



**Aberdeenshire**  
COUNCIL



# TOWN CENTRE HEALTH CHECK SEPTEMBER 2022

STONEHAVEN, ABERDEENSHIRE



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# INTRODUCTION

## INTRODUCTION

Town centre health checks are a way of analysing the factors that contribute to successful town centres and indicate good standards of vitality and viability. 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.

Town Centre Health Checks have been completed in Aberdeenshire since 2003. However, in 2021 a new methodology was introduced 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.

NPF4 notes that policies should 'encourage, promote and facilitate development in our city and town centres, recognising they are a national asset' (NPF4, page 81).

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 2022 for Stonehaven. 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

For the principal town centres, the surveys are being conducted every two years as it is considered this would reduce the risk of consultation fatigue and allow for monitoring of any changes within town centres which have occurred in that period. 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 in 2021, 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 116 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**

For the principal town centres, the surveys are being conducted every two years as it is considered this would reduce the risk of consultation fatigue and allow for more effective monitoring of any changes within town centres which have occurred in that period. The survey was available on Engage HQ in 2021 and was shared via relevant groups for completion. Several topics were questioned, including the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on businesses. The survey also gave an opportunity to comment on improvements that businesses would like to see to the town centre. The survey was open for three weeks and received 10 responses. A summary of the responses received can be seen on page 45.

## **FOOTFALL AND TRAFFIC COUNTS**

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. In response to feedback received following the Town Centre Health Checks in 2021, traffic counts were also added to the methodology for all towns. Where possible, traffic counts were carried out at the same location as the pedestrian counts and for the same length of time following completion of the footfall counts. Where traffic counts could not be carried at the same location at the footfall counts, these were done at the closest viable point in order to gain information on the number of vehicles using the town centre.

## **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**

During the 2021 survey, 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. The results from the 2021 accessibility audit were reviewed as part of the survey this year and relevant points updated as necessary. The merits in revisiting the accessibility audit for the principal town centres will be considered in the future to determine the frequency in which they are carried out as part of the Town Centre Health Checks.

How a place looks, its history and what other people think of a 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:** Those who use the town centre were divided in opinion and this was reflected in the 2021 survey responses. For those that felt positively, Stonehaven is a friendly community, with local, independent shops and an attractive setting next to the beach are some of the comments received. Others felt that the town was declining with a poor range of retail outlets, issues with traffic and parking and poorly maintained roads, pavements and buildings. Community spirit is good and the town has a network of voluntary organisations who are recognised for their efforts in supporting the town centre.

**The growth of Stonehaven:** The town grew up around its harbour, which started when a breakwater was built in the **1500s**. The New Town, which includes the town centre was designed by the 4th Robert Barclay. At the centre of Stonehaven is the Market Square, historically the home of the towns market. The Square is overlooked by the Market Buildings which were built in **1826**. The 4<sup>th</sup> Robert Barclay's son, Captain Robert Barclay-Allardice, was famous for walking 1000 miles in 1000 hours in June **1809**. Their influence can be seen in the naming of the streets today. The town developed as a seaside resort and today is well connected by road and rail. Its close proximity to Aberdeen has meant it has benefited from the oil wealth generated in the area. It is a significant service centre and has a range of marine service industries and other light industries.

Sources: Understanding Scottish Places, Undiscovered Scotland, stonehavenguide.net

## IDENTITY & BELONGING



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



46% Community

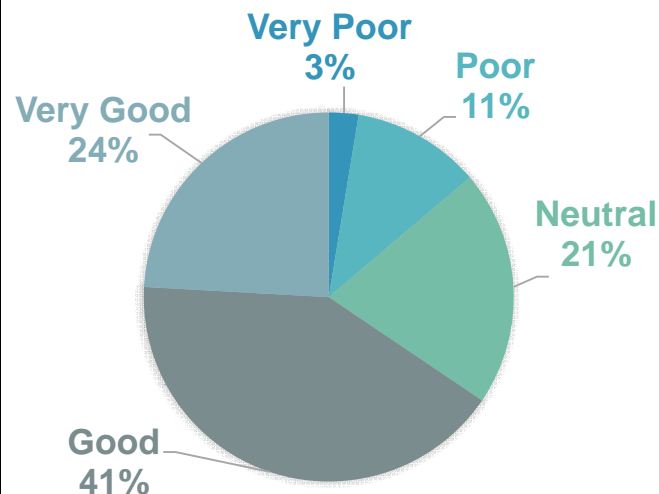
40% Businesses



54% Community

60% Businesses

### In Your Opinion, Community Spirit In The Town Centre Is?



*"I like living in Stonehaven so I feel very positive about it."*

*"We live in a beautiful town with many positives. The town thrives on voluntary organisations so the community spirit is brilliant."*

*"I love the town."*

*"It was good to see some of the buzz returning as shops etc opened up again this summer."*

*"Need a sense of pride in our town and maybe some funding streams to help achieve it."*

*"It's very far from welcoming."*

*"Town centre has deteriorated over last few years, which is a shame as it used to be lovely to visit."*

*"The town centre has changed for the worse over the last 20 years."*

*"Stonehaven is a nice town with good amenities which are at the point of starting to feel tired."*

*"Amazing place to live however It has potential to be so much better."*

Business and Community Survey, September 2021

Feeling safe in and around the places that we spend time in 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 in 2021. Safety during the evening was slightly less positive, with more neutral responses given, indicating perhaps that the town is less used in the evenings. However, overall visitors and businesses in Stonehaven felt safe when using the town centre and this is supported by low crime figures and the limited number of comments provided on this subject.

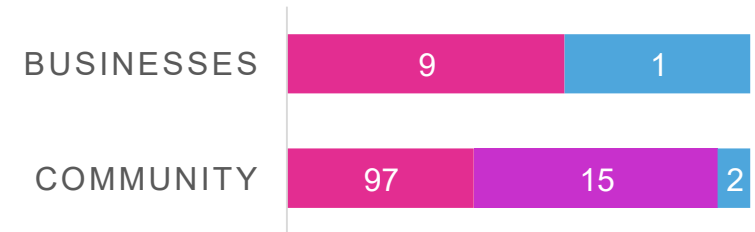
*"Many vehicles speeding through town centre."*

*"I think there should be some CCTV in the Market Square as my feeling is there can be trouble at night time."*

*Business and Community Survey, September 2021*

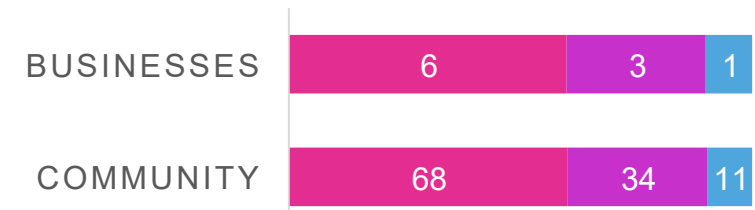
## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: SAFETY DURING THE DAY?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



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

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



### Key Safety Features:



A mixture of lighting styles appeared to be well maintained and distributed across the town



No central CCTV system in place



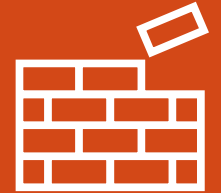
Images (Clockwise from Top Left): Stylised lighting around the Market Square; Modern LED lighting, Allardice Street; Wall-mounted lights, Market Square.

**54** Incidences of crime reported  
1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 – 31<sup>st</sup> July 2022  
Police Scotland



Places that are well cared for can make us feel better about a place, while those that are neglected can have the opposite effect. Proper maintenance arrangements allow people to feel supported and more positive about where they live.

# CARE & MAINTENANCE



Vacant Building – Margaret Street



Façade needing work



Façade Improvement beneficial

**Observations:** The topic of care and maintenance of buildings received a number of negative comments through the 2021 community survey. These comments were mainly associated with the buildings that are currently vacant within the town centre and the community desire to see these buildings tidied up. The topic was also rated within the bottom five of all topics in the 2021 business survey. During the 2021 and the 2022 site visit the building maintenance in general was noted as good with a couple of vacant units letting down the overall town.

The images (left) give an impression of the town centre environment where any maintenance would really improve the overall area.

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

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor

BUSINESSES	1	3	6
COMMUNITY	13	48	53

*“There needs to be improved maintenance of streets and buildings.”*

*“Certain buildings need tidied up.”*

*“There needs to be maintenance of buildings.”*

*“Money needs to be spent on the maintenance of the buildings.”*

*“Tidy up frontage of empty buildings.”*

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	Stonehaven Town Partnership	Horizon Project	Stonehaven Business Association (SBA)	Stonehaven & District Community Council
Legal Status	Registered Charity SC044314	Constituted Group	Constituted Group	Community Council
Membership	Over 50* local organisations	Volunteer committee and helpers	Around 110* businesses from the Stonehaven area	The community; 18* Councillors
Responsibilities	Stonehaven Town Partnership is the central point of contact and coordination for all organisations, and through them, the people of Stonehaven in relation to matters affecting the town's growth and economic development, the well-being of inhabitants, and the promotion of the town's attractions.	The Horizon Project aims to foster civic pride in the town and to make Stonehaven a better place to live and work in. Projects include providing and maintaining the town's floral displays, working with school eco groups, organising community litter picks and bulb and tree planting.	SBA is a non-profit making organisation made up of, owners, partners and directors of local businesses and acting as the Voice of Local Business. Set up in 1973, SBA have been involved with projects such as the Tourism group, Continental Markets, Christmas Lights and Mearns Community Radio.	Community Councils (CC) are the most local tier of statutory representation in Scotland, bridging the gap between local authorities and communities. Key tasks: Representing CCs on other organisations; Campaigning on local issues; Conducting local surveys; Organising public meetings on major development proposals or the Local Development Plan; Statutory Body for public consultation on Planning and Licensing; Representing and providing a platform for public views.
Contact	<a href="#">Stonehaven Town Partnership</a>	<a href="#">Horizon Project</a>	<a href="#">Stonehaven Business Association</a>	<a href="#">Stonehaven and District Community Council</a>

\*Correct at time of survey.

**Observations:** Stonehaven Town Centre is well represented with a number of different organisations working together to ensure the best outcomes for residents and businesses alike. From the 2021 surveys, there was a good awareness of the groups in the wider community.

**65%** of community survey respondents were aware of groups that support the town centre.

The word cloud (right) shows survey responses, with Horizon (61), Stonehaven Town Partnership (11) and the Men's Shed (8) receiving the most.

*Business and Community Survey, September 2021*



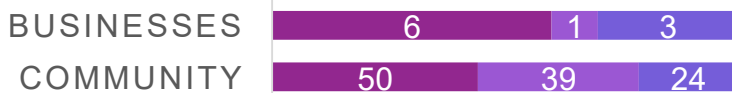


Walking and cycling are beneficial for both our health and the environment. Good places can support and encourage people to walk and cycle by providing quality routes and a pleasant and safe experience.

**Observations:** The town centre is shared between vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. Getting around scored as one of the top five best elements of the town for business respondents in the 2021 surveys. However, a number of comments were received in relation to crossings. Signage is considered good, particularly along the beachfront and in Market Square. The town is on Route One of the Sustrans National Cycle Network. However, there are no cycle racks within the town centre and this is reflected in the survey responses.

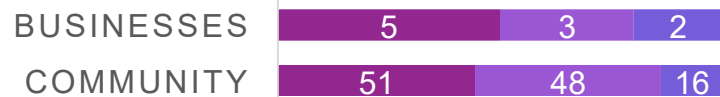
### HOW WOULD YOU RATE: GETTING AROUND THE TOWN CENTRE?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



### HOW WOULD YOU RATE: SIGNAGE?

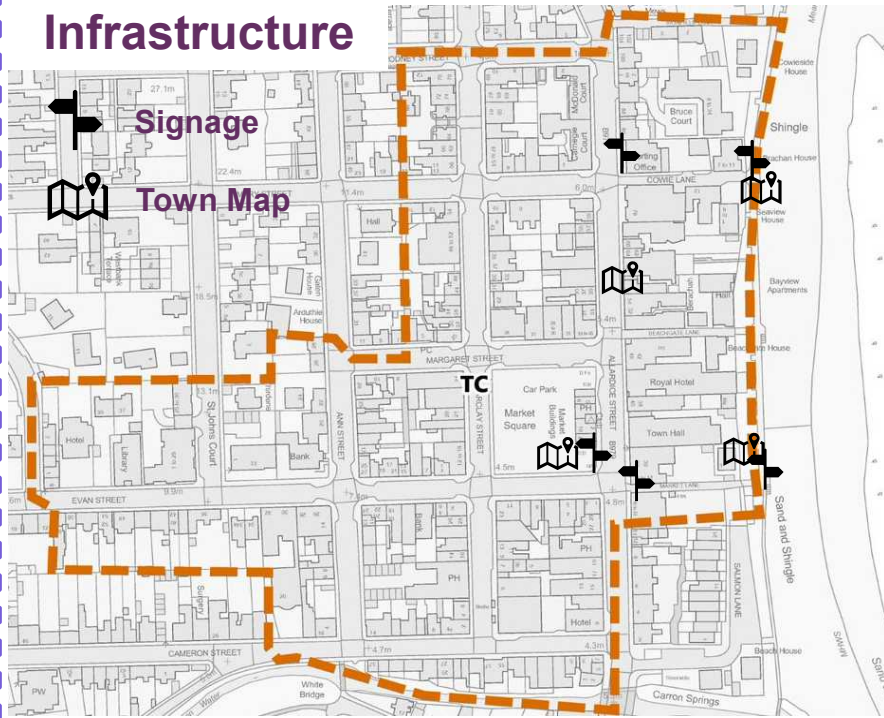
■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



# MOVING AROUND



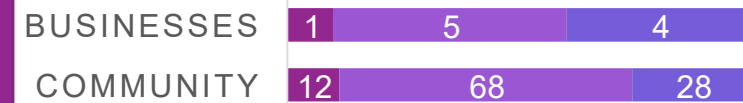
## Infrastructure



Images (Clockwise from Top Left): Fingerpost signage and map at the beach; Signage, Market Square; Decorative maps and images, Market Square.

### HOW WOULD YOU RATE: CYCLE PARKING?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor





*“Hard to get about on foot - little option but to stand and wait for cars at many junctions.”*

*“Feels too small - not enough space to park cars, drive safely; not enough room to walk about.”*

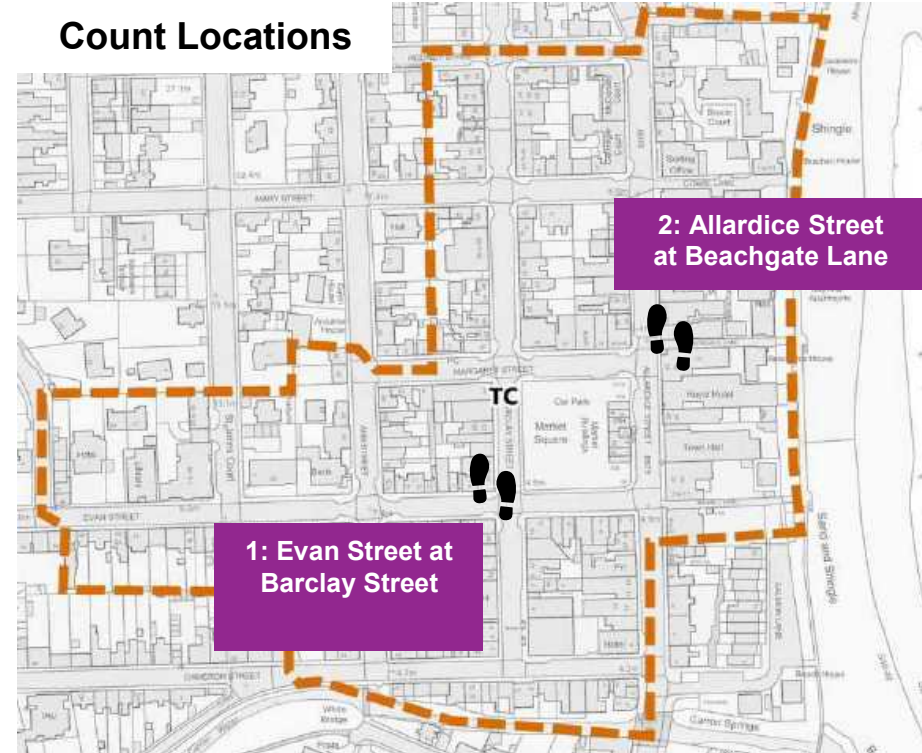
*“Cycling... is a terrible experience, best avoided to be honest.”*



# MOVING AROUND: FOOTFALL SURVEY

Day	Time	Location 1	Location 2	Hourly Total	Overall Total
<b>Tuesday</b> 	09:30	102	78	180	<b>864</b>
	11:30	165	125	290	
	14:30	197	74	271	
	18:00	74	49	123	
<b>Saturday</b> 	09:30	46	58	104	<b>678</b>
	11:30	78	149	227	
	14:30	73	131	204	
	18:00	52	91	143	
<b>Totals</b>		<b>787</b>	<b>755</b>	<b>1542</b>	

## Count Locations



Footfall is a measure of the vitality of the town centre and can be directly linked to economic activity. Pedestrian counts were undertaken on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2022 for a duration of 15 minutes, four times a day, in two locations.

## HEADLINES

**Busiest Location:** Evan Street  
**Busiest Time:** 14:30  
**Busiest Day:** Tuesday

**Quietest Location:** Evan Street  
**Quietest Time:** 09:30  
**Quietest Day:** Saturday

**Observations:** The pedestrian count showed the highest footfall count was recorded at Evan Street on Tuesday afternoon (197 people). It was also the busiest count point in general over the course of the surveys. In contrast to the previous year, Tuesday was a busier day than the Saturday. Evan Street on Saturday was noticeably quieter in terms of footfall in comparison to 2021, whereas Allardice Street was fairly similar with exception of 18:00, which was busier than before.

# MOVING AROUND: ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT 2021



Participants were recruited from the local community to undertake a survey to identify the effect of roads, pavements and the general streetscape on people who use the town centre in order to identify barriers to moving around and enhancement opportunities to improve connectivity, attractiveness and safety.

