



From mountain to sea

Community Impact Assessment

Interim Findings



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Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL



Community Impact Assessment

PART 1: Community Survey

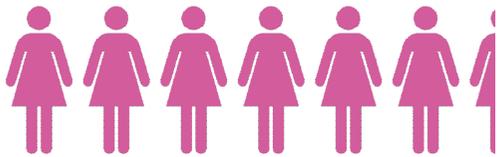
PART 2: Ward Forums

PART 3: Data Analysis

PART 1: Community Survey

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Sex

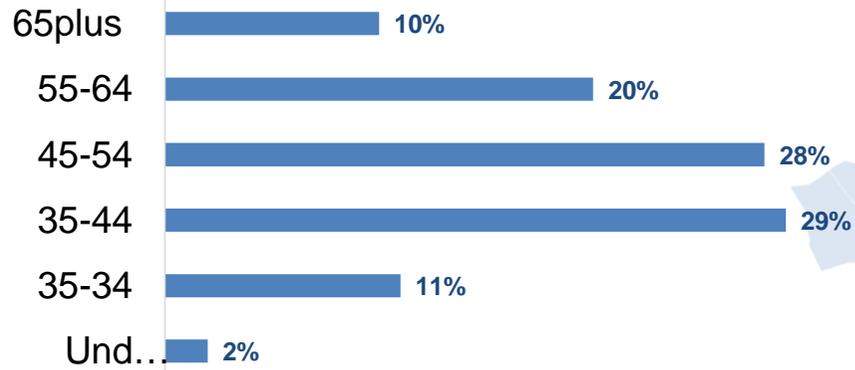


Female 82%

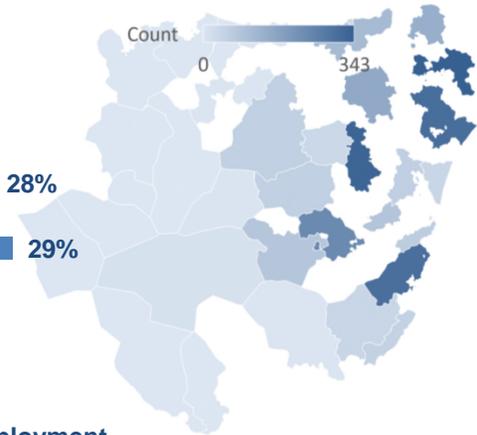


Male 18%

Age



Area



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Housing tenure



- 84% owner occupied
- 7% social rented
- 9% private rented/other

Disability

- 6% have a disability
- 2% prefer not to say



Caring responsibilities

- 20% responsible for caring for an adult
- 13% have pre-school age children
- 47% have school age children



Household income

- 15% below £20,000
- 21% between £20,000 and £40,000
- 17% between £40,000 and £60,000
- 22% over £60,000



Employment

- 61% employed
- 10% self employed
- 3% unemployed
- 2% student
- 2% unable to work
- 11% retired
- 6% looking after home/family
- 5% other





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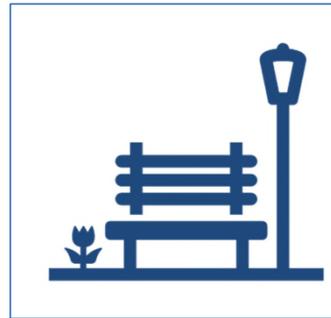
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Positive and negative impact on community groups



- Improved communication (between members and the wider community)
- Increased use of digital technology (use of zoom, teams, etc to hold meetings/deliver counselling)
- Reacted to the situation well (for example change of focus from community café to foodbank)
- Increase in demand in services



- Loss of income
- Procurement issues
- Unknown impact of closure of facilities (for example village halls)
- Increased pressure on volunteers
- Faced barriers and bureaucracy dealing with some “statutory services”
- Concerns about capacity and sustainability



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Local communities have rallied to meet local need. Response has been very quick, especially in the community. New volunteers coming forward which was fantastic

