiver Fest, the Love Banff and Macduff website and the Scotland Loves Local Gift Card.
Contact	<a href="#">Banff and Macduff in Bloom</a>	<a href="#">Banffshire Business Forum</a>

**Observations:** Presently, with the absence of a Community Council, Banff has a limited number of town centre organisations. However the recently formed Business Forum is a useful addition to the town and the In Bloom group work hard to green the town centre. Town projects are supported by Aberdeenshire Council and cross-sector working through the Regeneration Partnership. Awareness of groups is low so greater promotion could be considered.

*“Urgent is the key word here - the opportunity to take action must be grasped. Banff has suffered for too long from plans and promises, but now needs action and opportunity.”*

**38%** of community survey respondents are aware of groups that support the town centre.

The word cloud (right) shows survey responses, when asked to name town centre groups, with Banffshire Business Forum (6), Regeneration Partnership (5) and In Bloom and the Phoenix Fund (both 4) receiving the most.

Christmas Lights Group  
 Banff and Macduff in Bloom  
 Banff Preservation and Heritage Society  
 Banffshire Business Forum  
 Banffshire Partnership  
 Canal Park Group  
 Phoenix Fund  
 Regeneration Partnership

Walking and cycling are good for both our health and the environment. Good places can support and encourage people to walk and cycle by providing good quality routes and a pleasant and safe experience.

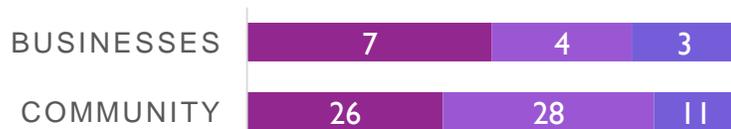
# MOVING AROUND



**Observations:** The town centre is shared by vehicles and pedestrians. Getting around scored as one of the top five best elements of the town for business respondents. Signage and getting around both had a mix of good and neutral responses with fewer poor ratings. Signage is adequate, however there was no signage near the Trinity car park on Castle Street. The disconnect between High Street and Low Street was commented on.

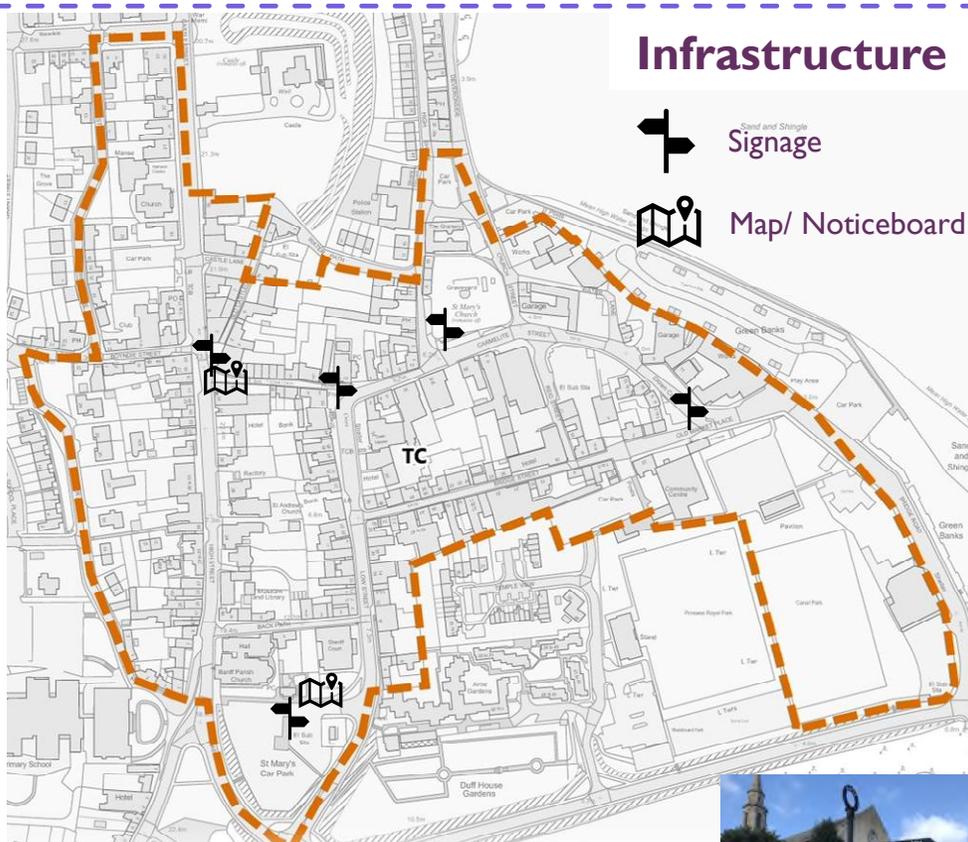
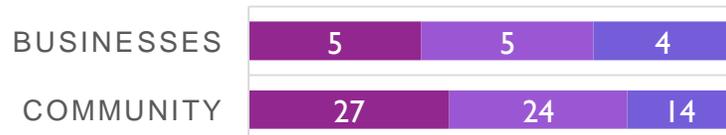
## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: GETTING AROUND THE TOWN CENTRE?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: SIGNAGE?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



*“Need more crossings for pedestrians. Lorries... go too fast on High Street and Sandyhill Road.”*

*“More signage for the beach, the school. Signage to show local beaches, castles in more detail.”*

*“The town needs a focal point as it is split in two, Strait Path is useless for anyone with a disability so there needs to be some way of connecting Low St. to High St.”*

*“Such a divide between High Street and Low Street. Need a strategy to create atmosphere on both streets. A unique town centre with adjoining path ways – great opportunities.”*

Images (Left to Right): Fingerpost signage, St. Mary’s car park; Strait Path; Town Map, St. Mary’s car park.



# MOVING AROUND: CYCLING

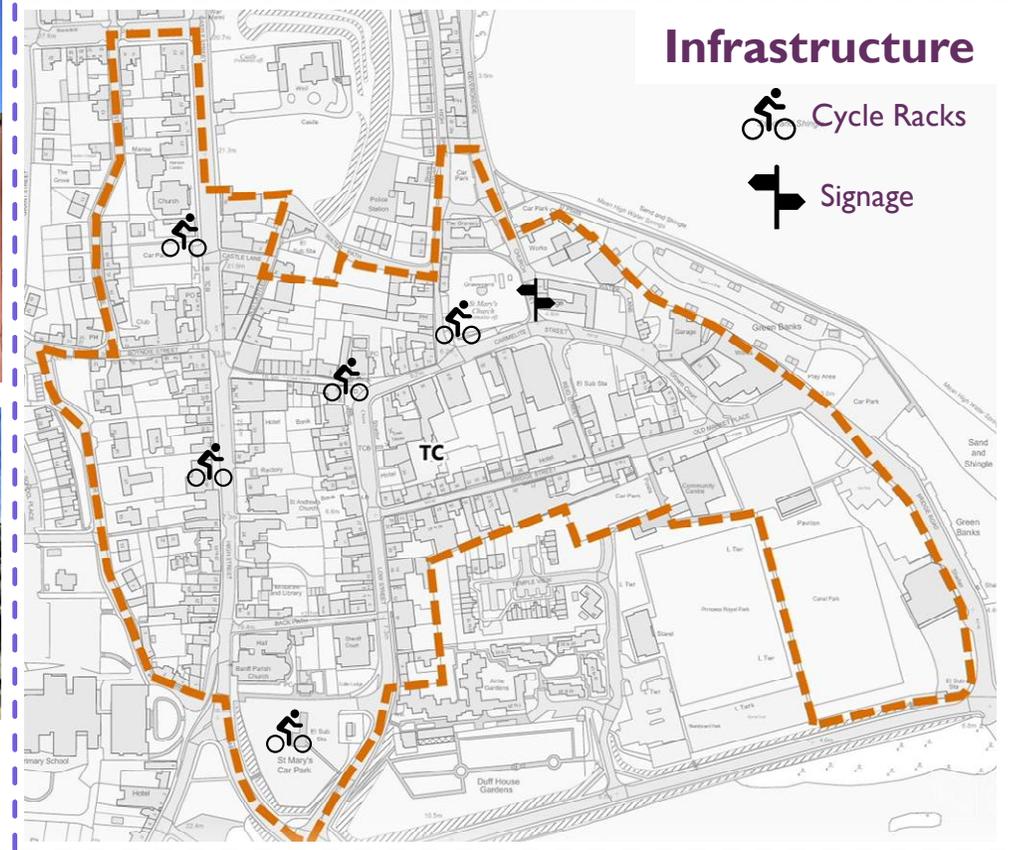
**Observations:** There are currently no cycle lanes in Banff Town Centre, however the town is on Route One of the Sustrans National Cycle Network. Given the town's location on the route this could be an opportunity that could be explored further to encourage new visitors. There are several locations for cycle parking across the town, however there are no covered parking areas and some of the freestanding racks are in a poor condition. Survey responses show that most do not have a concern with cycle parking, however there were more poor ratings than good, so this suggests that for some of those who do cycle in the town that they find the experience unsatisfactory. No comments were provided in relation to cycling.

## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: CYCLE PARKING?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor

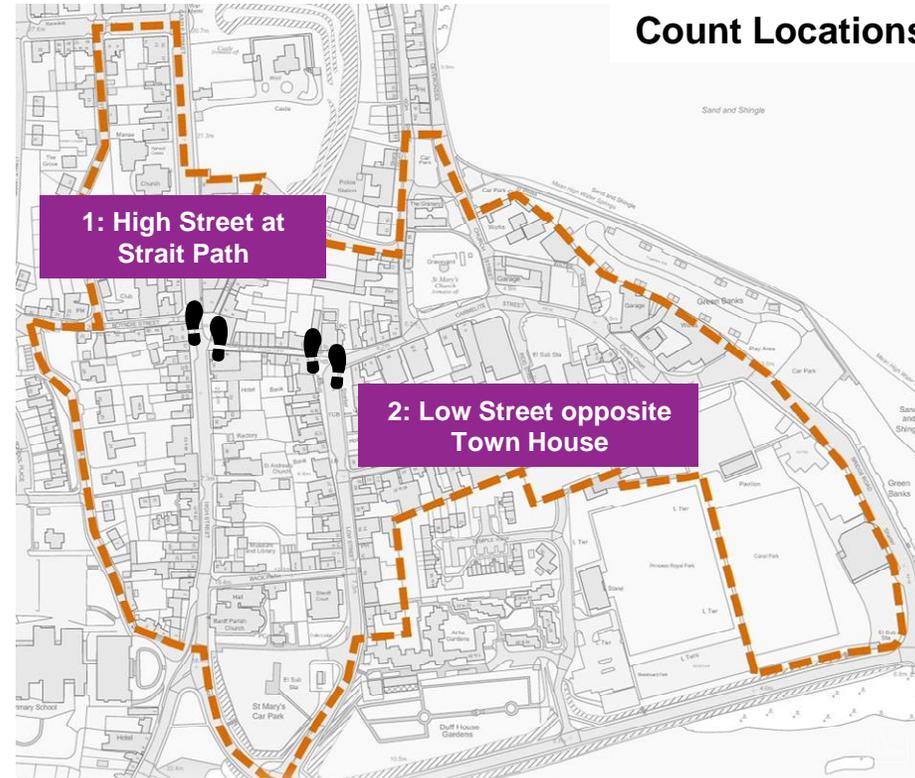


Images (Clockwise from Top Left): Freestanding cycle racks, Trinity car park; National cycle route signage, Church Street; Freestanding cycle racks, St. Mary's car park; Freestanding cycle racks, High Street.



# MOVING AROUND: FOOTFALL SURVEY

Day	Time	Location 1	Location 2	Hourly Total	Overall Total
<b>Thursday</b> 	09:30	70	35	105	<b>443</b>
	11:30	101	56	157	
	14:30	93	48	141	
	18:00	18	22	40	
<b>Saturday</b> 	09:30	69	8	77	<b>368</b>
	11:30	117	39	156	
	14:30	75	17	92	
	18:00	34	9	43	
<b>Totals</b>		<b>577</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>811</b>	



Footfall is a measure of the vitality of the town centre and can be directly linked to economic activity. Pedestrian counts were undertaken on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> September for a duration of 15 minutes, four times a day, in two locations.

The pedestrian count findings showed the highest footfall count was recorded at High Street on Saturday morning (117 people). It was also the busiest count point in general over the course of the surveys.

## HEADLINES

**Busiest Location:** High Street  
**Busiest Time:** 11:30  
**Busiest Day:** Thursday

**Quietest Location:** Low Street  
**Quietest Time:** 18:00  
**Quietest Day:** Saturday

# MOVING AROUND: ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT



Participants were recruited from the local community to undertake a survey to identify the effect of roads on people who walk and to identify barriers to walking and enhance opportunities to improve connectivity, attractiveness and safety.

Volunteers reviewed the following elements, and their comments are noted on the next page:

- Footway surfaces and obstructions;
- Facilities and signage;
- Maintenance and enforcement;
- Personal security;
- Crossing points;
- Access to buildings.

The survey took place on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October 09:30 – 11:30. The weather was dry but cold.

# ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT

**Observations:** Participants identified a number of consistent themes during the audit:

- The geography of the town can be a barrier to people with limited mobility.
- Tactile paving is missing from a number of key crossings as are drop-kerbs.
- Some buildings are difficult to navigate due to stairs or narrow aisles.
- Large vehicles can make High Street feel unsafe.
- Pinch points on several streets were noticed where pavements narrowed and this caused difficulty for pedestrians, particularly at corners.



*“Busy junction – can be difficult to cross.”*



*“Tactile paving is missing at some junctions.”*

*“In larger shops and public buildings there are quite often double doors and its necessary to open both to get a wheelchair through. If you are alone, pushing a wheelchair, it’s almost impossible to try to hold both doors open and push the wheelchair through at the same time.”*



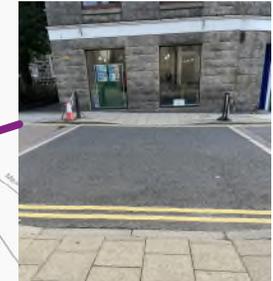
*“Strait Path is steep.”*



*“Narrow pavements (Boyndie Street) can be a hazard for pedestrians.”*



*“Street furniture and shop signs can be an obstruction to wheelchair users or parents with pushchairs.”*



*“No tactile paving Low Street.”*



*“This crossing is missing tactile paving and has no dropped kerb.”*

*“There is continual use of Disabled Car Parking spaces by people who are not Blue Badge holders.”*

*“Narrow pavement here can be noisy and feel unsafe when large vehicles such as HGVs and buses go past.”*

*“Narrow pavement outside the Church.”*

*“The cobbled seating area in the car park is damaged and difficult to navigate.”*



*“Store layouts, including in supermarkets, often mean a wheel-chair user cannot access various aisles/product display areas because the shelving/units are so close together the aisle space is not sufficient to get a wheel-chair through.”*

Access to an affordable, reliable and well-connected public transport service is important for all communities. Good public transport encourages people to get around in ways that are better for the environment.

