

PITLOCHRY  
COMMUNITY PROFILE  
February 2022



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## Background

This Profile has been produced to give an insight into the Pitlochry Community Action Plan area. We also identify strategic issues that arise from analysis of the facts and figures presented.

It documents the facts and figures about the area that could be collected from existing sources such as the [Perth & Kinross Local Development Plan 2](#), [National Records of Scotland \(NRS\)](#), [Scottish Government Statistics, Census 2011](#), [Office for National Statistics](#), Perth & Kinross Town Centre and Retail Study 2016, [Scottish Assessors Association, Living Streets Scotland](#) and [Open Data, Perth & Kinross](#). Where appropriate, data sources were selected via [Community Insights](#) Software for the Pitlochry and Moulin area which is similar geographically to the Pitlochry Intermediate Zone area.

The profile also benefits from shared local knowledge and information.

It should be noted that not all statistical information available for use was comparable in terms of the boundary area for the consultation processes. The Pitlochry Intermediate Census Zone covers 4 data zones and is much wider than the Community Action Plan area. However, in general terms, Data Zones 2 and 3 of the Pitlochry Intermediate Census Zone area are fairly representative of the Community Action Plan area.

The Community Profile forms part of the process to develop a five-year Community Action Plan 2022 – 2027 for the Pitlochry area. In addition to the Profile, the other elements of the Community Action Planning process have included:

- A Community Views Survey
- A Business Survey
- A Youth Survey
- Stakeholder Interviews
- A Community Futures Event

## Acknowledgements

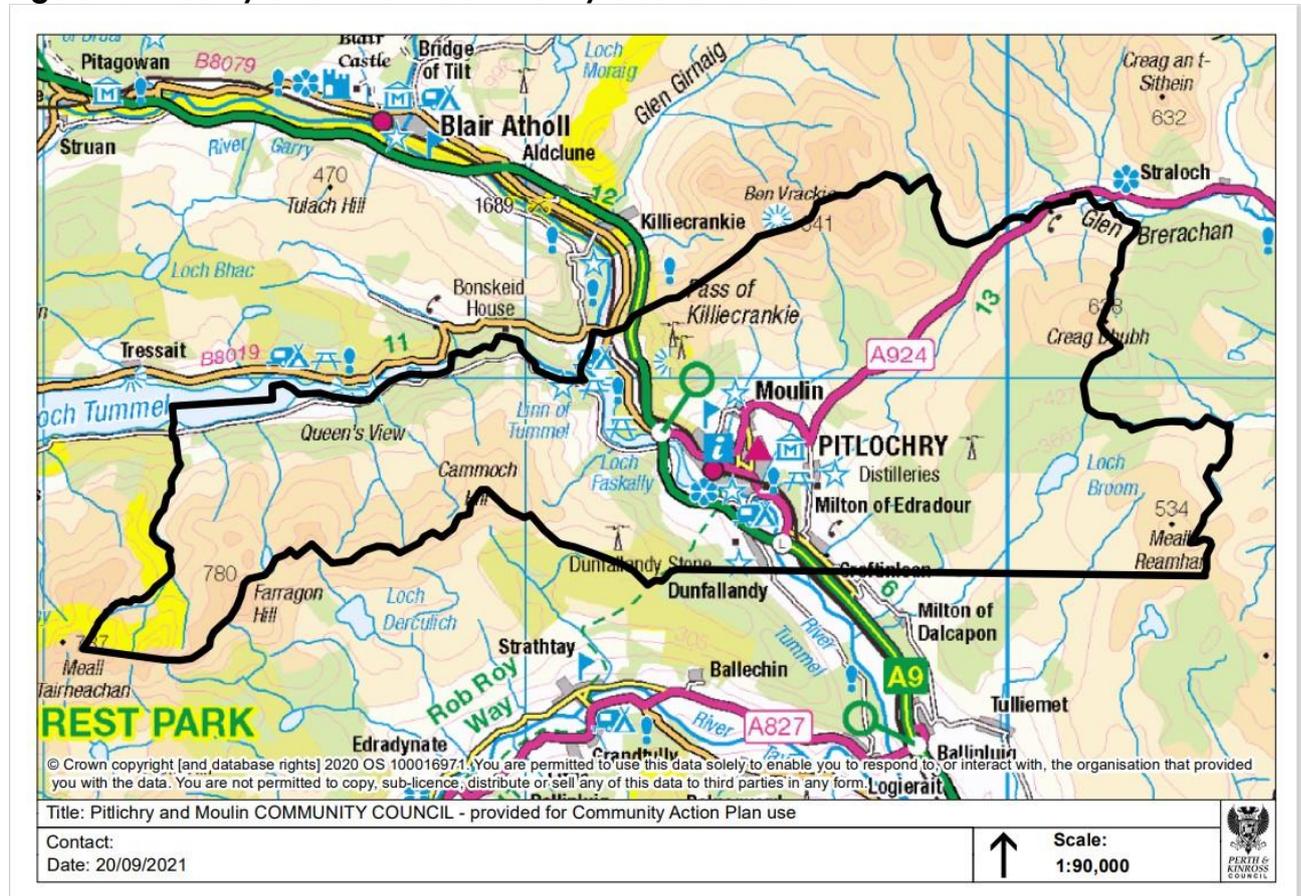
Funding for the Community Action Plan work has been provided by the Rural Perth & Kinross Leader Programme.

The Community Profile has been researched and produced by STAR Development with support from the Steering Group using guidelines and templates provided by STAR Development Group through their Community Futures Programme. Special thanks go to Alan Crombie for the majority of the superb information detailed in the Heritage section.

## 2. OVERVIEW OF AREA

The area covered by the Community Action Plan is the Pitlochry and Moulin Community Council plan area (Figure 1). The Community Council area extends beyond that of the Pitlochry Intermediate Census Zone area (Figure 2) - Data Zones 2 and 3 within the Pitlochry Intermediate Zone are the closest match in terms of available statistics used to complete the Community Profile.

**Figure 1: Pitlochry and Moulin Community Council area**



### Brief description

Pitlochry is well situated on the main A9 Scottish trunk road system with excellent transport links to the North and South. The Victorian town is positioned in the heart of Highland Perthshire amidst stunning scenery and has a wealth of history to its name. Highland Perthshire itself comprises several other historic and beautiful villages and towns including Dunkeld, Aberfeldy and Kenmore. Pitlochry is the largest settlement in the area, split into two parts by the River Tummel. It is a local and visitor service centre and plays a significant role in the Highland Perthshire economy. Tourism is a key driver to maintaining the viability of services and provides valuable employment across the area.

Pitlochry has ample period features to explore with many Victorian buildings remaining. This charm adds to the town centre experience for both local people and visitors. There are many shops, cafes, restaurants and hotels to enjoy with a great calendar of events to extend the town's appeal for everyone. To name a few, Etape Caledonia brings in thousands of avid cyclists each year for its closed road sportive; The Enchanted Forest, a multi-award-winning light show attracts 80,000 visitors and the new March into Pitlochry Music Festival caters for a variety of music interests. Pitlochry Highland Games,

re-established in 1852, also attracts upwards of 5,000 visitors each year and the New Year's Day Street Party draws international visitors to the town too. Pitlochry is spoiled with distilleries - Edradour Distillery, one of Scotland's traditional distilleries, established in 1825, offers a unique experience for those who visit and the Blair Athol Distillery & Visitor Centre, which uses Blair Athol's ancient source of water – the Allt Dour – to contribute to its whisky. Pitlochry Festival Theatre attracts over 100,000 visitors annually and produces large-scale plays and musicals for theatre goers of all ages.

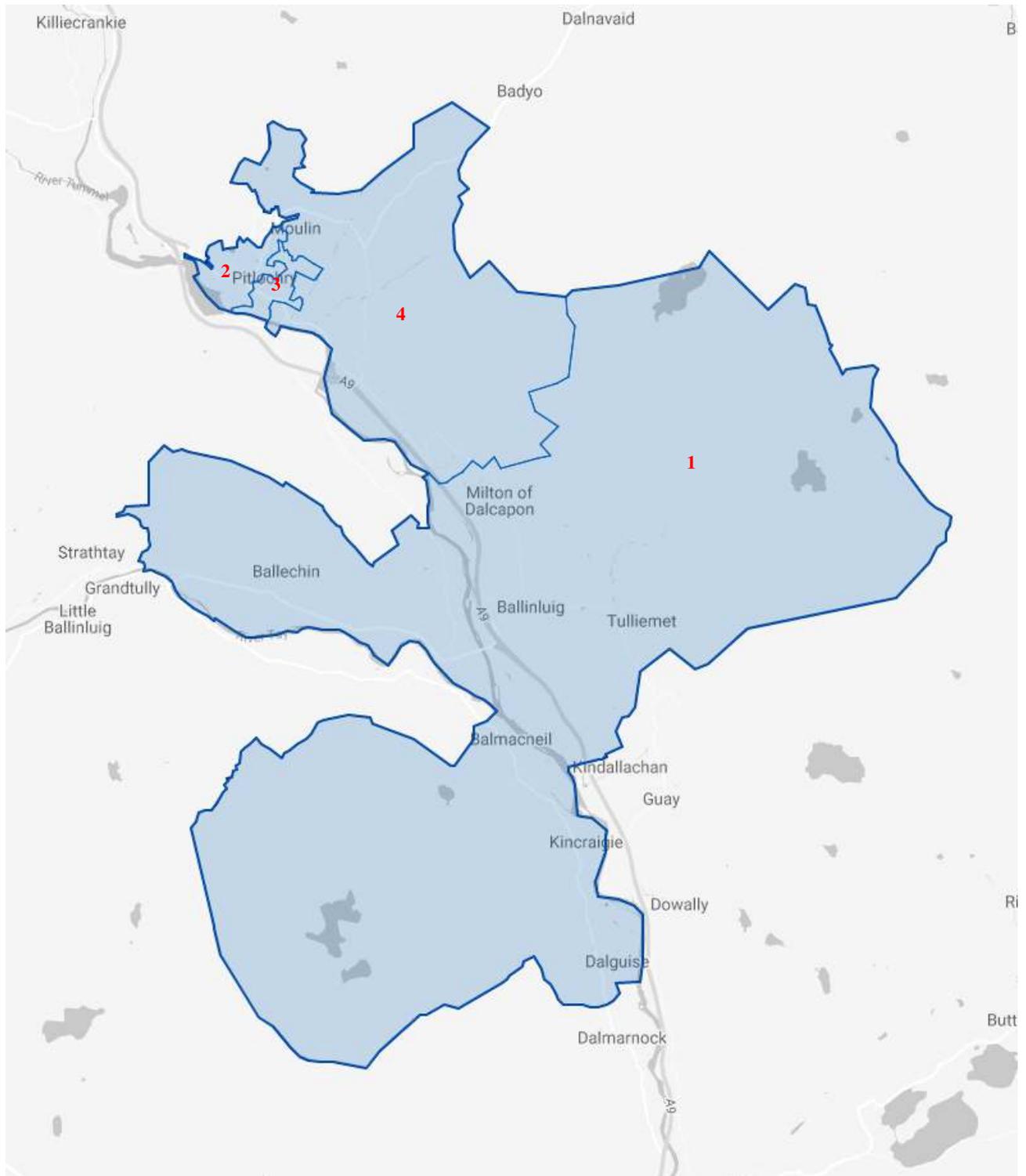
Its long-standing train station has enabled Pitlochry to grow and thrive as a busy tourist destination, offering a central location where visitors can access both amenities and adventures across the area. There are hills, glens, lochs and rivers that easily set the area apart and thanks to local mountains, Ben y Vrackie and Schiehallion, regular walkers are attracted to stay in the area or simply make use of the local hospitality after a hard day!