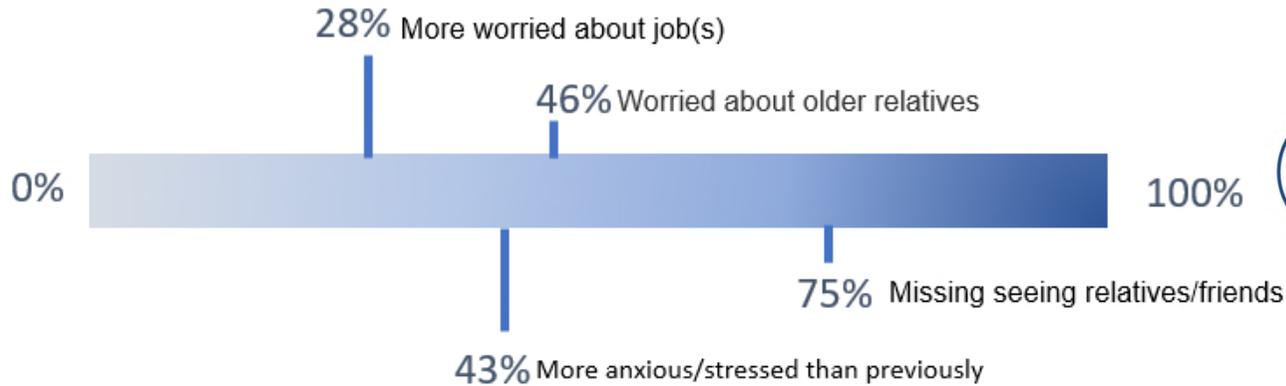
The flow of information and direction from Aberdeenshire Council was brilliant however we felt somewhat overwhelmed by the amount



Views about the impact on community groups
Views about the impact on people

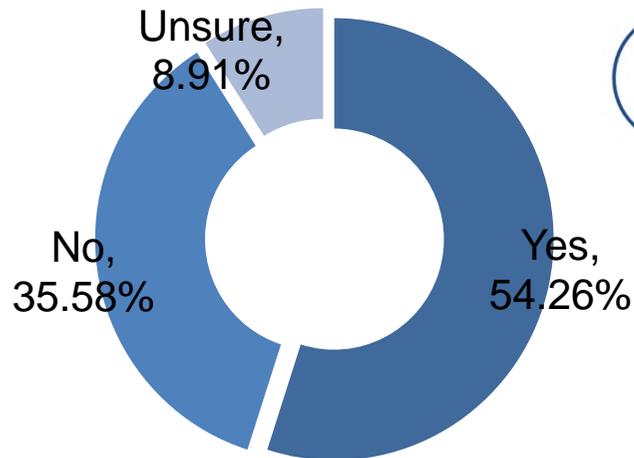


Biggest negative impacts people are facing right now



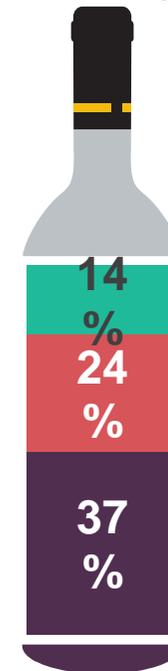
Three quarters of respondents noted that they have been missing relatives and friends

Have you been more active during lockdown?



The majority of respondents were more active during the lockdown period

Drinking more or less than before?



1 in 4 people are admit to drinking more in the past few months



“

In general we have coped well and the only real worry has been over future employment but that was to do with the oil price as well as covid. Overall I am optimistic that there will be work just might not be the same as prior to the lockdown

We found it very difficult to both work and have a preschool aged child at home (we are all very independent, including the child). Most resources and activities were for more school aged children. However, the psychological resilience hub was fantastic and helped me get through the worst patch

”