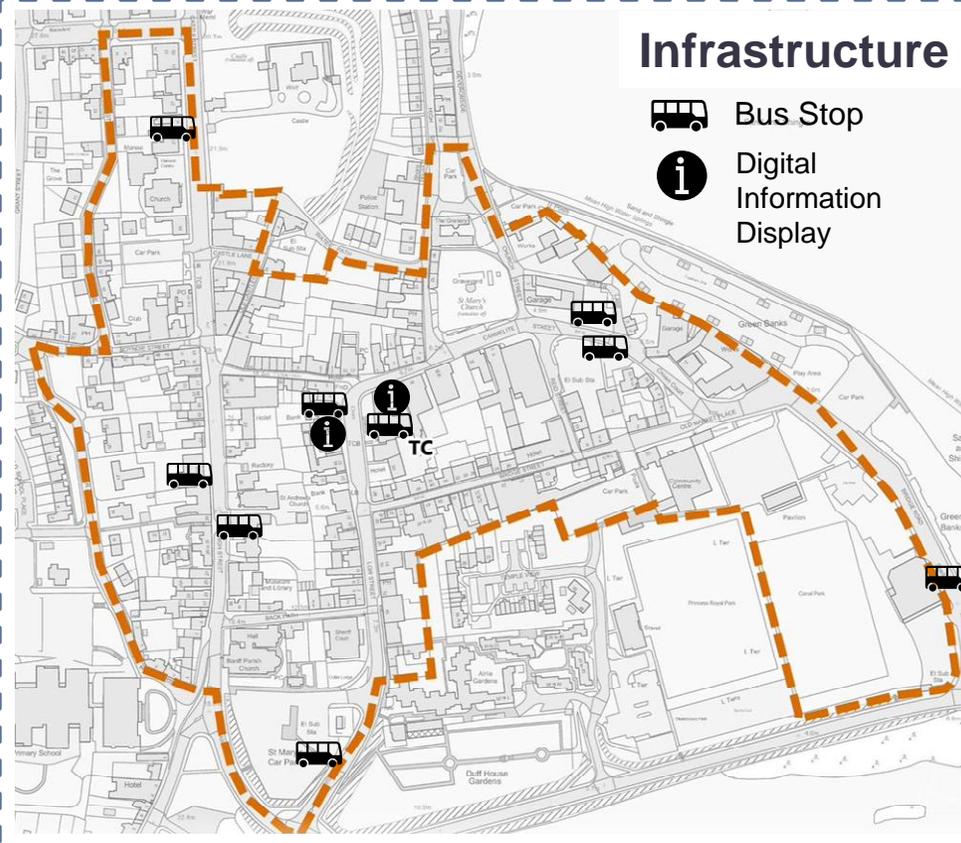
**Observations:** Banff Town Centre has reasonable bus links to Aberdeen and Elgin, although the journey times are lengthy. There is also a good town service which provides access around the town and to Macduff and a Dial-A-Bus service provided by the Banffshire Partnership. There is a more limited service to other towns/ villages. The main bus interchange is on Low Street with covered waiting facilities and real time information displays. A number of other bus stops are distributed across the town centre. Survey responses show that most do not have a concern with public transport, however there were more poor ratings than good, so this suggests that for some of those who do, or would like to use public transport, that they find the service unsatisfactory.

# PUBLIC TRANSPORT



## Infrastructure

-  Bus Stop
-  Digital Information Display



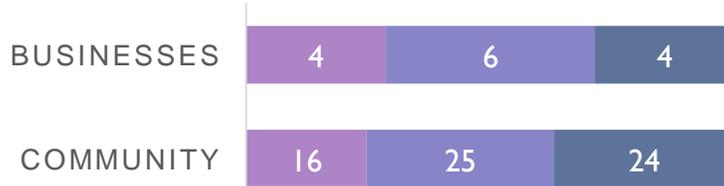
Images (Clockwise from Top Left): Covered bus stops, Low Street; Bus stop, Water Lane; Town service, Castle Street.

*“Local bus service is good between the towns, lack of bus connections that are reliable between major towns and the cost and time of transport means you are reliant on car travel to get anywhere.”*

*“Unless travelling to Elgin or Aberdeen, extremely poor public transport.”*

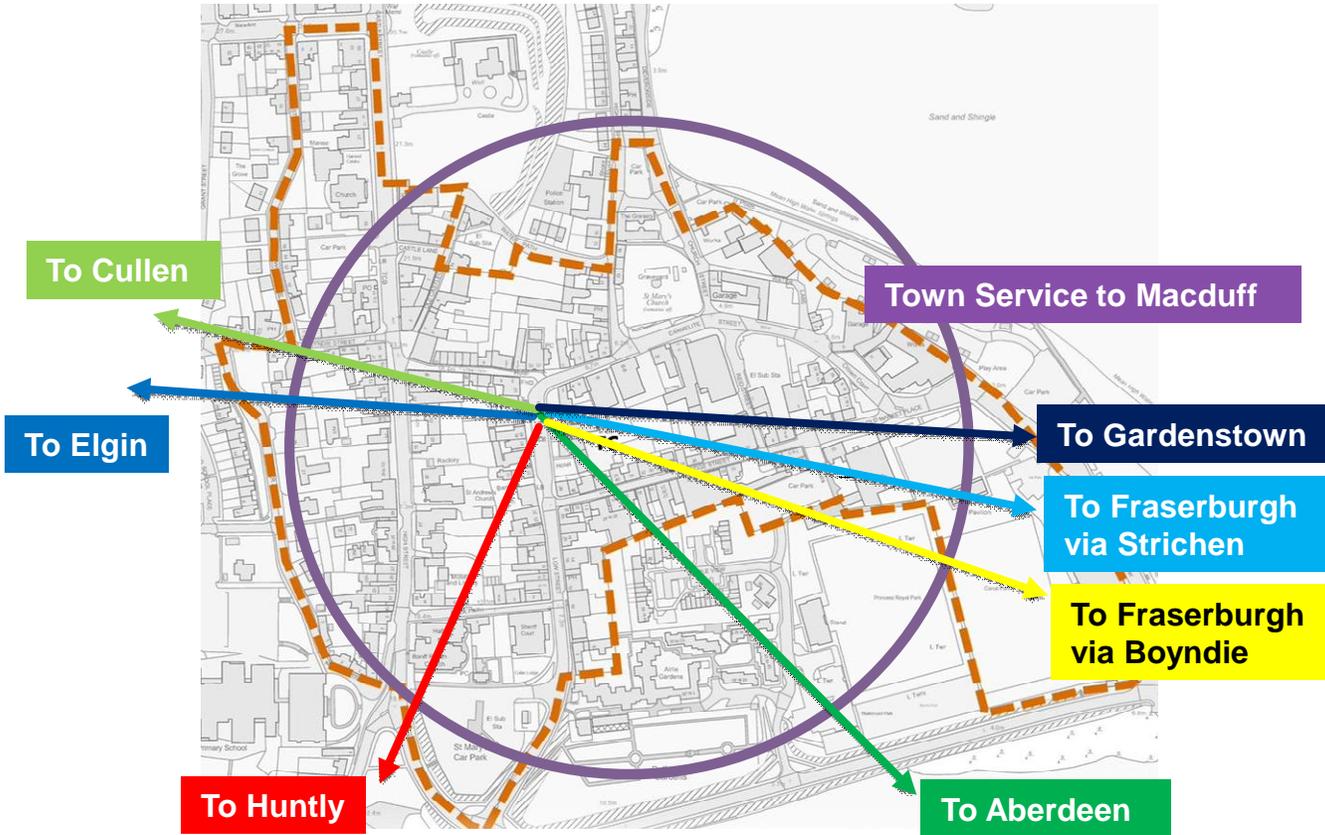
## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: PUBLIC TRANSPORT?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



*“I would really like to see an express bus to Aberdeen. Two hours to get to Aberdeen on the bus is ridiculous. I would certainly use the bus a lot more if it didn't take so much more time than driving.”*

# PUBLIC TRANSPORT ROUTES



**Key:**

	Bus Route 35		Bus Route 301		Bus Route 271
	Bus Route 35		Bus Route 405		Bus Route 273
	Bus Route 272		Town Service 300		

Route (all from Low Street) *	Frequency (per week day)	Fastest Journey Time	Earliest Travel Time	Latest Travel Time	Cost (Single Standard Ticket)
Bus to Aberdeen (35)	25	1hr 55mins	04:19	21:35	£11.00
Bus to Elgin (35)	15	1hr 50mins	05:51	22:41	£11.00
Bus to Fraserburgh (272)	2	55mins	10:57	14:57	£9.00
Bus to Huntly (301)	3	55mins	07:30	15:00	£6.50
Bus to Macduff (300 Town Service)	9	5mins	09:10	17:10	-
Bus to Cullen (405)	2 (Wed/ Fri only)	45mins	09:10	12:30	-
Bus to Fraserburgh (271)	2	47mins	07:35	17:15	-
Bus to Gardenstown (273)	5	27mins	09:15	17:38	-

\* Correct at time of survey

A [Dial-A-Bus](#), pre-booked minibus service provided by the Banffshire Partnership is available in Banff. A door-to-door service is provided for those with no access to a car or without easy access to public transport.

Too much traffic can cause problems for people who live in, work in, or visit an area. Traffic and parking arrangements that allow people to move around safely can help people to get the most out of a place.

# TRAFFIC & PARKING

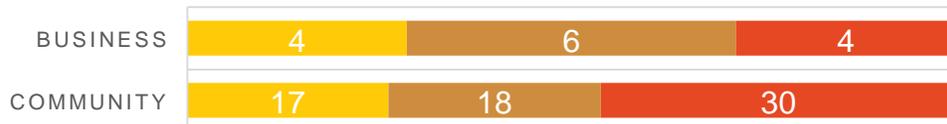
## TRAFFIC



Image: View over St Mary's Car Park.

### HOW WOULD YOU RATE: TRAFFIC FLOW?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



*"Sort out the horrendous traffic issues."*

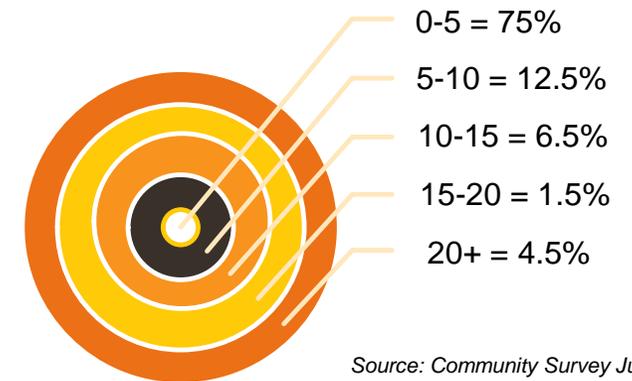
*"Slow traffic on the main street."*

*"The traffic is a major problem."*

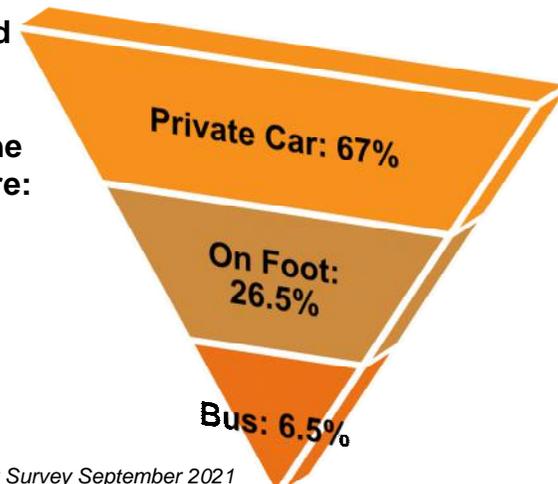
**Observations:** There were only a small number of comments received on this topic but they all were all noting that the topic was an issue. It was noted that there is a lot of traffic within the town centre and there was requests for the speed of the traffic to be reduced.

The main users of Banff Town Centre are from the town itself and the immediate local area as 75% of the respondents completing the survey travel 5 miles of less with 87.% of Banff Town Centre users travelling 10 miles of less.

### Distance Travelled to Use the Town Centre (Miles)



How would you generally travel to the town centre:



# TRAFFIC & PARKING CAR PARKING AFFORDABILITY

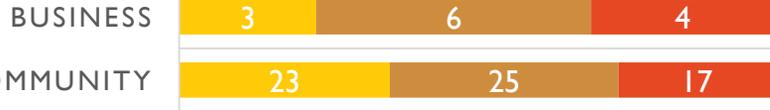
## Parking Costs

**£0.50**

Average hourly rate  
September 2021

## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: PARKING AFFORDABILITY?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor

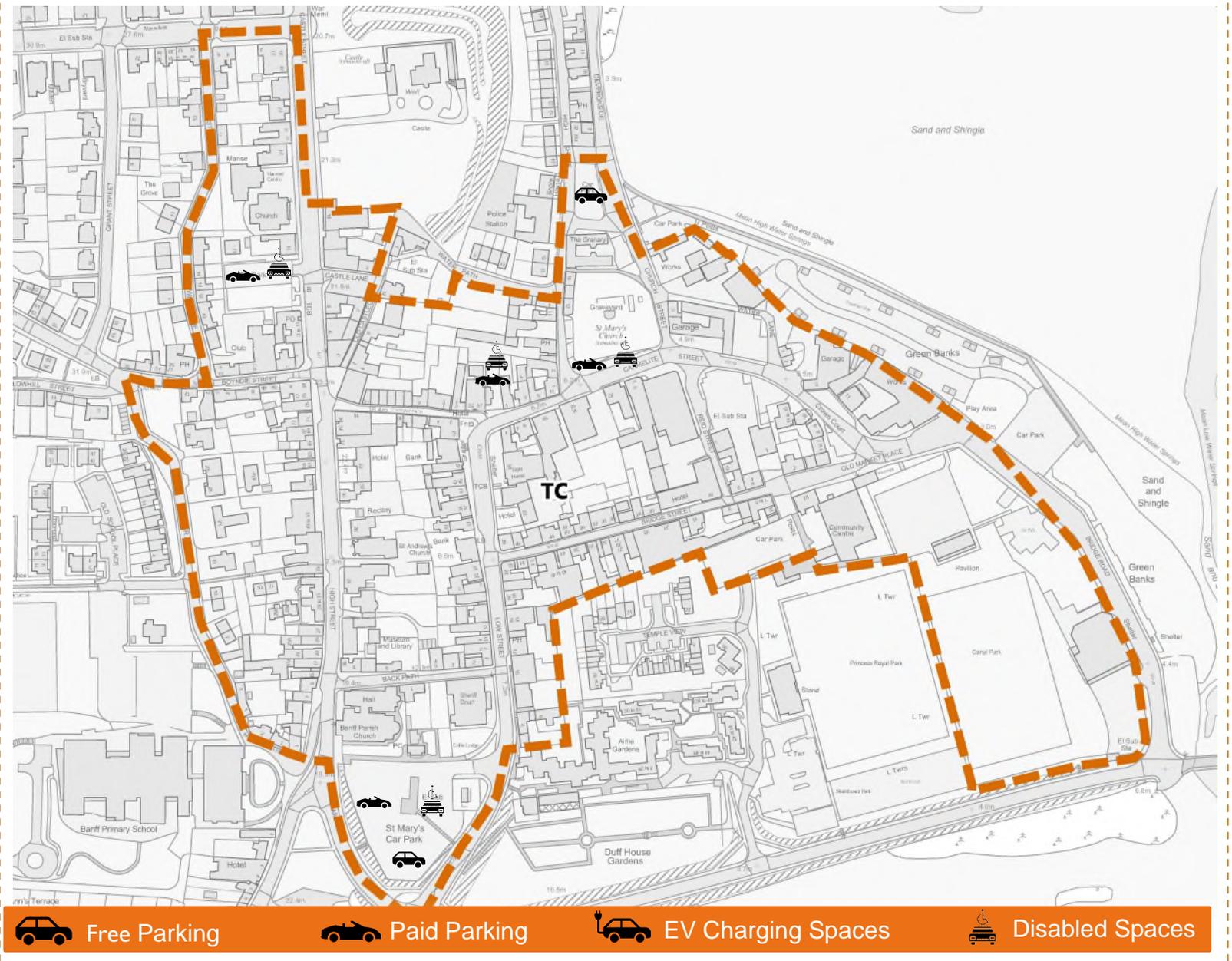


*“Parking charges stop people coming into the town centre.”*

*“Encourage folk to stay longer in the Town-by scrapping parking charges for a start.”*