Just one kilometre north of Pitlochry is the small village of Moulin – it may be small but it is big in history! From Viking raids on Moulin Moors to the retreat of Robert the Bruce in Moulin in 1306 to Mary Queen of Scots visiting on her way to Blair Castle, it has many fascinating facts and features to be explored. Prior to Pitlochry itself growing around 1745, the Parish of Moulin took in the whole area of Moulin and Pitlochry, with Pitlochry being the smaller of the two.

### 3. POPULATION

The best fit statistics are available for a number of Pitlochry data zones and a larger Pitlochry Intermediary Zone. The map below shows the wider Pitlochry Intermediate Zone and the four data zones that are included.

**Figure 2: 2011 Intermediate Census Zone Pitlochry split into its 4 Data Zones**



Boundary data: Copyright Scottish Government, contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right (2018)

**Table 1: Population Comparisons**

	2011	2020	approx. % change
Pitlochry Data Zone 1	735	702	↓ 4.5%
Pitlochry Data Zone 2	1,255	1,329	↑ 5.9%
Pitlochry Data Zone 3	1,125	1,087	↓ 3.4%
Pitlochry Data Zone 4	645	693	↑ 7.5%
Pitlochry Intermediate Zone <i>(Note: sum of figures for data zones 1-4)</i>	3,760	3,811	↑ 1.35 %
Perth & Kinross	146,652	152,910	↑ 4.45%
Scotland	5,295,403	5,466,000	↑ 3.22%

Source: Scottish Government Statistics

**Table 2: Structure of Population by age group in 2011**

Age band	Pitlochry Intermediate Zone	Perth & Kinross	Scotland
0-4 years	3.4%	5%	5.5%
5-15 years	8.9%	12.2%	11.8%
16-29 years	14.5%	15.3%	18.5%
30-44 years	15.2%	18.2%	20%
45-59 years	21%	22%	21.1%
60-74 years	20.9%	17.9%	15.5%
75 years +	16.2%	9.5%	7.7%
Under 16 years	12.2%	17.2%	17.3%
16-64 years	58.6%	62.7%	65.9%
65 years +	29.2%	20.2%	16.8%

Source: Census 2011

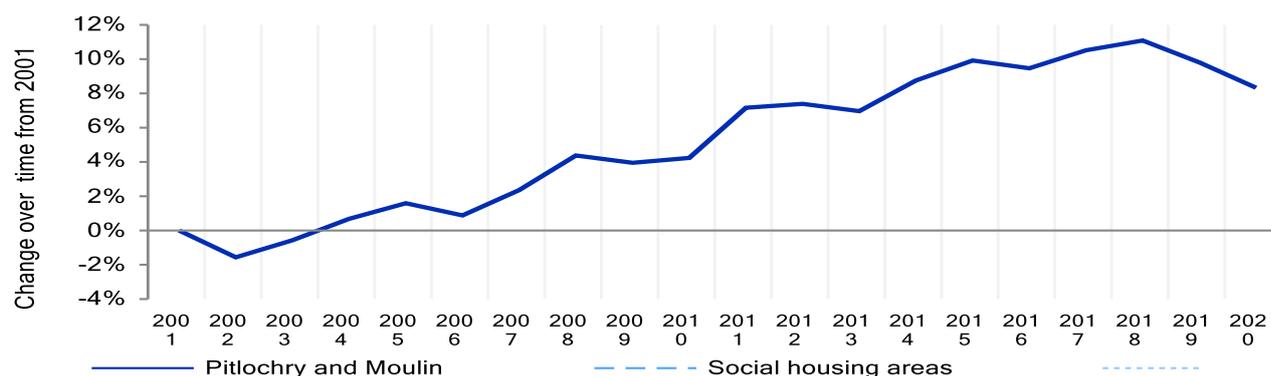
**Figure 3: % Change in total population from 2001 to 2020 – Pitlochry and Moulin**

Figure 3: % change in total population from 2001-2020  
Source: Mid-Year Estimates (ONS)- Community Insights

The Community Insights data (Figure 3) for Pitlochry and Moulin is similar to the geographical area covered by the Pitlochry Intermediate Census Zone.

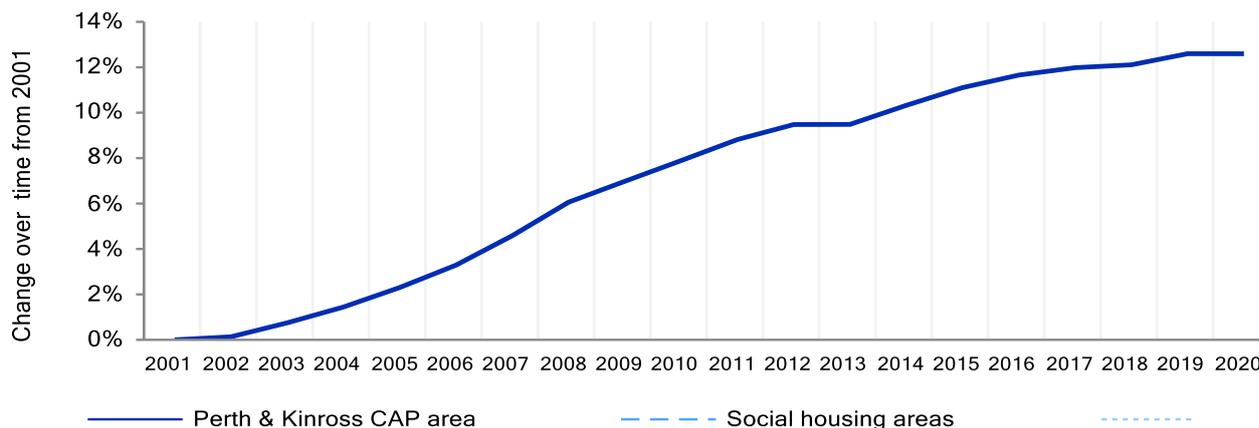
**Figure 4: % Change in total population from 2001 to 2020 – Perth and Kinross**

Figure 4: % change in total population from 2001-2020  
 Source: Mid-Year Estimates (ONS) – Community Insights

### Comments

The population growth rate in Pitlochry Intermediate Zone is low in comparison to the growth seen in both Perth and Kinross and Scotland (Table 1), with two out of the four data zones actually decreasing in numbers. When only Data Zones 2 & 3 are considered, this shows a cumulative difference of 36 additional people between 2011 and 2020. Across all Data Zones, the difference isn't much higher at 51 additional people. **N.B.** Census 2011 Pitlochry Intermediate Zone data records a population of 2,776 but more in-depth analysis of individual Data Zones 1-4 records the figures as shown in Table 1 (3,760).

The Pitlochry Intermediate Zone population of people over the age of 65 years is almost double that compared to Scotland and almost 10% higher than Perth & Kinross as a whole (Table 2). The 75 years + age group is more than double compared to Scotland, with all age groups 0-59 years being lower than regional and national figures. This aligns to consultation feedback that there is a noticeably older population living here.

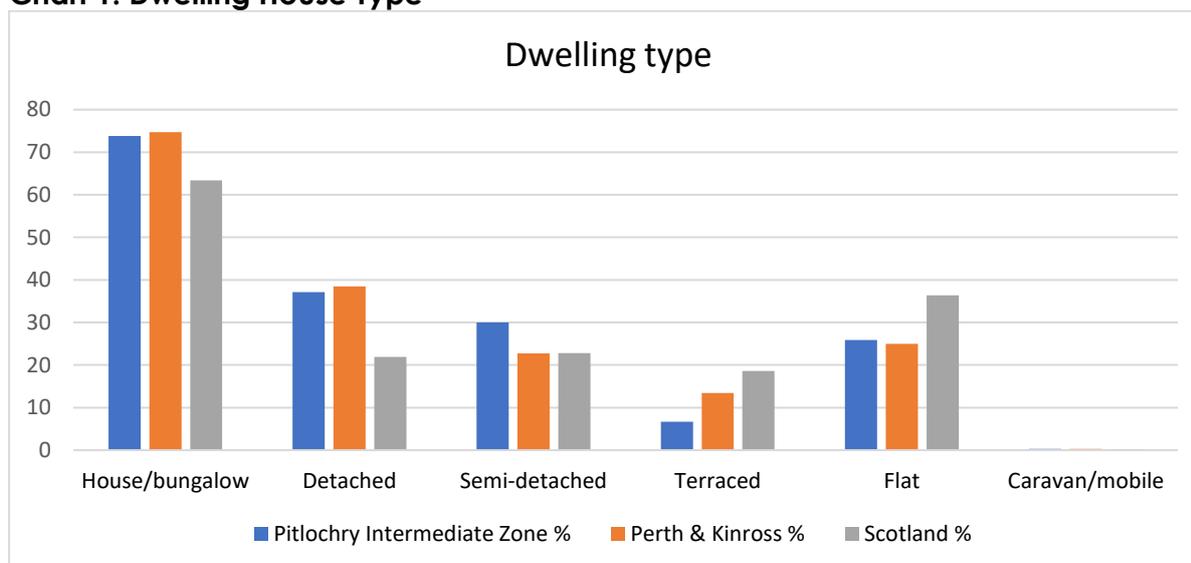
The change over time 2001-2020 for Pitlochry and Moulin (Figure 3) shows a general and fluctuating increase to the population, with the fluctuation of growth possibly reflecting the tourist-based workforce year on year at any given time. And at around 8% growth since 2001 it can be seen that there has been a decline in the population in recent times compared to Perth & Kinross (Figure 4) which has experienced a more gradual and generally upwards growth over the same time period of 12%.

### Strategic Issues

Additional pressures on services are unlikely to be attributable to the additional permanent residents in the area according to the data. The fact that the older population is considerably higher than recorded across Perth & Kinross and Scotland could be one factor – people are living for longer – plus the fact that local services have been significantly eroded is likely to be the other.

## 4. HOUSING

Chart 1: Dwelling House Type



Source: Census 2011

Table 3: Housing Tenure

Tenure	2011		
	Pitlochry Intermediate Zone	Perth & Kinross	Scotland
<b>Owned</b>	64.2%	65.9%	62%
<b>Rented from council</b>	7.9%	11.5%	13.2%
<b>Other social rented</b>	12.8%	5.6%	11.1%
<b>Private rented</b>	13%	14.6%	12.4%
<b>Living rent free</b>	2.1%	2.3%	1.3%

Source: Census 2011

### Comments

A house/bungalow is by far the highest dwelling type out of all house types but the overall trends are fairly similar across Perth & Kinross and Scotland, apart from terraced housing where this is at a much lower level in Pitlochry Intermediate Zone in comparison.