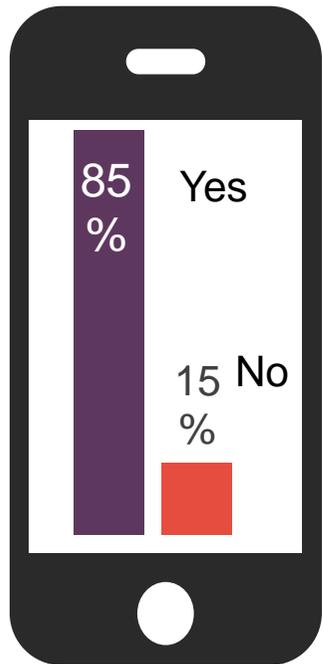
Views about the impact on people

In there own words: illustrative quotes



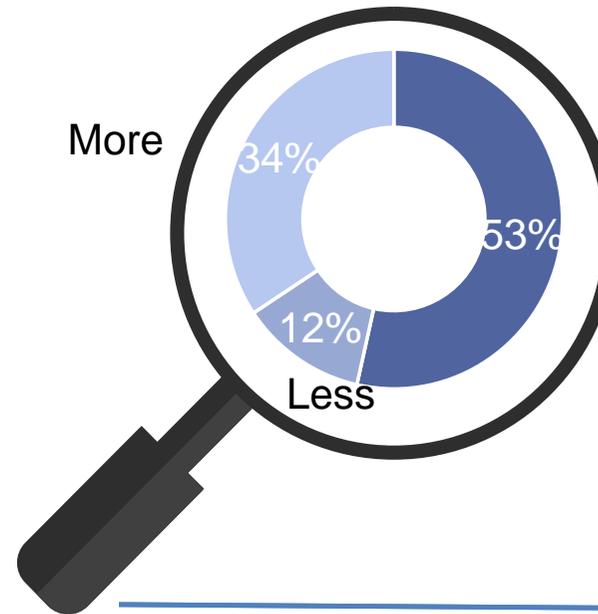
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Have used new technology to keep in touch with friends and family?



Most people reported that they had used new technology such as zoom and Face Time to keep in touch with others

Frequency of contact with friends and family



About the same

Nearly everyone reported that they have been in contact with others either about the same as before or more often



Nearly half of all respondents agreed that support from family had made the pandemic easier



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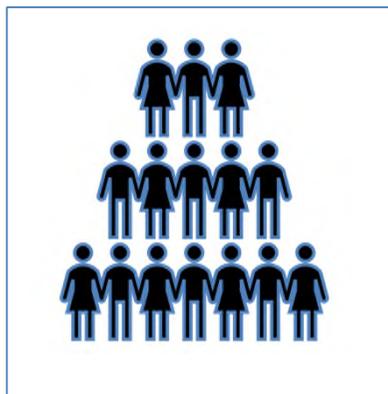
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Views on the positive and negative impacts On People



- People have enjoyed spending more time with their families
- Around half of all of respondents were more active during lockdown compared to normal
- A high percentage of people report making positive changes to their lifestyle
- People have found ways to relax and take part in different activities (top three responses include; walking, cooking, gardening)



- A significant amount of people are drinking more units of alcohol
- People are more stressed and anxious than before
- A substantial amount of people are concerned about the impact of the pandemic on other people's mental health
- People are concerned about access to health care services and the impact of the last few months on long term health



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More wild flowers, quieter roads enabling us to enjoy bike rides & walks without fear of speeding traffic which is normally an issue. Less rubbish lying around the streets & park

I liked the wild flowers in embankments and roundabouts that had been left to grow, encouraging bees and other pollinators



More people saying hello and in my village plenty of people out walking but it didn't feel busy. More wildlife for sure. Especially the noisy birds.