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

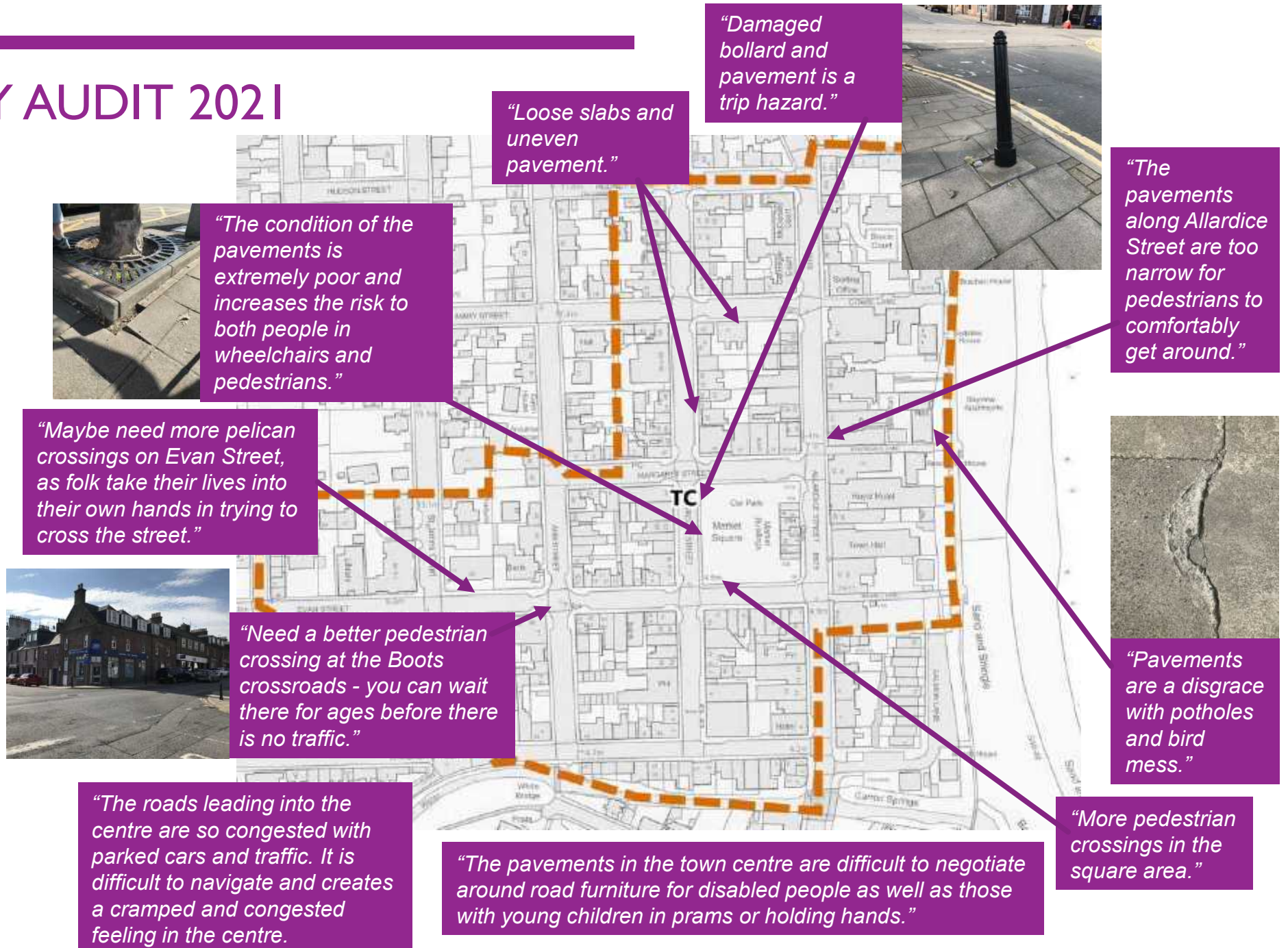
- Footway surfaces and obstructions;
- Facilities and signage;
- Maintenance and enforcement;
- Personal security;
- Crossing points;
- Access to buildings.

The survey took place on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2021, 13:00 – 15:00. The weather was dry and mild.

# ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT 2021

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

- Crossing busy roads can be difficult in several locations, particularly around the Market Square/Evan Street.
- The town centre feels dominated by cars with a large car park, on street parking and through traffic.
- Pavements are in a poor state of repair with several trip hazards identified.
- Some streets were narrow and street furniture could cause additional barriers for those with limited or impaired mobility.
- The town centre feels safe.

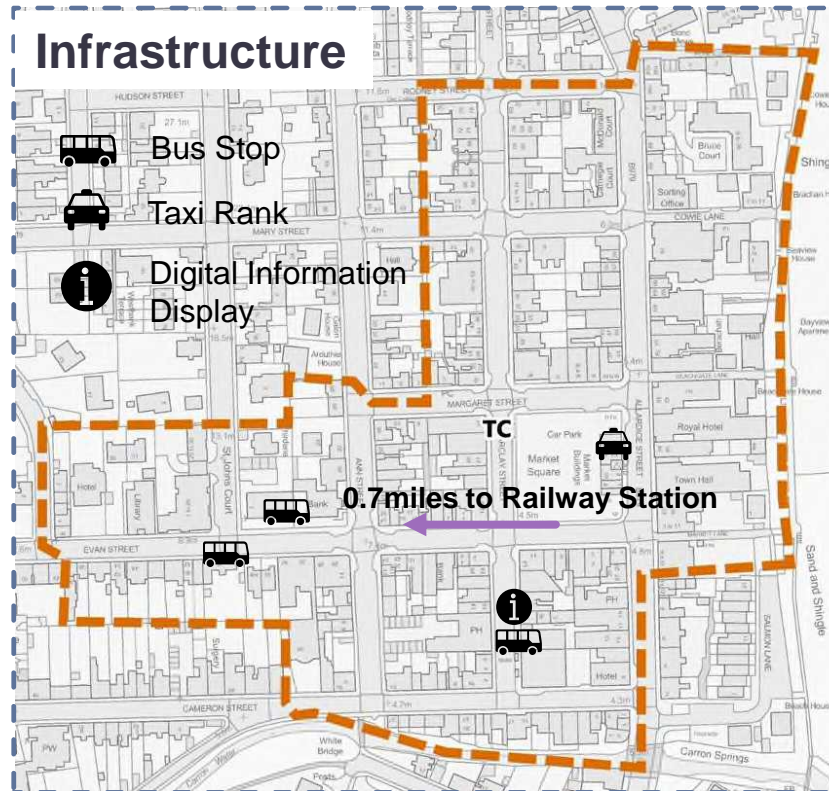




Access to an affordable, reliable and well-connected public transport service is important for all communities. Good public transport encourages people to get around in ways that are better for the environment.

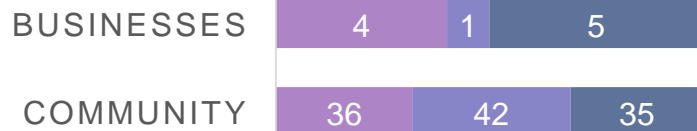
**Observations:** Stonehaven is reasonably well served with bus links from the town centre, a dedicated taxi waiting area and access to a railway station. There are a limited number of bus stops distributed across the town centre, and the main bus interchange on Barclay Street has real time information provision. Overall, survey respondents in 2021 gave a mixed response to public transport, with several suggestions provided about how the service could be improved, particularly in terms of linking up other parts of the town and wider area, which could support the tourism economy. There are limited buses running later in the evening to serve areas to the south of Stonehaven which could be improved.

# PUBLIC TRANSPORT



## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: PUBLIC TRANSPORT?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



Images (Left to Right): The main bus interchange, Barclay Street; Taxi rank, Allardice Street; Bus stop Evan Street; Real Time Digital Display.

*“A local bus service to the castle would also help.”*

*“Buses through the day are fine, but I cannot get a bus home from Stonehaven after 10pm at the weekend so this doesn't encourage people to come and use the pubs and restaurants.”*

*“If the bus timetable was better from rural areas, maybe more people would use that rather than clog up the town centre with cars.”*

*“Move car park to outside town, provide e-bikes/e-buses to take visitors into the centre.”*

*“Buses sit waiting at the bus stop (Barclay Street) with diesel engines constantly running.”*







*“Regular free bus to and from Train Station would attract visitors accessing the town by rail.”*

*“More investment into town centre. It's very clogged with cars so would be good to see more regular public transport around the town and safer cycling routes. A park and ride from Mackie would reduce traffic into the town centre.”*

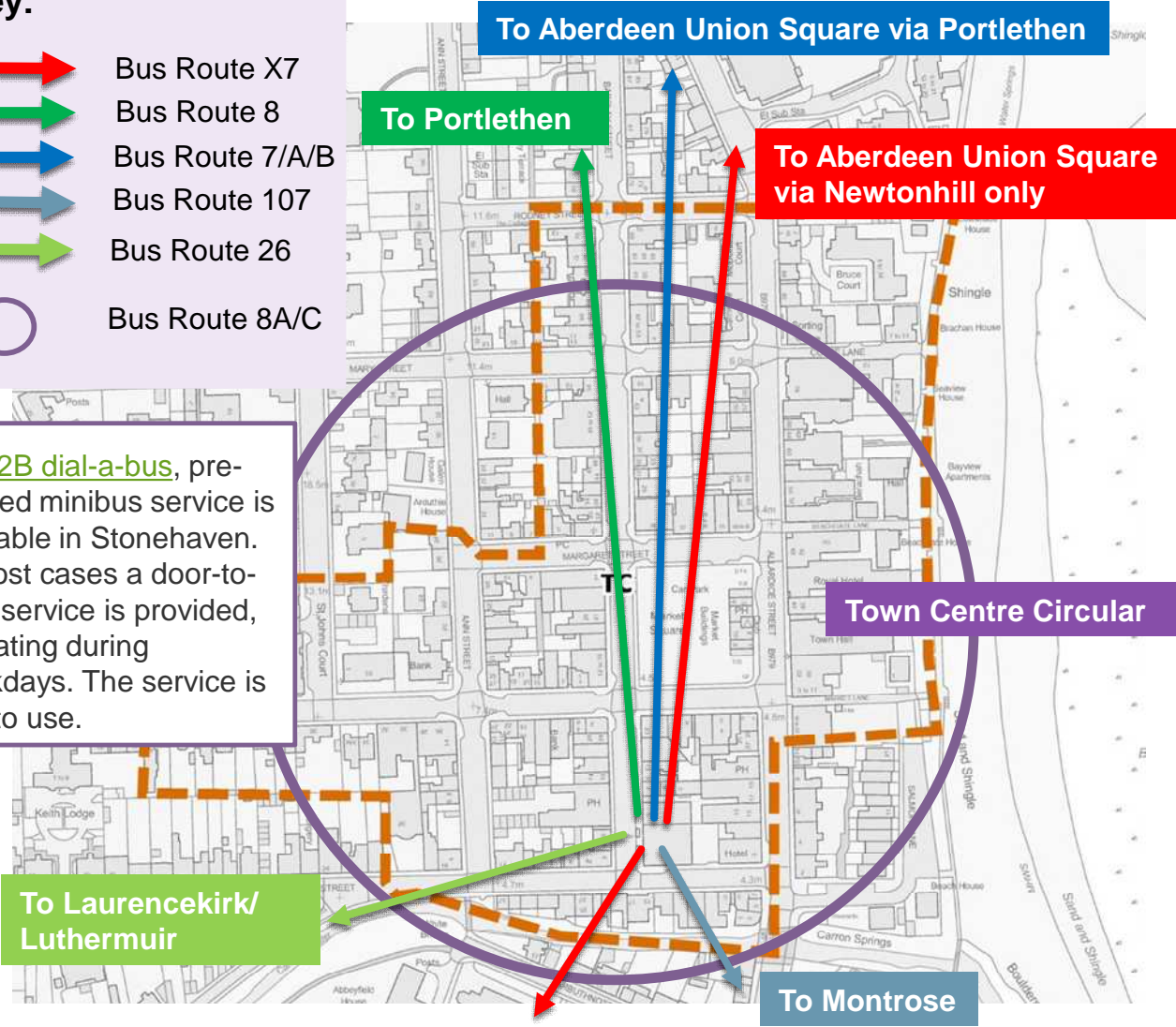
*“Reinstate the little train to Dunnottar Castle for tourists.” Business and Community Survey, September 2021*

# PUBLIC TRANSPORT ROUTES

**Key:**

-  Bus Route X7
-  Bus Route 8
-  Bus Route 7/A/B
-  Bus Route 107
-  Bus Route 26
-  Bus Route 8A/C

An **A2B dial-a-bus**, pre-booked minibus service is available in Stonehaven. In most cases a door-to-door service is provided, operating during weekdays. The service is free to use.



**To Perth, via Dundee and Montrose**

Route* (from Barclay Street)	Frequency (per week day)	Fastest Journey Time	Earliest Travel Time	Latest Travel Time	Cost (Single Standard Ticket)
Bus to Aberdeen (7/A/B)	10	56mins	04:54	20:52	£5.70
Bus to Aberdeen (X7)	34	38mins	05:45	22:00	£5.70
Bus to Portlethen (8)	4	14mins	08:45	13:45	£4.70
Bus to Luthermuir (26)	3	42mins	08:28	13:15	£5.70
Bus to Laurencekirk (26)	8	28mins	06:51	18:57	£5.20
Bus to Montrose (107)	7	50mins	05:21	17:10	£8.50
Bus to Dundee (X7)	13	1hr 46mins	07:43	20:05	£9.40
Bus to Perth (X7)	10	2hrs 54mins	07:43	17:00	£9.50
Town Circular (8A)	7	28mins	09:45	16:55	£1.60
Town Circular (8C)	7	28mins	09:15	16:15	£1.60

\* Correct at time of survey

Too much traffic can cause problems for people who live and work in town centres as well as visitors. 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



Images: Market Square Car Park.

*“Something needs to be done with the traffic – it is very busy.”*

*“Need to look at traffic measures as all very tight around the square and some days it just backs up.”*

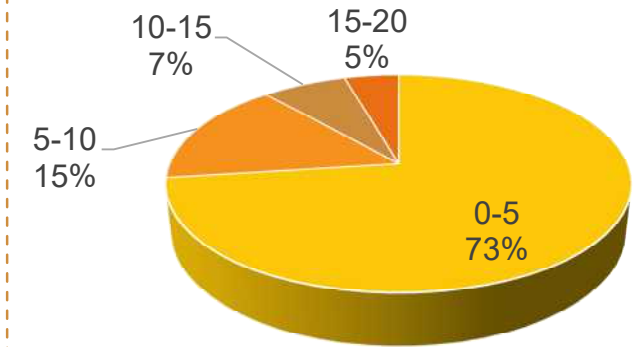
*“Improve traffic congestion.”*

*“A park and ride from Mackie would reduce the amount of cars in the town centre.”*

*“There needs to be better traffic movements.”*

*Business and Community Survey, September 2021*

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

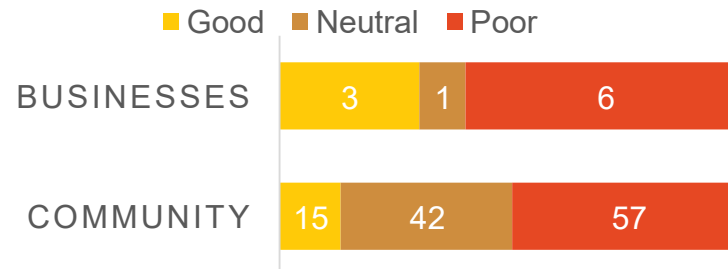


*Source: Community Survey September 2021*

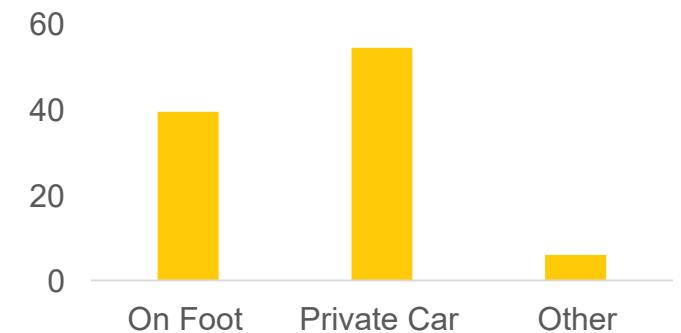
**Observations:** During the 2021 survey a number of comments were received in relation to the traffic within the town centre. Several comments noted that the traffic in the town centre is very busy and there is a real community aspiration to see something done by introducing measures that help to improve traffic movement in the town centre. Traffic flow was also noted within the bottom 5 topics rated through both the 2021 community and business surveys.

73% of respondents who use the town centre travel less than 5 miles to use the town centre so as expected the main users are those from within Stonehaven.