House ownership is consistent with Perth & Kinross and Scotland levels but council rented property is noticeably lower in the Pitlochry area. Overall, the occupancy of rented property is not that different to elsewhere but does indicate that despite the high numbers of older adults living in the area (Table 2), there is a high demand for rental properties in the area, potentially caused by the very high houses prices across Pitlochry Data Zones as shown in Table 4.

**Table 4: Median House Prices**

Data Zones	No. of dwellings (2020)	Median House Prices (2018)			
		Data Zone	Pitlochry Intermediate Zone	Perth & Kinross	Scotland
1	341	£207,000	£192,500	£170,500	£152,500
2	695	£252,000			
3	582	£145,000			
4	404	£227,500			

Source: Scottish Government Statistics

**Table 5: Small area household estimates data, numbers and percentages of dwellings by 2011 data zone, 2020**

Data Zone	Total no. of dwellings	Occupied dwellings	Vacant dwellings	Second homes
1	340	297 (87%)	19 (6%)	24 (7%)
2	696	622 (89%)	36 (5%)	38 (5%)
3	581	533 (92%)	19 (3%)	29 (5%)
4	404	364 (90%)	17 (4%)	23 (6%)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2,021</b>	<b>1,816</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>114</b>

Source: Open Data, Perth & Kinross

### Comments

Median House prices in Data Zones 1,2 and 4 are significantly higher than Data Zone 3. The Pitlochry Intermediate Zone median price is £22,000 higher than that in Perth & Kinross and £40,000 higher than Scotland median price data.

In 2020, the total number of houses across Pitlochry Data Zones 1-4 was recorded as 2,022 (Table 4). Census 2011 data states there were 1,297 households **with residents** which could indicate that potentially over 700 houses are used for rentals, second homes etc. Exploration of additional available data using the Perth & Kinross Open Data source (the number of dwellings is ever so slightly different) demonstrates a somewhat different perspective with second homes not recorded as high as expected (according to local feedback). When analysing self-catering accommodation (page 14), the number of self-catering units is also 114 but this is over a wider area and what the data doesn't evidence is whether all second homes are rented out as self-catering units or are just lived in occasionally.

**N.B.** differences in the data for households (similar to that highlighted for population) may have occurred as a result of changes to zone areas over time.

### Development

According to the Perth and Kinross Local Development Plan 2 (2019), Pitlochry is identified in TAYplan as a "Tier 3 Principal Settlement", which means that it is expected to accommodate some growth.

However, opportunities for development are limited due to topography to the north, the River Tummel and its flood plain around the town, the ancient woodlands adjoining or close

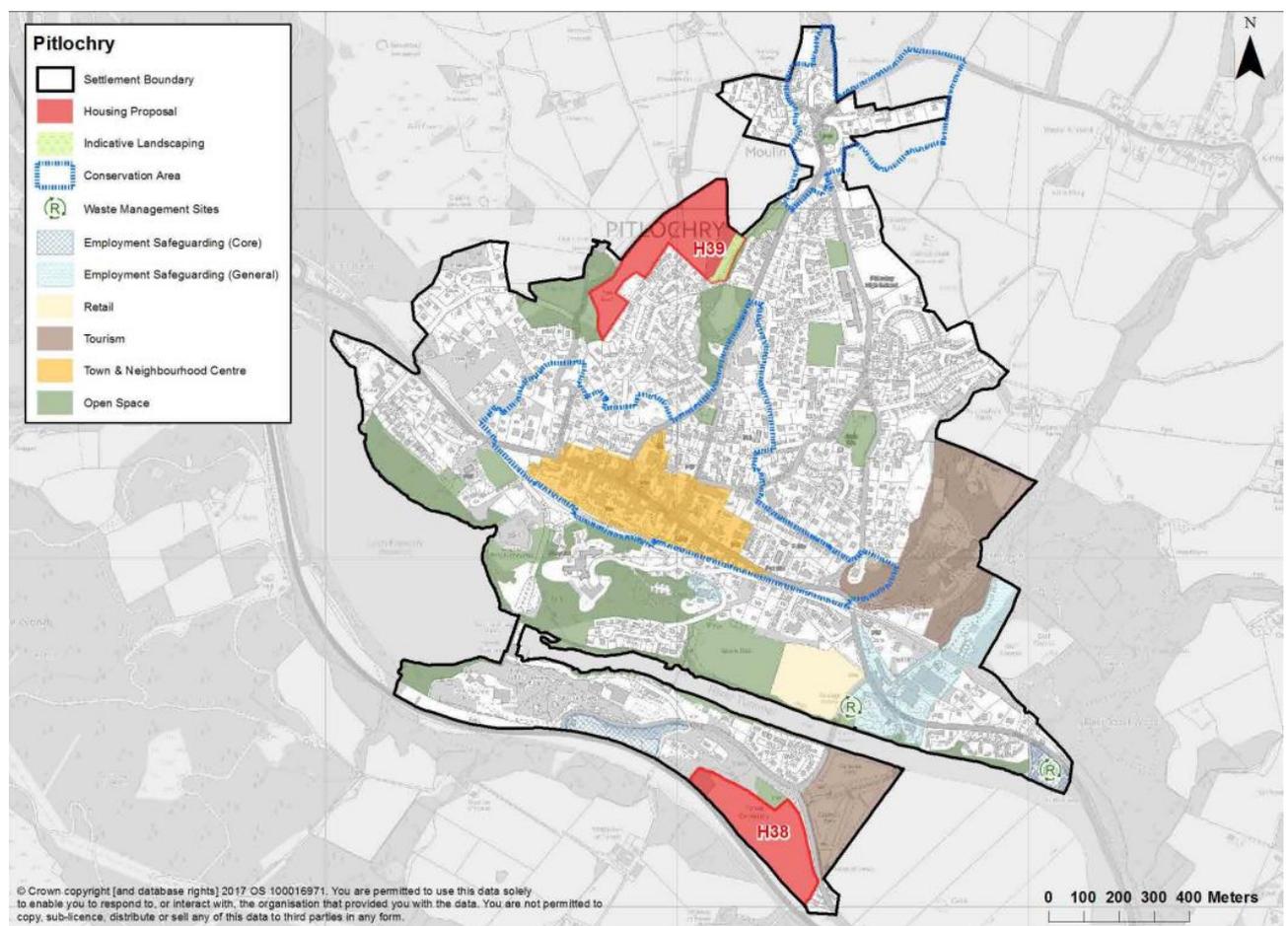
to the settlement boundary, and the A9 which defines the southern boundary. Sites are allocated for new housing development at Robertson Crescent (H39, Figure 5) in the north and at Middleton of Fonab in the south (H38, Figure 5). At Robertson Crescent houses will not be permitted to be built in the northernmost part of the site to help maintain the physical separation of Pitlochry and Moulin. As part of the Middleton of Fonab development, an area will be reserved for the future expansion of the cemetery.

A site is also reserved for retail development west of Bridge Road should an appropriate scheme come forward.

The future dualling of the A9 has the potential to bring positive economic benefits to Pitlochry although the land use implications of the project are not yet clear.

Source: Perth & Kinross Local Development Plan 2: 2019

**Figure 5: Local Area Development Plan (Pitlochry)**



Source: Perth & Kinross Local Development Plan 2: 2019

## Comments

Potential house build programmes could lead to 121-190 new houses in the area and if population is extrapolated at the regional figure of 2.12 people per house, this would add another 256-403 people to the population total, bringing it to over 4,200.

**Strategic Issues**

The low number of council rental properties aligns to consultation feedback that local authority housing is severely lacking and local people are not prioritised for allocation. House prices in the area are considerably higher than elsewhere regionally and nationally, making Pitlochry unaffordable for many people. This correlates to feedback that local people are priced out when trying to purchase a home and if both these situations are not resolved, then it may become impossible for them to stay in the area – an area where they have grown up and want to raise their own families.

The interpretation of data on second home ownership could evidence why this topic consistently arose during both the household survey and stakeholder interviews. Many local people cite second home ownership as an issue in the town but clarification of the extent of second homes owned in the area and their actual impact, may encourage a collective voice to challenge this.

Local services and amenities may not grow and develop at the same rate of new house builds, creating additional pressures in the town. As an older population in general, services such as Education for example may struggle to accommodate new children in the future if house builds are targeting families, particularly if they attend the secondary school.

## 5. ECONOMY

### Economic Activity

**Table 6: 2011 Economic Activity**

Economic activity	Pitlochry Intermediate Zone	Perth & Kinross	Scotland
<b>All persons 16 to 74</b>	1,986	107,546	3,970,530
% Economically active	70.9	71	69
% Employees - part-time	12	14.3	13.3
% Employees - full-time	40.5	40.1	39.6
% Self-employed	13.4	10.6	7.5
% Unemployed	2.5	3.3	4.8
% Full-time student – employed	2.3	2.2	2.9
% Full-time student – unemployed	0.2	0.5	0.8
% Economically inactive	29.1	29	31
% Retired	20.9	17.2	14.9
% Student	2.6	3.5	5.5
% Looking after home / family	2	3	3.6
% Long-term sick or disabled	2.5	3.3	5.1
% Other	1	1.9	1.9

Source: Census 2011

### Business Activity

**Table 7: Business Sites and Number of Employees at each site**

	Pitlochry Intermediate Zone	Perth & Kinross	Scotland
<b>No of employees</b>	230 business sites*	7,060 business sites*	208,265 business sites*
0	65	2,300	68,955
1-9	105	3,155	85,765
10-49	30	685	19,860
50-249	10	255	8,345
250+	25	660	25,345

Source: Scottish Government Statistics 2017

\*A business site is an enterprise or part thereof situated in a geographically identified place. An enterprise carries out one or more activities at one or more locations.

**Table 8: Business Sites by Sector**

Sector	Pitlochry Intermediate Zone	Perth & Kinross	Scotland
Accommodation and Food Services	45	580	16,265
Wholesale, Retail & Repairs	45	1,200	35,255
Construction	25	760	20,680
Non-manufacturing Production	20	1,105	19,615
Professional, Scientific & Technical	20	905	134,435
Administrative and Support Services	15	530	15,440
Education, Health & Social Work	10	390	12,560
Transport & Storage	10	200	7,255
Other Service Activities	10	280	9,485
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	10	220	5,900
Financial and Insurance	5	90	3,805
Manufacturing	5	305	10,120
Real Estate Activities	5	230	16,360
Information and Communication	5	265	11,095

Source: Scottish Government Statistics 2017

### Comments

*Economic activity in Pitlochry is relatively similar to that of Perth & Kinross and Scotland in many aspects, with its stand-out activities being self-employment and retired, both of which are above the regional and national figures. At almost 6% higher than the general level of self-employment in Scotland, this could be due to the rural location with great connectivity. Similarly, as reflected elsewhere in the Profile and consultation processes, higher levels of retired people are of no surprise when compared to Perth & Kinross or Scotland but is certainly not as representative of the wider population as is possibly believed.*

*It should be noted that not all employees of all business sites will necessarily be located in e.g. Pitlochry Intermediate Zone and that these figures may also represent other enterprise locations.*

*Given the high level of tourism and the bustling hospitality industry in the area, it makes sense that this sector is one of the most prevalent than elsewhere regionally or nationally. The other two top sectors for Pitlochry (Wholesale, Retail & Repairs and Construction) are broadly the same elsewhere in terms of ranking. The Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES), 2019 [Community Insights] confirms that Hotels and Catering is the largest industry in the area, with Retail being the second largest.*

### Strategic Issues

The data, whilst showing similarities across the region and Scotland, does not highlight the transient nature of some types of employment due to the tourist season and the poor terms and conditions attached to associated sectors e.g. hospitality. The Sector information does demonstrate that the area is highly dependent on a few business types and excludes individuals with other skills who could work in the area or who currently live in the town but cannot find work relative to their sector experience.