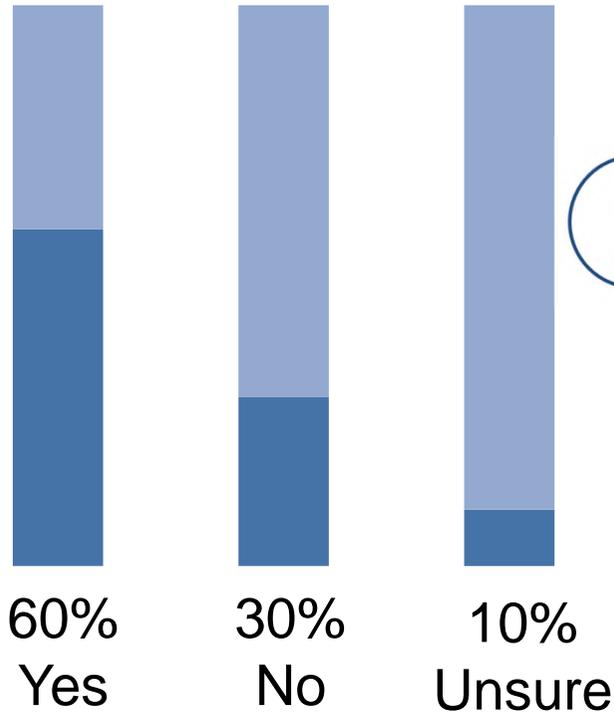
Views about the impact on place

In their own words: illustrative quotes continued



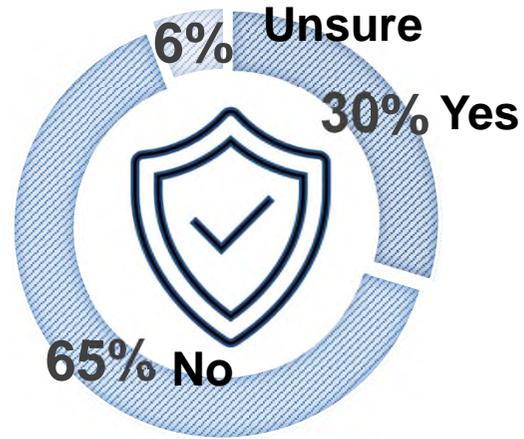
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Have you noticed improvements in your local community?



Over half of people who responded have felt there has been improvements in their local area

Has the pandemic affected how safe you feel in your local area ?



Nearly one third of people feel less safe in their local area

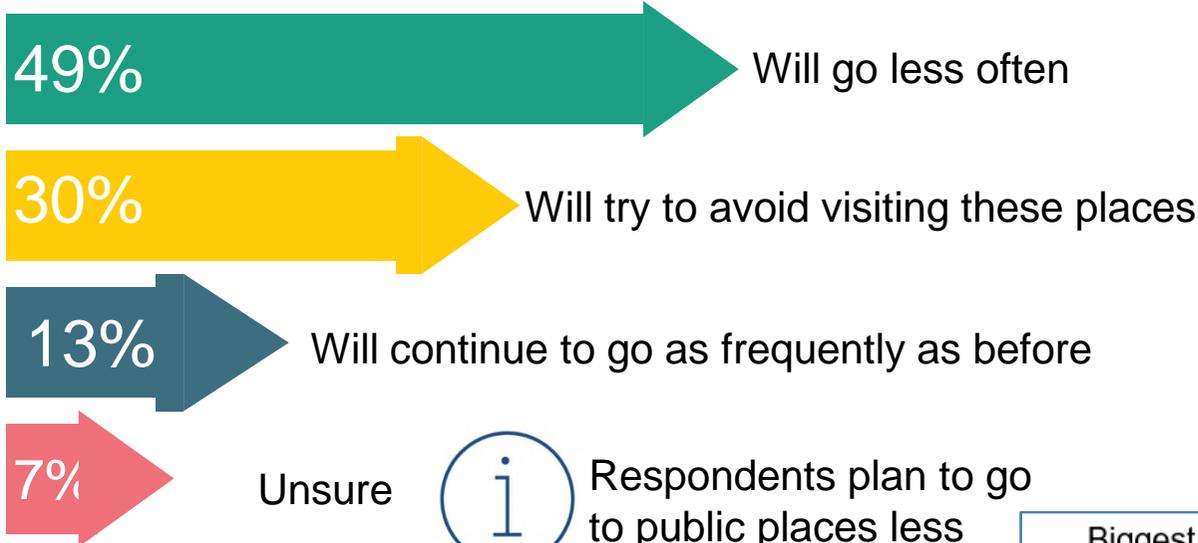
- 62% of people rely on my neighbours for help if needed
- 51% of people think there neighbours look out for them
- 50% could ask their neighbours for advice