### HOW WOULD YOU RATE: TRAFFIC FLOW?



### How would you generally travel to the town centre:



*Source: Community Survey September 2021*



# MOVING AROUND: TRAFFIC SURVEY

Day		9:45am-10:00am		11:45am-12noon		2:15:2:30pm		5:45pm-6:00pm		Total number of Vehicles
Thursday	Location 1	Car	103	Car	125	Car	110	Car	119	554
		Buses	1	Buses	2	Buses	3	Buses	3	
		Lorries	2	Lorries	1	Lorries	2	Lorries	1	
		Vans	19	Vans	16	Vans	16	Vans	10	
		Taxis	2	Taxis	3	Taxis	5	Taxis	2	
		Bicycles	3	Bicycles	1	Bicycles	0	Bicycles	2	
		Other	0	Other	1	Other	2	Other	0	
	Location 2	Car	67	Car	108	Car	104	Car	104	482
		Buses	2	Buses	2	Buses	0	Buses	3	
		Lorries	0	Lorries	1	Lorries	1	Lorries	1	
		Vans	17	Vans	20	Vans	15	Vans	9	
		Taxis	3	Taxis	6	Taxis	4	Taxis	2	
		Bicycles	2	Bicycles	2	Bicycles	0	Bicycles	3	
		Other	0	Other	4	Other	1	Other	1	
Hourly Totals (all traffic):		221		292		263		260		1036

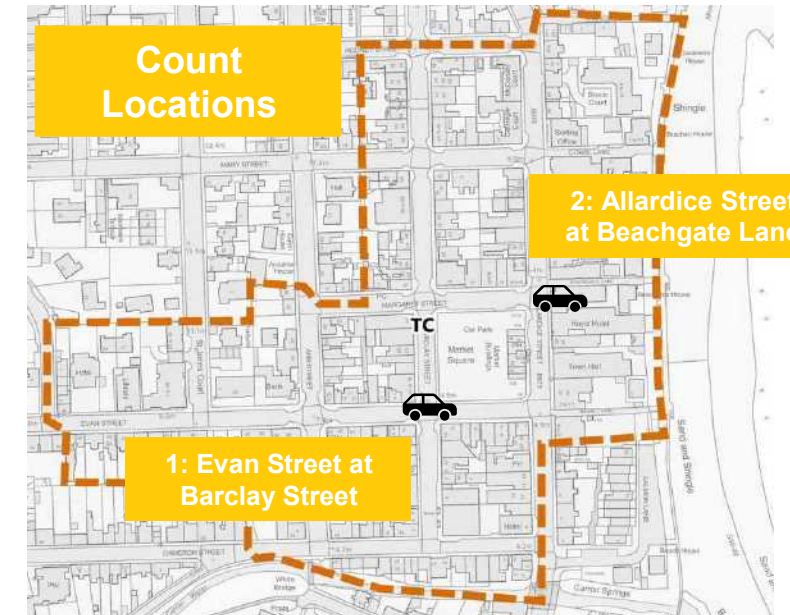


Image: Looking up Market Place from Allardice Street.

# MOVING AROUND: TRAFFIC SURVEY

Day		9:45am-10:00am		11:45am-12noon		2:15:2:30pm		5:45pm-6:00pm		Total number of Vehicles
Saturday	Location 1	Car	202	Car	86	Car	114	Car	85	547
		Buses	0	Buses	2	Buses	3	Buses	0	
		Lorries	0	Lorries	0	Lorries	0	Lorries	0	
		Vans	11	Vans	0	Vans	9	Vans	5	
		Taxis	3	Taxis	2	Taxis	4	Taxis	10	
		Bicycles	0	Bicycles	3	Bicycles	0	Bicycles	0	
		Other	2	Other	1	Other	3	Other	2	
	Location 2	Car	101	Car	118	Car	111	Car	130	515
		Buses	0	Buses	1	Buses	1	Buses	0	
		Lorries	1	Lorries	1	Lorries	1	Lorries	0	
		Vans	5	Vans	7	Vans	11	Vans	0	
		Taxis	1	Taxis	1	Taxis	5	Taxis	6	
		Bicycles	0	Bicycles	0	Bicycles	4	Bicycles	0	
		Other	1	Other	2	Other	5	Other	2	
Hourly Totals (all traffic):		327		224		271		240		1062

## HEADLINES

**Busiest Location:** Evan St at Barclay St  
**Busiest Time:** 09:45  
**Busiest Day:** Saturday

**Quietest Location:** Allardice Street  
**Quietest Time:** 09:45  
**Quietest Day:** Thursday

**Observations:** Vehicle counts were undertaken on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2022 for a duration of 15 minutes, four times a day, in two locations. These give information on the number of cars that are passing through the town centre. It cannot be confirmed whether these cars have all contributed to the local economy but were in the town centre at the time of the count.

The vehicle count findings showed the vehicle numbers were fairly consistent between the two count locations within the town but location one, Evan Street at Barclay Street was very slightly higher than Allardice Street at Beachgate Lane.

# TRAFFIC & PARKING

## CAR PARKING AFFORDABILITY

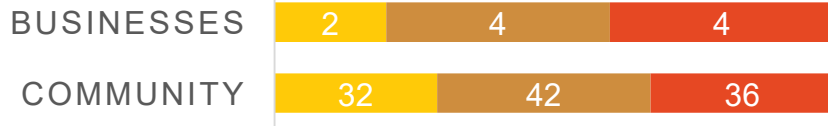
### Parking Costs

**£0.50**

Average hourly rate  
September 2022

### HOW WOULD YOU RATE: PARKING AFFORDABILITY?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



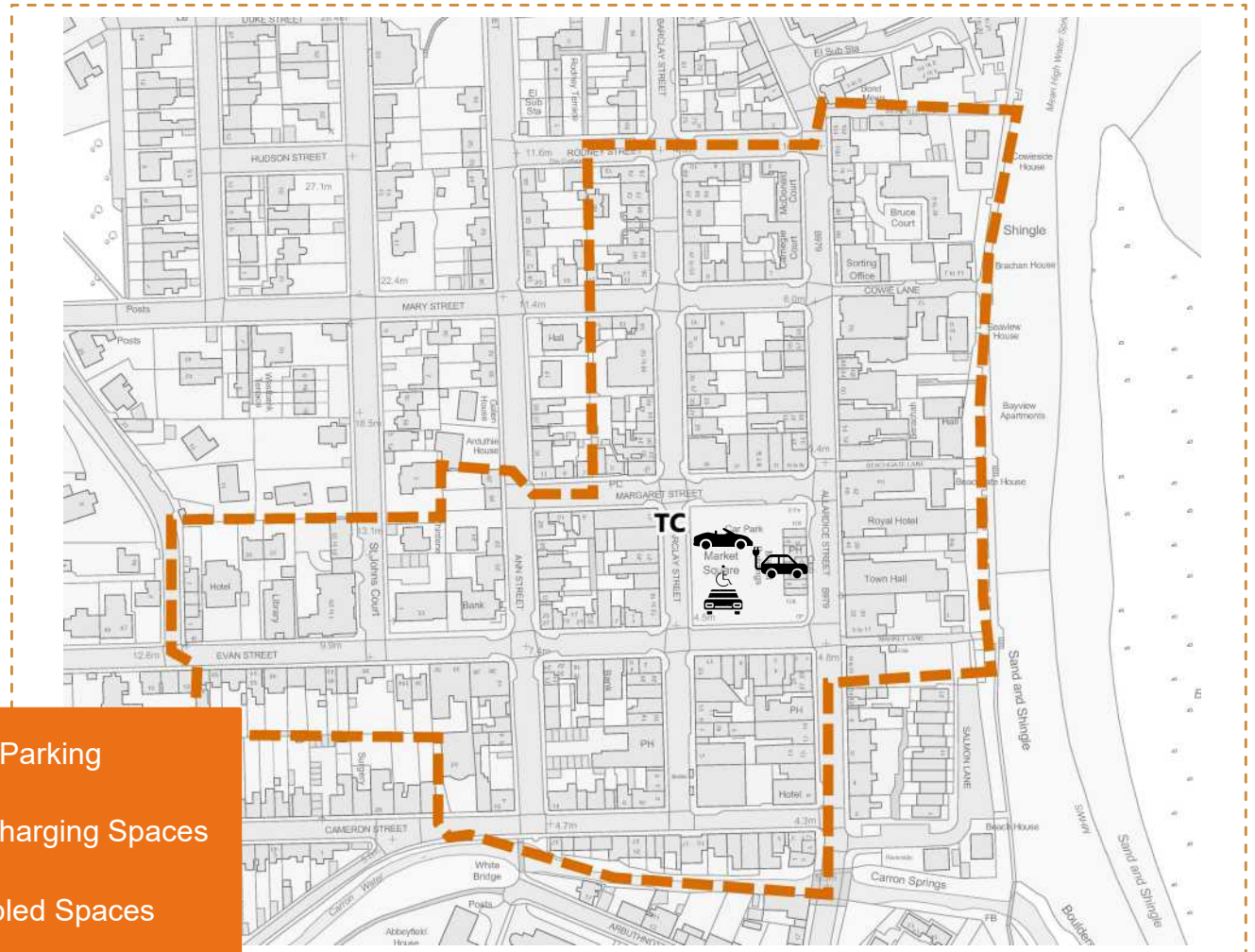
*“Free parking.”*

*“Make Market Square free for 4 hour parking.”*

*“Better free parking.”*

*“There should be free short term parking.”*

Business and Community Survey, September 2021



Paid Parking



EV Charging Spaces



Disabled Spaces



# TRAFFIC & PARKING

## CAR PARKING AVAILABILITY



Images (Both): Market Square Car Park.

*“Take away all but disabled parking and cycle racks in the Market Square and return the area to its original purpose.”*

*“Better parking facilities.”*

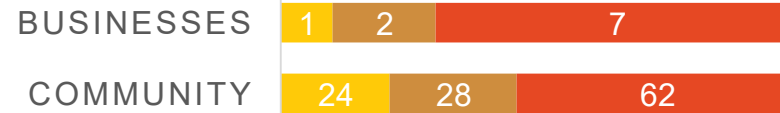
*“Move most of the car park somewhere else but leave very short term parking for those using the shops.”*

*“More parking.”*

Business and Community Survey, September 2021

### HOW WOULD YOU RATE: PARKING AVAILABILITY?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



### Spaces

- 0 No. of Free Spaces
- 72 No. of Paid Spaces
- 4 No. of Disabled Spaces
- 1 No. of EV Charging Spaces

**Observations:** In terms of parking affordability a large number of comments were received during the 2021 survey noting the community desire to see parking within Market Square being free, whether it is free for a long period of time or if it is for a limited time to allow people to support the local shops.

The topic of parking availability was rated within the bottom five topics of both the community and the business survey. In terms of the comments that were received these were mixed with several noting the desire to see more parking within the town centre but conversely there were also a number of comments received wanting to see the parking in Market Square being moved elsewhere so that the square could be re-purposed for something else.

# TRAFFIC & PARKING

## EV CHARGING POINTS

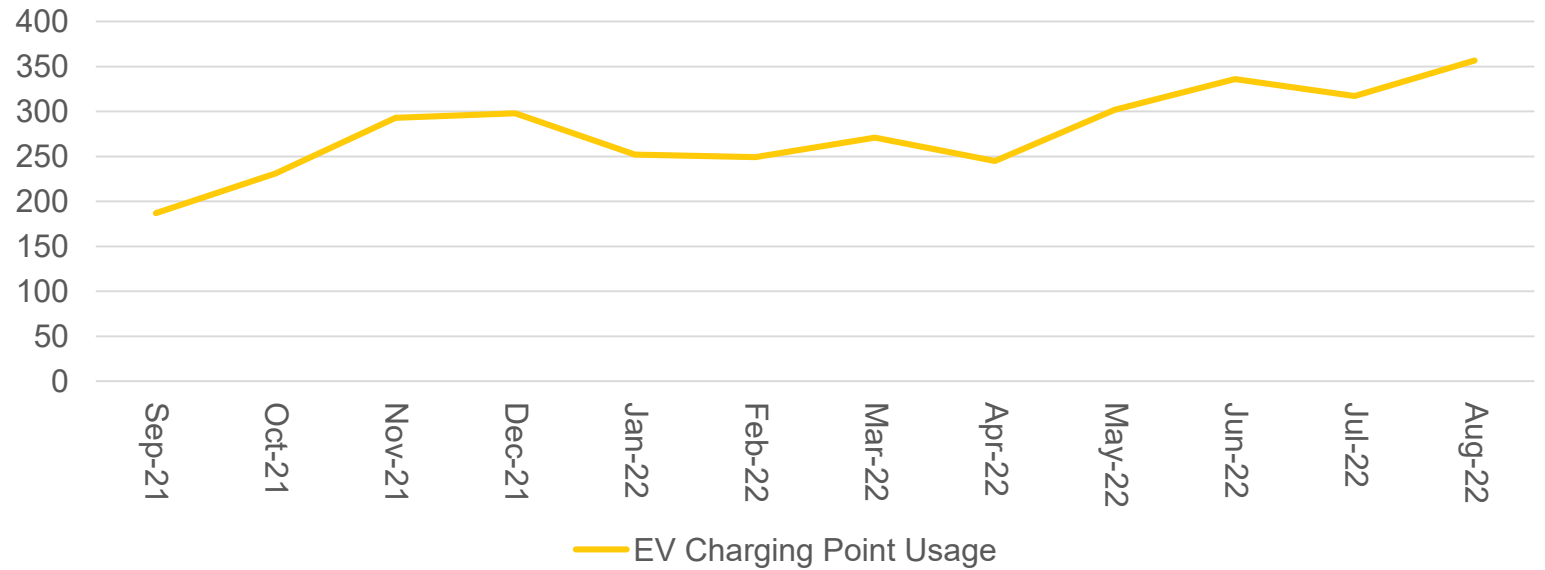
### EV Charging Points

**1** No. of 7kW charging spaces



Image: Market Square Car Park.

### EV Charging Point Usage



### EV Charging Points



#### August 2022

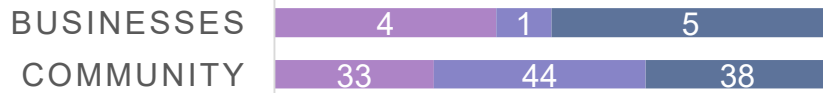
Highest monthly usage of the charging points in Burn Lane

**Observations:** There is one electric vehicle space in the town centre and it is located in the Market Square Car Park. During the survey the space was in use and this is reflected through the usage data. The usage of the EV charging point has consistently increased since 2020, into 2021 and then again into 2022 which relates to the increase in popularity of electric vehicles.

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:** Overall the town has an attractive setting although through the 2021 surveys a number of comments were received noting that the whole of the town centre requires a deep clean. There is a good mix of listed buildings and more modern buildings within the town centre with the Market Buildings and the Town Hall being a focus. Although there is limited green space within the town centre the fact that the beach is on the boundary also adds to the attractiveness of the town.

Additionally, through the surveys a number of comments were received in relation to the work that the Horizon group does in terms of the planters which significantly adds to the overall attractiveness of the town centre.

*“There needs to be more attractive public places.”*

*“The Horizon group have made Stonehaven brighter.”*

*“There needs to be a deep clean within the town centre.”*

*Business and Community Survey, September 2021*

# STREETS & SPACES

## ATTRACTIVENESS OF TOWN CENTRE



**Carron to Mumbai Restaurant**

**Planters at Market Square**

**Market Square building**

**Beach in close proximity to town centre**

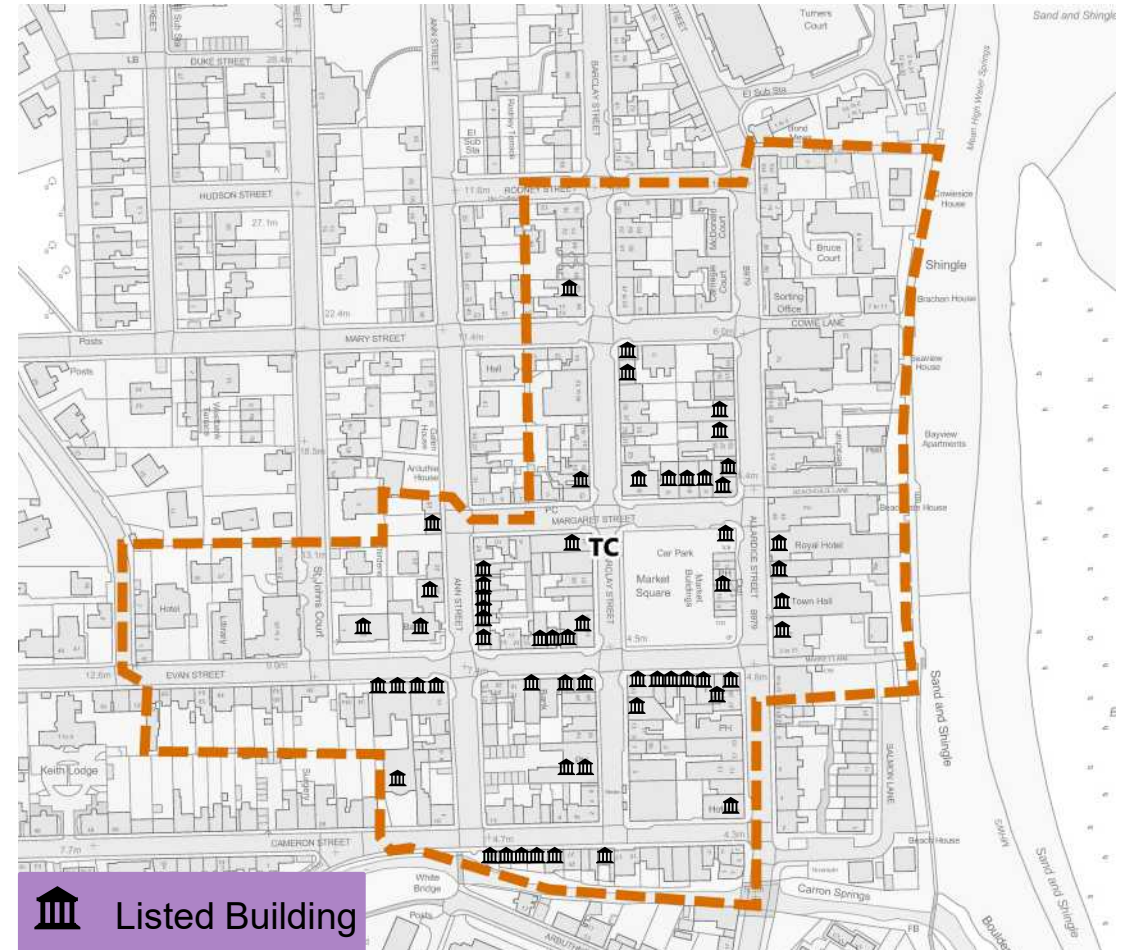


**Observations:** There are 55 listed buildings within Stonehaven Town Centre covering two of the listing categories. There are 44 Category C listed and 11 Category B listed buildings.