## Local Economy

**Table 9: Retail Unit costs compared with other small Towns in Perth & Kinross**

Town	Range of costs per sq.m
Crieff	£6 - £30
Blairgowrie	£6 - £30
Kinross	£7 - £12
Aberfeldy	£8 - £11
Auchterarder	£11 - £19
Pitlochry	£16 - £19

Source: Perth & Kinross Town Centre and Retail Study, 2016

### Comments

Table 9 compares retail unit costs per square metre across various local towns and shows a higher starting point in terms of cost for Pitlochry but the town does not have the highest upper end cost compared to others. Research of business rates across Pitlochry, Crieff and Blairgowrie for large shop units shows similar rates ranging between £38,000 to £40,200, so the higher business rate often referred to in Pitlochry (shops) is not that unusual when compared with other local towns.

**Table 10: Google Analytics – pitlochry.org**

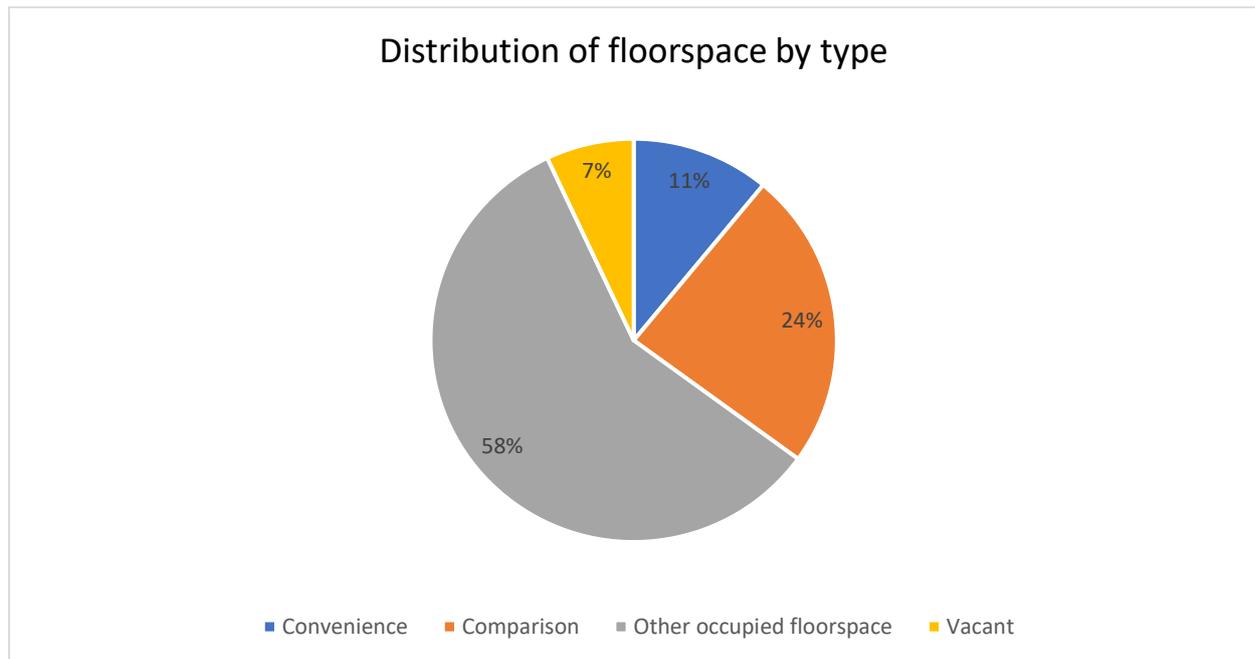
2020	2021 by Country	2021 by UK
Main hits came from London, Glasgow and Edinburgh (in that order)	UK USA Canada Australia Germany China Netherlands France Ireland Sweden	Glasgow London Edinburgh Aberdeen Perth Dundee Dunfermline Livingston Newcastle upon Tyne

Source: Pitlochry Partnership, 2022

### Comments

Google Analytics provided by Pitlochry Partnership (Table 10) show a very strong insight during the first year of the pandemic with most hits being from UK residents which correlates with government messages not to travel abroad/staycations.

The second year of the pandemic saw more countries viewing the website (pitlochry.org) with an interesting breakdown of where people in the UK live who searched. The other notable change is the demographics of people searching the website - this changed dramatically from a dominant, older female viewer to younger males aged 25 to 34 years dominating. A further observation from column three in 2021 is that the town likely had a lot of day and weekend visitors, and the full car parks would support that insight.

**Chart 2: Pitlochry Town Centre Floorspace 2016**

Source: Perth & Kinross Town Centre and Retail Study, 2016

### Chart 2 Descriptor

- Convenience floorspace examples = food, alcohol, non-alcoholic, tobacco, newspapers and magazines, non-durable household goods
- Comparison floorspace examples = books, chemists, banking, clothing, jewellery, audio
- Other floorspace examples = restaurants, cafes, pubs, takeaways

Chart 2 highlights that there is a very low proportion of convenience floorspace in Pitlochry but the Perth & Kinross Town Centre and Retail Study in 2016 also highlighted at that time, only 8 out of the possible 106 units were vacant, a vacancy rate of 7.5%. When this is compared with the multiple retailer representation at 27% (e.g. Mountain Warehouse), these proportions indicate successful trading and reflects the high level of visitor attraction to the town. Further comments made were that Pitlochry Town Centre is heavily orientated towards visitor spending and that most of the shops are independent operators with significant numbers of gift shops, arts/crafts, clothing and accessory shops, and that the range and quality could be improved.

Pitlochry Partnership reported that during the year 2020/21, 3-4 businesses in the town were lost, with a good number choosing not to open in 2020. To date, 7 businesses were lost in 2021, a couple of new businesses emerged and about 5 are still uncertain about the future.

### Comments

*The data highlighted in Chart 2 consolidates Community Action Plan consultation feedback that Pitlochry caters for the tourist more than for local people and this is a stark representation of the reality of unit space in the town. The vacancy rate is likely to be higher after the impact of the pandemic with local figures demonstrating a considerable loss of businesses over this period.*

### **High Street / Town Centre**

The main street through Pitlochry has a selection of independent shops, cafes, public houses, hotels and restaurants.

### **Business Parks / Business Centres**

- Aldour Industrial Estate
- Units near Fonab Castle Hotel
- Pitlochry Business Centre

### **Business/Organisation Support**

- Pitlochry Partnership is a membership organisation that offers a range of benefits to local individuals, organisations, retail, accommodation providers, restaurants, cafes & bars, services and attractions & visitor centres. Benefits include:
  - Website listing on pitlochry.org
  - Co-ordinated marketing to deliver a greater impact and awareness
  - Improved networking within community and business sectors
  - Support of new major events and festivals
  - Support and advice for local community groups
  - Representation at local and national forums
  - Increased revenue from destination marketing activities
- Highland Perthshire Communities Partnership (HPCP) is a collaboration of local businesses, organisations, and community councils working together for the benefit of Highland Perthshire.
- GrowBiz provide free mentoring and business support for rural businesses including:
  - One-to-One Support
  - Learning Sessions
  - Peer Support Meetings
  - Networking Events
  - Mentoring Programme
  - REDS online Directory of small rural businesses (free for rural micro-enterprises)

### **Main Employers in the area**

#### Hospitality

Old Mill Inn, Victoria's Restaurant, Fisher's Hotel, Pitlochry Hydro Hotel, Scotland's Spa Hotel, Moulin Hotel, Green Park Hotel, Atholl Palace Hotel, Fonab Castle Hotel & Spa, Knockendarroch Hotel & Restaurant, McKays Hotel Bar & Restaurant, Pinetrees Hotel

#### Retail

Outdoor shops including Mountain Warehouse and Craghoppers plus shops aimed at tourists.

#### Trades/Other

RW Bell Electrician, Freshwater Fisheries Laboratory

#### Culture

Pitlochry Festival Theatre, Enchanted Forest

### **Accommodation**

According to the Scottish Assessors Association, there are 114 self-catering units registered for rates in the PH16 postcode area, which covers an area wider than the town of Pitlochry/Moulin. This includes Killiecrankie (5), Kinloch Rannoch (10) and Strathtummel/Tummel Bridge (6). Overall, there are 149 self-catering, bed & breakfast and guest houses, 24 hotels, 3 hostels and 6 caravan sites over the same PH16 geographical

area. These figures will possibly not reflect all accommodation as some will fall under council tax as opposed to rates and those operating under the Airbnb model may not be captured either.

### **Comments**

*The town has a range of shops and services with some great networks and organisations to support them and other less visible businesses. The main employers are, unsurprisingly, the hotel and hospitality industry with self-catering, bed & breakfast, guest houses and caravan sites all playing a major part in the local economy.*

### **Strategic Issues**

Despite the local feedback of high costs to operate shop units in the town, the vacancy rate has been relatively low but the pandemic has very likely increased this somewhat. Considering the high level of units targeting tourists, it is vital that an unusually higher than normal unit vacancy rate at this time is not exploited by additional visitor type offerings and alienating locals' needs even further. The local and regional business support networks need to continue to actively support local businesses to ensure further businesses do not fall victim to the pandemic. Whilst self-catering units can generate indirect financial benefits to the town, this must not be to the detriment of local people and affordability of housing.

## 6. EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE

### Pre-school

Jelly Tots is held every Thursday afternoon, term time only, usually at Pitlochry Primary School (but currently at Moulin Hall) for parents/carers and their children up to age 3 years.

Pitlochry Breastfeeding Group run a weekly session for mothers who breastfeed and their babies on Mondays at The Tryst from 10am-12pm.

Parents who need private nursery facilities for children aged 0-3 years have to go to Puddleducks in Dunkeld or ABC Nursery in Aberfeldy.

The Baptist Church deliver Stay and Play for 0-5 year olds but these are currently on hold due to refurbishments and COVID-19.

### Childminders

There are two childminders in Pitlochry registered with Perth & Kinross Council although local feedback suggests these services have stopped or will do imminently

### Pitlochry High School

- Nursery current roll call - 56
- Primary current roll call - 182
- Secondary current roll call - 117

Pitlochry High School is an all through school providing education for nursery, primary and secondary pupils up to the end of S4. Secondary pupils attend up to S4 and then most transition to Breadalbane Academy, although some go to other schools, college or employment.

Pitlochry High School serves the town of Pitlochry and its immediate surroundings and the nearby village of Killiecrankie. Logierait Primary and Blair Atholl Primary are the associated Primary schools and most pupils from these schools join Pitlochry High School in S1.

The nursery provides 1140 hours of free early learning and childcare for 3-5 year olds and some eligible 2 year olds. They have both term time and 45-week options.