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Views on visiting public places



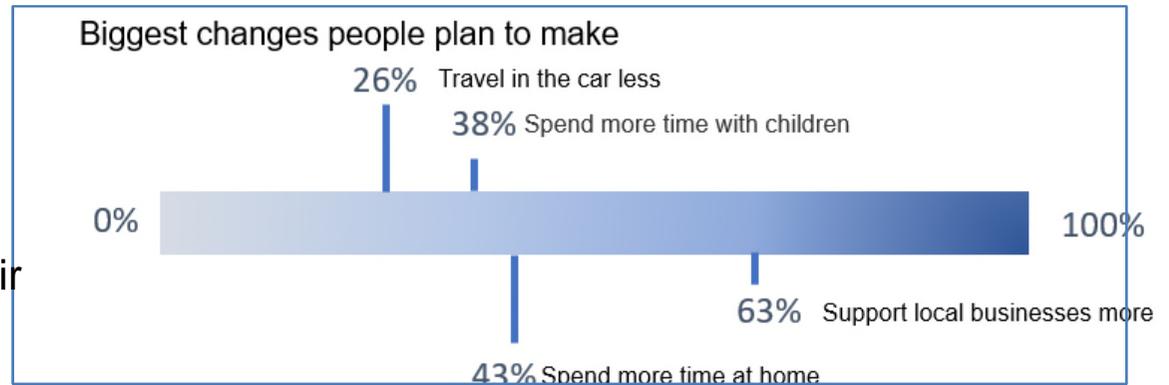
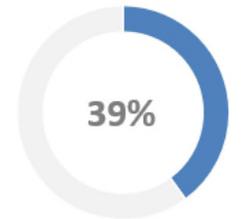
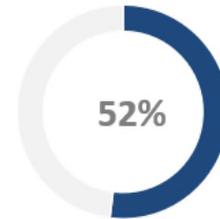
i Respondents plan to go to public places less often in the future but are planning on spending less time traveling, being home, spending time with their family and supporting local businesses

Percentage of residents concerned with:

Future employment

Financial situation

Education or training opportunities





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Views on the positive and negative impacts

On Place



- Residents are confident that their neighbours would look out for them and other people living nearby
- Nearly everyone is certain they would help out people living nearby if they were asked to
- More people think there had been improvement in their local area because of lockdown compared to those who disagree
- A quarter of people have volunteered in their local area and nearly all of them will continue to do so



- A third of people agreed that they have felt lonely or isolated in the last three months
- 1 in 3 people feel less safe in their home or local area
- A minority of people have kept in touch with friends and family less
- Residents are concerned that there is gaps in the support available for certain groups for example single parents, vulnerable groups and young people



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I'm really concerned about people from Aberdeen ignoring the local lockdown rules and visiting Deeside, about people visiting multiple pubs, getting drunk being unable to adhere to pretty simple social distancing rules and putting lives at risk. I'm concerned about the local economy and the financial hardships that families will face when there are inevitable job cuts.



Views about the impact on the economy
In there own words: illustrative quotes continued



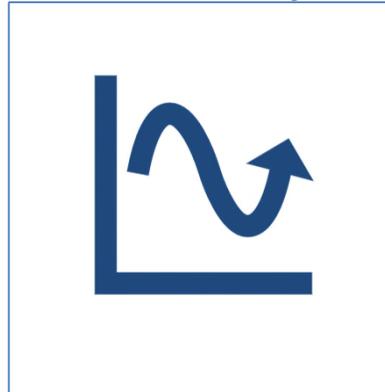
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Views on the positive and negative impacts

On the Economy



- Most people have claimed they intend buy goods from local shops and business more often in the future
- People are positive about their experiences of working differently through the pandemic



- A higher proportion of people than before are concerned about their finances and job security
- Concern about the loosing of restrictions are prominent among individuals
- The majority of people will change behaviours and habits around how frequently they visit public places in the short and medium term
- Most people have spent less money in the last few months
- A number of people are still on furlough from their employer