All of the listed buildings were in good condition and contribute to the town centre environment. One of the listed buildings that is particularly interesting is the Art Deco restaurant building, a very individual and attractive building.

Another positive in relation to the historic environment is that there are no buildings at risk within Stonehaven Town Centre.

## STREETS & SPACES: HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT



Images (Far left and clockwise): Carron to Mumbai Bar and Restaurant, Stonehaven Town Hall and Market Square Buildings.



# STREETS & SPACES: SEATING

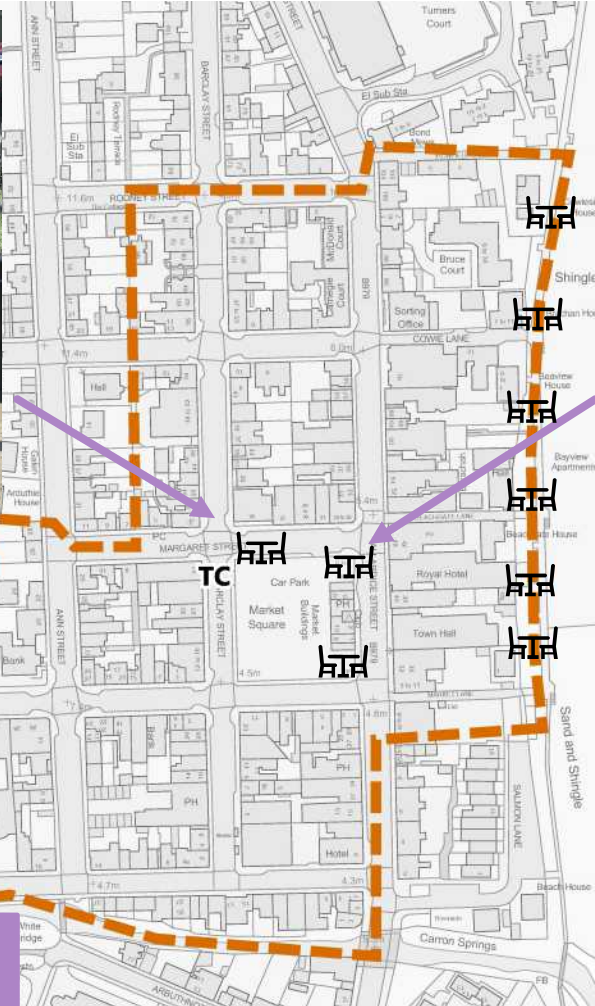
## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: SEATING/ AREAS TO CONGREGATE

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor

BUSINESSES	5	2	3
COMMUNITY	27	37	50



Bench at Market Square



Seating at Community Garden, Market Square

**HIA** Seating Areas

*“ More sheltered seating would be good.”*

*“ Need a seating area in the Square.”*

*“New seating areas are needed.”*

*“Green the Square to provide an attractive seating area.”*

*“The new seating in The Square looks good – however not opened yet.”*

*“Need to establish seating so people congregate in the town centre.”*

*Business and Community Survey, September 2021*

**Observations:** The topic of seating was highly commented on through the 2021 surveys with a large number of comments noting the community aspirations for more seating areas within the town centre.

A number of comments were made through the 2021 survey that the public would like to see more seating in the square. Since the 2021 survey, the community garden has opened beside the Market Buildings and provides a relaxing place for people to sit outside surrounded by planters. This area adds to the attractiveness of the area.

**Observations:** A number of comments were received through the survey to note that the community would like to see the town centre brightened up and a couple suggested the use of murals would be good to add to the flower displays that brighten the town.

There are a number of banners around Market Square which brighten up the area. In addition, they highlight what the town has to offer in terms of events and attractions. They are all in good condition.

On a number of the lampposts around the town there are brackets for hanging baskets which have the Horizon Project Group logo on them. These contribute to a sense of unity through the town centre.

On the eastern boundary of the town centre there is also a new art installation on the beach front where the stones painted through the COVID-19 lockdowns have been displayed together at the side of the path to preserve them.

*“Art installations / street murals would bring additional stimulation.”*

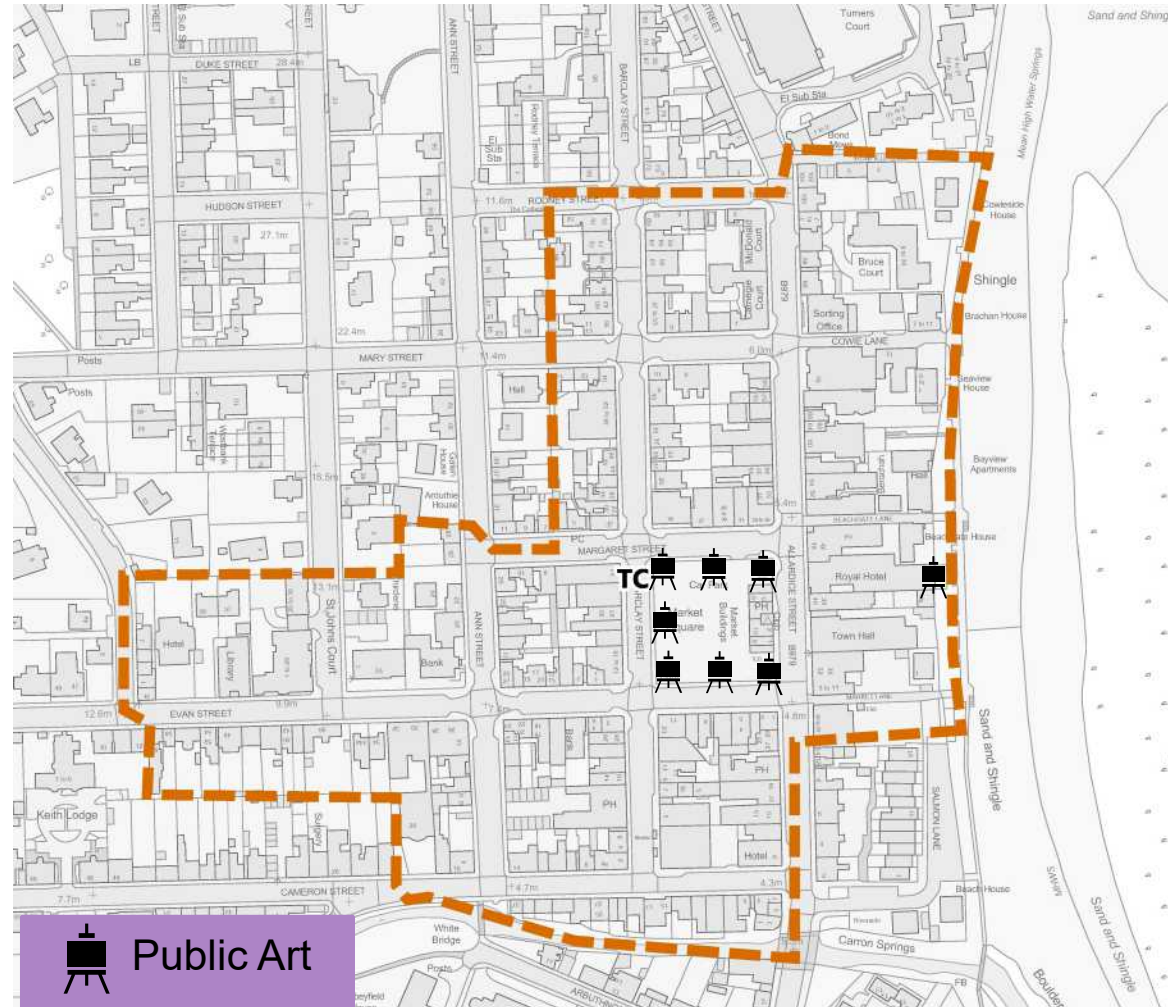
*“The local horizons group as well as other voluntary groups have maintained flowerbeds and baskets, brought artwork to the town.”*

*“Could do with brightening up.”*

*“Horizon group brighten up the town with flower beds and have secured some art for the town.”*

Business and Community Survey, September 2021

## STREETS & SPACES: PUBLIC ART



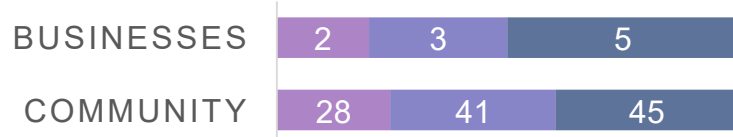
Images (Top to Bottom): Signs in Market Square and lamppost decorations for hanging baskets (town centre wide).



# STREETS & SPACES: PAVEMENTS

## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: PAVEMENT CLEANLINESS?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



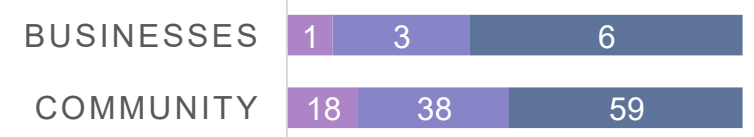
**Observations:** Neither of the topics relating to pavements were rated highly through the 2021 survey with a number of comments calling for cleaner and better quality pavements within the town centre. The topic of pavement quality rated within the bottom 5 topics of both the community and business survey.

During the site visit the pavements were noted as poor as there were areas with cracked and uneven slabs and some areas where a clean would be beneficial. The quality of the pavements was also highly commented on through the Accessibility Audit work carried out in 2021.



## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: PAVEMENT QUALITY?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



*“Cleaner pavements which are weed and litter free.”*

*“Deep clean the pavements.”*

*“Pavements are a disgrace with bird mess.”*

*“Dog mess on the pavements is an issue.”*

*“The pavements are a disgrace.”*

*Business and Community Survey, September 2021*

*“Need better pavements.”*

*Need to improve pavements.”*

*“Need to resurface pavements.”*

*“Make pavements useable.”*

*“The state of the pavements badly let the town down.”*

*“There are a number of potholes in the pavements.”*

*“The condition of the pavements is extremely poor.”*

*Business and Community Survey, September 2021*

“Fill the empty units.”

“Tidy the frontage of the vacant units.”

“Reduction of business rates to assist local businesses and also help to fill the empty premises in the town centre.”

Business and Community Survey, September 2021

# STREETS & SPACES: VACANT RETAIL UNITS

**Observations:** The vacancy rate within the town centre at the time of survey was 3.2% which is substantially lower than the Scottish average of 15.7% (Local Data Company).

It should be noted that although the vacancy rate has slightly increased to 4.4% in Stonehaven there is only one unit that remains vacant from the 2021 site visit. Additionally, the units which are now vacant are substantially smaller units and are not in such prominent places within the town centre.

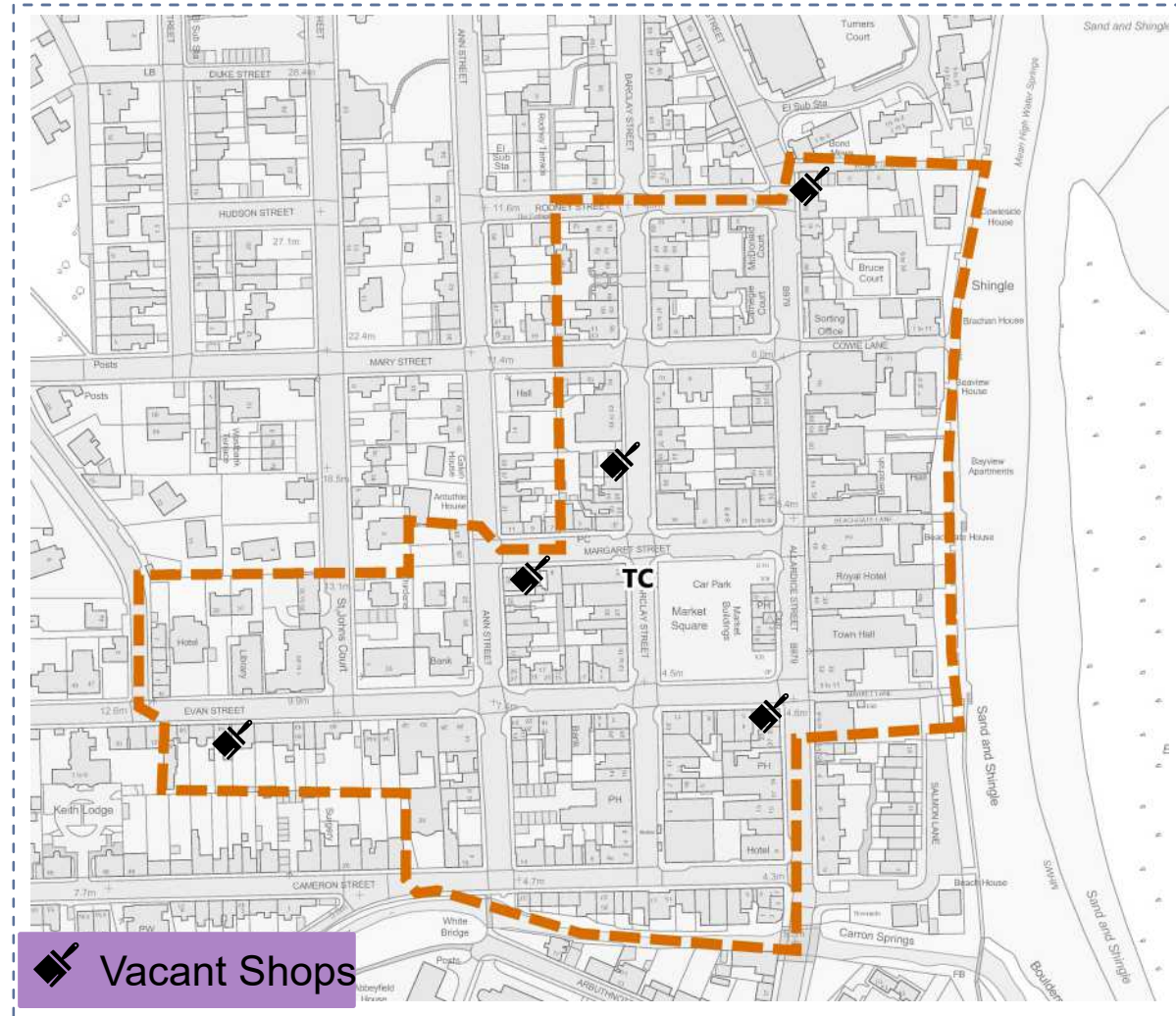


Images (Top Left and Clockwise): Margaret Street. Barclay Street, Market Square and Allardice Street.

Vacant Retail Units:

**5**  
**4.4%**

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



Vacant Shops







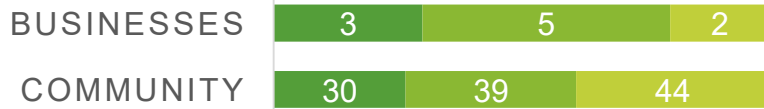
Good public places and facilities encourage children to play and allow adults to enjoy leisure and sporting activities. Opportunities for play and recreation can improve the quality of our lives and our health.

# PLAY & RECREATION



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

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor

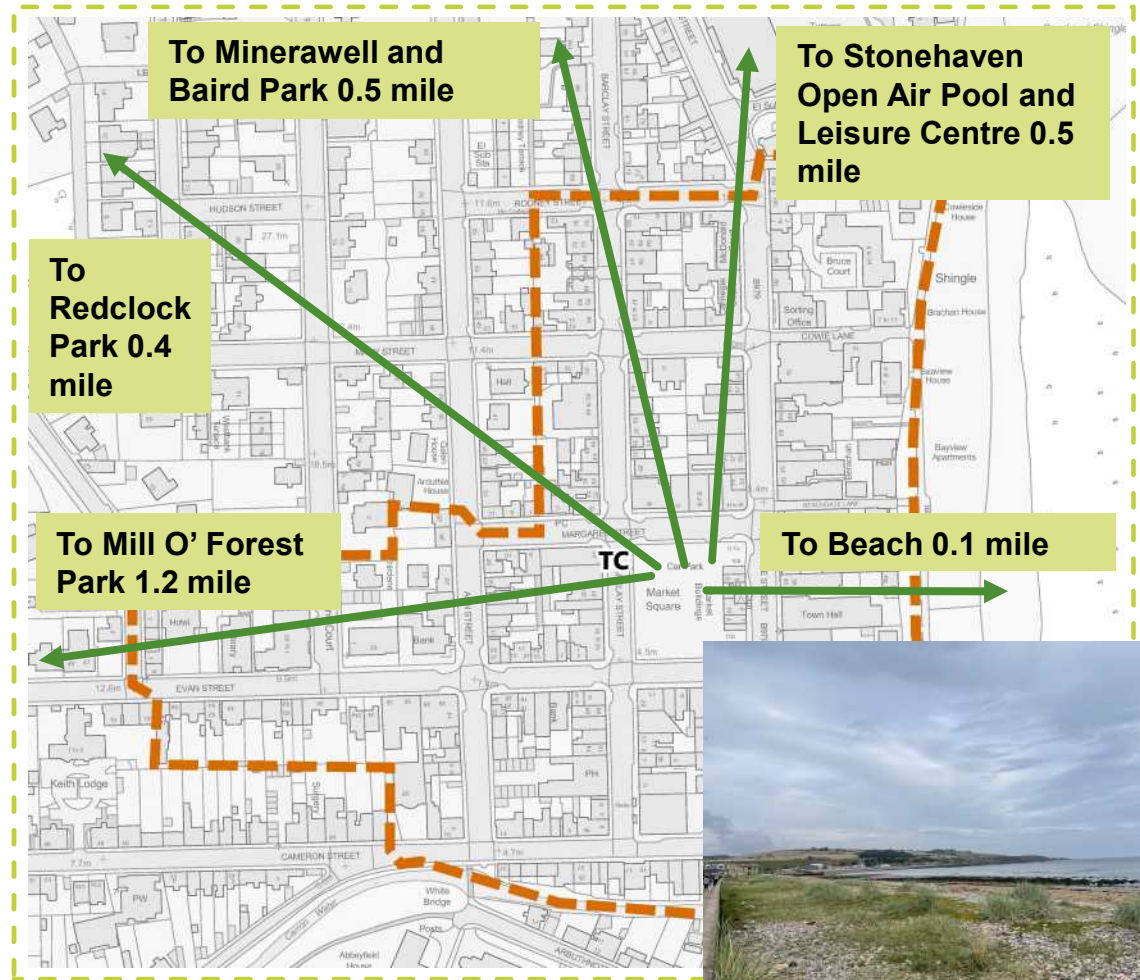


**Observations:** Although Stonehaven has no play and recreation sites within the town centre boundary itself, there are a range of play/leisure options just about 0.5 mile from Market Square, including a number of parks, the Open Air Pool, Leisure Centre and the Beach. Comments received through the 2021 community and business survey back up the point that while there was nothing within the town centre, there were a number on the boundary. This is reflected by the scores given by respondents to the 2021 surveys, with a fairly even spread through the different rating categories.