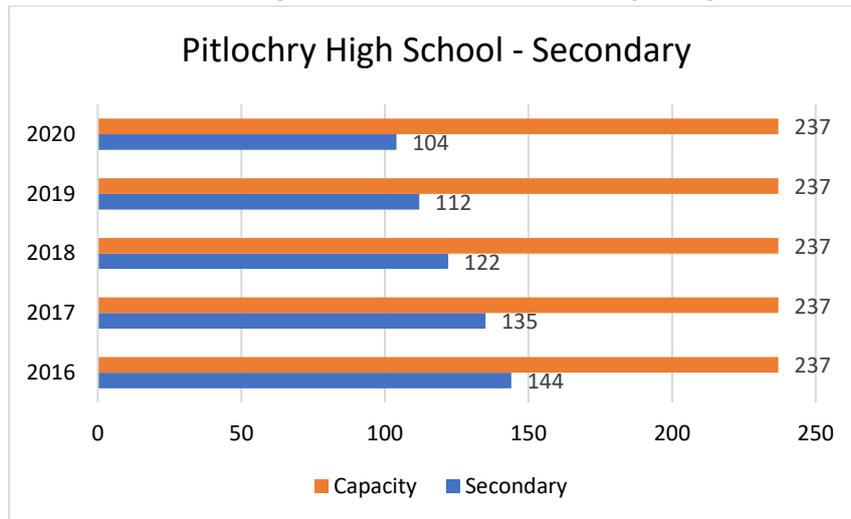
### After School Clubs

- Active Schools
- The Den @ Heartland Kids' Club (also run a breakfast club)

### Comments

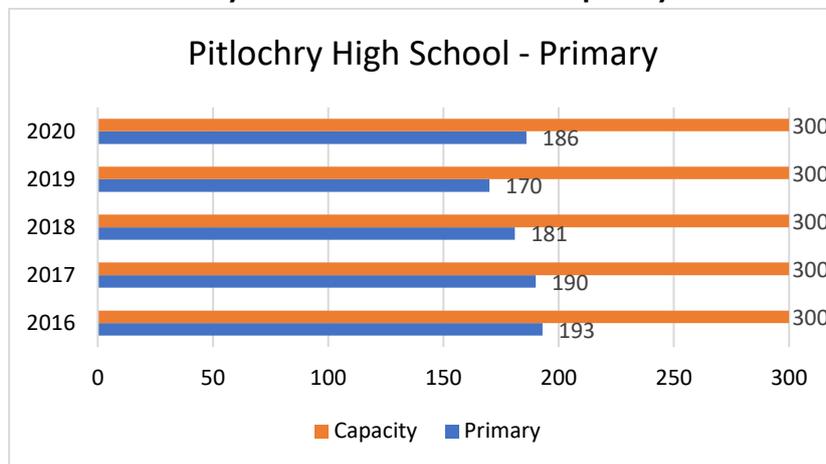
*There are a few options for pre-school children, some of which involve travelling to Dunkeld or Aberfeldy. The lack of childminders in the area is noticeable and there are not many options for after school provision.*

**Chart 3: Secondary school roll calls and capacity 2016-2020**



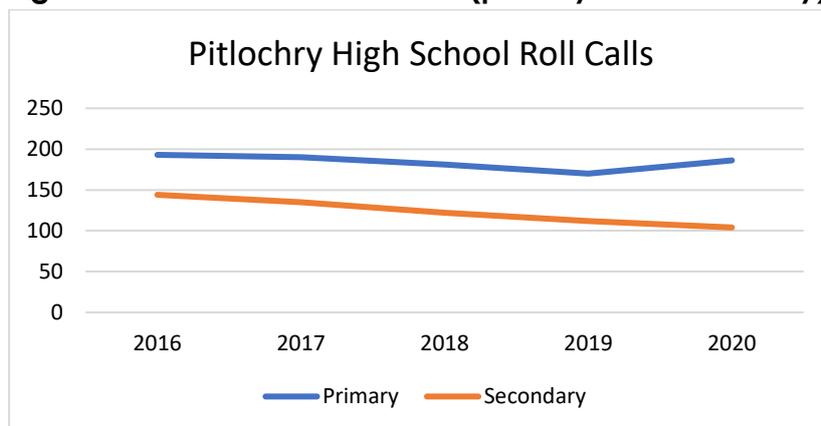
Source: Scottish Government

**Chart 4: Primary school roll calls and capacity 2016-2020**



Source: Scottish Government

**Figure 6: Whole school roll calls (primary and secondary) 2016-2020**



Source: Scottish Government

**Comments**

*Since 2016 both the primary and secondary school have seen a gradual reduction in the number of pupils attending apart from 2020 when the primary school saw an increase by 16 pupils. Capacity % has changed over time from 60.8% to 43.9% in the secondary (40 less pupils). In the primary, capacity % has changed from 64.3% to 62% (7 less pupils).*

*There is a fairly drastic decrease in transition from Pitlochry Primary School to the Secondary e.g. in 2019, 170 pupils ended their primary education but there were only 104 secondary pupils in 2020. According to capacity numbers (300 primary school/237 secondary), not all primary school children would be able to transition to the secondary school anyhow.*

**Strategic Issues**

The lack of options for nursery and childcare, for under 3's in particular, may prevent new families moving into the area or cause existing ones to leave. It can only be assumed that secondary aged children are either starting their secondary school life entirely at Breadalbane Academy to prevent a disruptive transition in S4 or families are moving away from the area after their children finish primary school to secure a more settled secondary education for young people, which is of concern. It is also known that some families chose to move their children to Breadalbane Academy when there was a threat of the secondary school closing in 2019, when they otherwise might not have taken this step. The seamless education of young people in the area needs to be addressed.

## 7. HEALTH AND CARE

### Pharmacy

There are two pharmacies in Pitlochry - both run by Davidsons Chemists.

### Medical Services

- Pitlochry Community Hospital is an integrated healthcare facility that serves Pitlochry and the surrounding area. The recent closure of the 9-bed GP ward is concerning for local people on top of other cuts to medical services i.e. dementia unit, minor injuries unit.
- The Atholl Medical Centre is the sole medical practice in the area and covers approx. 700 square miles and has a branch surgery in Blair Atholl, with just under 5,000 patients (although this can rise to 20,000 transient patients due to the visitor population).
- Perth Royal Infirmary (A&E), 27 miles
- Ninewells Hospital, 48.7 miles
- Scottish Ambulance Service, based at the Atholl Medical Centre/Pitlochry Community Hospital. Available for GP emergencies, hospital transfers, 999 calls and cover a wide, rural area
- There are nine defibrillators registered in the Pitlochry area

### Optician

There is an optician - Pitlochry Opticians who are an independent business.

### Dental Services

Infinity Blu Dental Care and Implant Clinic are the only dentist in Pitlochry and provide private and NHS treatment.

### Care Services

There are several care homes, supported housing and assisted living complexes in Pitlochry including Balhousie Care Group and Abbeyfield, and local insight suggests that people who live in the town are not necessarily prioritised for places.

**Table 11: General Health**

General health 2011	Pitlochry Intermediate Zone	Perth & Kinross	Scotland
All people	3,760	146,652	5,295,403
% Very good	50.5	54.6	52.5
% Good	32.1	30.7	29.7
% Fair	11.9	10.6	12.2
% Bad	3.9	3	4.3
% Very bad	1.7	1	1.3

Source: Census 2011

### Comments

*Pitlochry does not have a wide choice of independent medical services for people to choose from and this could be excluding affordable access for some. Diminishing services at the hospital in particular has been voiced regularly during the consultation process and is clearly a matter that worries residents. Conversely, the health data (Table 11) is in line with the Perth & Kinross area and Scotland, so the lack of services does not appear to be impacting on health.*

**Strategic Issues:**

If Pitlochry Community Hospital services continue to be depleted, residents and visitors may struggle to receive treatment when required, with the closest hospital being some 27 miles away. This, combined with severely stretched emergency services (and in particular during the heavy tourist season) could significantly impact on the level of care delivered in Pitlochry and the surrounding areas.

## 8. COMMUNITY AND RECREATION

Pitlochry and Moulin is a very active community with a wide range of community groups and organisations to support local people and visitors. This includes 23 organisations registered with OSCR, the Independent Regulator for Scottish Charities.

There is one leisure centre, Live Active Atholl, where fitness, gym and sports hall activities are available. The centre has just very recently re-opened after two years of closure.

The Atholl Palace Hotel offers local people membership to use the spa facilities, gym, fitness room and tennis courts. Membership is also available at Scotland's Spa Hotel and Pitlochry Hydro Hotel to use the gym and swimming pool.

An Active Schools Co-ordinator organises sport and physical activity opportunities for Highland Perthshire at Pitlochry High School, Breadalbane Academy and their associated primary schools.

The oldest amateur football club in Scotland, the Vale of Atholl, is currently in abeyance due to lack of players of playing age.

Pitlochry Town Hall has 3 meeting rooms and can cater for over 200 people. Other meeting/community spaces in the town include the Tryst, Moulin Hall and the Atholl Centre.

Pitlochry Festival Theatre is a huge attraction in the area with a very loyal customer base and an independent impact study in 2003 found that the theatre was the generator of between £13m and £20m annually in Highland Perthshire.

**Table 12: Registered Charities in the Pitlochry and Moulin area**

1 <sup>st</sup> Perthshire Pitlochry Scout Group	Pitlochry Senior Citizens Good Neighbour Association	Pitlochry Church of Scotland
Friends of Pitlochry Community Hospital	Pitlochry Festival Theatre	Rotary Club of Pitlochry Charitable Trust
Pitlochry & Blair Atholl Pipe Band	Moulin Kirk Trust	Andie Millar's Trust
Pitlochry & District Choral Society	Pitlochry Highland Games	The Sinclair Family Trust
The Den @ Heartland Kids' Club	Pitlochry Baptist Church SCIO	All Saints Episcopal Church
Highland Perthshire Shopmobility	Enchanted Forest Community Trust	John Muir Trust
Heartland Radio Foundation Ltd	Abbeyfield Atholl Society Ltd	Cuil-An-Daraich Home Private Trust
Margaret Steel Charitable Trust	Breadalbane and District RDA	

**Table 13: Other Community Groups & Organisations**

Pitlochry Community Council	Pitlochry Neighbourhood Watch	Pitlochry Girl Guides	Pitlochry Men's Shed	Pitlochry and District Friends of Confolens
The Atholl Centre	Scottish Wildlife Trust	Pitlochry & District Climate Café	Pitlochry in Bloom (includes litter and path groups)	Highland Mainline Community Railway
National Trust for Scotland	Auchterarder Primrose Football Team	Pitlochry Bridge Club	Inner Wheel Club of Pitlochry	Pitlochry & District Tangent Club
Faskally Forest parkrun	Dell Dippers	Pitlochry Golf Club (Juniors and Seniors)	Tryst Table Tennis Club	Indoor Bowling (Live Active Leisure)
Pitlochry Angling Club	Pitlochry Tennis Club	Pitlochry Rugby Club	Pitlochry Bowling Club	Vale of Atholl Football Club
Pitlochry Archery Club	Pitlochry Amateur Weightlifting Club	Holy Trinity (Scottish Episcopal Church)	Pitlochry Town and Country Club	Pitlochry Flower Club
Pitlochry & District u3a	Pitlochry and Moulin Heritage Centre	Pitlochry and Moulin History Circle	Tryst Scottish Country Dance	Town Hall Users Group
Pavilion Users Group	Pitlochry Market	Pitlochry Indoor Market	March into Pitlochry Music Festival	Moulin Scottish Country Dance Class
Pitlochry Lighting Committee	Pitlochry New Year Street Party Committee	Pitlochry Highland Games Committee	Community Bonfire Committee	Vale of Atholl Pipe Band
Pitlochry and Blair Atholl Pipe Band	Pitlochry Partnership	Pitlochry and District Adult Education Association	Welcome All Soup Lunch	Moulin Hotel Community Coffee Morning
Breastfeeding Support Group	Jelly Tots	Baptist Church Stay and Play	Hospital Car Service	Atholl Centre Medical Users Group
Riders of the Storm	Happy Highlanders Dementia Group	Pitlochry High School Parent Council	Pitlochry Station Bookshop	The Tryst Day Care Centre
St Brides RC Parish Church	Senior Citizens Minibus	North Perthshire Recovery Café		

### Churches / Religious Groups

- Church of Scotland
- Pitlochry Baptist Church
- Holy Trinity (Scottish Episcopal Church)
- St Brides RC Parish Church
- Roman Orthodox Church
- Bahá'í Community

The Church of Scotland has prepared some interesting facts and figures for the [Parish of Pitlochry](#) but it should be noted that the boundary area is different if compared to that used to define the 2011 Pitlochry Intermediate Census Zone (see Figure 2).