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Views on Aberdeenshire Council

- 48% of respondents think Aberdeenshire Council is doing a good job overall in its response to the COVID 19 pandemic (15% disagreed and 37% were unsure)
- 45% think that the decisions the Council has made have been in the best interest for people living in Aberdeenshire (15% disagreed and 40% were unsure)
- 46% think that the Council has treated residents with dignity and respect (9% disagreed and 45% were unsure)
- Three quarters of respondents think the Council has communicated OK or better



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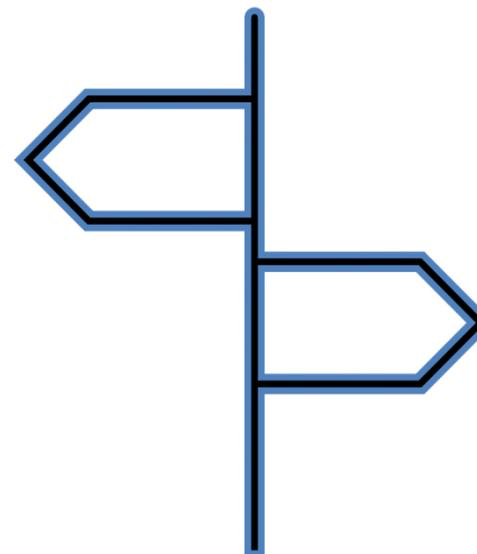
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PART 2: Ward Forum Meetings

- Forum meetings ran in all six administrative areas of the Council in August 2020
- All Elected Members and a range of groups and organisations from the community, voluntary and, business community were invited to attend virtually
- Feedback from meetings was positive and a general feeling from all the meetings was that the meetings in themselves were a good way to bring the local community together to reflect on the last few months and an important to step to continue to promote, sustain, support, and maintain community action and connections locally





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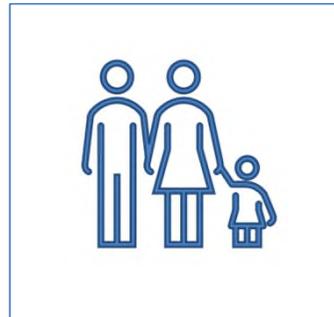
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Feedback from ward forum meetings People



- People valued, and were supported by, the Grampian Covid19 Assistance Hub
- Quick financial help from Aberdeenshire Council through the Resilience Fund was key to the success
- The existence of strong community groups (both new and established) was of key importance
- Community spirit increased and was evident in acts of kindness



- There was too much reliance on digital communication
- Information was being issued from too many places and a more co-ordinated approach
- Loneliness and isolation were big issues particularly for the elderly
- Volunteers are going back to work, reducing availability and capacity for community groups.



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Feedback from ward forum meetings Place



- Footpath and cycle networks created over past years were greatly appreciated.
- Physical activity increased. People realised what is on their doorsteps
- Communities were shopping more locally, local businesses supported the community and the community supported the businesses
- Reduction in traffic meant
- Uncut grassed areas and verges left for wildflowers to grow were appreciated



- Lack of grass cutting, maintenance of communal spaces
- Concerns about the confidence of shielded and elderly residents
- Investment is required into providing and upgrading safe accessible paths
- Increase of littering and dog fouling
- Sudden increase in day visitors and overnight campers to coastal and rural areas



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Feedback from ward forum meetings Economy



- Local business reacted quickly to the pandemic and were able to diversify
- Employers saw that productivity could be maintained with employees working flexibly at home.
- Business relief fund for village halls



- Concerns over the end of furlough, increase in unemployment, reduction of available jobs, pay cuts etc.
- Limited broadband affects rural business.
- Not all businesses or organisations were eligible for funding support and charitable organisations are reporting a drop in donations
- Covid-19 is not going away, communities need to be supported to live with Covid-19 and to recover
- Need to avoid duplication of other work taking place and be careful not to create dependencies for people