*“Although there aren’t play facilities in the town centre area as marked in this survey, there are good ones in the town and nearby, and the beach area is very close.”*

*“Leisure and play facilities within the town are poor, money needs spent on these to bring them up to standard.”*

*“It would be great if the central car park in the square could be made into a greener area with seating, possibly a play area and more functional outdoor space.”*



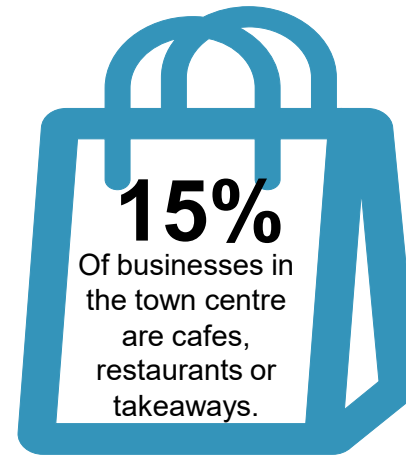
# FACILITIES & AMENITIES: RETAILER REPRESENTATION

## Retailer Representation

**67%** of businesses in the town centre are independent retailers

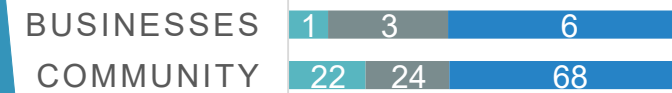
**50%** of businesses in the town centre are Class 1: Shops

**23%** of businesses in the town centre are Class 2: Financial, Professional and other services



## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: VARIETY OF SHOPS?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: QUALITY OF SHOPS?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



*“Attract a wider variety of shops.”*

*“Need more variety of shops to many of the same type.”*

*“Need more quality shops.”*

*“Stonehaven needs to up its game in terms of the variety of shops.”*

*Business and Community Survey, September 2021*



Image (Top to Bottom: Dee Street and High Street.

**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 2021 surveys related to the lack of variety within the town centre and the topic ranked within the 5 lowest ranked topics through the community survey. A number of comments were received in relation to the community aspiration of wanting more shops within the town centre.



# FACILITIES & AMENITIES: CAFÉ AND RESTAURANTS

**Observations:** The choice of cafés and restaurants is something that was rated as poor by the majority of respondents to the 2021 surveys and the desire for more cafés and restaurants was strongly commented on. A number of comments were also received in relation to the quality of cafés and restaurants and the topic was ranked within the top five of all topics rated within both the community and business surveys.



Image (Top to Bottom): Margaret Street Corner and Cameron Street.

*“Would be good to see more cafés.”*

*“In the summer cafés should have longer opening hours.”*

*“More diverse choice in cafés.”*

*“Don’t need anymore cafés.”*

*“Need to attract a wider variety of restaurants.”*

*“There are no good quality restaurants.”*

*“The town is well catered for with some excellent cafés and restaurants.”*

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

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



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

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



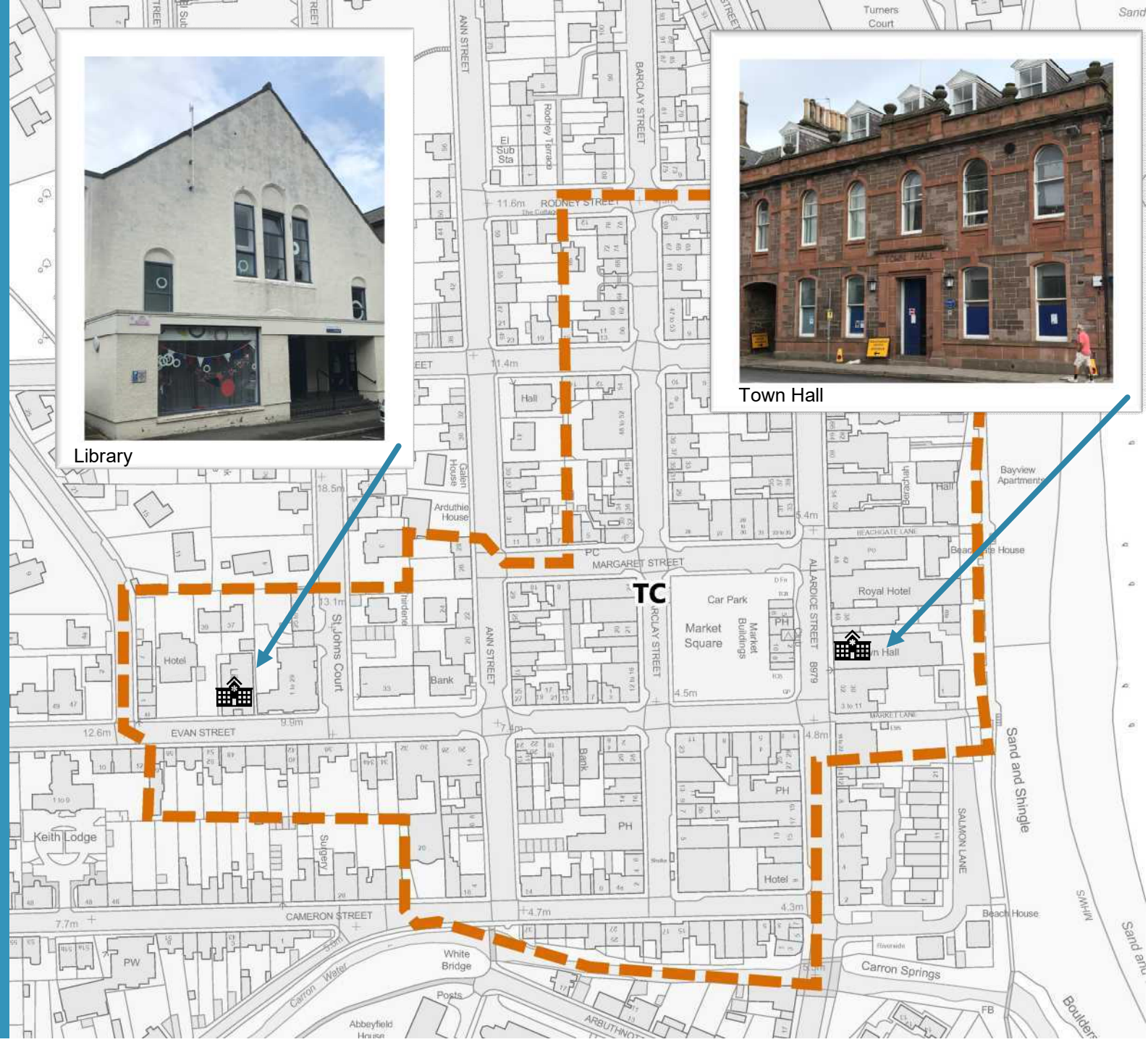


# FACILITIES & AMENITIES: CULTURAL AND LEISURE OUTLETS, AND PUBLIC SERVICES

**Observations:** Within Stonehaven Town Centre out of the three categories there are only public services as there are no leisure or cultural outlets within the boundary. However, it should be noted that all three categories are available just outwith the town centre boundary.

A lack of leisure facilities within the town centre was highly commented on through the community survey in terms of the desire for more places to open to encourage people of all ages into the town centre.

-  Cultural Outlets
-  Leisure Outlets
-  Public Services



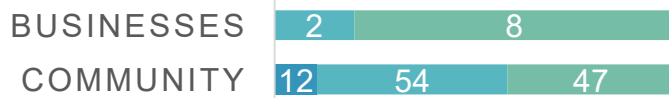
Library

Town Hall

# FACILITIES & AMENITIES: EVENING ECONOMY

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

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



*“Need more cafes and bars open in the evenings.”*

*“More evening uses.”*

*“A café to visit in the evening would be lovely.”*

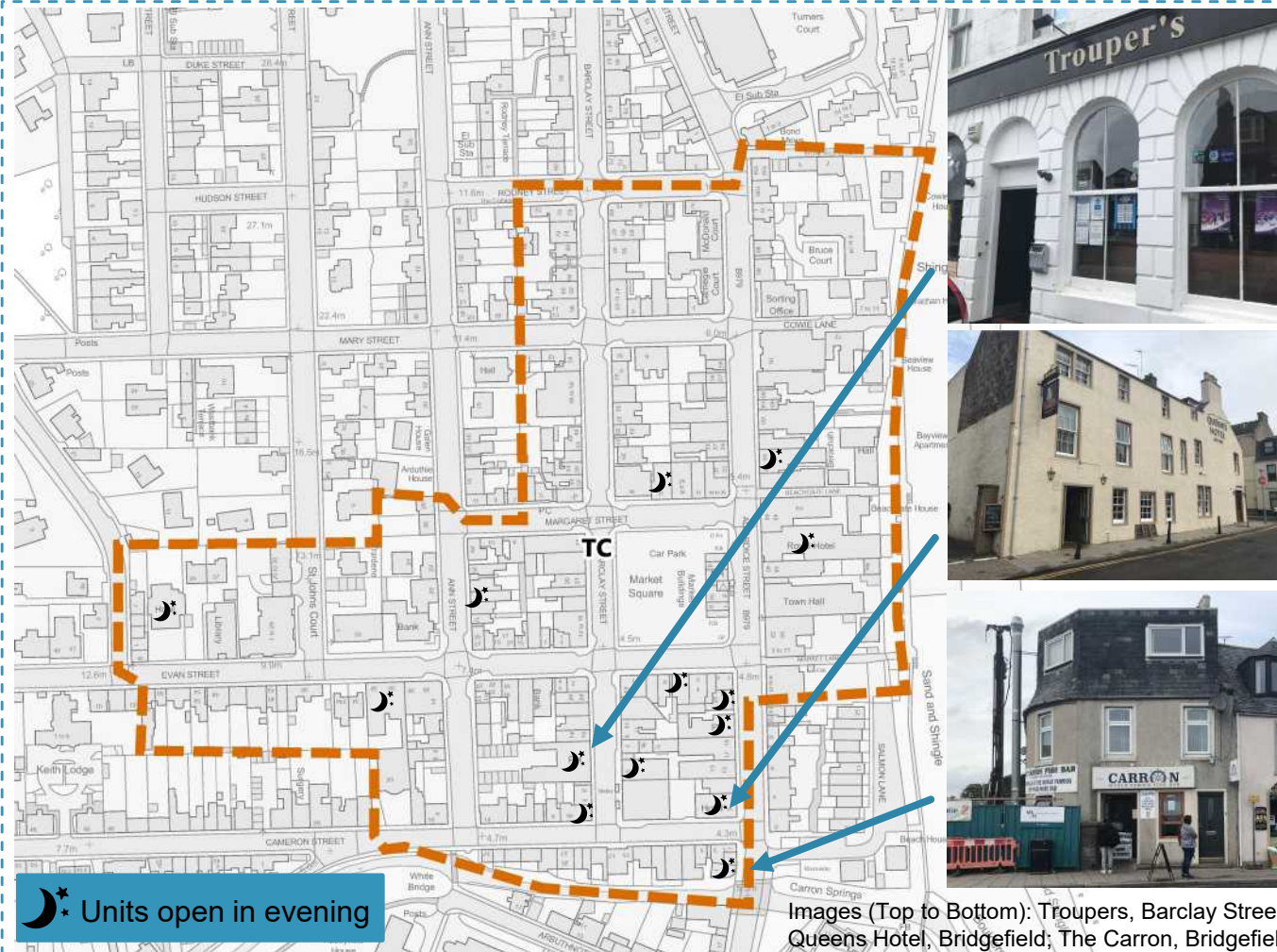
*“It would be great to have a café or restaurant open in the evening in the right location to create more vibrancy in the town.”*

*Business and Community Survey, September 2021*

**Observations:** There were a large number of comments received within the 2021 community and business surveys relating to the lack of things to do within the town centre in the evening.

There was a strong desire from the community to see more places to go in the evening. This includes places to go to eat such as cafes and restaurants but also to increase the vibrancy of the town centre by bringing more people out in the evening.

This topic was also scored within the bottom five topics within the business survey.



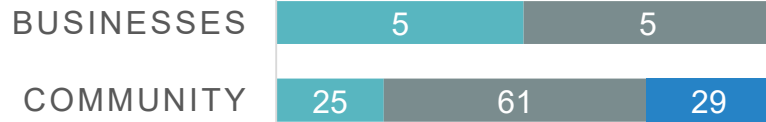
Images (Top to Bottom): Troupers, Barclay Street, Queens Hotel, Bridgefield; The Carron, Bridgefield.



# FACILITIES & AMENITIES: COMMUNITY AND VISITOR SATISFACTION

## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: VALUE FOR MONEY?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



“Too many of the same placed, need more variety.”

“There is a poor selection.”

“There should be training for supermarket staff to be more helpful and less rude.”

Business and Community Survey, September 2021



Image: Allardice Street Streetscape.

## Town Centre Offer:

38%

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

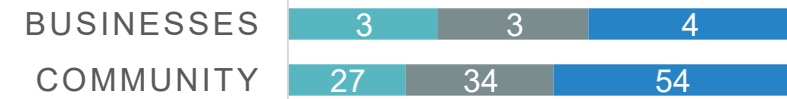
Business and Community Survey, September 2021

**Observations:** The standard of service in shops rated within the top five of the topics surveyed in both the community and the visitor surveys, although there were a limited number of comments received noting this could be improved.

Conversely, the variety of goods was rated within the bottom five topics in both the business and community surveys and a number of comments were received, particularly from the community, with an aspiration to see more variety within the town centre.

## 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 Stonehaven in the ‘Towns and Villages’ section of their website:

5,697 Jan-Dec 2019

2,830 Jan-Dec 2020

7,431 Jan-Dec 2021



# FACILITIES & AMENITIES: MARKET

*“There should be an event like a Christmas Market.”*

*“The road directly outside the bank of Scotland and the market Square co-op could be pedestrianised to allow for small traders to set up market stalls permanently, selling artisan foods, green groceries etc.”*

*“Improve the Farmers Market.”*

*“More markets aimed at children.”*

*“Dogs should not be allowed to attend the Farmers Markets on hygiene grounds.”*

*“Make more use of Market Square for markets.”*

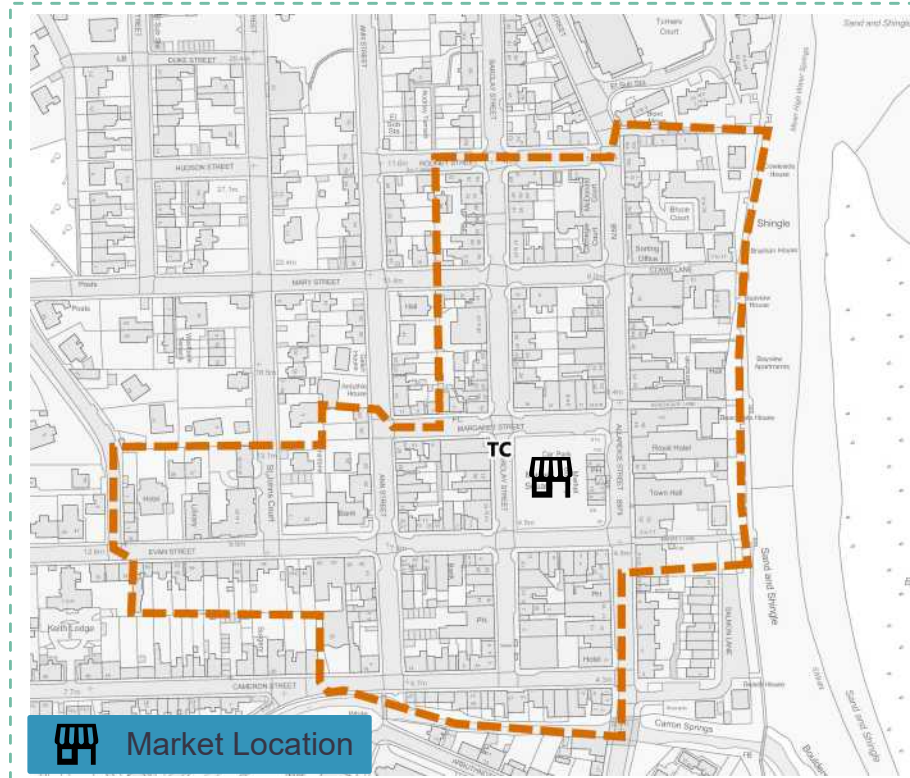
*“There should be a permanent Farmers Market in the town square.”*

*Business and Community Survey, September 2021*

**Observations:** The Stonehaven Farmers Market is held in Market Square on the first Saturday of the month 09:00-13:00.

There was a mix of comments received to the 2021 surveys relating to the market but the main themes coming through the comments were:

- Desire to see a more regular market, with some even noting the market should be a permanent feature within the town.
- Improve the market to increase the number of stalls and offering.



## HOW WOULD YOU RATE: THE MARKET?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor

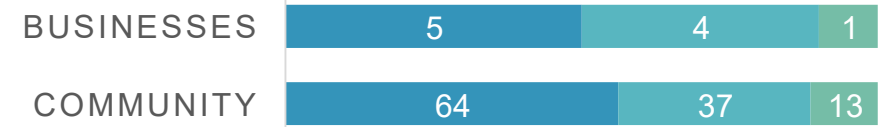


Image: Corner of Market Square and Allardice Street.