### Young People

Young people can complete their Duke of Edinburgh Awards and John Muir Awards through the school, as well as schemes for Junior Rangers. The Scouts also run weekly sessions for girls and boys.

### Community and Social Events

- March into Pitlochry Music Festival
- Pitlochry Highland Night
- The Enchanted Forest
- Pitlochry Highland Games
- Winter Words Festival
- Ladies Highland Open
- Gents Highland Open
- Etape Caledonia

### Emergency Planning

There is a [Pitlochry and Moulin Community Emergency Plan](#) in place to support major incidents and emergencies expected in an area close to a major trunk road network and vast numbers of tourists visiting the area, including flooding, severe weather and accidents.

### Comments

*There is a very large number of active groups and organisations in the area, with over 20 registered charities and over 60 other community groups. Pitlochry also has a very active social calendar for both locals and visitors to the area. Whilst public leisure facility provision is low, residents can access hotel facilities with a membership. There is a wide range of faith groups in the town to support all members of the community. Young people are well catered for in terms of formal/organisational awards but recreational groups are severely lacking for this age group.*

### Strategic Issues

Whilst having many groups and organisations active in the town supports many interests, a lack of succession planning to replace older volunteers could put their future at risk. Membership of the many faith groups is also decreasing and the community need to consider the impact of this in the coming years. Young people in the town are not catered for well in terms of activities and opportunities, and it is known that older young people already leave Pitlochry because of the lack of housing and jobs – no leisure or recreational activities will only compound this problem if not addressed.

## 9. COMMUNITY SERVICES AND AMENITIES

### **Council Services/Library**

Part time area office and library

### **Petrol Station**

There is one petrol station, BP, on Perth Road, with a carwash facility.

### **Cashpoints**

There is a cashpoint at the Bank of Scotland, the Co-op and outside WH Smith.

### **Recycling**

The Recycling Centre, Bridge Road, Pitlochry is available for a wide range of materials and to collect compost – garden waste gets turned into free compost for the community. Glass recycling is available at the back of the main carpark on Atholl Road.

### **Banking**

There is now only one bank in Pitlochry - Bank of Scotland - after the recent closures of both TSB and Royal Bank of Scotland.

### **Supermarket**

The Co-op is the only supermarket in the area and offers online/delivery or collection options.

### **Public Toilets**

West Lane, Pitlochry – open all year with facilities for ladies, gents, baby change and disabled use. A cashless system is currently being piloted.

### **Police Scotland**

The Police station in Atholl Road, Pitlochry is open to the public Monday-Friday 9am-5pm and has a permanent civilian member of staff. Constraints to limited police resource in the town means that policing support is sometimes required from e.g. Perth, Blairgowrie to ensure all demands can be met.

### **Scottish Fire & Rescue Service**

Fire station in Atholl Road, Pitlochry, retained fire crew

### **Community Information**

- Noticeboards – Atholl Road at the bus stop, the corner of East/West Moulin Road and on Delta Road
- [www.pitlochry.org](http://www.pitlochry.org)
- Pitlochry Life Magazine
- The Atholl & Breadalbane Quair
- Heartland FM
- Facebook – Pitlochry News, Pitlochry Community Page, Kids Activities and Beyond

### **Comments**

*Council services have reduced over time as have some amenities such as banks. Although more recycling facilities are desirable, the community really enjoy the benefits of the free compost. One supermarket in the town limits choice in terms of price and range for residents and now that some establishments are no longer willing to be part of the Comfort Scheme, one public toilet facility is insufficient. Police and Fire services can be limited at*

times due to high demands placed on them and this is exacerbated during the busy tourist season.

**Strategic Issues**

As a town with an older population, it may become increasingly difficult for older residents to easily travel to other towns and cities to access basic services e.g. banking. Social mobility could also be difficult due to a limited choice of supermarkets, shops and council support services for people to make positive changes in their lives. The community needs to protect what services and amenities they have and work together to improve this situation to ensure all local people can afford to live and work in the area.

## 10. ENVIRONMENT

### Paths and Parks

Pitlochry has numerous amenity greenspaces including Armoury Park, Delta Park, West Moulin Road Park and the Wildlife Garden. There are also green corridors and a multi-use Recreation Park e.g. play areas, football, skatepark.

An overview of the Pitlochry Paths network can be viewed [here](#).

There are no cycling lanes in Pitlochry and according to the Living Streets Scotland report for Pitlochry in 2018, local residents reported fast moving cyclists on pavements as being a problem, particularly in the busy tourist season.

### Outdoor Spaces/Attractions

- Faskally Forest
- Explorers Garden
- Loch Dunmore Nature Trail
- Queens View
- Pitlochry Dam and Fish Ladder
- Black Spout Wood
- Linn of Tummel
- Clunie Walk

### Mountains and Lochs

- Ben y Vrackie
- Craigvrack
- Schiehallion
- Loch Faskally

### Allotments

Due to the level of interest, a proposal for allotments has been put forward to Perth & Kinross Council

### Pitlochry in Bloom

The group tend to all the feature beds in Pitlochry each week through the Summer and Autumn and also put on a stunning floral show throughout the year.

There is also a Pitlochry Litter Support Team who respond to litter concerns in car parks, woodlands, by the loch-side, picnic areas etc.

The Pitlochry Paths Group improve and maintain the variety of path networks in and around Pitlochry.

### Comments

*According to the Perth & Kinross Council Pitlochry Infrastructure Report in 2017, the open space provision of Pitlochry is approximately 76.5 ha which is 23.3 ha/ 1000 people. The report also stated:*

- 60% of households are within a 10-15 minute walk of a playing field in Pitlochry
- 97% of households are within 10-15 minutes from a public park or garden in Pitlochry
- 76% of households are within a distance from playgrounds which is considered to be appropriate for children at target ages

**Strategic Issues**

Currently the provision of playgrounds is slightly below the standard and an additional 0.09ha would be required to offset the impact of growth. Allocated development may be required to provide smaller play spaces in line with the Council's Play Strategy (Source: Pitlochry Infrastructure Report, 2017). Cycling safety is a big consideration that should be addressed to encourage more active travel in the area. Volunteers should be a priority to support the work of the Greenspace Ranger to maintain and enhance the beautiful outdoors that the area enjoys.

## 11. ROADS, PAVEMENTS, PARKING AND TRANSPORT

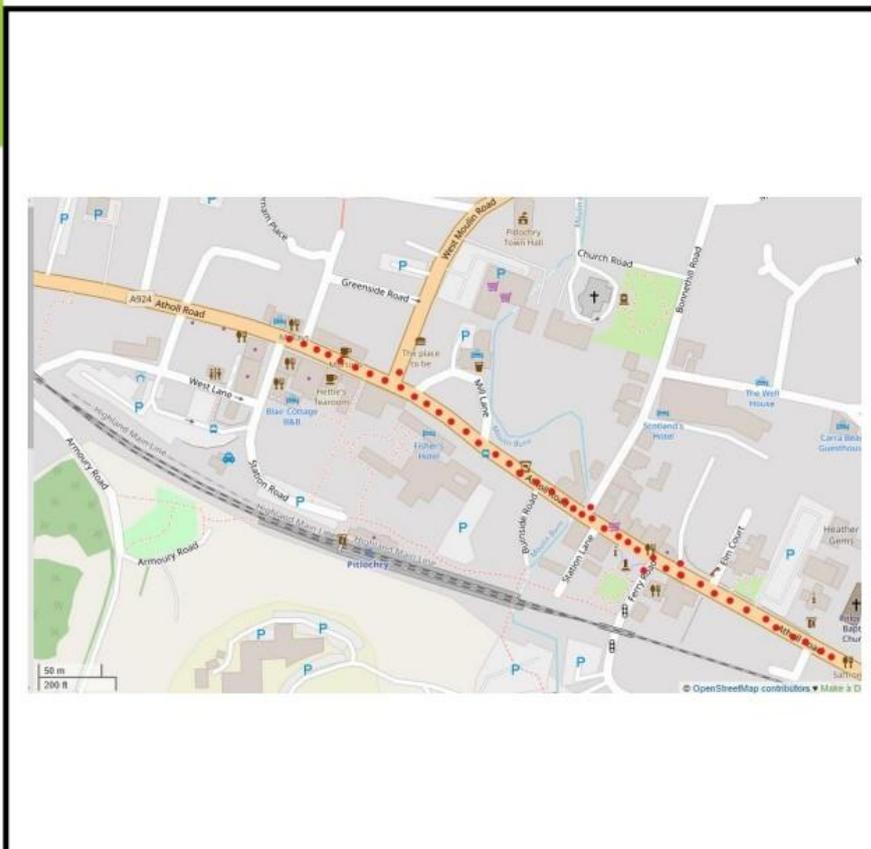
### Roads

The main access to Pitlochry is via the A9 trunk road with some local roads linking smaller communities. The A9 Dualling project is one of Scotland's largest ever transport infrastructure programmes and the 11-stage scheme aims to upgrade 80 miles of single carriageway between Perth and Inverness.

### Pavements

In 2018, Living Streets Scotland identified and published numerous problems in their Pitlochry Community Street Audit Report. The study focused on assets and barriers on local streets/paths that encouraged or discouraged everyday walking with the needs of older and more vulnerable people living in the area in mind. The audit route was Atholl Road from the Atholl Centre to McKays Hotel (Figure 7). Kerbs, pavements, road surfaces and advertising boards were all identified as hazards/barriers.

**Figure 7: – Living Streets Scotland Audit Route**



© OpenStreetMap contributors

**The red route** indicates the route reviewed

Source: Living Streets Scotland, Community Street Audit Report, Pitlochry, 2018

### Parking

There are four public car parks in Pitlochry:

- Rie Achan Road – 78 bays/2 disabled bays, 5 electric charging points
- Ferry Road (off Ferry Road West) – 60 bays/0 disabled bays
- Ferry Road (off Ferry Road East) – 26 bays/2 disabled bays
- Atholl Road – 63 bays/2 disabled bays

### Buses

National bus services such as Megabus and Citylink provide travel from Glasgow, Edinburgh and Inverness. Local Buses run from Pitlochry to the rest of Highland Perthshire.