*“Free parking.”*

*“All parking charges should be removed.”*



Free Parking    
 Paid Parking    
 EV Charging Spaces    
 Disabled Spaces

# TRAFFIC & PARKING

## CAR PARKING AVAILABILITY



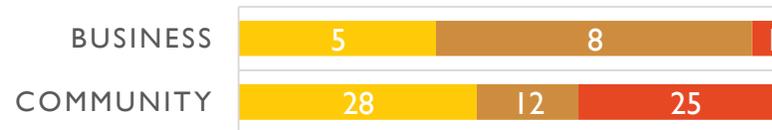
Image: St Mary's Car Park Sign.

*“There are hardly any disabled parking bays within the car parks with the town centre.”*

*“There should be an additional car park.”*

### HOW WOULD YOU RATE: PARKING AVAILABILITY?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



### Spaces

60

No. of Free Spaces

117

No. of Paid Spaces

9

No. of Disabled Spaces

0

No. of EV Charging Spaces

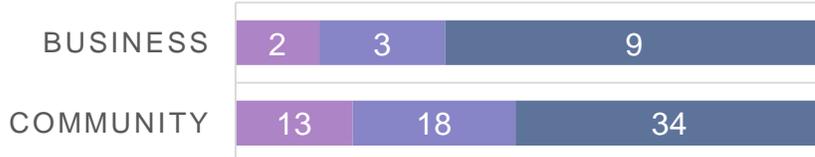
**Observations:** The main theme that became apparent through the comments relating to the affordability of parking was the community desire to see more free parking within the town centre. This was for a variety of reasons but the main reason noted by respondents was that the parking charges deter people coming into the town centre whereas people should be encouraged to shop local.

As for the availability of parking there were less comments received on this theme but generally it was noted that there is a requirement for more disabled parking within the town centre. It was also requested that there was an additional car park. However, during the survey it was noted that the parking on offer throughout the town centre was well spread geographically throughout the town.

Buildings, landmarks, greenery, views and natural landscape can all help to create an attractive, distinctive place that people enjoy. These features can also help people to find their way around.

### HOW WOULD YOU RATE: ATTRACTIVENESS OF TOWN?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



**Observations:** The topic of the attractiveness of the town received a very mixed response which was reflected in the ratings with 15 respondents noting the topic as good and 43 noting it as poor. During the site visit many areas were identified where improvements could be sought to improve the overall attractiveness of the town.

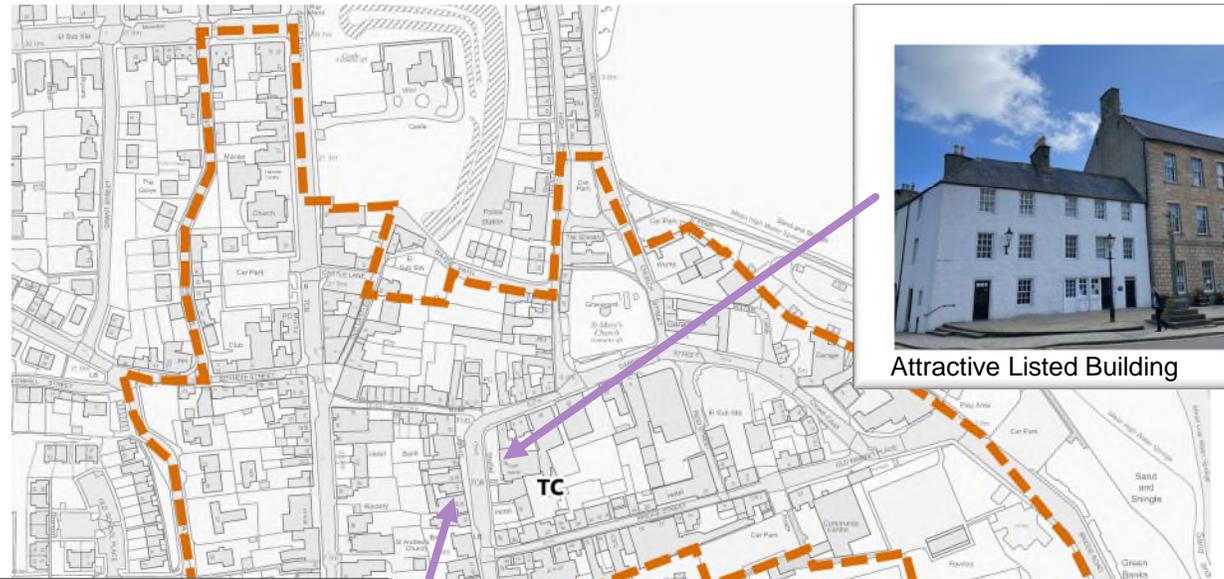
There are a number of listed buildings which do contribute to the overall attractiveness of the town. However, maintenance of the vacant units within the town centre would help to improve the overall look of the town. The seating within St Mary's Car Park would also benefit from some maintenance.

*“Regardless of how much money is spent on the town, it's the people within it which help make it attractive.”*

*“A benefit to the town centre would be for it to be tidied up and the appearance improved.”*

# STREETS & SPACES

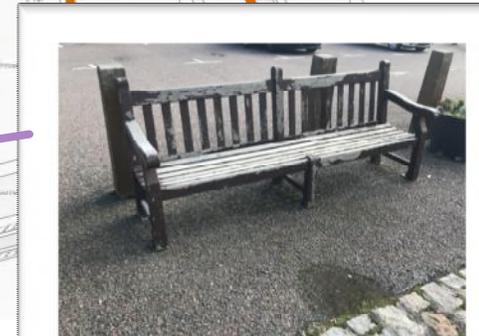
## ATTRACTIVENESS OF TOWN CENTRE



Attractive Listed Building



Run down Shop Front



Bench requiring maintenance



## STREETS & SPACES: HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

**Observations:** There are 135 listed buildings within Banff Town Centre covering all listing categories. There are 46 Category C listed, 79 Category B listed and 10 Category A listed buildings.

Unfortunately, within Banff there are a number of properties on the Buildings at Risk Register and of the listed buildings there are 5 on the register which means 3.7% of listed buildings are at risk and require attention. Care and maintenance are required to a number of other buildings, a common concern raised through the surveys, to ensure they also don't end up on the register.



Images (Left to Right): Town House and Fife House, both Low Street.

# STREETS & SPACES: SEATING

## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: SEATING/ AREAS TO CONGREGATE

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor

BUSINESSES



COMMUNITY



*"Provide more seating."*

*"Some outdoor seating – look to see how other towns do it."*

*"Little places for seating apart from St Mary's carpark."*

*"The lack of benches in Banff especially around the high street are is terrible."*

*"There is just one seat on Low Street in an area covered with bird droppings."*

*"There should be more benches within the town centre."*

**Observations:** There was generally a lack of seating noticed within the town centre, with the majority of seating at the St Mary's Car Park. This was something that was widely commented on through the surveys and the topic was rated within the bottom five out of all topics in both the community and the business survey.

The majority of seating that was available was in good condition however it was noted that the bench within the seating area in St Mary's Car Park would be improved by some maintenance.

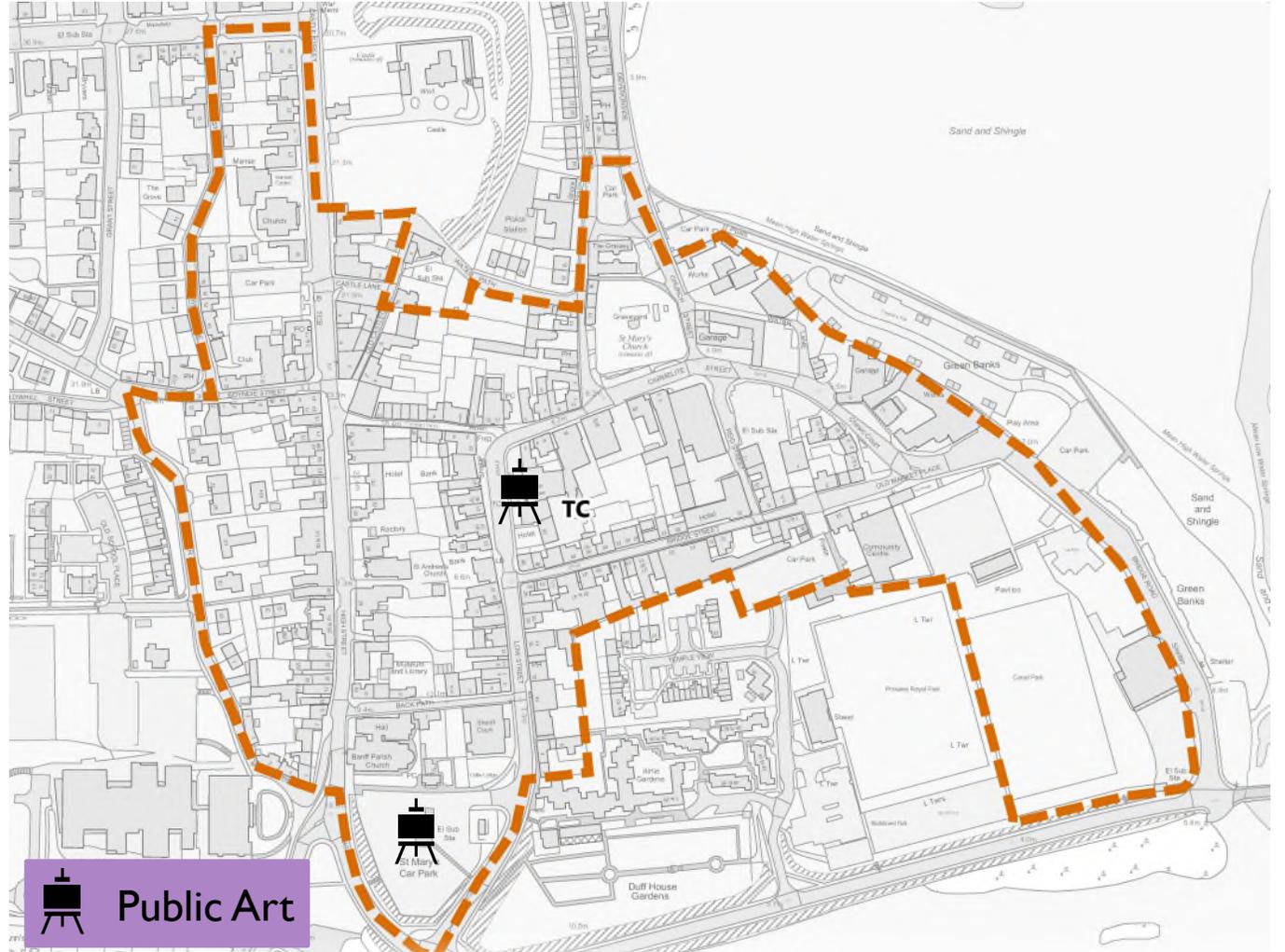
# STREETS & SPACES: PUBLIC ART

**Observations:** There is limited public art within the town centre as observed through the site visits. However, it should be noted that there are a number of historic assets including the Banff Mercat Cross and the Water Fountain on Low Street. These are additions that help to provide a sense of place along with the public art.

The art that is located within the town centre is well kept, with the plaque providing some colour to its surroundings.



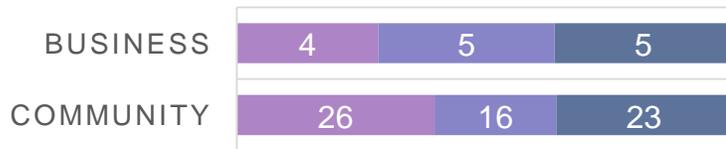
Images (Left to Right): Statue in St Mary's Car Park and Plaque on side of the Town House.



# STREETS & SPACES: PAVEMENTS

## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: PAVEMENT CLEANLINESS?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



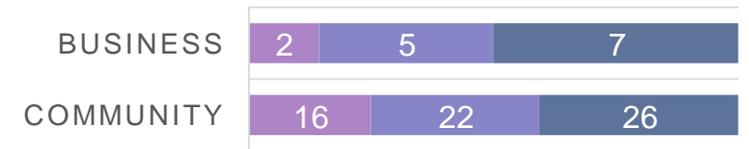
**Observations:** The topics relating to pavement cleanliness and quality attracted a large number of comments within the majority of comments being of a negative nature.

The main themes coming through the topics noted that the pavements needed to be cleaned to remove the moss, weeds and seagull mess in the pavements and the topic of maintenance was also raised on several occasions.



## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: PAVEMENT QUALITY?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



*“Clean the pavements.”*

*“A seagull population that is creating health and safety challenges as well as ruining the pavements.”*

*“The pavements are disgusting with green slime and weeds.”*

*“The pavements need washed.”*

*“The pavements need weeding – especially on Low Street.”*

*“There are broken pavements.”*

*“The council should remove weeds from pavements.”*

*“The main streets are in bad repair.”*

*“There needs to be better maintenance.”*

*“Better maintenance by the council and enforcement orders on building owners who neglect their properties. Broken windows, weedy gutters and general dereliction should be improved, making the areas more welcoming.”*

*“There needs to be more investment in the empty units.”*

*“There needs to be less vacant shop units.”*

*“Try to encourage re-use of vacant shop units to create a town centre worth visiting and exploring.”*

*“Need to try and fill the empty shops.”*

*“Businesses should be supported to open up in the empty units.”*

*“Regenerate the empty shop units.”*

**Observations:** The number of vacant units is something that was highly commented on through the surveys with the majority of comments noting there were far too many vacant units within the town centre. The vacancy rate within the town centre at the time of survey was 21%. This is slightly higher than the Scottish average at the time of the survey, Q3 2021, which is 15% (Scottish Retail Consortium and Local Data Company). The condition of these buildings was also something that attracted a large number of comments.