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PART 3: Data analysis

Overall vulnerability

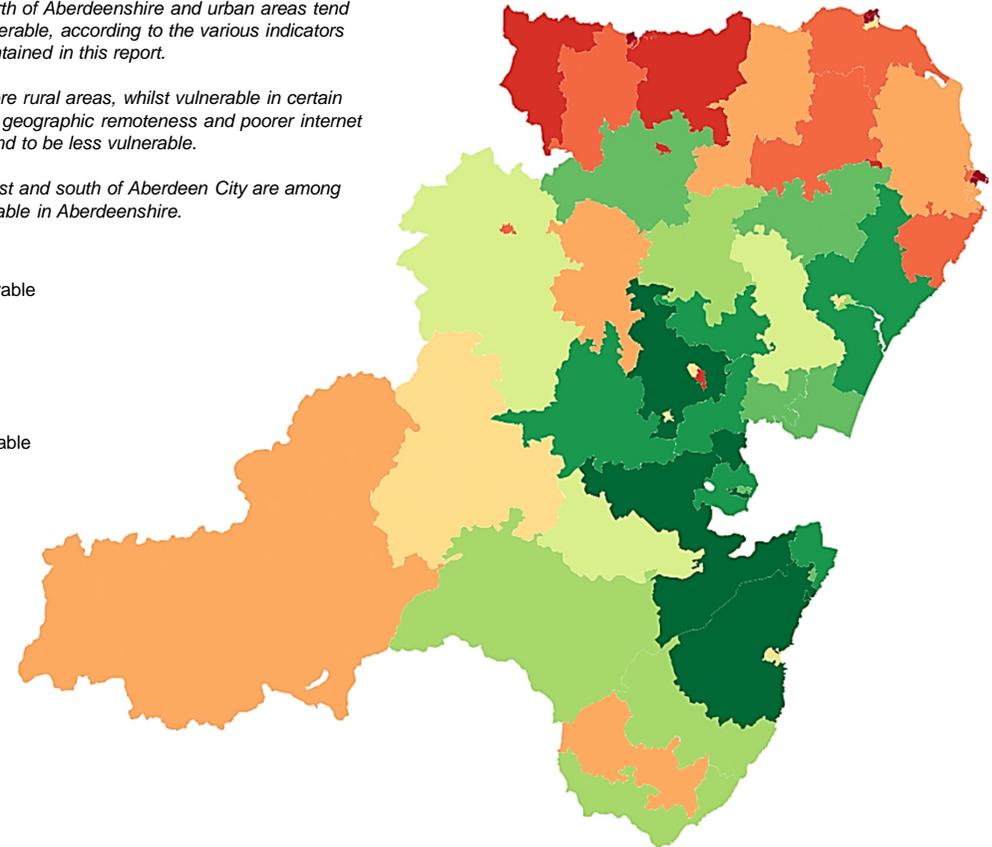
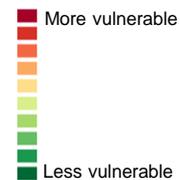
Intermediate Zones in Aberdeenshire ranked according to their respective rankings using the following themes:

- COVID Vulnerability;
- Age Vulnerability;
- Health Vulnerability;
- Economic Vulnerability;
- and Other Socio-Economic Vulnerability.

Areas in the north of Aberdeenshire and urban areas tend to be more vulnerable, according to the various indicators and themes contained in this report.

Some of the more rural areas, whilst vulnerable in certain respects due to geographic remoteness and poorer internet connections, tend to be less vulnerable.

Areas to the west and south of Aberdeen City are among the least vulnerable in Aberdeenshire.





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Emerging trends

1. People are concerned about their jobs, education and safety in their community
2. Residents are reporting to be drinking more alcohol
3. Some people continue to feel lonely or isolated
4. Community groups have reacted well but there is concern around sustainability and future capacity



5. People are confident that they can ask their neighbours for help

6. Local people have said they will do more to support local business

7. People are positive about volunteering in their local area

8. People report to be more active (socially and physically) than before

9. People are positive about their local area and the community they live in