### Rail

Pitlochry Railway Station is centrally located and services include a direct link to London Kings Cross and overnight sleeper service to Euston. There are also frequent services during the day to connect Perth, Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen, Inverness, Glasgow and Stirling. There are also some local services but these are more limited.

### Taxis

The main taxi providers are:

- Pitlochry Taxis – provide taxis 24x7, 365 days a year and cover Perthshire. Offer domestic, corporate, airport, festival and school runs.
- Elizabeth Yule Transport – provide a taxi service covering the whole of Highland Perthshire including airport, local guided tours or minibus/coach for larger parties and weddings

### Private Transport

Car or van availability (1-3 vehicles) in Pitlochry Intermediate Zone area is 75.9% of households (with residents) compared to 78.8% in Perth & Kinross (Source: Census 2011).

### Comments

*The A9 dualling project could potentially have positive and negative impacts – dual carriageway makes it easier and quicker for people to travel to Pitlochry but conversely, if it significantly decreases travel time when travelling further north, then travellers may not stop in the town. Local people and visitors need to be mindful of the more vulnerable people living in the town when it comes to barriers on pavements etc. Although the town has several car parks, this is severely inadequate during the busy tourist season or when large events are hosted in the town. Local bus and train services need to be more flexible and co-ordinated with affordable ticket prices to ensure their sustainability. One local taxi provider is to close shortly due to difficulties recruiting drivers in the area.*

### Strategic Issues

The A9 dualling timeline of 2025 is fast approaching and appears ambitious. The pandemic may have serious financial implications on its progress. With large scale events due to return in 2022, the significant parking issues of years past will cause serious congestion in the town and overspill/additional areas need to be identified urgently. Co-ordination of bus/train connections needs to be reviewed to ensure a seamless experience for travellers. Locals are highly reliant on access to private transport but as the older population age further, this ability may decrease and more public transport options need to be planned for.

## 12. HERITAGE

### A Historical Summary

Pitlochry and its parent village, Moulin have long been visited towns, first by the godly, but later by the great and good. The armoured knights of Edward I Hammer of the Scots marched through to ravage the country after the execution of William Wallace, Edward III's soldiers passed this way on their way to Blair Castle and 400 years later Bonnie Prince Charlie's Highlanders came south on their triumphal march to Edinburgh. They might have been better stopping here in the Howe of Moulin, "The Garden of Atholl", as things went downhill for them all after they left!

Moulin Kirk (now the Heritage Centre) is dedicated to St Colm or St Colman, who around 670 AD brought Christianity to Atholl, then a stronghold of the Picts. Pictish Chiefs, on becoming Christian, would build a Church within or very near their principal fort and it is likely that this happened here in Moulin. There are many Pictish and older remains locally including the round house in Black Spout Wood and the mis-named Dane's Stone (amongst many others) on the slopes of Ben Vrackie.

From the time of St Colm, a Market, called 'Feill Machalmaig' (the Market of Blessed Dear Colm) was held in Moulin in March. Local agricultural produce was traded but it was predominately cattle, brought south over the rivers by way of Strathtummel and Strathgarry and up the hill from Killiecrankie or from the east along Strathardle that were sold and then taken south over the river at Port Na Craig or along the hillside to the east of the Tummel and Tay. Later it became a noted horse fair and by Georgian times it was firmly established as a hiring fair where farm hands and others were hired for the year. The hospitality industry of Georgian Moulin catered for the needs of these travellers and it was noted (but not approvingly) by the local clergy. The clergy preferred the Linen Industry which kept women and children gainfully occupied in spinning yarn.

Until the early Eighteenth century the road from Dunkeld through Atholl was along the eastern slope of the valley, passing Edradour, crossing by the Black Castle to the north of the Moulin Inn and over to Tummel Bridge. Valley floors were wet, rocky or boggy - difficult ground for both horses and cattle, hillside was easier ground and had feed for the cattle. However, this centuries old pattern was disrupted in 1724 when King George sent Major-General George Wade to investigate how best to solve the "Highland Problem" - the simmering resentment to "German Geordie"! His solution was to build forts and barracks to house troops to dominate and control the main routes within and around Scotland. Fort William was upgraded to control the west coast and Fort George created to do the same on the east at Inverness. Wade connected them with a new road along the Great Glen which sliced through Jacobite country. Barracks at Ruthven dominated Badenoch further south and this was soon connected to Inverness in the north and to Perth in the south. The 100 mile long, 16 foot wide road was well graded, properly drained and with a wide, solid surface to allow fast movement of troops and their baggage carts. The route was designed to have the minimum of major river crossings, these were forded initially, but bridges soon followed, as did branch roads to East and West. Unlike its medieval predecessor the New Road followed the valley floor with few steep slopes to traverse.

Much of the A9 still follows the same route and it enters what we now know as Pitlochry as East Haugh Road and Bruach Lane. This New Road with its easier slopes was the signal for the people of Moulin to begin moving down the hill towards "Pitlochrie". For many years after Wade had left there was no more than a cluster of farming townships here. Then the Butter family, staunch government supporters who prospered after the '45 (and early users of the current spelling of Pitlochry) opened an Inn at Moulinearn probably on the site of a

Kings House where Wade had a camp and smithy to support his road-builders. The Fisher family soon moved over from Aberfeldy and by 1825 they had shares in the regular mail coach through "Pitlochrie" which travelled the newly "macadamised" road between Perth and Inverness through Pitlochry leaving Moulin bypassed as a tranquil backwater on the side road to Kinnaird, Kirkmichael and Blairgowrie. At the dawn of the Nineteenth Century Pitlochry was one of the most accessible places ready and willing to capitalise on the new, royal interest in the Highlands sparked off by Sir Walter Scott's novels and associated influencing.

In September 1844 Queen Victoria first visited Pitlochry en-route to Blair Castle. Queen Victoria's interest in Scotland ensured that the fashion for all things Highland intensified. Fisher's Hotel expanded with ample stables for the many coaches that rumbled up the north road. It was more than a "bed and breakfast" for man and horse but aimed to be a destination in its own right. The old mill dam was converted into a garden which became one of the must-see sights of the district for its beautiful display of flowers. Some still survives as a garden and some is now Fishers View.

In the summer of 1846, while the aristocracy tramped the heather shooting deer or grouse, the first tours by Thomas Cook from Leicester to Scotland were housed in Fisher's Hotel and then travelled on to Killiecrankie, Blair Atholl and on to Killin then home via Loch Lomond. (Thomas Cook here pre-dated Club 18-30 by advertising that it was safe for unaccompanied ladies to travel!) Pitlochry was now a destination for the more intrepid traveller wanting to indulge in Dark Tourism and view the battlefields of the preceding century or to view the Romantic Hills and Glens popularised by Sir Walter Scott's tales of derring do.

It was already thriving as a tourist destination when the railway arrived in 1863 and then Pitlochry became a favoured destination for tourists. The new bourgeoisie holidayed in Fishers Hotel which was soon joined by other establishments built to cater for the demand. A Victorian "clean air, clean water" health kick triggered a Spa fashion and in Pitlochry the Hydropathic Hotel was built on a Druidical or early Christian sacred site. With pure Highland air, an excellent medical service, fishing, invigorating walks, and the Hydro, the town soon had a reputation as an exotic and slightly (but safely) inaccessible health resort.

Adjacent to the station and right in the centre of the town, Fisher's Hotel flourished and so did the town. New and handsome business premises were built across Atholl Road at Alba Place, blocking the glorious view of Ben Vrackie from Fisher's hotel! Legend says that Mr Fisher deliberately built out the wing of bedrooms between the main street and his lovely gardens, with the retort "If you won't let me see Ben-y-Vrackie, then I won't let you see my gardens."

But the noblest and most imposing structure of all was built in the 1870's by a company of promoters in Pitlochry (including Mr Fisher!), the imposing Scots baronial Atholl Palace Hotel. It costing in excess of £90,000 to erect (about £12 million in today's money), so hardly surprising that the company went bankrupt. However, it has survived this bankruptcy, two world wars and is now a thoroughly modern establishment, dominating the town with its massive Victorian symmetric splendour.

The railway brought more visitors. Prime Minister William Ewart Gladstone came and saw and held a Cabinet meeting in 1864. He returned in 1887, and local Liberal landowner, Stewart of Edradour, gave his workers a day's holiday from the harvest - on condition they went to Fisher's to hear the Grand Old Man speak! The jute barons of Dundee or English aristocrats built substantial stone villas or bought estates. Each August nineteenth century

society would leave King's Cross station with rods and gun-dogs and come north via Perth to the shooting lodges that had sprouted up in every glen. When they had tired of the scenery and shot enough of the wildlife, the great and the good, the minor aristocracy and royalty of the world took themselves off for an evening of (newly re-invented) Country Dancing in the ballroom of Blair Castle. Then they went South for the winter leaving the local characters, the gillies, the porters and the others who made their stay so delightful to survive in the off-season.

The Twentieth Century was a cycle of booms and busts with Pitlochry thriving in peace-time, suffering in the Depression and adjusting its hotels and hospitality in war-time to cope with evacuated school children or recuperating wounded. The post-war growth in car (and caravan) ownership again changed the town's hospitality. Healthy living and outdoor pursuits, pleasant camping and caravan sites made Pitlochry a popular family holiday destination until cheap air travel encouraged the younger age groups to have overseas holidays in sunnier climes. Electrification and the Hydro Board saw the construction of the man-made Loch Faskally held back by Pitlochry Dam with its Fish Ladder specially constructed with a viewing chamber where visitors could watch the salmon pass the new obstruction.

Around the same time and with the same longsightedness John Stewart created Pitlochry Festival Theatre. Initially in a tent in the grounds of Knockendarroch Hotel, "Scotland's Theatre in the Hills", now lies on the farther bank of the River Tummel and is internationally renowned for its fine repertoire of drama and comedy. Its slogan "Stay six days and see six plays" succinctly links the theatre to the town.

## **Heritage Displays/Interpretation**

### **Pitlochry in bloom path with leaflet and boards**

Pitlochry in Bloom led the community effort to create a Town Heritage Trail and Tourist map over the winter of 2013/14. Interpretation boards are located around the town showing local information. A map showing their locations is available from VisitScotland, the Heritage Centre and many local hotels.

## **Historic Buildings**

### **Pitlochry Town**

The National Record of the Historic Environment for Scotland lists 202 historic sites in and around Pitlochry and mentioned below are the outstanding and unique ones. So, for example, there are nine sets of "Standing Stones" and 18 or 19 remains or sites of mills depending how you count replacements. Some of these two hundred sites are literally just marks on a map showing the location of former buildings and others (such as enclosures and farm field systems) are now little more than lumps in the ground which need a good eye to spot and some knowledge to identify. Indeed, the site of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Golf Course is now marked as a yellow blob in Loch Faskally having been flooded as part of the Hydro Scheme in the 1940's. However, Pitlochry is lucky in that many of the historic buildings are still in use and as you might expect in a destination town, many are hotels, bed and breakfasts or AirBnBs. Many are private residences which has ensured their survival but can make investigating them a little intrusive.