# FACILITIES & AMENITIES: ONLINE SHOPPING

## Online Offering

**90%** of businesses surveyed have online presence

**33%** of businesses surveyed sell online

**100%** of the businesses surveyed that sell online make 25% or less of their income from this

**52%** of the community surveyed said they are more likely to shop online rather than going into the town centre for the same item

**64%** of the community survey noted that their attitude towards online shopping had changed because of the COVID-19 pandemic

**62%** of the community survey noted that their usage of the town centre had decreased because of the COVID-19 pandemic

*Business and Community Survey, September 2021*

**Observations:** Within the 2021 community survey there was a 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.

*"I like to see things before I buy them."*

*"No choice in Stonehaven and its too expensive."*

*"I only use online if it's something I can't get locally."*

*"I try to support the local shops. Use them or lose them."*

*"There is not the variety available in Stonehaven."*

*"Cheaper and more convenient to shop online."*

*Business and Community Survey, September 2021*



Image: Market Square.

# FACILITIES & AMENITIES: CONNECTIVITY









**Observations:** Mobile coverage within Stonehaven Town Centre is very strong with all of the top networks being accessible 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 Stonehaven Town Centre:

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

## Internet Speed in Stonehaven Town Centre:

	Download:	17.6 Mbps
	Upload:	3.1 Mbps

## Mobile Coverage in Stonehaven 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

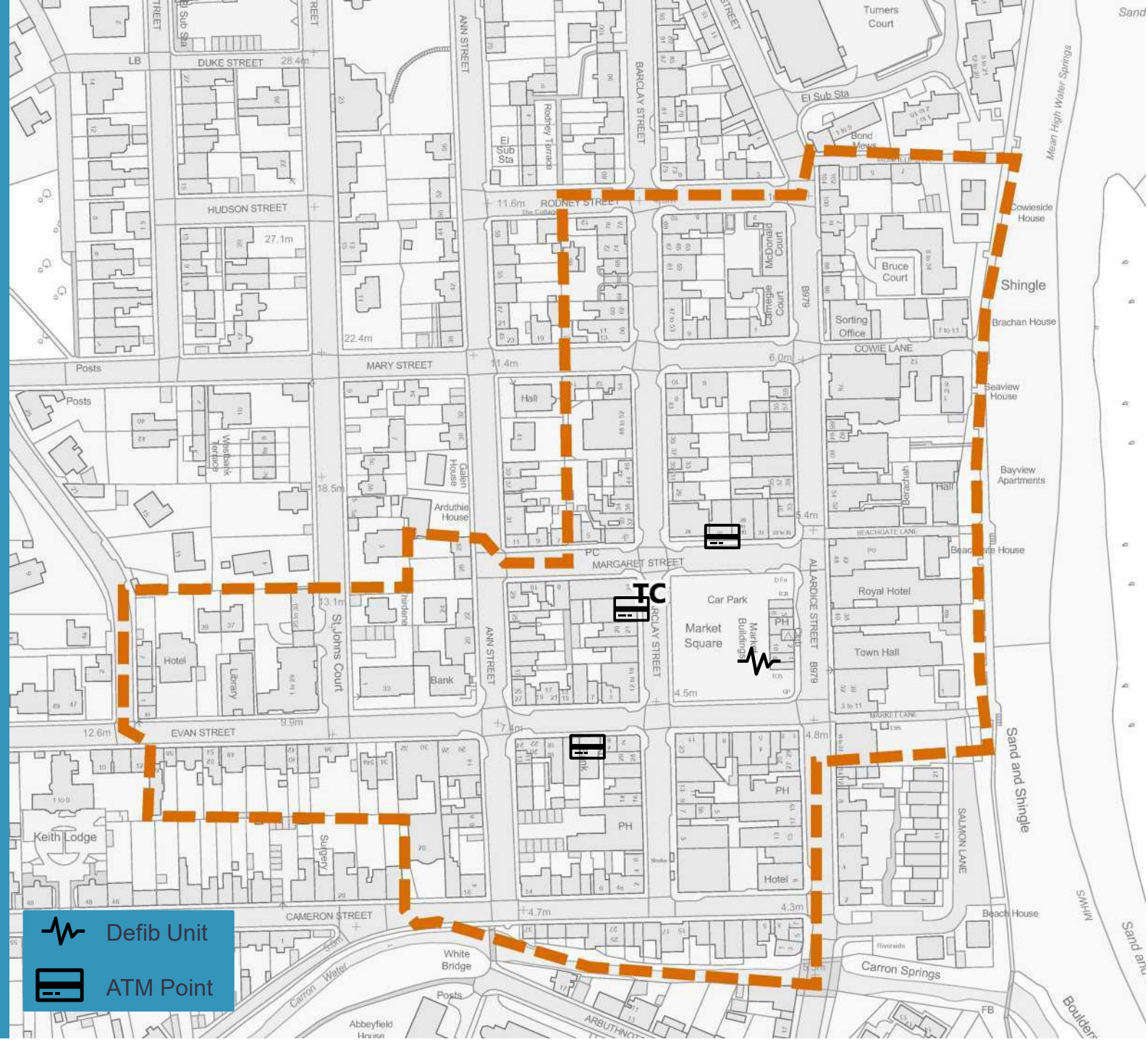


# FACILITIES & AMENITIES: OTHER SERVICES

**Observations:** Stonehaven Town Centre is well serviced by ATM machines. Additionally, there is a Defibrillator unit on the side of the Market Buildings which can be used by anyone within the town centre should the need arise. This is well located as it is central to most of the shops and also central to where any events/ markets happen.



Image: Defib Unit on the side of the Market Buildings, Market Square.



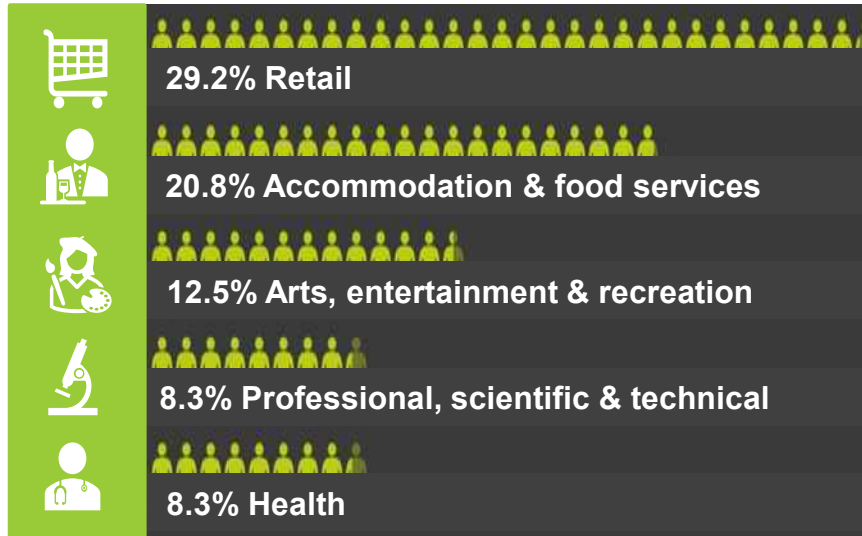
Good quality work offers important benefits through income, activity, social contact, sense of identity and job satisfaction. A thriving local economy can provide work opportunities and help create lively places where people want to spend time.

# WORK & LOCAL ECONOMY



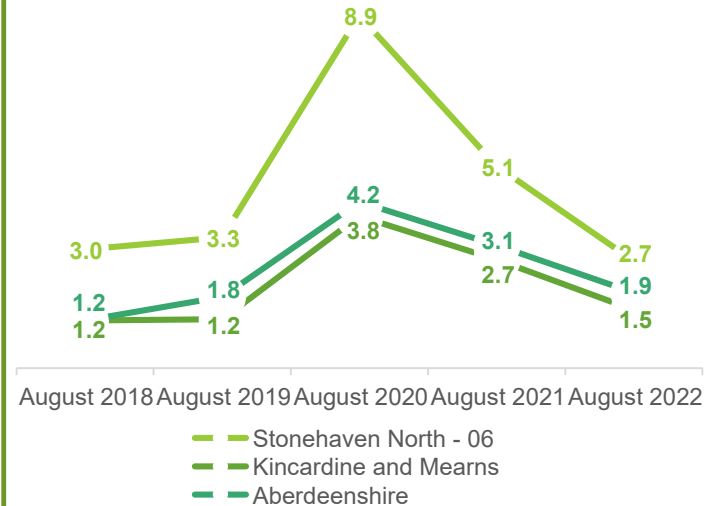
**Observations:** The employment and income picture is as would be expected for this scale of settlement, with a high proportion of retail and hospitality jobs. However, there is an interesting mix across other sectors providing a variety of employment opportunities at differing skill levels. There has been a drop in the number employed in the arts, entertainment and recreation category since 2021. The claimant count rate increased in 2020, partly in response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic but the numbers have now fallen back down to pre-COVID levels. However, the Stonehaven Town Centre Data Zone remains at a higher level than the Kincardine and Mearns electoral wards average and the Aberdeenshire average. Low levels of deprivation are reflected in the income levels.

## Top 5 Employment Sectors 2021 Stonehaven Town Centre Data Zone\*



Source: Business Register and Employment Survey 2021

## CLAIMANT COUNT RATE^ (%)



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

**Settlement Type:**  
**Other Urban Area**  
 (Settlements of 10,000 to 124,999 people)  
 Scottish Government's Urban Rural Classification, 8-fold

**Median Household Income 2021**  
 Town Centre Data Zone  
**£26,299**



£42,819 Kincardine & Mearns;  
 £36,889 Aberdeenshire

Source: © CACI Limited 1996 - 2021 This report shall be used solely for academic, personal and/or non-commercial purposes.

## Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020

Town Centre Data Zone\*:

**40-45%**

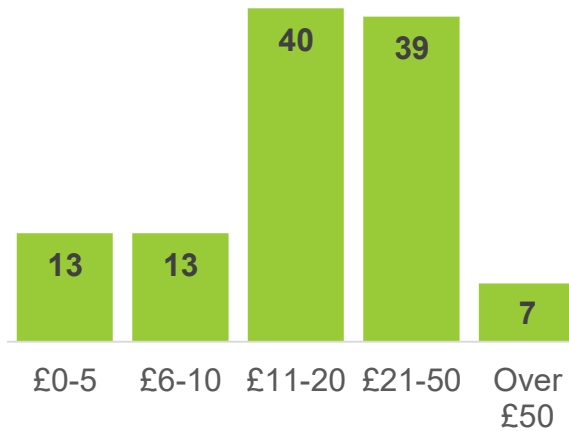
Least deprived in Scotland

\* The data zone (S01006835) that includes the majority of the town centre.

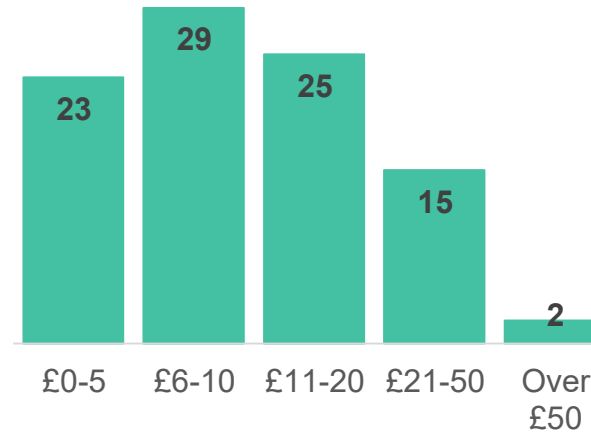
# WORK & LOCAL ECONOMY: AVERAGE CONSUMER SPEND 2021

**Observations:** These graphs, produced from the results of the 2021 surveys, highlight a balanced spread across different sectors within the town centre. The most high value expenditure was on Hair and Beauty although this was by slightly fewer people than other categories. Most other categories were at the mid-range levels, with the exception of Events/ Entertainment and Other. This may reflect the limited provision in these areas and so offer the greatest opportunity for increased spend in the town centre.

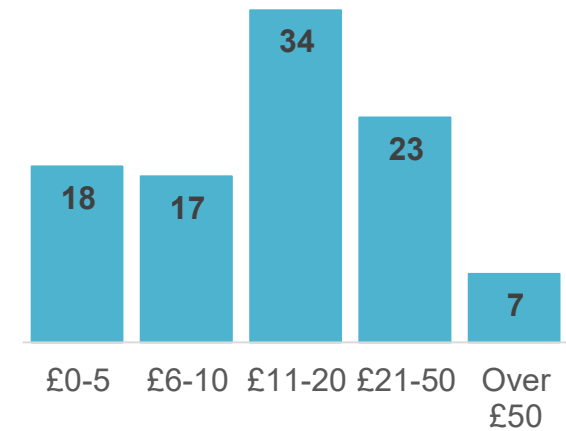
### Food Shopping



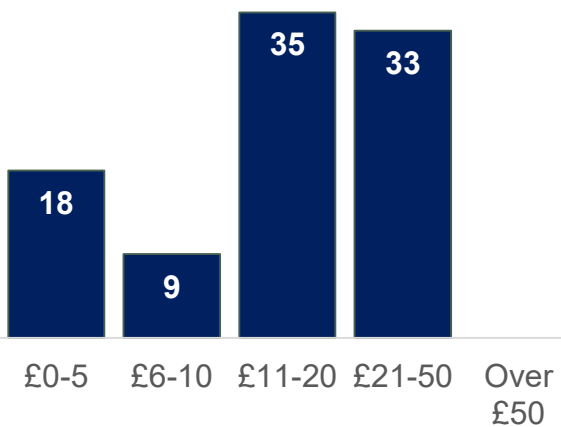
### Other Shopping



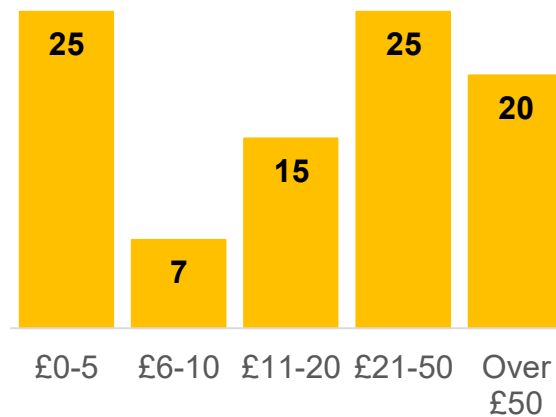
### Café/ Restaurant



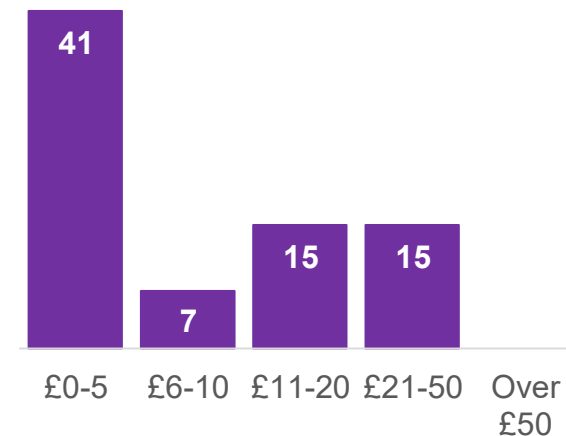
### Takeaway



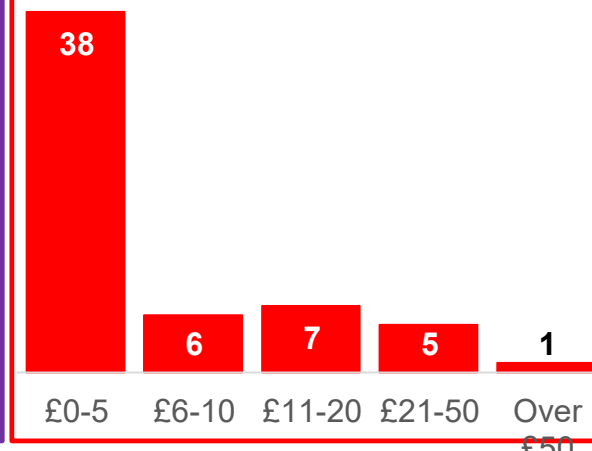
### Hair & Beauty



### Events/ Entertainment



### Other





# WORK & LOCAL ECONOMY: BUSINESS SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS 2021

**Observations:** 10 businesses responded to the survey in 2021 and provided a very mixed outlook for the town when looking at confidence in future performance and historic turnover and employment levels. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic could also be seen with over half of respondents experiencing a significant drop in turnover. However, when looking forward, encouragingly 40% were looking to expand within the next one to five years, although a further 40% were unsure about their plans, perhaps reflecting the ongoing uncertainty around the pandemic. There was a high proportion of independent businesses and a fifth of those surveyed were start-ups. Businesses were making good use of Facebook but there is scope to further explore other online marketing options.