## Vacant Retail Units:

**21** Vacant Units in the town centre **21%** Vacancy Rate at time of survey

# STREETS & SPACES: VACANT RETAIL UNITS



Natural space includes parks and woodlands, fields, streams and rivers, green space alongside paths and roads, and tree-lined streets. These can be good for wildlife, improve air quality and benefit our health and wellbeing.

**Observations:** Banff's location next to the coast and other natural spaces is undoubtedly an asset for the town, contributing to parks and green spaces being in the top five best features for both business and community respondents. There is a variety of well-maintained planting within the town centre including planters, hanging baskets, verges and leisure spaces. Some respondents would like to see more green space and planting.

### HOW WOULD YOU RATE: PARKS & GREEN SPACES?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor

BUSINESSES	7	4	3
COMMUNITY	34	14	17

*"The golf course, Canal Park and Princess Royal Park form a magnificent entrance to the town 🌳."*

*"Excellent leisure facilities, parks and local attractions."*

*"Plant trees, flowers, shrubs."*

*"More flowers to brighten it up."*

*"More green space and better links to the coast."*

# NATURAL SPACE



Planters and hanging baskets soften the hard landscaping in High Street and Low Street



Lanes benefit from greenery



Banff has great natural spaces on the town centre boundary such as the beach, golf club and Airlie Gardens



The Kirkyard adds to the green feel of the town

Banff and Macduff in Bloom, are a group of volunteers working to enhance the main areas of the two towns with floral displays. Visit their [Facebook](#) page to find out more.



Planting in St. Mary's car park welcomes visitors to the town



Canal Park

Good places encourage children to play and allow adults to enjoy leisure and sporting activities. Opportunities for play and recreation can improve the quality of our lives and our health.

**Observations:** Banff has sports facilities within the town centre boundary and there are also a number of facilities on the boundary of the town centre. Canal Park is located within the town centre as recreation space, although it is noted that there are proposals being developed for this site. However, at the time of the survey no decision had been made. There were a mix of comments received but generally comments focused on desire to see indoor facilities within the town centre. Additionally, there are a number of play/leisure just about 1 mile from the Town House.

### HOW WOULD YOU RATE: LEISURE AND PLAY FACILITIES?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor

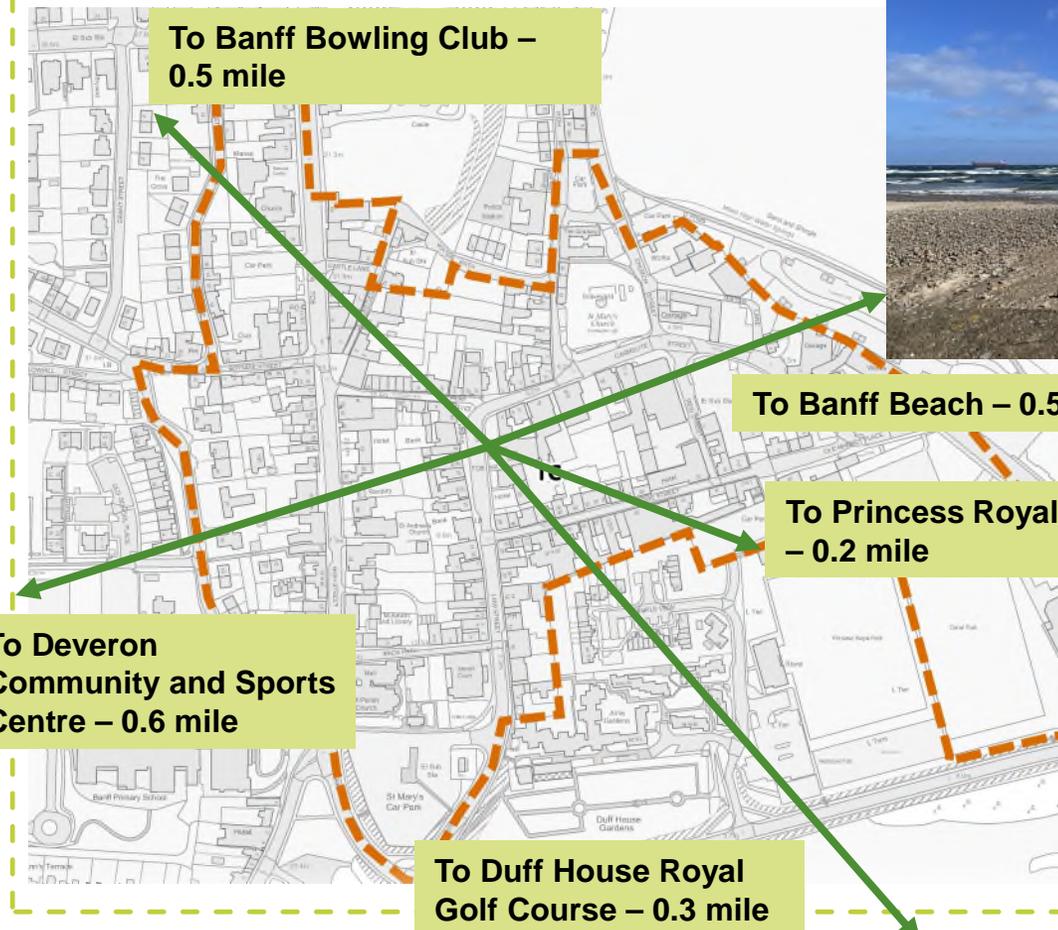
BUSINESSES	4	5	5
COMMUNITY	20	21	24

*“Be good to have things to bring people into the town centre more.”*

*“Canal Park offers a magnificent entrance to the town.”*

*“Would be great to see a soft play within the town centre.”*

# PLAY & RECREATION



Facilities and amenities are the things that we need to live and enjoy life. This can include shops, schools, nurseries, libraries, GP surgeries and places to eat, drink and meet friends. Access to facilities and amenities is important to support healthy, fulfilling lives.

# FACILITIES & AMENITIES

## RETAILER REPRESENTATION

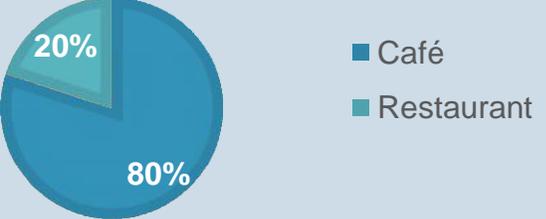
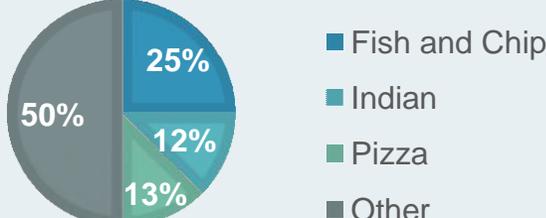


Use Class Order Classification The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Scotland) Order 1997	Number of Units within Use Class	Distribution of Units in Use class
<p><b>Class 1: Shops</b> (Retail sale of goods other than hot food, post office; sale of tickets; travel agency; sale of cold food for consumption off the premises; hairdressing; direction of funerals; the display of goods for sale; hiring out of domestic or personal goods or articles; launderette or dry cleaners; reception of goods to be washed, cleaned or repaired; where the sale, display or service is principally to visiting members of the public)</p>	50 units	<p><b>CLASS 1: SHOPS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Charity</li> <li>■ Clothes &amp; Footwear</li> <li>■ Entertainment</li> <li>■ Florists</li> <li>■ Food &amp; Drink</li> <li>■ Hairdresser &amp; Barber</li> <li>■ Home &amp; Garden</li> <li>■ Other</li> </ul>
<p><b>Class 2: Financial, Professional and other services</b> (Use for the provision of - financial services; professional services; or any other services (including use as a betting office) e.g. offices of accountants, dentists, doctors, solicitors, beauticians, estate agents)</p>	15 units	<p><b>CLASS 2: FINANCIAL, PROFESSIONAL &amp; OTHER SERVICES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Banks</li> <li>■ Accountants, Solicitors, Estate Agents</li> <li>■ Beauticians</li> <li>■ Betting Office</li> <li>■ Dentists</li> <li>■ Other</li> </ul>



Images (Top to Bottom): Low Street and High Street.

# FACILITIES & AMENITIES: RETAILER REPRESENTATION

Use Class Order Classification The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Scotland) Order 1997	Number of Units within Use Class	Distribution of Units in Use class
<b>Class 3: Food and Drink</b> (The sale of food or drink for consumption on the premises. e.g. cafes, restaurants, snack bars)	5 units	<b>CLASS 3: FOOD AND DRINK</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Café</li> <li>■ Restaurant</li> </ul>
<b>Sui Generis</b> (For the sale of hot food for consumption off the premises. e.g. pizza shops, takeaways, kebab shops, fish and chip shops)	8 units	<b>SUI GENERIS: HOT FOOT TAKEAWAY</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Fish and Chips</li> <li>■ Indian</li> <li>■ Pizza</li> <li>■ Other</li> </ul>
<b>Sui Generis</b> (Use as a Public House)	1 unit	1 Public House



Images (Top to Bottom) : Bridge Street and Low Street.

# FACILITIES & AMENITIES: RETAILER REPRESENTATION

## Retailer Representation

**58%** of businesses in the town centre are independent retailers

**21%** of businesses in the town centre are multiple retailers  
\*have multiple stores operating under one brand name and have common ownership.

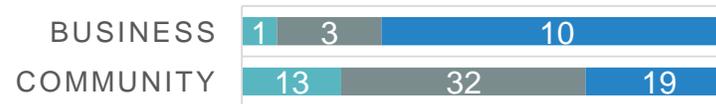
**3** No. of Charity Shops

**26%** of visitors to Banff Town Centre agree that it offers all services expected (retail, café, pubs etc)

**Observations:** There is a good distribution between independent and multiple (chain) retailers within the town centre. However, a large proportion of the comments received through the surveys related to the lack of variety within the town centre, the topic actually ranked within the 5 lowest ranked topics through both the community and business surveys. A number of comments were received noting that encouraging start-up small businesses would help improve the offering available.

## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: VARIETY OF SHOPS?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: QUALITY OF SHOPS?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor

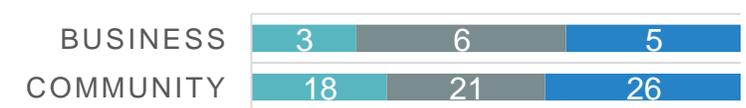


Image: Low Street.

*“More variety of shops would be good.”*

*“More variety of nice little quirky shops would be an improvement.”*

*“Banff has very little choice and variety.”*

*“The town needs more variety.”*

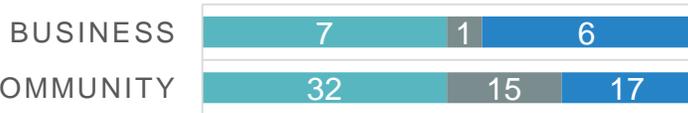
*“Need to encourage people to set up quality businesses within the town centre.”*

*“There is not enough variety.”*

# FACILITIES & AMENITIES: CAFE AND RESTAURANTS

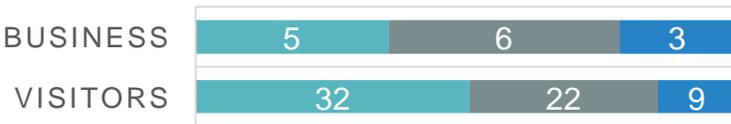
## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: CAFE/ RESTAURANT CHOICE?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: CAFE/ RESTAURANT QUALITY?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



*“There are almost too many cafes in the town centre.”*

*“Need more of a range of cafes and restaurants.”*

*“Deveron side could be improved and be a vibrant place for cafes.”*

*“Pedestrian areas to promote cafe culture.”*

*“It would be good to have access to outdoor cafe facilities when weather permits.”*

*“Would be nice to have more choice in cafes and restaurants.”*

**Observations:** The choice of cafes and restaurants and the quality of them were rated within the top five of all the topics within the community survey and cafe choice was rated within the top five of the business survey. A number of comments were received noting that it would be good to see more cafes and restaurants within Banff Town Centre, including introducing a cafe culture.

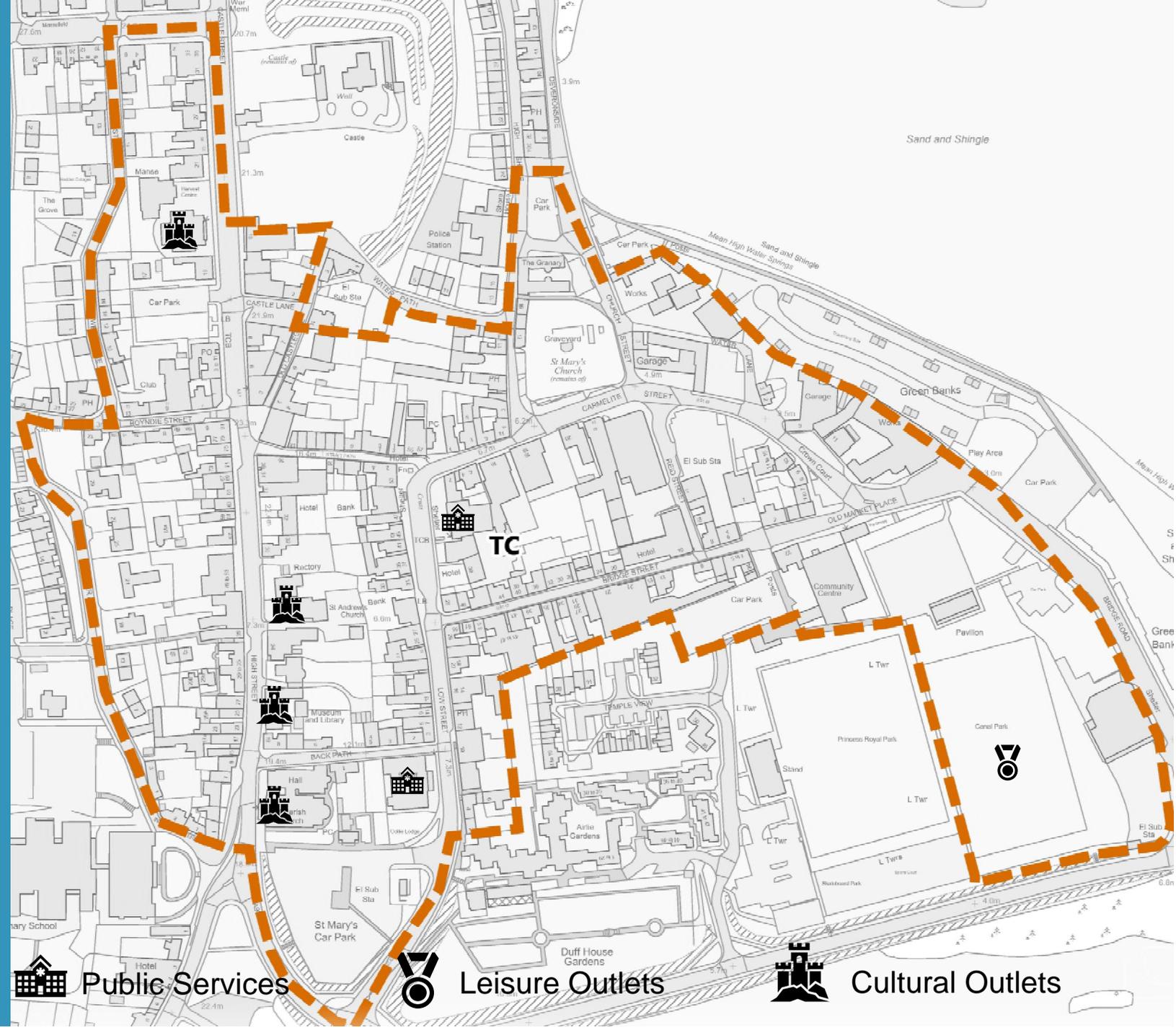


# FACILITIES & AMENITIES: CULTURAL AND LEISURE OUTLETS, AND PUBLIC SERVICES

**Observations:** There is a good selection of different cultural, leisure and public services within the town centre. There is a range of uses from Council Offices, Churches, Library and Museum and leisure space.