Let us start with the unoccupied Sunnybrae Cottage, at the north end of Atholl Road, as it is Pitlochry's oldest extant building dating back over 200 years to the days when Pitlochry

consisted of three small hamlets. Once a public house and the site of a tragic accident which led to the death of John Stewart of Bonskeid. Now in the care of Historic Scotland, who have conducted a thorough archaeological investigation described on a board outside. Its corrugated iron roof may seem "modern" and ripe for "restoration" but it has historical significance as it is probably the oldest corrugated iron roofed cottage (possibly even the first) in Scotland. It's usually open at Doors Open Day and well worth a visit. You will see how buildings are adapted as needs and technology changes as has happened elsewhere around Pitlochry.

At the other end of Atholl Road is a row of what were single storey cottages and are now the Hardware shop and Robertsons. Not spectacular buildings but they set the tone of the town for visitors from the South. Around the town there are many other, if younger, cottages still in use and with differing degrees of modernisation. Port-na-craig has former ferry keeper's cottages still in use as housing and Edradour Distillery has distillery cottages somewhat repurposed but easily identified. At the other end of the scale are the country houses of Baledmund and Balnakeilly. Possibly built on or near the sites of ancient buildings they are ostentatiously part of the landscape - the epitome of conspicuous consumption. Faskally House, now repurposed as a Fishery Laboratory is hidden from the A9 but now dominates the waterscape of the man-made Loch Faskally in a way its architects never envisaged.

The town boomed after the Railway arrived in 1863 and has retained many stone Victorian buildings of that era. The Station, built shortly after the trains arrived, has survived the Twentieth Century rather better than many others. The listed but now disused Signal Box is crying out for a new occupant. The central part of Atholl Road has many Victorian shops and an unusual period cast iron canopy over one side, an attempt to ameliorate the worst of the Scottish weather. Some of these shops have been sympathetically handled over the years and many still have flats in use as housing over them. Alba Place is a good example of this mid-range housing and shopping mix. The more up market Bank Houses here and in Bonnethill Road have fared less well though there is light on the horizon.

As a road junction town before the railway and a holiday town thereafter it is unsurprising that there are thirteen historic Hotels ranging from the assertively aloof Atholl Palace – a Victorian Monument to Hospitality and home to the only Hotel and Hospitality Museum. Some of the town centre hotels were custom built while others are converted former mansions (again some more sympathetically transformed than others). Fisher's Hotel adjacent to the station once had a croquet green and spectacular floral gardens to the north. The gardens are now sadly diminished and partly built over by Fisher View. The Green Park and Fonab Castle Hotel and Spa both overlook Loch Faskally and contribute to the view as you walk round the loch. The railway also offered the opportunity to commute to Perth and beyond. One of the early commuters was Principal J. G. Forbes of St Andrews University, who in the 1860s commuted from Dysart Cottage. His son, the distinguished astronomer Professor George Forbes, F.R.S., built his spacious hut, now known as The Observatory, in the Fairies' Dell and each summer retreated to it.

Pitlochry's industrial past has left little physical evidence. The sites of the gas works, the iron works, the lemonade factory and the Bobbin Mill are all to the southwest of the Railway but now mostly car park with nothing significant visible. The Laundry in Ferry Road is still recognisable as industrial but is now housing. Moulin Hall, now a popular community meeting place, was previously a school and then a Laundry. The Coal Merchants Office and the associated weighbridge building beside the station are now offices for Yule's bus and taxi business.

Further to the east and above Scotlands Hotel is the site of Toberargan one of the three hamlets that merged into Pitlochry. It took its name from St Feargain's Well, and the remains of the well can be seen in Well Brae where there is a pipe which empties into a pottery sink about 15 inches square. The smallest historical "building" in this list! Historically there are records of two wells around here but Tober Chalmaig or St Colm's Well, is now believed to be covered over in the garden of Tigh-na-craig. Nearby in the garden of a private house in Tom-na-moan Road, there are remains of an old Lime Kiln. Adding lime to the acid Highland agricultural land increased the yield (tripled it - according to the Statistical Account of the time) so local outcrops of lime were quarried and heated with coal and finally slaked with water to convert the lime into a powder for application to the land.

Before the First World War, the Armoury on Armoury Road was the Drill Hall and Armoury for the local regiments: the 1st Scottish Horse and the 6th Battalion of the Black Watch. It has been much renovated internally since then as it functioned as a restaurant and is now a House. It has not changed much externally but it has acquired a garden and some gargoyles appreciated by children walking down to the Dam. Walking over the Dam and down the side of the Fish Ladder (examples of mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century construction) leads us to the Theatre – old enough to be listed on Canmore but new enough for some of us to recall its construction. Initially starting within a tent in the grounds of Knockendarroch at Lower Oakfield, it moved to its present location in 1981. The adjacent Suspension Bridge completes the circle round Port na Craig taking us up to the Recreation Ground and the Pavilion, moved from its original site now under Loch Faskally where the Highland Games were first held on 10th September 1852 and have been held annually on the 2nd Saturday in September except for the period of the World Wars and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Pitlochry Town Hall is a Category B listed building built in 1900. Money raised by public subscription paid for the building and in 1975, the building was transferred to the management "only" of Atholl Leisure Centre in 1991.

### **Moulin**

Today Moulin is dominated by the Moulin Hotel, a former coaching inn established in 1693. Across Moulin Square which has nineteenth century cottages on two sides, is Moulin Kirk, now the Heritage Centre and open from April to October. It is the oldest Kirk in the area, it is unclear when exactly the first building was erected here but the present church dates from 1875 when its predecessor burnt down. The churchyard contains two slabs from local tradition known as "Crusader Graves" as they have medieval swords carved on their surfaces. In times past, offenders who committed petty crimes were punished for their misdemeanours by being tethered to a tree known as the Joung Tree for all to see. You can see the stump in the Moulin Kirkyard and learn all about this and more in the Heritage Centre. The Parish Church, the Baptist Church and the Anglican Church are of similar vintage while St Bride's Chapel dates from the time of the dam's construction with its influx of Irish navvies.

As you walk back down East Moulin Road to Pitlochry you will pass the ruins of Black Castle which can still be clearly seen in the field opposite the school. The castle is believed to date back to the 1320s when Sir John Campbell built it in the middle of a small lochan that existed until it was drained in 1720 for agricultural land. The castle was inhabited until 1500, the year of the great plague. A messenger from Perth brought it here and infected the occupants. It is said the castle was fired on by a cannon to form a funeral pyre for the victims and it is certainly a ruin now.

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## Museums

### **Atholl Palace Museum**

Set in the old servant's wing of the Atholl Palace Hotel, the museum charts the history of the hotel from when it first opened as a Hydropathic establishment in 1878 through to its re-opening after World War II and beyond. There are tales of bankruptcy, colourful entrepreneurs, Victorian servant's, unusual and torturous spa treatments, renovations, and war time evacuees turning hotel to school. There are room settings and tactile exhibits packed full of historical insights and anecdotes. It includes a look into a rail carriage, the doctor's cupboards, the wine cellar and children can dress up as a hotel servant in what was an original bedroom sleeping six servants. Within the museum, children can also explore a Minecraft version of the hotel and grounds, opening doors to all parts of the hotel to discover our history. The Atholl Palace Museum also celebrates the work of Andrew Heiton Jr., a prolific Perthshire architect, who not only designed the Atholl Palace hotel but also shaped the character and style of Scottish Baronial architecture across Perthshire. This self-guided museum is open daily, seven days a week. Free to residents of the Atholl Palace. The Atholl Palace Museum is the only museum of its kind to celebrate the social history of a hotel. In 2005, when it first opened it was the first hotel museum in the UK. The Atholl Palace is the first hotel in the world to have its building recreated in Minecraft blocks as an educational tool for a museum.

### **Moulin and Pitlochry Moulin Heritage Centre**

Pitlochry and Moulin Heritage Centre is a visitor-friendly centre for the genealogy, local and social history of Moulin Parish. Housed in Moulin Kirk, founded 490AD (or 670AD) by St Colm, it is documented as the parish church of the area from 1214. The church burned down on many occasions and was rebuilt in 1873. It closed to worship in 1989 and a group of locals founded the Trust to provide an educational experience for locals and visitors to the area, while maintaining an archive for future visitors. It holds the town's Millennium Diary and is currently curating the equivalent COVID-19 Diary. The Centre is laid out as a local journey through time - showing life in the wider Parish of Moulin. The displays cover from before St Colm who founded Moulin Kirk, through medieval life around the nearby Black Castle of Moulin, old shops and trading in Pitlochry as it developed after Wade's road and the railway brought tourists to the area, the prominent (and not so prominent) local families, the flax industry and trade, including examples of raw flax and finished linen. The Centre believes in Living Heritage and has weekly displays of spinning by a volunteer who is local artisan spinner, weaver and dyer. He demonstrates spinning (on a modern wool spinning wheel, not the 19<sup>th</sup> Century flax spinning wheel!). He also talks about the associated skills of carding, dying, knotting and weaving. The Centre hosts regular visits from P6 and 2nd year pupils which are an integral part of their History curriculum. It has displays of a 1950 pharmacy, old postcards, newspaper articles, a brilliant photographic display, including many old school photos—not just the Council schools but also the various smaller private or religious schools and Children's Homes that have come and gone from the parish. The Centre is a charity, funded through memberships, entry fees and donations and is managed and looked after by volunteers. The Heritage Centre is open throughout the summer months from 2pm to 4pm every day. The centre is closed for winter from late October.

## Heritage organisations

### **Pitlochry and Moulin History Circle**

Except during Covid restrictions, the History Circle meets monthly during the winter to host speakers on local history. It also runs an annual summer outing to historically interesting places further away. It has contributed to and maintained an archive of books in Moulin and Pitlochry Moulin Heritage Centre.

**Special thanks to Alan Crombie for providing such a tremendous insight into Pitlochry's Heritage – it is a magnificent addition to the Community Profile – a great legacy for people of all ages to relish!**

### **Comments**

*Nowadays, Pitlochry, sitting roughly half way between Edinburgh - Scotland's Capital and Inverness – The capital of the Highlands, is still a town of shops and a convenient lunch and coffee break location for visitors passing along the A9. Nestling in the crook of three valleys, Pitlochry will always struggle with electronic communications though recently constructed masts on three surrounding hills have eliminated most mobile phone not-spots and Satellite TV has brought TV to anyone who wants but radio has been a long-term problem with reception of BBC Radio patchy at best and commercial radio reception non-existent in most places. But Pitlochry has kept pace with the times and the locals began their own. Now housed in converted fishing tackle shop on the main street is Heartland FM, a community radio station run by volunteers, which for nearly 30 years has broadcast to the people of Highland Perthshire. It is the notice board for the straths catering for all in and around Pitlochry.*

### **Strategic Issues**

The town should continue to use its fascinating and tremendous heritage to make Pitlochry the destination of choice for people to live, work and visit. The wealth of information available demonstrates the need to keep and share this extensive knowledge in the community and for Pitlochry to draw upon this in many of its future projects.