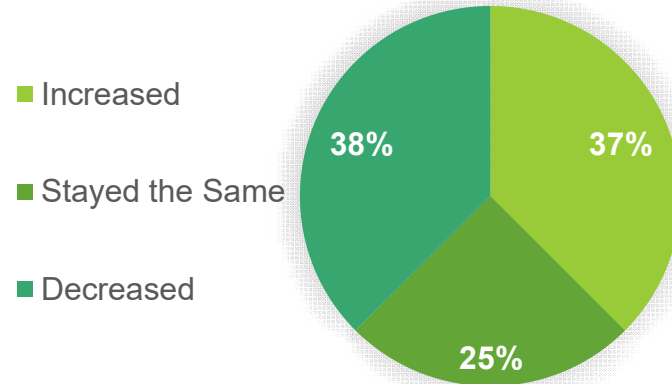
**80%** of business owners surveyed were **established** businesses in the town centre; **20%** were start-ups

**90%** of business owners surveyed were **independent** businesses

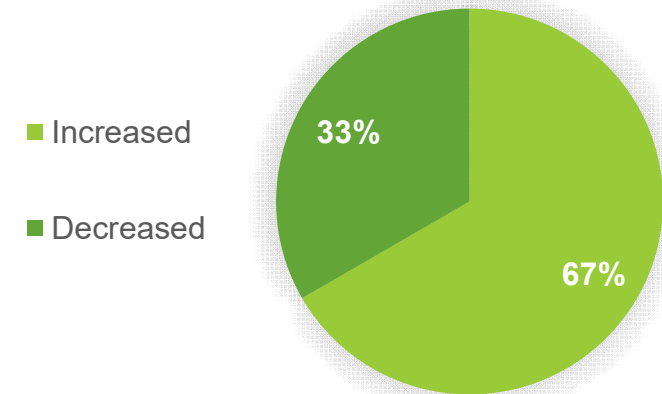
**40%** of business owners surveyed were **extremely** or **somewhat confident** about future business performance in Stonehaven; **40%** were **somewhat** or **extremely unconfident**

**20%** of business owners surveyed were looking to **grow** or **expand** in the next year, with a further **20%** in the next five years. **40%** were **unsure** and **20%** were **not** currently considering growth or expansion

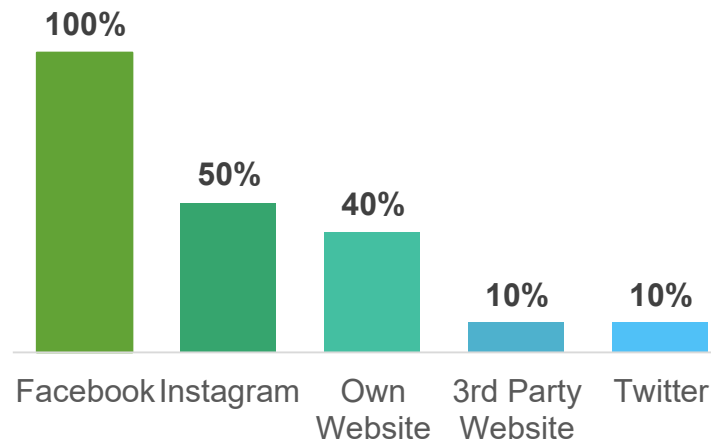
Has employment at your premises changed in the past five years?



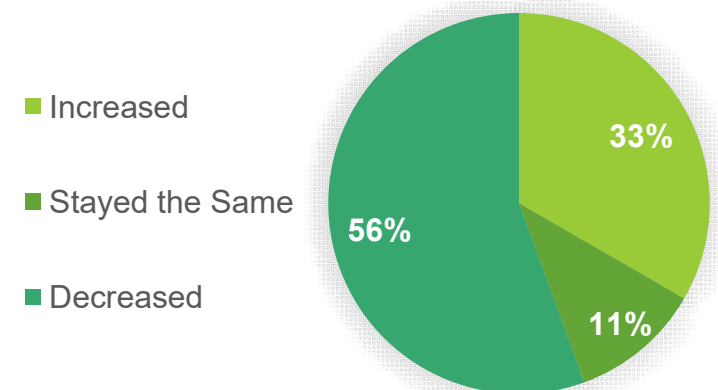
How has turnover at your premises changed in the past five years?



Top 5 Online Marketing Tools Used



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



## WORK & LOCAL ECONOMY: PROPERTY

**Observations:** In 2021 the commercial property market was fairly stable in Stonehaven, with a low vacancy rate and a relatively large number of independent, established businesses as indicated in the business survey. It was noted during the site visit in 2022 that two previously vacant larger units on Allardice Street were now in active use which is encouraging, however the vacancy rate has increased slightly since last year with a large unit now vacant on Barclay Street and a smaller in Market Square. Although the majority of premises were rented in 2021, the outlook for town centre stock investment was positive with 50% of respondents indicating they would invest in their premises in the next one to five years. Comments received in the surveys suggested that assistance with financial incentives to help landlords and business owners to upgrade their buildings or to find new tenants would be welcomed.



**30%** of business respondents said they would invest in their premises in the next year, **20%** in the next five years. **20%** were unsure of their investment plans and **30%** had no plans for investment.

### Planning Applications:

Within the town centre 11 planning applications were approved between August 2021 – August 2022. Of note were:

- Change of Use from Betting Shop (Sui Generis) to Restaurant (Class 3) and internal alterations to form enlarged kitchen area;
- 3 x Installation of signage;
- Change of Use from Class 1 (Shop) to Class 11 (Assembly and Leisure - Gymnasium);
- Internal Alterations to create consulting rooms;
- Repainting of windows and fascia to shopfront;
- Internal alterations, including conversion of first floor rooms to consulting rooms.

*“Current retailers/ cafes/ private buildings may appreciate financial support to upgrade their exteriors. Things are looking tired in the town centre - perhaps new signage for shops, and a good lick of paint would help. But given the recent restrictions, many businesses and homeowners cannot afford these additional costs.”*

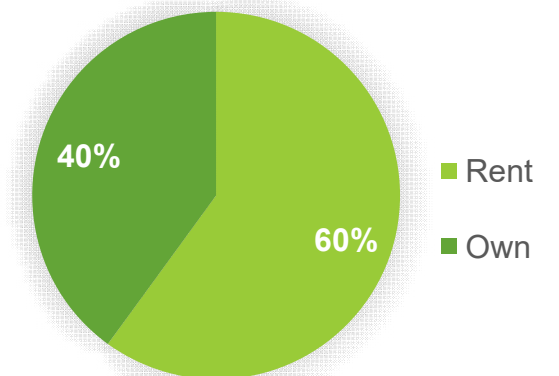
*“Pop up stalls in the Square would offer low cost business opportunities for entrepreneurs.”*

*“There are limited empty units.”*

*“Reduction of business rates to assist local businesses and also help to fill the empty premises in the town centre.”*

*Business and Community Survey, September 2021*

### Do you rent or own your premises?

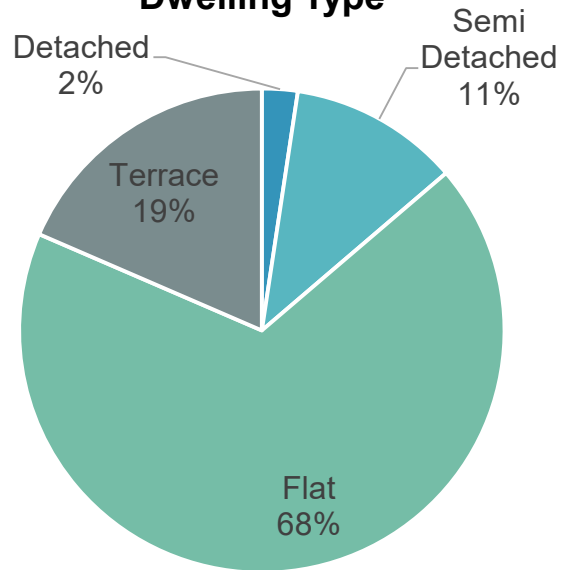


Housing is central to people's lives and helps to shape the appearance and character of places. Good places provide a mix of housing that supports a socially balanced community and meets people's needs throughout life.

# HOUSING & COMMUNITY



## Dwelling Type



The mix of dwelling types within the town centre is shown above. The majority of the dwellings are flats with a large number of flats above shop and office units and purpose built flats.

Of these dwelling types within the town centre the main tenure is properties that are either owned outright or properties owned with a mortgage.

## Housing Profile and Population

The overall population total for Stonehaven in 2020 was 11,150 and it is estimated that approximately 758 people live within the town centre.

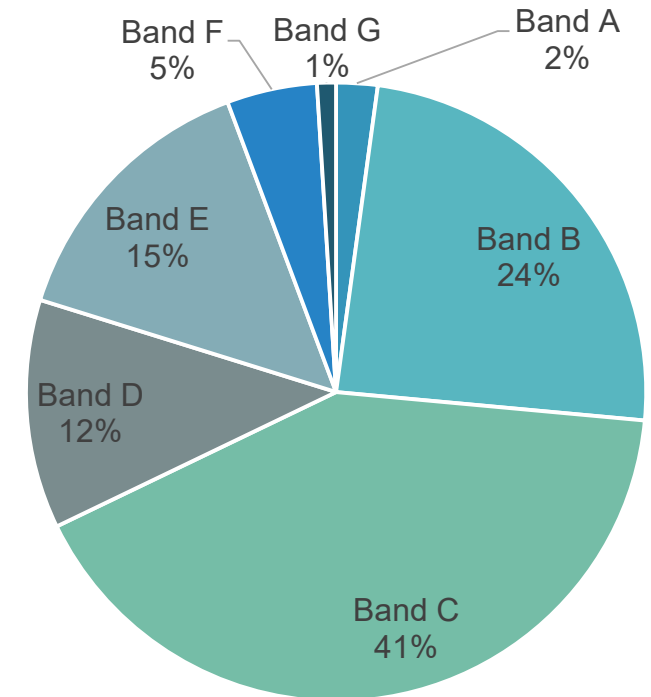
The average house price for dwellings within the town centre boundary in 2018 was £144,088 compared with the average house price in Aberdeenshire of £230,038.



Image: Allardice Street.

In terms of Council Tax Bands (2021), Stonehaven Town Centre has dwellings in Bands A-G on the scale of the Council Tax Bands. The majority, over are within Band B and Band C.

## Council Tax Band





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:** The range of events received a mixed response in both of the 2021 surveys but this could have been influenced by the COVID-19 restrictions at the time of the survey. There are several venues that are available for social interaction in the town centre, including a number of cafes, but there is a strong community desire to see more events within the town centre, particularly making use of the Town Hall and Market Square in order to bring the community together.

### Town Centre Events\*^



The following events are planned over the next year:

**Farmer’s Market**

1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of every month (09:00-13:00, except Jan and June)

**Feein’ Market**

3<sup>rd</sup> June 2023

**32<sup>nd</sup> Stonehaven Folk Festival**

7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> July 2023

\*Not an exhaustive list ^Correct at time of survey

# SOCIAL CONTACT



Venue	Indoor / Outdoor	Opening Times
Library	Indoor	Tues 09:00-19:00 Wed 09:00-17:00 Fri 09:00-17:00 Sat 10:00-14:00 Click and Collect available during opening hours.
Town Hall	Indoor	Open to public bookings.

*“More events to bring life and community to the town throughout the year.”*

*“Attract more small businesses in terms of craft fairs and organised events using the town hall and other existing resources.”*

*“Improve the farmers market and events.”*

*“More events using Market Square.”*

*“Pre-covid there was a good range of events - presumably they will return. I think the council should do all they can to enable this to happen.”*

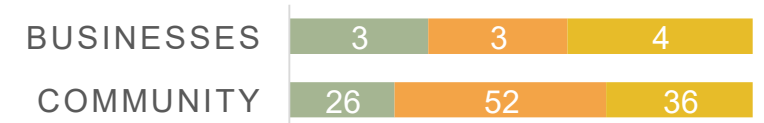
*Business and Community Survey, September 2021*



Images: Left, Stonehaven Library; Right, Stonehaven Town Hall.

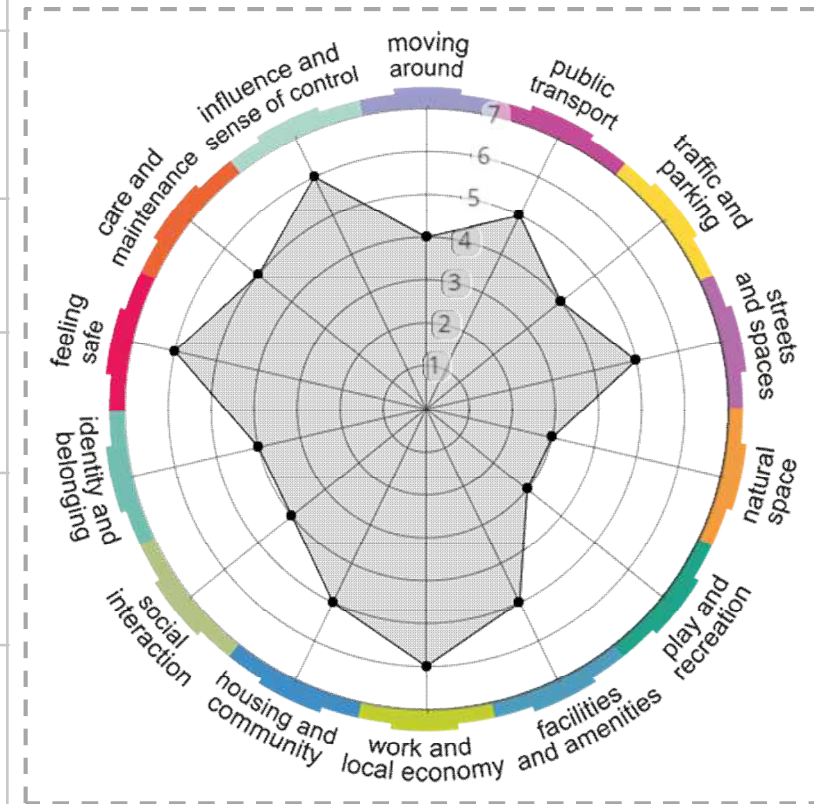
### HOW WOULD YOU RATE: RANGE OF EVENTS?

■ Good ■ Neutral ■ Poor



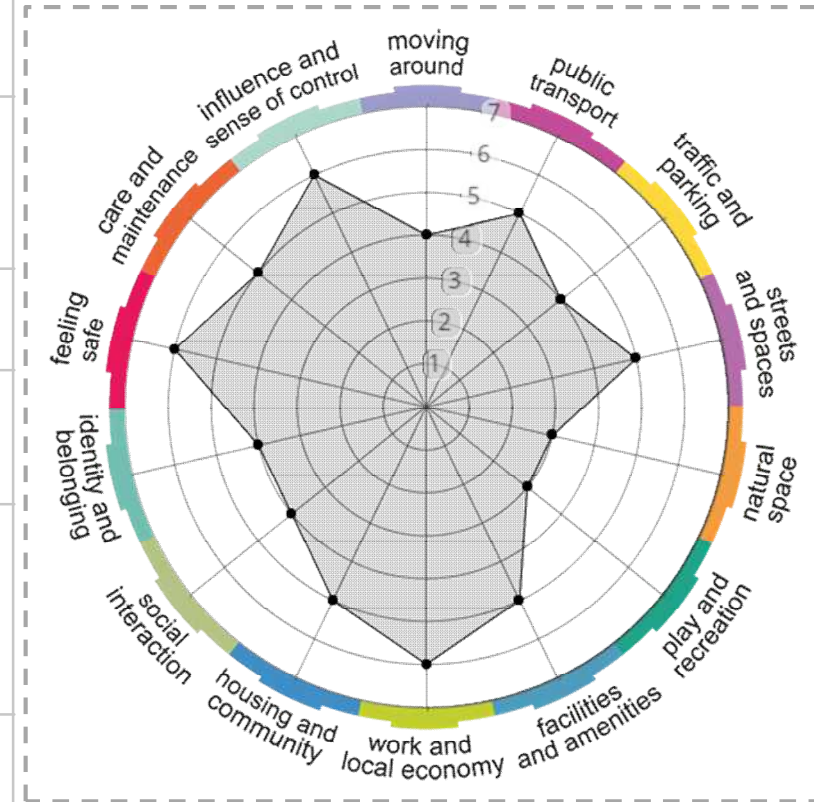
# KEY CONSIDERATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

Theme	Key Improvements
<p>Identity and belonging Rating: 4</p>	There is good community spirit in Stonehaven but overall there was a mixed response to how people feel about the town centre. Interventions identified in other indicators could increase the sense of pride in the town.
<p>Feeling safe Rating: 6</p>	This area was highly rated by business and community alike with few concerns raised. Consideration could be given to the provision of CCTV and the interaction between vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.
<p>Care and maintenance Rating: 5</p>	This topic attracted a number of negative comments through the survey with concerns noting guttering needing attention and general upkeep of buildings. Any interventions that would see maintenance happening to the gutters and empty buildings would be beneficial.
<p>Influence and sense of control Rating: 6</p>	Stonehaven has a strong network of voluntary organisations working together to support the town centre. The Horizon Project is particularly highly regarded. Promotion by all groups could increase awareness and opportunities for engagement.
<p>Moving around Rating: 4</p>	Although this scored well overall, there is no cycle parking provision in the town centre and there is some conflict between vehicles and pedestrians/cyclists. Signage was well placed and informative. Some pavements were in a poor state of repair which could be a hazard for some town centre visitors.
<p>Public transport Rating: 5</p>	Public transport links are reasonable, with the benefit of access to the rail network in close proximity to the town centre. There could be an opportunity to explore transport solutions that could benefit the community and tourist economy alike such as park and cycle/ride or links to attractions.
<p>Traffic and parking Rating: 4</p>	Traffic flow was rated within the bottom five topics in both surveys and comments noted that there was a community aspiration to see improvements made to this. Any studies that could be completed to analysis the current situation would be welcomed.