Images (Left to Right): Banff Museum and Library and Banff Parish Church.



 Public Services

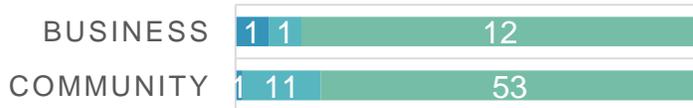
 Leisure Outlets

 Cultural Outlets

# FACILITIES & AMENITIES: EVENING ECONOMY

## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: THE VIBRANCY IN THE EVENING :

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



*“Would be nice to see more things to do in the town centre in the evening.”*

*“More good food places for the evening.”*

*“There's no vibrancy in the evening because nothing is going on unless you want to go to a pub.”*

*“Banff is great during the day but needs more in the evening - good quality restaurant for example.”*

**Observations:** There are a number of units open within the evening but the majority of these are takeaways. A number of comments were received to the surveys noting that there needs to be more open within the evening and that this would help with the vibrancy within the evening.

These comments are reflected through the ratings, with the majority noting vibrancy in the evening as poor and it also ranked within the bottom five topics for both the community and businesses.



# FACILITIES & AMENITIES: COMMUNITY AND VISITOR SATISFACTION

## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: VALUE FOR MONEY?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



*“There needs to be more affordable shops within the town centre.”*

*“Need to offer a wider variety of shops within the town centre.”*

*“Banff has a unique offering and could really be a all round inspiring destination.”*

*“There is limited retail choice and it is expensive.”*

*“There is a poor choice available in terms of products and they can be quite expensive.”*

## Town Centre Offer:

**26%**

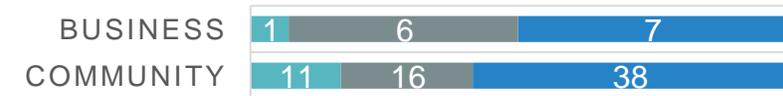
of the community agree that Banff offers all services expected (retail, café, pubs etc)

**Observations:** There is a large proportion of respondents to the community survey who noted that they didn't think that Banff has all the services expected as only 26% agreed that it did.

The standard of service in shops was rated in the top five themes through the surveys. Whereas, conversely the variety of goods available was majority rated as poor with 45 respondents noted that this topic was poor. The variety of goods attracted a number of comments through the surveys.

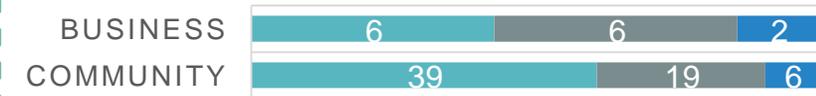
## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: VARIETY OF GOODS AVAILABLE?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: STANDARD OF SERVICE IN SHOPS?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



**Tourism:** Data provided by VisitAberdeenshire shows the number of page views received for Banff in the 'Towns and Villages' section of their website:

**3,830** Jan-Dec 2019

**2,602** Jan-Dec 2020

# FACILITIES & AMENITIES: ONLINE SHOPPING

## Online Offering

**92%** of businesses surveyed have online presence

**50%** of businesses surveyed sell online

**50%** of the businesses surveyed that sell online make 25% or less of their income from this

**48%** of the community surveyed said they are more likely to shop online rather than going into the town centre for the same item

**62%** of the community survey noted that their attitude towards online shopping had changed because of the COVID-19 pandemic

**75%** of the community survey noted that their usage of the town centre had decreased because of the COVID-19 pandemic

**Observations:** Within the survey there was a real mix of responses to the questions about shopping online.

A number of respondents noted that they would rather shop local rather than buying online. Whilst others noted that convenience, pricing and variety of goods were the main reasons for online shopping.

*"It's quicker, there is more variety and less travel to shop online."*

*"I always want to shop local when ever I can."*

*"Online is cheaper than local."*

*"I prefer to shop in person."*

*"I order goods online that are not available in Banff."*

*"More choice online."*



Image: High Street.

# FACILITIES & AMENITIES: CONNECTIVITY

**Observations:** Mobile coverage within Banff Town Centre is very strong with all of the top networks being able to be connected to at a 4G level and the There is currently no coverage of 5G within the town centre.

Broadband coverage is also strong with fibre and superfast broadband being available within the town.

There is no free public WIFI available within the town centre.

## Broadband Coverage in Banff Town Centre:

	FTTH/FTTP	✗
	Ultrafast Broadband (>=100 Mbps)	✗
	Superfast Broadband (>24 Mbps)	✓
	Fibre (FTTC or FTTH or Cable or G.Fast)	✓
	Wireless	✗
	LLU	✓
<b>A+</b>	ADSL2+	✓
<b>A</b>	ADSL	✓

## Mobile Coverage in Banff Town Centre:

		Voice	3G	4G	5G
Three	Indoor	✓	✓	✓	✗
	Outdoor	✓	✓	✓	
O2	Indoor	✓	✓	✓	✗
	Outdoor	✓	✓	✓	
EE	Indoor	✓	✓	✓	✗
	Outdoor	✓	✓	✓	
Vodafone	Indoor	✓	✓	✓	✗
	Outdoor	✓	✓	✓	

 Good coverage
  You may experience problems
  No coverage

# FACILITIES & AMENITIES: OTHER SERVICES

**Observations:** Banff Town Centre is well serviced by ATM machines. Additionally, there are three Defibrillator units within the town centre. One located on High Street and one on Reid Street which can be used by anyone within the town centre should the need arise. There is also one on Low Street in the Town House but this is only available for use when the building is open as it is located inside.

Additionally, there is currently no farmers market within the town centre, which is why there was a mix of ratings. The closest farmers market is in Macduff. However, there were a large number of comments received noting the communities aspiration to see a farmers market within the town.

## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: THE MARKET?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor

BUSINESS	3	4	7
COMMUNITY	4	35	25

*“A decent farmers market would be a boost to the town centre.”*

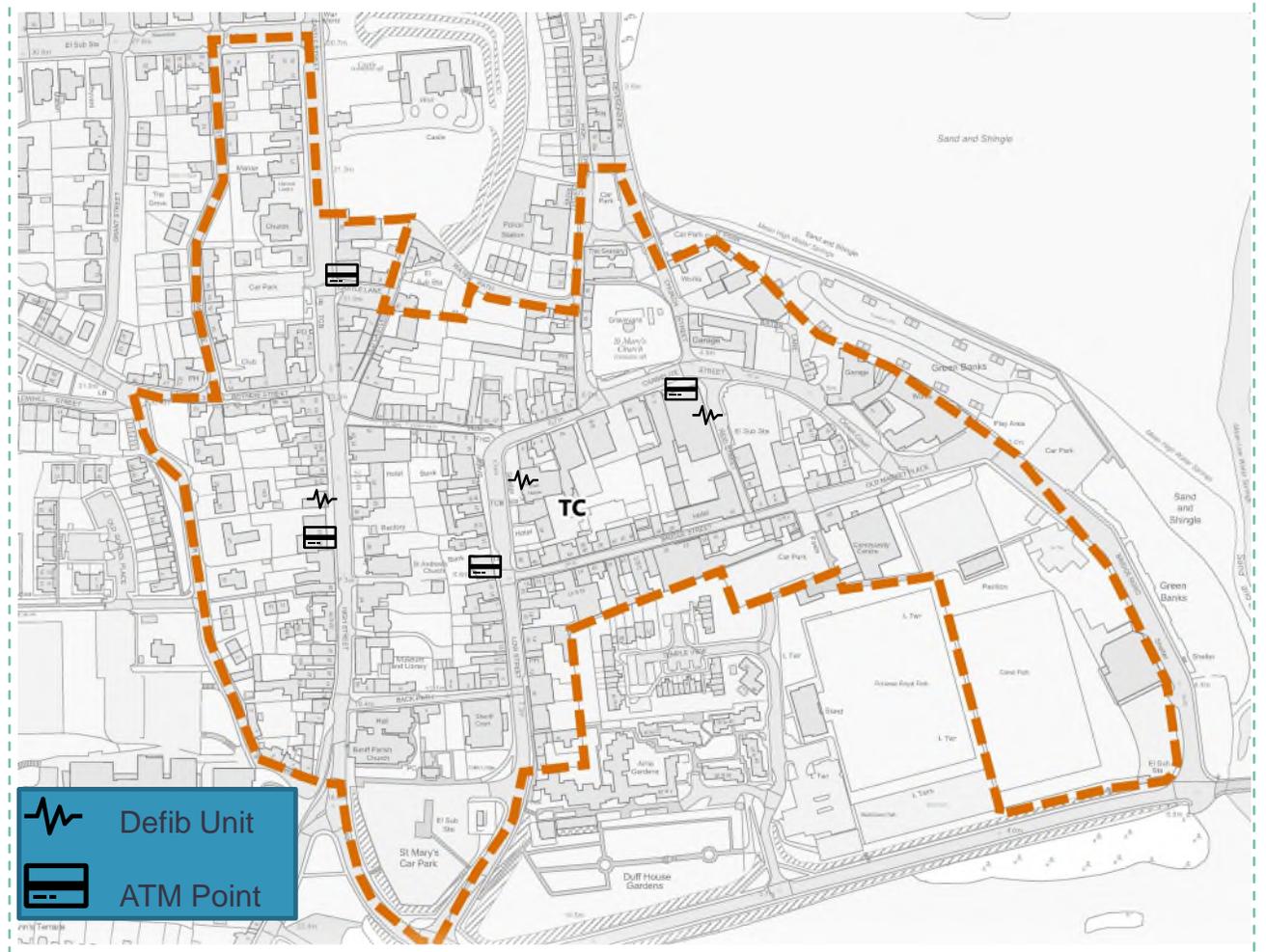
*“There should be a proper outdoor market.”*

*“There should be street markets for local food producers.”*

*“There should be seasonal markets.”*

*“The nearest farmers market is good and held in Macduff.”*

*“There is no farmers market within Banff.”*



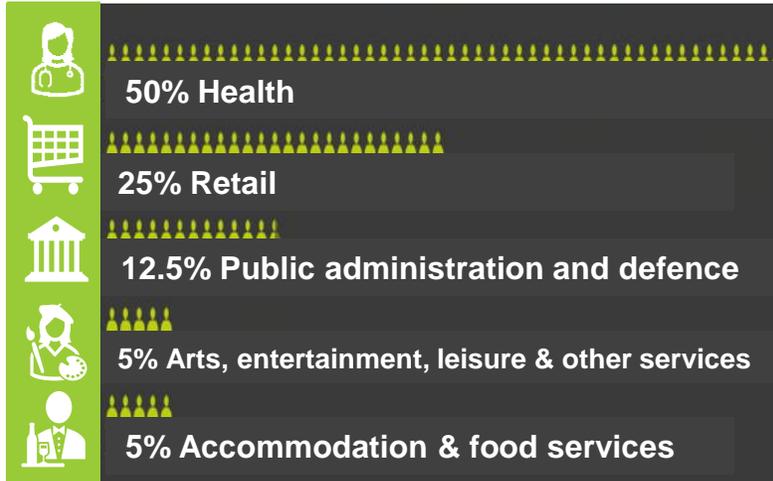
Good-quality work offers important benefits through income, activity, social contact, sense of identity and job satisfaction. A thriving local economy can provide work opportunities and help create lively places where people want to spend time.

# WORK & LOCAL ECONOMY



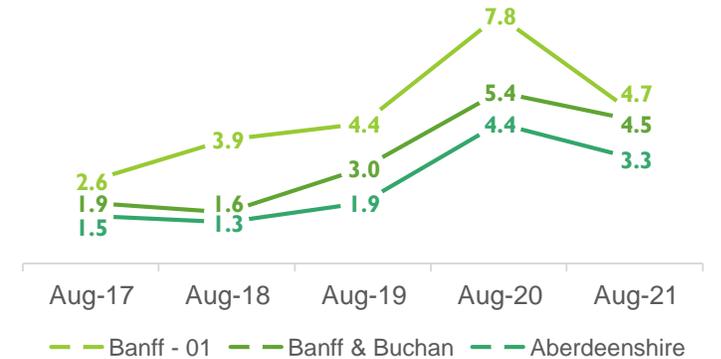
**Observations:** Banff is a designated Regeneration Priority Area and the indicators illustrate why this intervention is required. The latest employment picture is reflective of the towns position as a remote town that served as a previous administrative centre with a high proportion of public sector jobs, along with the expected retail and hospitality jobs. The significant jump in the claimant count rate between 2019 and 2020 therefore likely reflects the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the retail and hospitality sectors but the fall back towards pre-COVID levels is encouraging. Household income is low in comparison with the locality and very low in the Aberdeenshire context.

## Top 5 Employment Sectors 2020 Banff Town Centre Data Zone\*



Source: Business Register and Employment Survey 2020

## CLAIMANT COUNT RATE (%)



\*Includes people claiming Universal Credit or Jobseekers Allowance  
Source: ONS Crown Copyright Reserved



## Settlement Type: Remote Small Town

(Settlements of 3,000 to 9,999 people, and with a drive time of over 30 minutes but less than or equal to 60 minutes to a Settlement of 10,000 or more)

**Scottish Government's Urban Rural Classification, 8-fold**

## Median Household Income 2020 Town Centre Data Zone\*

**£23,243**

£28,871 Banff & Buchan;

£37,853 Aberdeenshire



Source: © CACI Limited 1996 - 2020 This report shall be used solely for academic, personal and/or non-commercial purposes.

## Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020

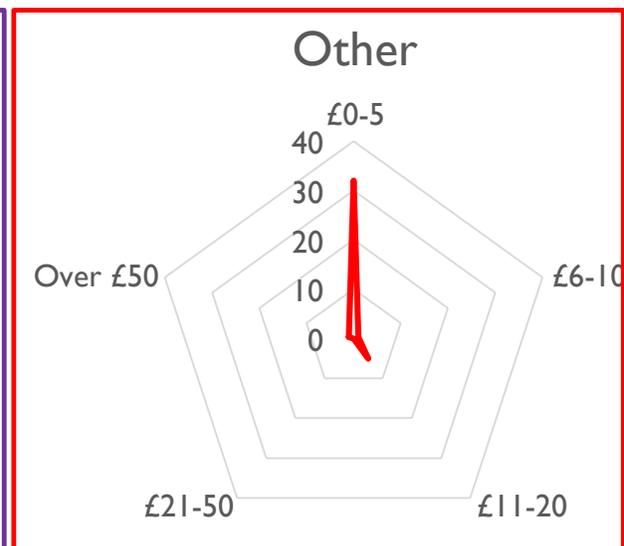
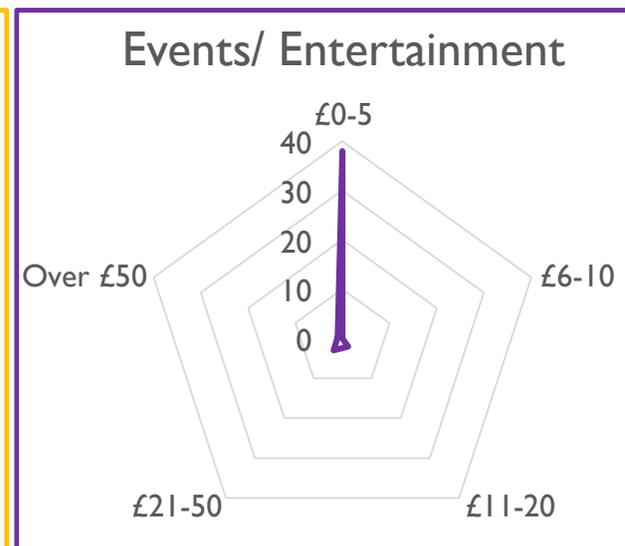
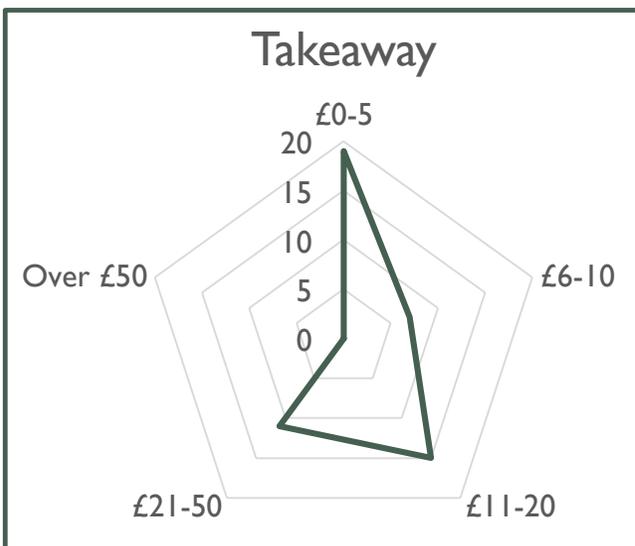
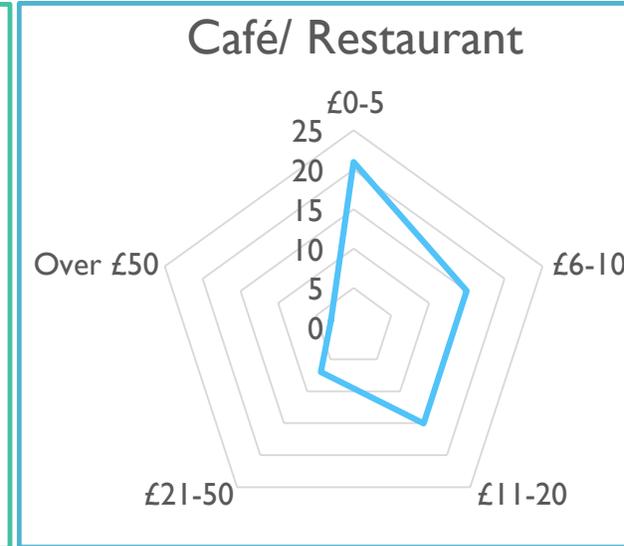
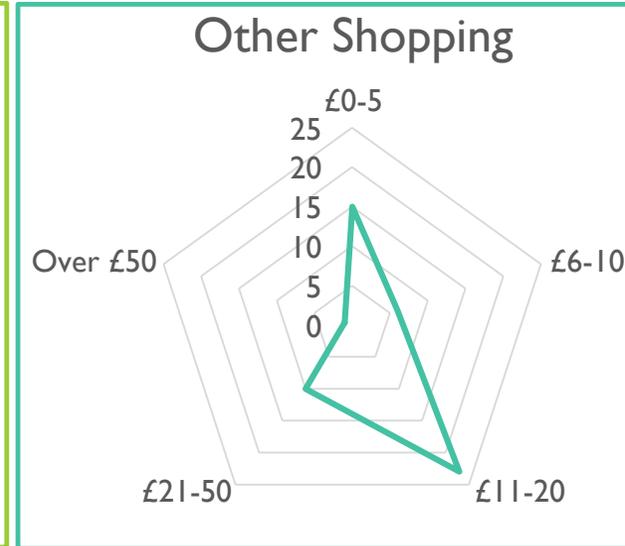
### Town Centre Data Zone\*:

**40%** most deprived in Scotland

\* The data zone (S01007032) that makes up the majority of the town centre.

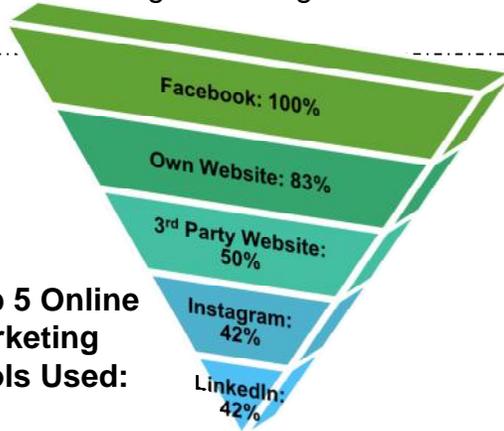
## WORK & LOCAL ECONOMY: AVERAGE CONSUMER SPEND

**Observations:** The graphs show that food shopping accounts for the highest proportion of spend in the town centre. Other shopping and takeaways are seeing most spend in the mid to lower levels, with £11-20 the most popular spend level. Café/ Restaurant spend is predominantly at the low to mid level, which suggests it is more likely cafés than restaurants that people are visiting. Hair and Beauty is also in the mid-range but at much lower numbers. There is very little spend on Events/ Entertainment, perhaps illustrating the lack of opportunities in this area.



# WORK & LOCAL ECONOMY: BUSINESS SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

**Observations:** 14 businesses responded to the survey and provided a very mixed outlook for the town, with some businesses increasing turnover, whilst others are seeing a fall. When looking at the more recent impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, this is more obviously impacting on profits. This mixed picture is illustrated further when looking at both business confidence and plans for growth. Businesses are making good use of online tools, but could consider widening their usage of different platforms.



Top 5 Online Marketing Tools Used:

*"There is a long way to go but private businesses are progressing."*

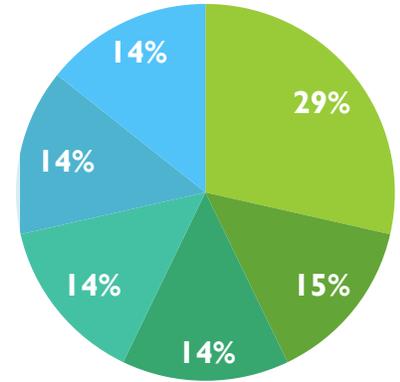
*"See the empty shops regenerated. Hopefully some independent retailers would then rent/buy shops."*

*"We are establishing a reputation for independent shops and tourism is on the up with more accommodation on offer that is of a higher quality."*

- 79%** of business owners surveyed were **established** businesses in the town centre, **14%** **start-ups** and **7%** are ready to **sell/ retire**
- 93%** of business owners surveyed were **independent** businesses
- 29%** of business owners surveyed were **confident** or **extremely confident** about future business performance, **29%** are **unconfident** or **extremely unconfident** and **42%** are **neutral**
- 39%** of business owners surveyed are looking to **grow** or **expand** in the next year. **23%** are **not** currently considering growth or expansion, with **38%** **unsure** at this time

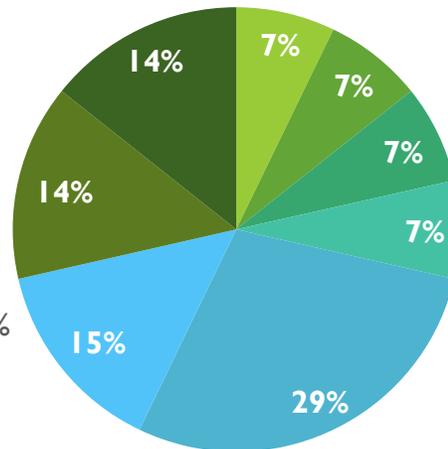
## How has turnover at your premises changed in the past five years?

- Increased by more than 25%
- Increased by 0.1-5%
- Stayed the Same
- Decreased by more than 25%
- Decreased by 16-25%
- Decreased by 6-15%



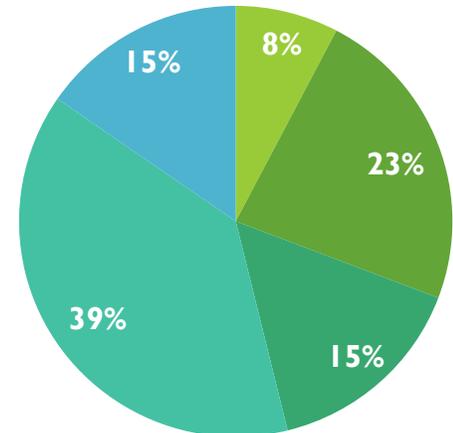
## Has employment at your premises changed in the past five years?

- Increased by more than 25%
- Increased by 16-25%
- Increased by 6-15%
- Increased by 0.1-5%
- Stayed the Same
- Decreased by more than 25%
- Decreased by 16-25%
- Decreased by 0.1-5%



## What difference have the COVID-19 restrictions had on turnover during the period March 2020 to April 2021?

- Increased by 16-25%
- Increased by 0.1-5%
- Stayed the Same
- Decreased by more than 25%
- Decreased by 6-15%



## WORK & LOCAL ECONOMY: PROPERTY

**Observations:** There is an even split in ownership of premises. In line with the indicators in the previous section businesses have a mixed outlook for investment in premises. Encouragingly a fifth of respondents have confirmed that they are looking to invest in their premises within the next year.

There have been a number of planning applications approved in 2020, with premises relating to the hospitality sector showing the most activity.

Comments received in the surveys suggested that affordable space for start-up's, improvements in building maintenance and incentives such as rent or rate relief would be welcomed.

*"A lot of empty buildings that are falling into disrepair. People are moving into Banff and more holiday homes are being bought but there is no investment into these neglected buildings. Owners should be given incentives to repair and rent/ sell."*

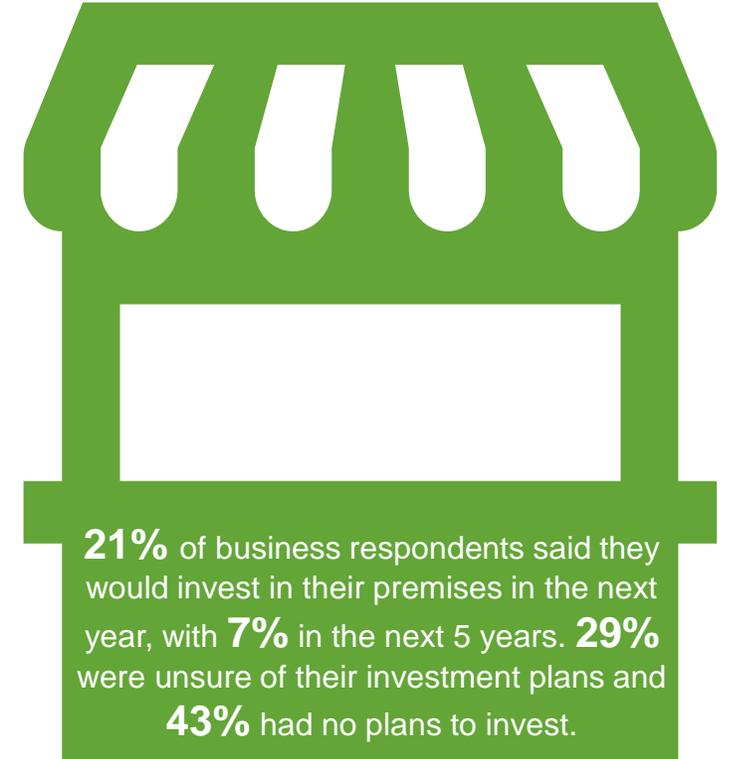
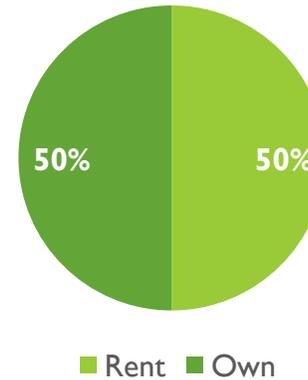
*"Encourage people to set up a quality business by a rates/ rent amnesty."*

*"Investment needs to be done to encourage growth. Ideal place Deveronside could be improved and be a vibrant place for cafes etc."*

*"Town needs investment."*

*"The empty buildings given the chance of grants to regenerate, encouraging businesses to move into the empty shops."*

### Do you rent or own your premises?



### Planning Applications:

Within the town centre 21 planning applications were approved in 2020. Of note were:

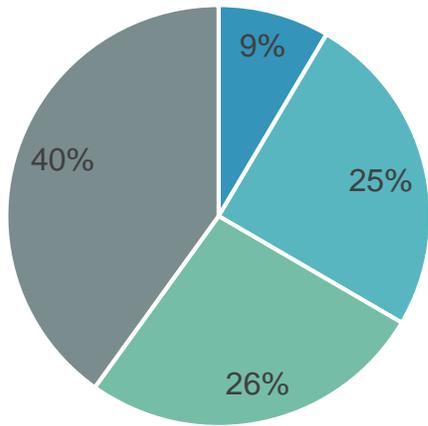
- 1 for erection of sign and internal alterations;
- 1 for erection of two signs;
- 1 for part change of use from Shop (Class 1) to Café (Class 3);
- 1 for alterations and extension to Shop and Restaurant;
- 1 for erection of two pods;
- 1 for change of use from Tourist Information Centre (Class 2) to Coffee Shop (Class 3);
- 1 for change of use from Care Home (Class 8) to Dwellinghouse (Class 9);
- 1 for change of use from Shop (Class 1) to additional residential accommodation (Class 9).

Housing is central to people’s lives and helps to shape the appearance and character of places. Good places provide a mix of housing that supports a socially balanced community and meets people’s needs throughout life.

# HOUSING & COMMUNITY



## DWELLING TYPE



■ Detached ■ Semi Detached ■ Flat ■ Terrace

The mix of dwelling types within the town centre is shown above. The majority of the dwellings are terraced houses.

Of these dwelling types within the town centre the main tenure is properties either being owned outright 30% of all properties or owned with a mortgage 23%. The other 47% is made up from people renting either from the Council, Social Landlord or Private Landlord.

## Banff Housing Profile and Population

The overall population total for Banff in 2016 was 4,100 and it is estimated that approximately 545 people stay within the town centre.

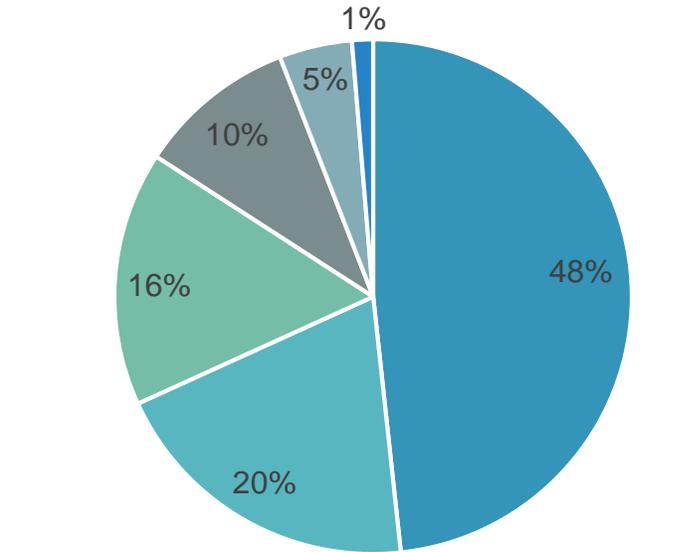
The average house price for dwellings within the town centre boundary in 2018 was £108,896.



Image: Low Street Streetscape.

In terms of Council Tax Bands (2020), Banff Town Centre has dwellings in Bands A-F on the scale of the Council Tax Bands. The majority 48%, are located within the first, Band A.

## COUNCIL TAX BAND



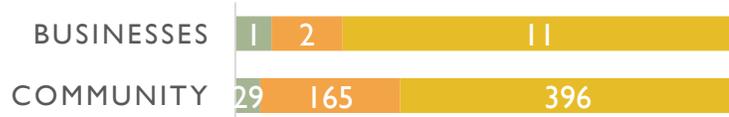
■ Band A ■ Band B ■ Band C  
■ Band D ■ Band E ■ Band F

Feeling isolated can be damaging to our health and wellbeing. Good places provide a variety of spaces to meet and spend time with others.

**Observations:** Range of events was scored relatively poorly in both surveys, resulting in it being in the bottom five topics in both the community and business survey but this could have been influenced by the COVID-19 restrictions at the time of the survey. There are a number of venues that are available for social interaction in the town centre, including a number of cafes, but the desire to have more events was highly commented on.

### HOW WOULD YOU RATE: RANGE OF EVENTS?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



# SOCIAL CONTACT



Venue	Indoor / Outdoor	Opening Times
Banff Library	Indoor	Wed 1:30-4:30pm
Banff Museum	Indoor	Sat 10:30am-1:30pm
Banff Parish Church	Indoor	Service Sun 11am, Evening service 6pm (1 <sup>st</sup> Sun of each month)
St Andrew's Church	Indoor	Morning Prayer (1 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sun of the Month) 11am Communion (1 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sun of the Month) 9:50am Parish Eucharist (2 <sup>nd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> Sun of the Month) 9:30am
River Church Banff	Indoor	Tues-Fri 9am-1pm Worship Sun 10am

*"There are very few events."*

*"There are no events taking place."*

*"Lots more family friendly weekend events."*

*"Markets, car boot sales, a cinema, community bingo and other events would be brilliant."*

*"More events especially in the summer months."*

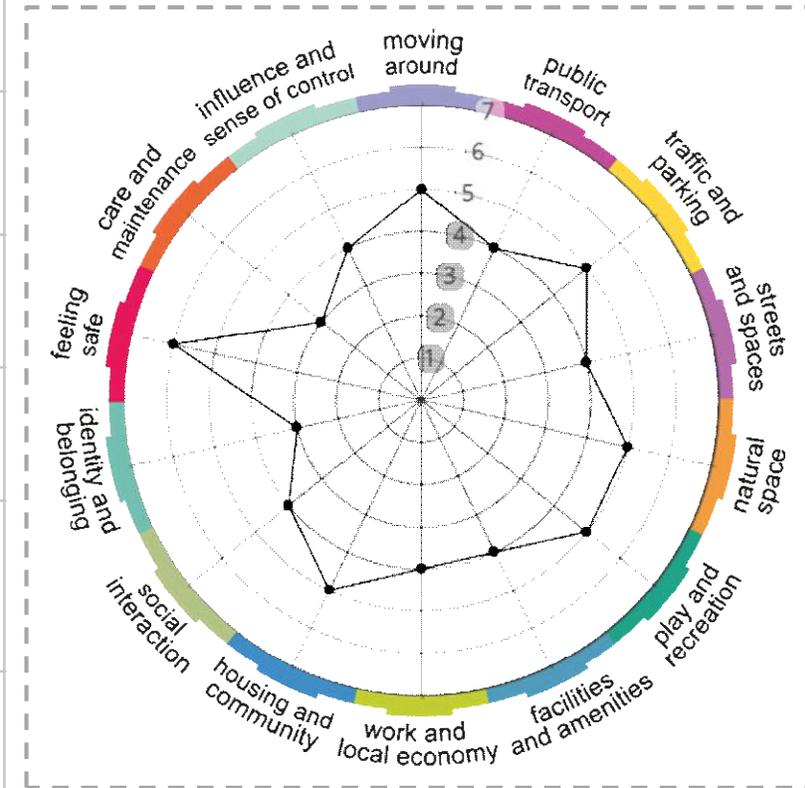
*"There should be more social spaces."*



Images: Far Left, Banff Museum and Library, Left, St Andrew's Church; Right, Banff Parish Church.

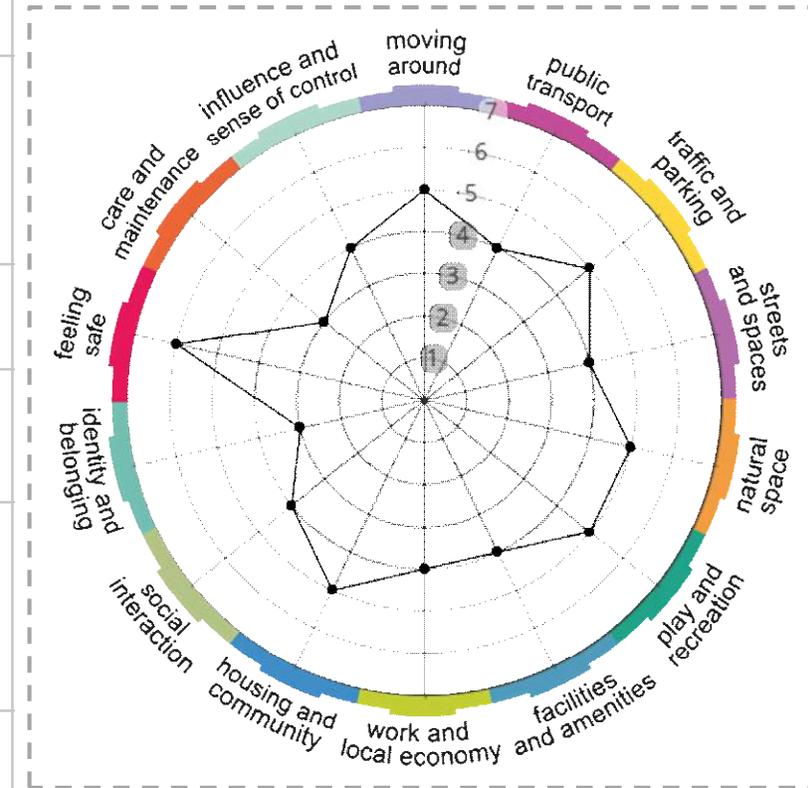
# KEY CONSIDERATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

Theme	Key Improvements
<b>Identity and belonging</b> Rating: 3	Businesses and the community feel negatively towards the town centre, commenting on its decline over a number of years. Community spirit is seen to be lacking for many respondents, however there is pride in the towns heritage and natural assets. There is some recognition that the town centre was starting to improve.
<b>Feeling safe</b> Rating: 6	Overall a very positive indicator for the town centre, particularly in relation to safety during the day. Safety during the evening is rated neutral perhaps indicating that less people use the town in the evening. Maintenance of lighting could be beneficial.
<b>Care and maintenance</b> Rating: 3	The overall perception of the care and maintenance of buildings within Banff Town centre was poor. This ranked within the bottom five topics within the surveys. Interventions looking at improvement works to buildings would be welcomed by the local community.
<b>Influence and sense of control</b> Rating: 4	There are a limited number of groups supporting the town centre and a lack of awareness of the groups that are in operation. However these groups are contributing to activity that benefits visitors and businesses.
<b>Moving around</b> Rating: 5	Although this scored well overall, facilities for cyclists could be improved such as covered parking areas and dedicated cycle routes. There are concerns about busy roads and the disconnect between High Street and Low Street. Signage was generally well placed and informative.
<b>Public transport</b> Rating: 4	Banff has reasonable public transport links when looking to travel east or west however journey times to Aberdeen and Elgin are lengthy. It is more difficult to travel to other main towns and settlements but there is a good local service connecting Banff and Macduff and a Dial-A-Bus service.
<b>Traffic and parking</b> Rating: 5	Traffic and parking received a mixed response through the surveys. A couple of themes that would be welcomed by the community would be additional free parking spaces and more disabled parking spaces.



# KEY CONSIDERATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES (CONTINUED)

Theme	Key Improvements
<b>Streets and spaces</b> Rating: 4	Both the community and businesses felt negatively towards aspects contained within this topic including the attractiveness of the town, the lack of seats and the amount of vacant units within the town centre.
<b>Natural space</b> Rating: 5	Banff Town Centre is situated next to excellent natural, open space and has some good green areas within the centre itself. There is a variety of well-maintained planting including trees, verges, planters and hanging baskets. There are spaces within the town centre that could be enhanced further and improved links between the town centre and the coast could be explored.
<b>Play and recreation</b> Rating: 5	There are play and leisure facilities within the town centre boundary and additionally there are a number of facilities within 0.5 miles of the town centre.
<b>Facilities and amenities</b> Rating: 4	The services you would expect to find in a town centre can be found in Banff but there was considerable support for increasing the variety and quality of the offering. A number of times it was mentioned that this could be achieved through filling the vacant units.
<b>Work and local economy</b> Rating: 4	Work is generally low paid but the claimant count rate is reducing. Businesses have a mixed outlook in terms of confidence, investment and growth. Consumer spend is generally at mid to low levels. Affordable space for start-up's, maintenance and renovation of redundant premises and incentives such as rent or rate relief would be welcomed.
<b>Housing and community</b> Rating: 5	There is a good mix of tenure and type of dwellings within the town centre. There is a majority of terraced houses within the town centre. The mix of tenure should be maintained so that the town centre provides for all.
<b>Social contact</b> Rating: 4	There are a number of venues for people to meet within the town centre but there was a large demand to see additional events happening in the town centre through the surveys. Notably events that will bring people into the town centre including a market.



## BUSINESS & COMMUNITY SURVEY RESPONSES: How Would You Rate? Top 5 Highest and Lowest Scoring Categories

### Community

#### Top 5 Highest Scoring Categories:

1. Feeling of Safety During the Day
2. Standard of Service in Shops
3. Parks/ Green Spaces
4. Café/ Restaurant Quality
5. Café/ Restaurant Choice

#### Top 5 Lowest Scoring Categories:

1. Vibrancy in the Evening
2. Variety of Shops
3. Range of Events
4. Care and Maintenance of Buildings
5. Seating/ Areas to Congregate

### Business

#### Top 5 Highest Scoring Categories:

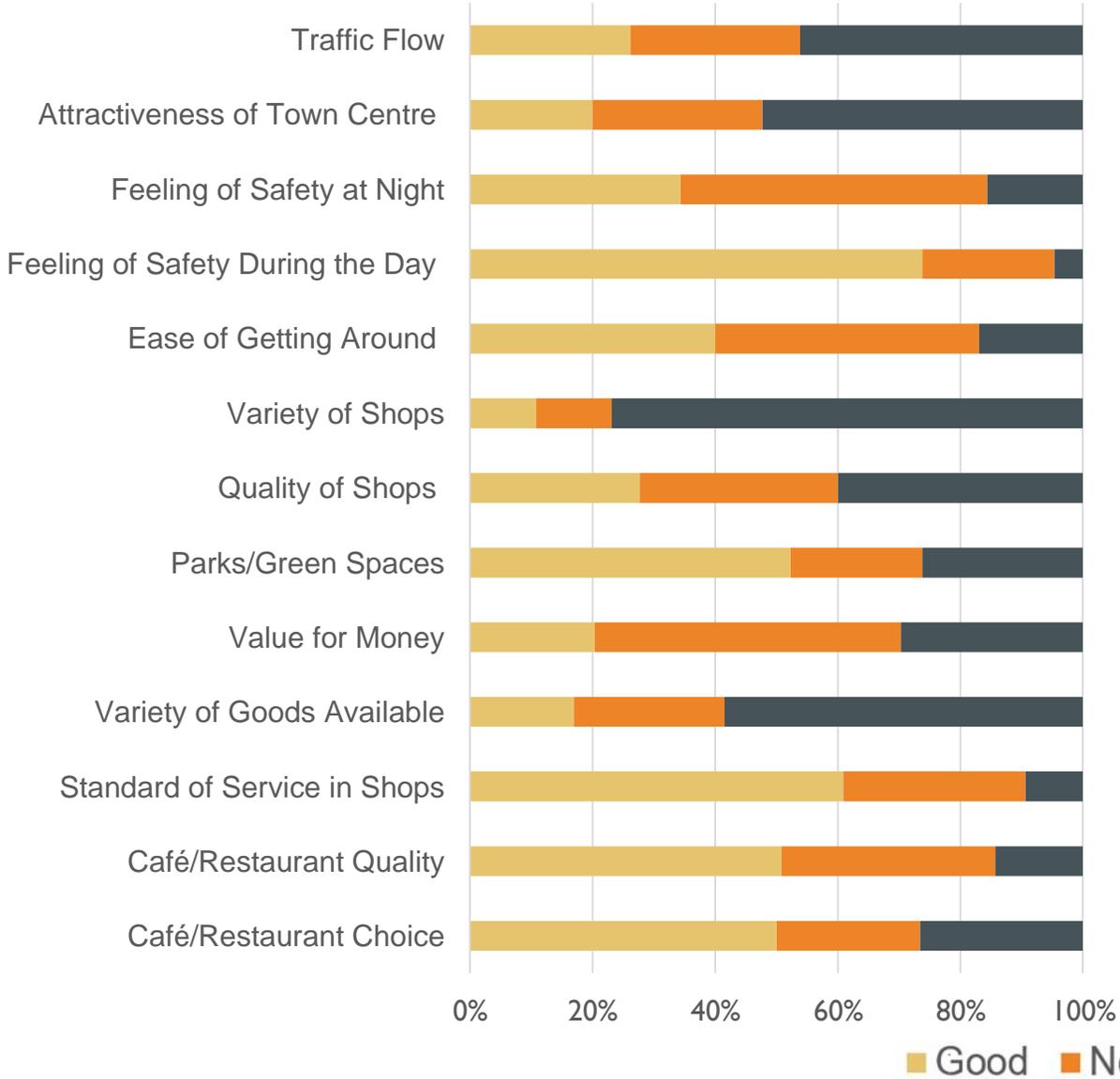
1. Feeling of Safety During the Day
2. Feeling of Safety at Night
- =3. Parks/ Green Spaces
- =3. Ease of Getting Around
4. Café/ Restaurant Choice
5. Standard of Service in Shops

#### Top 5 Lowest Scoring Categories:

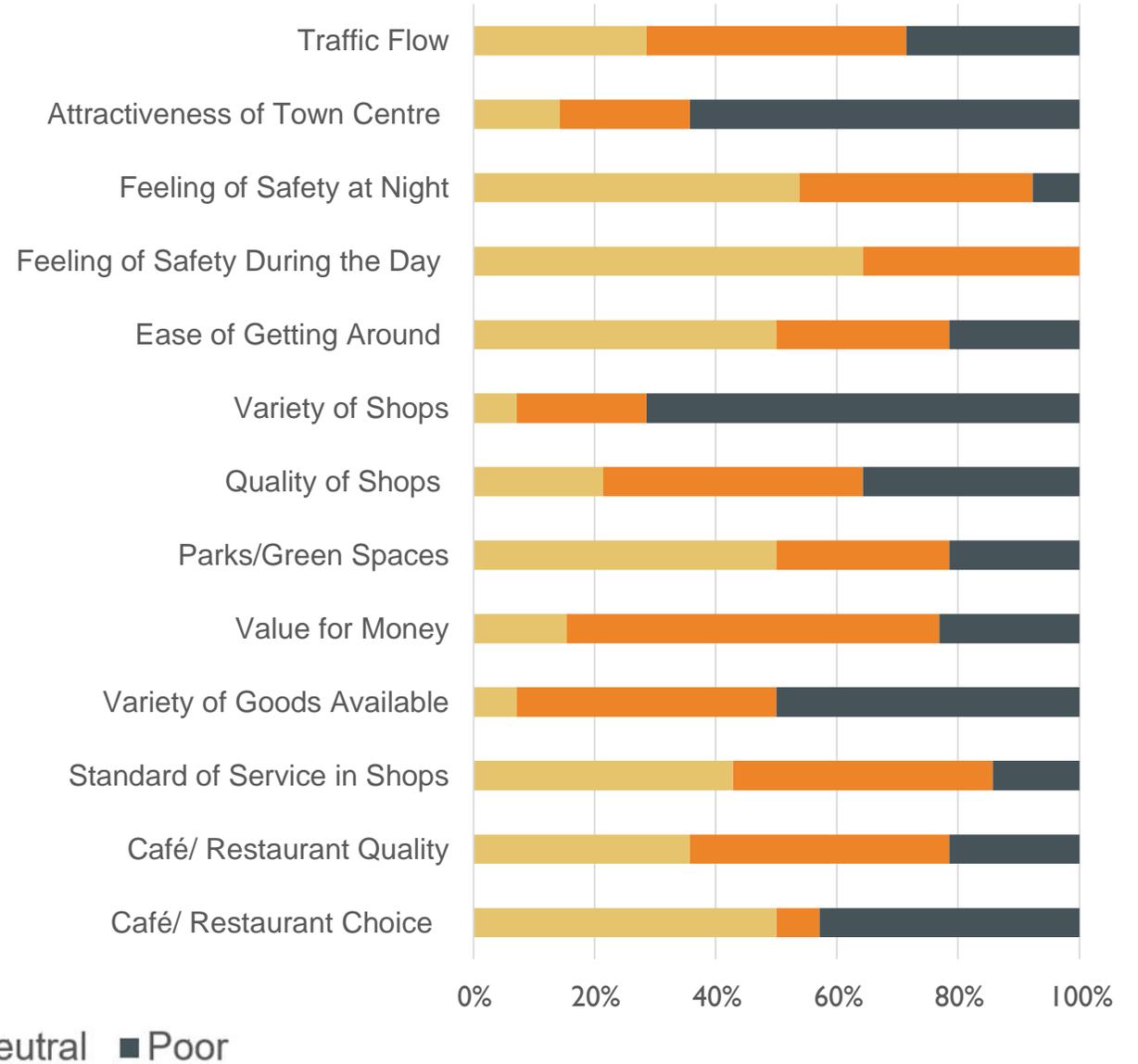
1. Vibrancy in the Evening
2. Care and Maintenance of Buildings
3. Seating/ Areas to Congregate
- =4. Range of Events
- =4. Variety of Shops
5. Vibrancy During the Day

# BUSINESS & COMMUNITY SURVEY RESPONSES: How Would You Rate?

## Community Responses:

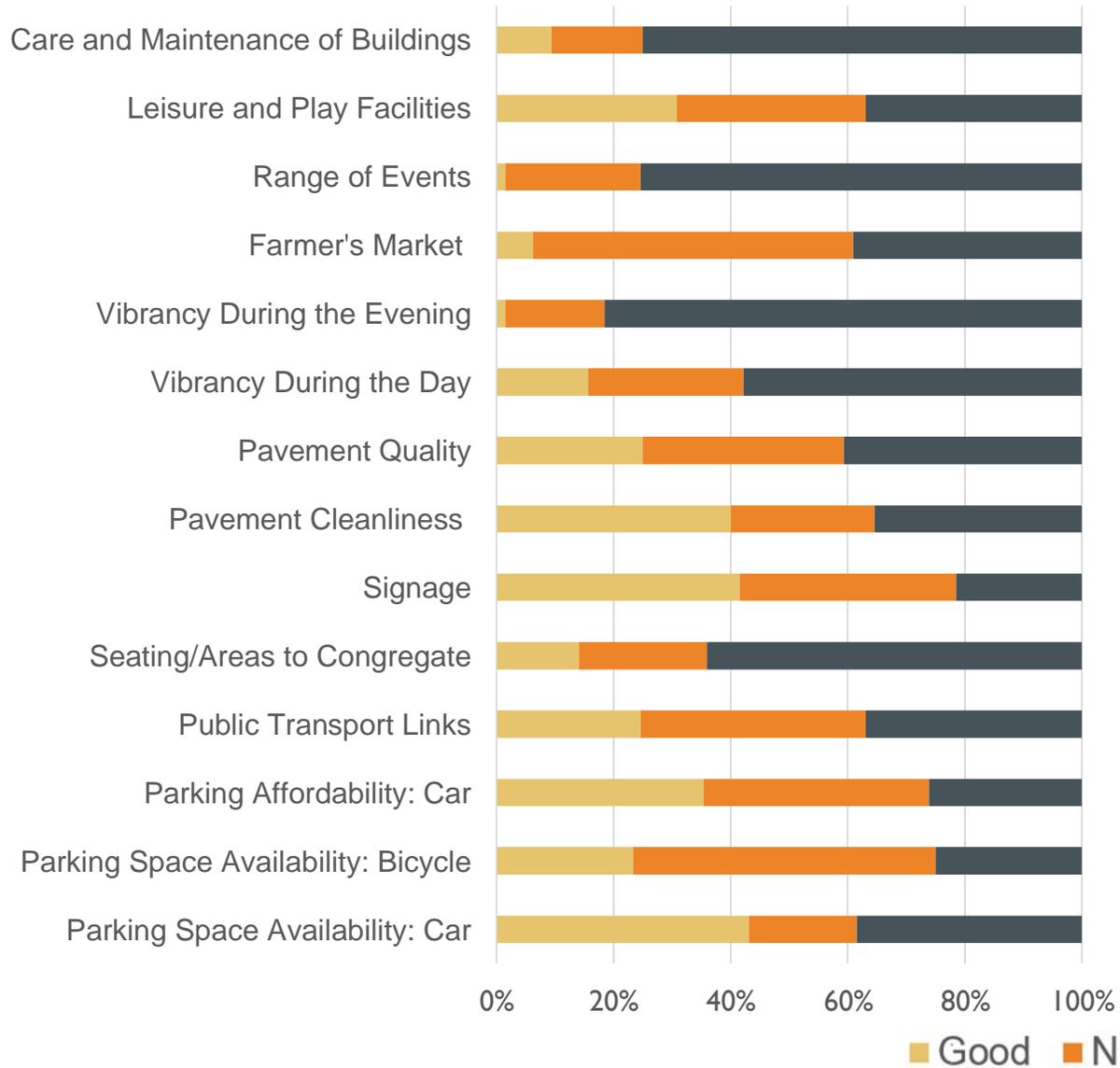


## Business Responses:

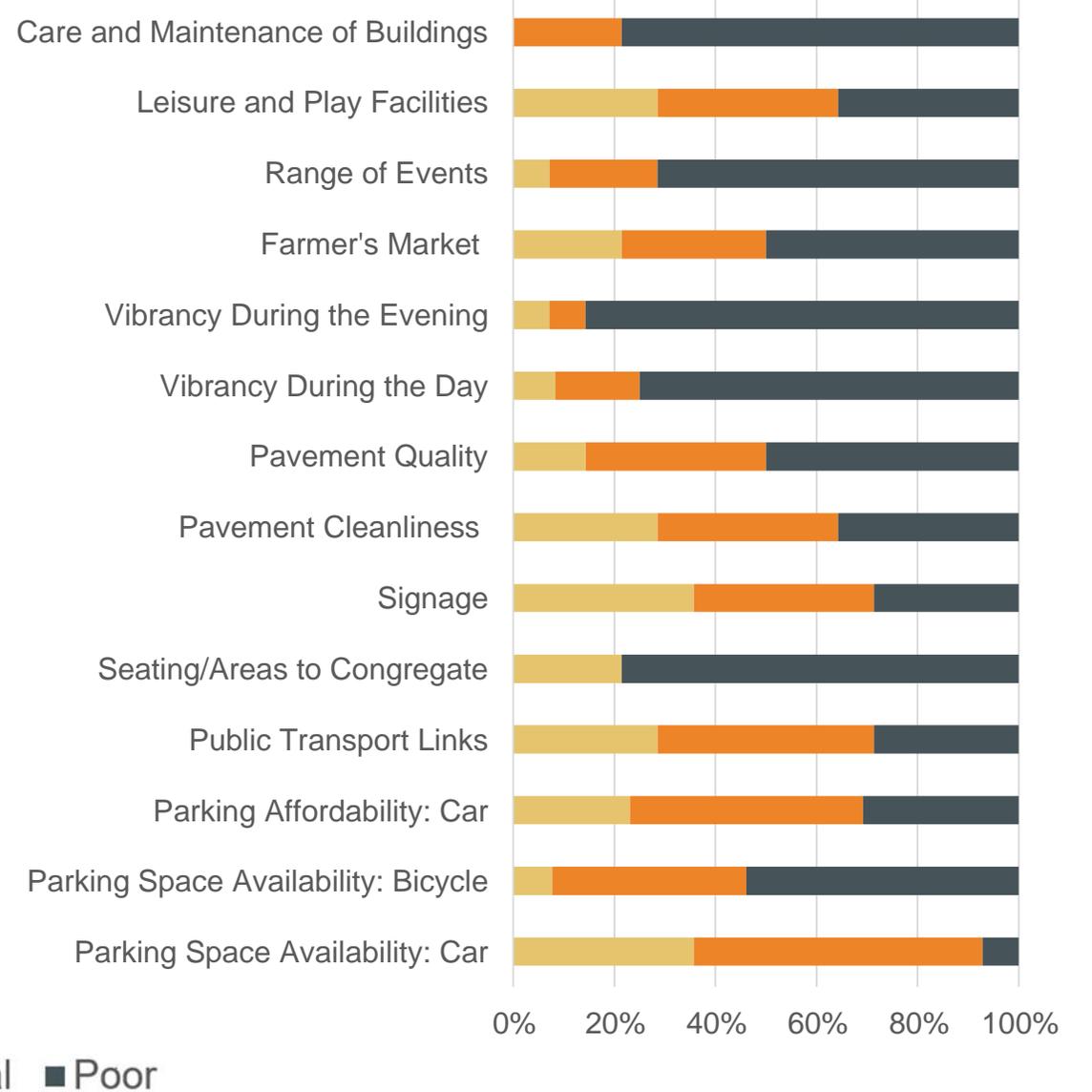


# BUSINESS & COMMUNITY SURVEY RESPONSES: How Would You Rate? (Continued)

## Community Responses:



## Business Responses:



# A PARTNERSHIP APPROACH: WORKING TOGETHER FOR THE BENEFIT OF OUR TOWNS

A key element of the new approach to undertaking Town Centre Health Checks in Aberdeenshire in 2021 is to work in partnership with stakeholders with an interest in the success of our town centres to collect and share knowledge, information and opportunities. This has added an extra dimension to the health checks, providing a base from which future, plans, strategies, engagement and collaboration can be built upon. A big 'thank you' goes to the following teams, organisations and individuals for their contributions to the project:

## Business and Community:

Banffshire Business Forum

Vinery Reference Group Members

Accessibility Audit Volunteers

**Banffshire  
Business Forum**



## Partner Organisations:

Sergeant Mellis, Intervention Hub,  
Police Scotland

Elaine Bisset, VisitAberdeenshire



## Council Teams:

Planning Information and Delivery

GIS Team

Community Learning and  
Development

Banff and Buchan Area Office

Community Payback Unpaid Hours  
Service

Community Engagement and  
Equalities

Economic Development

Transportation

Planning Policy

Customer and Digital Services

**Aberdeenshire**  
COUNCIL