# KEY CONSIDERATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES (CONTINUED)

Theme	Key Improvements
<p><b>Streets and spaces</b> Rating: 5</p>	<p>Pavements were noted in some areas within the town centre to be poor quality and potential trip hazards. Another topic which attracted comments through the 2021 survey was the desire for more seating within the town centre. This has been partially been addressed through the opening of the new seating area in Market Square, however more seating within the town centre may still be welcomed.</p>
<p><b>Natural space</b> Rating: 3</p>	<p>There is no natural space within the town centre. However, volunteers work hard to provide planters around the Market Square which is welcomed and there is good access to open space in close proximity. There are opportunities to consider the area within the Market Square for further green space.</p>
<p><b>Play and recreation</b> Rating: 3</p>	<p>There are no play and recreation facilities within the town centre. However, there is good access to facilities on the border of the town centre boundary.</p>
<p><b>Facilities and amenities</b> Rating: 5</p>	<p>There is a good offering of facilities within the town centre, however one of the main topics running through this theme is the desire to see more variety of retail offering. Filling the vacant properties may help to improve the offering.</p>
<p><b>Work and local economy</b> Rating: 6</p>	<p>There is a good range of employment opportunities within the town centre and consumer spend is well-distributed across different sectors. Businesses are reasonably confident about their future performance and some are looking to grow and invest in their premises. Exploring opportunities to support pop-up spaces or markets to help new businesses and funding for shop-front improvements would be welcomed.</p>
<p><b>Housing and community</b> Rating: 5</p>	<p>There is a good mix of house types and tenures within the town centre boundary which provides opportunities for housing for all of the community. This should be maintained.</p>
<p><b>Social contact</b> Rating: 4</p>	<p>There are opportunities for mixing within the town centre although there is a definite community aspiration to see more events within the town centre and making more use of Market Square.</p>





## 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. Feeling of Safety at Night
4. Farmer's Market
5. Café/ Restaurant Quality

#### Top 5 Lowest Scoring Categories:

1. Variety of Shops
2. Parking Space Availability: Cars
3. Pavement Quality
4. Traffic Flow
5. Variety of Goods Available

### Business

#### Top 5 Highest Scoring Categories:

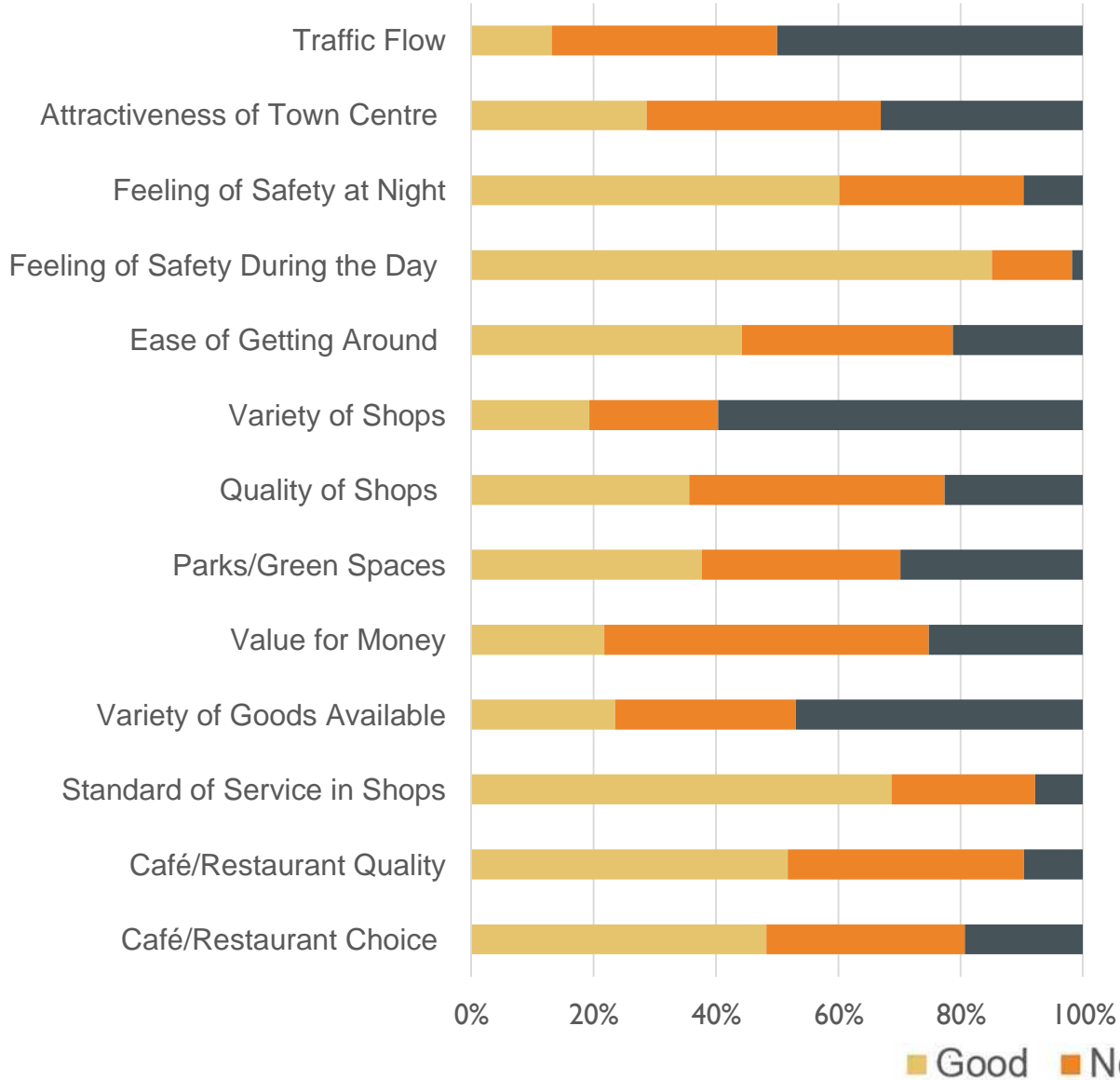
1. Feeling of Safety During the Day
2. Standard of Service in Shops
3. Feeling of Safety at Night
- =4. Café/ Restaurant Quality
- =4. Parks/ Green Spaces
5. Ease of Getting Around

#### Top 5 Lowest Scoring Categories:

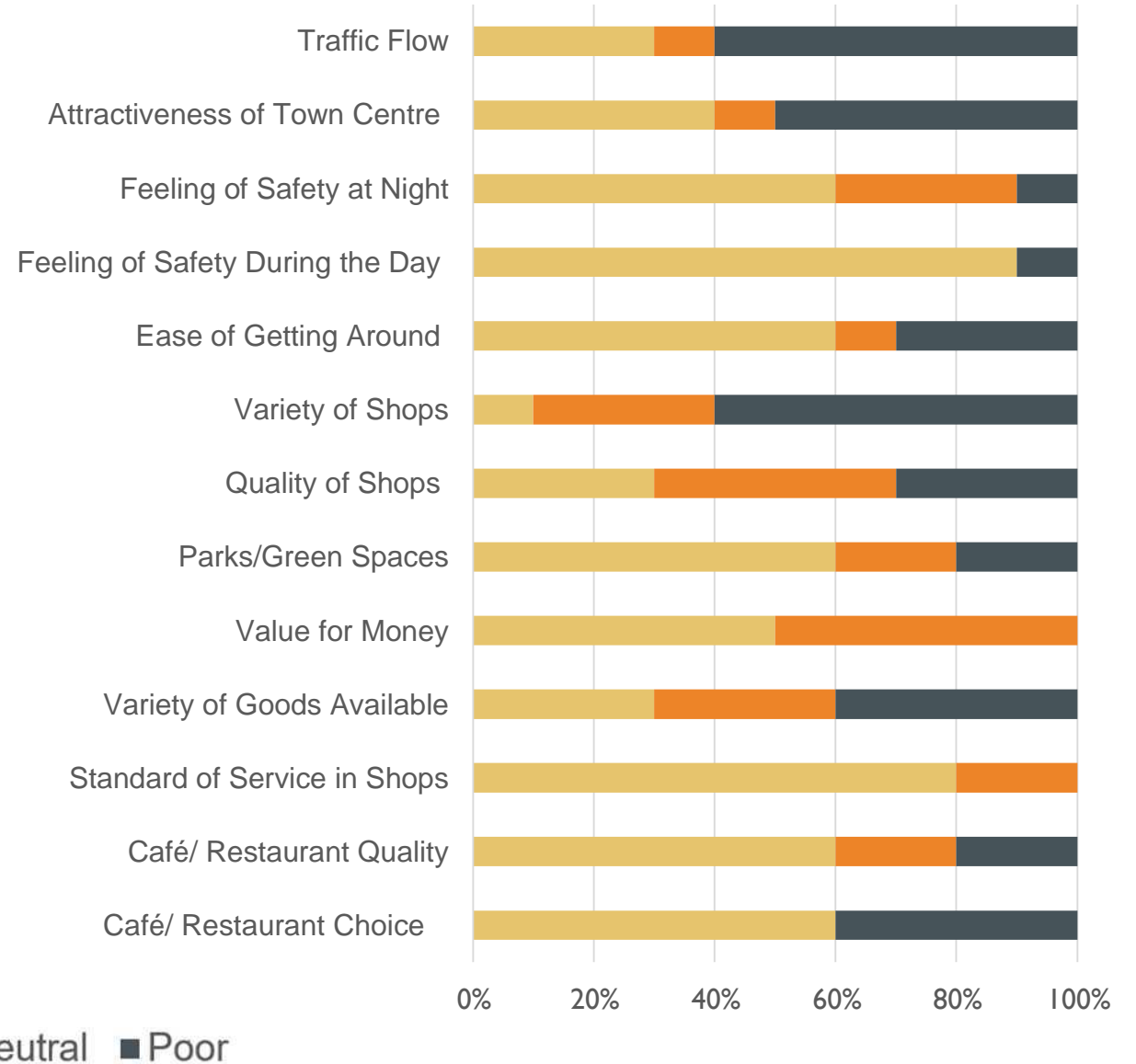
1. Vibrancy During the Evening
2. Parking Space Availability: Cars
- =3. Variety of Shops
- =3. Care and Maintenance of Buildings
- =3. Pavement Quality
4. Traffic Flow
5. Pavement Cleanliness

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

## Community Responses:

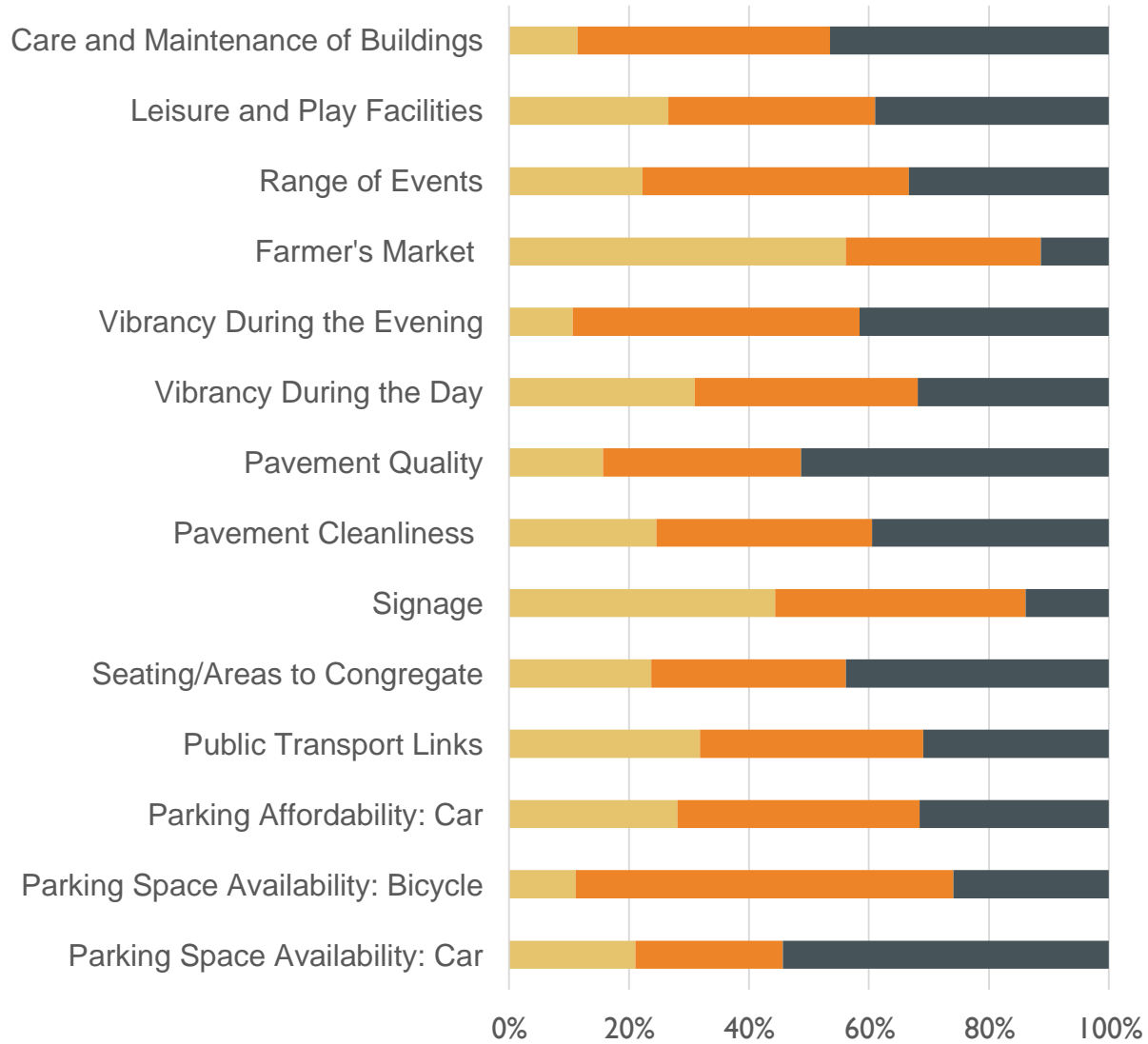


## Business Responses:

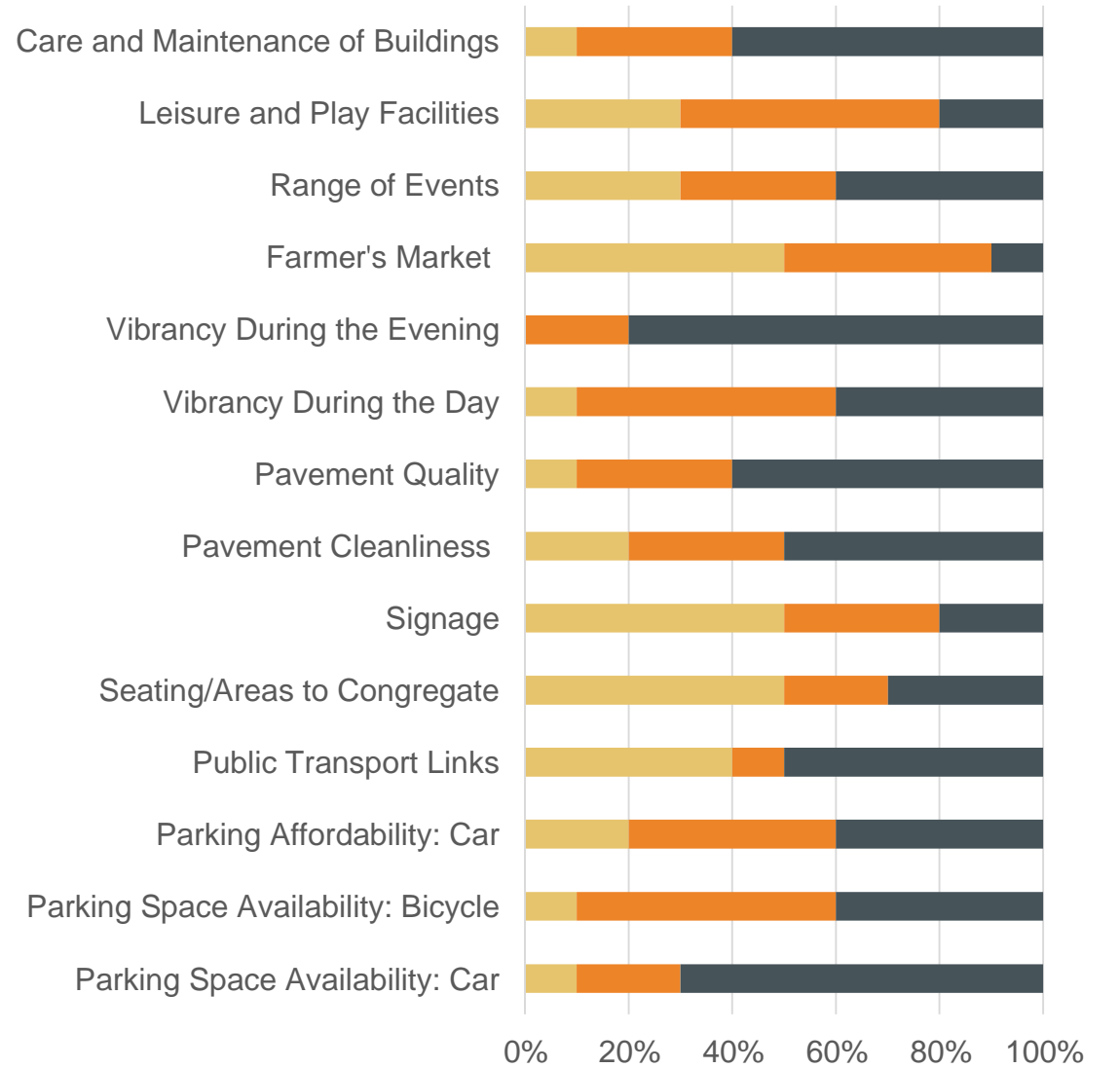


# BUSINESS & COMMUNITY SURVEY RESPONSES: How Would You Rate? (Continued)

## Community Responses:



## Business Responses:



Good Neutral Poor



# 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 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 in 2021 and 2022 for their contributions to the project:

## Business and Community:

Stonehaven Business Association

Stonehaven and District Community Council

Footfall Count Volunteers

Accessibility Audit Volunteers: 4 adults



## Partner Organisations:

PS Adam Mellis, Police Scotland

Elaine Bisset, VisitAberdeenshire



## Council Teams:

Planning Information and Delivery

GIS Team

Community Learning and Development

Kincardine and Mearns Area Office

Community Payback Unpaid Hours Service

Community Engagement and Equalities

Economic Development

Transportation

Planning Policy

Customer and Digital Services

**Aberdeenshire**  
COUNCIL



# Aberdeenshire

## COUNCIL



TOWN CENTRE HEALTH CHECK  
SEPTEMBER 2022

REPORT PRODUCED BY THE PLANNING INFORMATION AND DELIVERY TEAM  
PLANNING AND ECONOMY ; ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES ; ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL

WOODHILL HOUSE, WESTBURN ROAD, ABERDEEN AB16 5GB

[Delivery@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:Delivery@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)

[www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning](http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning)