

# PITLOCHRY COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN STAKEHOLDER VIEWS REPORT February 2022



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Background

1.1 This report summarises the findings of the **Stakeholder Conversations** carried out as part of the participatory process designed to inform the preparation of the Pitlochry Community Action Plan.

1.2 Meetings and interviews were organised and carried out by Community Connector Julia Harriman and STAR Development Consultant Caroline Ness on behalf of the local Community Action Planning Steering Group.

1.3 Views and information were provided by a wide variety of representatives from:

Welcome All Soup Lunch, The Atholl Centre, Pitlochry Festival Theatre, The Enchanted Forest, The Den at Heartland Kid's Club, Town Hall Users Group, Pitlochry New Years Day Street Party, Friends of Confolens, Faskally Forest Parkrun, The Dell Dippers, Scottish Wildlife Trust, Rotary Club of Pitlochry, Pitlochry Probus, Inner Wheel Club of Pitlochry, Pitlochry & District Tangent Club, Local residents Linda McAdam, Kate Howie, Care Sector and local residents, Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA), Northern District Riders of the Storm, Pitlochry Station Bookshop, Local Councillors, Fonab Caravan Park, NHS Scotland, Highland Perthshire Shopmobility UK, Balhousie Care Home, RW Bell Building Services, Church of Scotland, Pitlochry Baptist Church, Holy Trinity (Scottish Episcopal Church), St Brides RC Parish Church, Live Active Leisure, Community Greenspace Ranger, Perth & Kinross Council, National Trust for Scotland-North Perthshire, Highland Mainline Community Rail Partnership, Pitlochry Partnership, Pitlochry Community Council, Pitlochry & district Neighbourhood Watch, Pavilion User Group, Atholl Medical Centre Users Group, Artists and Makers based in the Pitlochry area, Pitlochry Breastfeeding Group, Climate Cafe Pitlochry & District, Community Ecohub, Balhousie Care Home, Handam Refill Station CIC, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Scottish Ambulance Service, Pitlochry and District Friends of Confolens, France, Atholl Medical Centre, Heartland Multimedia, Pitlochry Town & Country Club, Pitlochry Flower Club, Pitlochry & District Choral Society, The Tryst Scottish Country Dance Group, Atholl Estates, Cluniemore Estates, Pitlochry High School

A total of 35 interviews were conducted, with a total of 81 people present.

## 2. POPULATION, COMMUNITY AND COMMUNICATIONS

2.1 Stakeholders identified the following positive characteristics:

- Many retired incomers who have time/energy to get involved in things
- Some new families and working age people moving into the area
- Highland Perthshire Communities Partnership trying to bring groups together to share resources, make joint funding applications etc.
- Strong Neighbourhood Watch scheme run by volunteers and low crime area - people feel comfortable walking alone and safe in their houses
- Recent revamp of Community Council with good gender balance, good mix of business owners and willingness to work together / listen
- Community-wide desire for change and to make things better
- Fuel and living costs are high - families move away to access better services/choice, or move away as young adults for a good career and return in their 40s.
- The Basil Death Trust, Enchanted Forest, Rotary/Inner Wheel fund local causes
- Strong volunteer network for the Pitlochry & Moulin Coronavirus Support Group (110 people) - a third are members of churches
- Whatsapp group exists of 20 local businesses to share news/communicate
- Local radio station Heartland FM central method of communication in town and can strengthen other groups by sharing their news
- Atholl Quair and Pitlochry Life give free advertising to community groups and Pitlochry Partnership provides promotional and partnership opportunities
- Heart and Soul - inspirational religious broadcasting by Baptist Church in partnership with Heartland FM has worldwide reach

“Pitlochry is a very community-based place”

“People don’t visit Pitlochry for the weather or shops, they come for the sense of place and community”

“Although ‘outsiders’ can be criticised, they are the doers and run everything. Neither do local people understand that the services, shopping etc is only justifiable because of the tourists than it should be for a town this size.”

“People are moving to Pitlochry including families with children as it is easier to commute/work at home.”

“Tourists say categorically that Pitlochry is a very friendly place”

“Lots of help for people who needed it during the pandemic, lots of volunteers to support others and great coordination”

“Pretty decent digital connectivity”

“Local residents and businesses all support town fundraising initiatives”

“My picture of Highland Perthshire is to be kind and helpful to your neighbours but don’t intrude”

“There are personality clashes across a few main groups but there is capacity to be transformational in a different way”

## 2.2 Concerns / issues included:

- An ageing population and incomers come to retire here
- Small group of the same people making all major decisions for the town
- Funding is a challenge for the area as we don't hit the socio-economic criteria or have wind farms close by and there is digital and transport poverty
- Tourism dominates at the detriment of local people
- Divide between the older generation and young families
- Difficulty of replacing members of volunteer-led groups when they retire
- Volunteer-led community groups dissolving and not being replaced eg. Autumn Festival, Xmas market.
- Lack of younger volunteers (under 65) for many reasons
- Difficult to find out how / where to volunteer
- No central point to the town for people to gather / chat / meet
- Lack of community spirit / things to bring locals together like before
- Volunteers heavily relied upon for many essential services
- Broadband needs to be extended to the town centre
- Not all retailers set up for e-commerce
- 4G doesn't reach all parts of the town and it is essential for businesses accommodating increasing numbers of people who work remotely while on holiday
- Noticeboards now commercial - little community info and not geared to young people
- Elderly residents not IT savvy enough to order shopping online
- Facebook the predominant way people list activities / what is happening

“There used to be 5 amateur football teams in the area but (the team) has had to go into abeyance because it can't get enough players of playing age”

“Younger people can't take on volunteer roles as they are juggling childcare, caring for elderly relatives and/or working. Retirement age is a lot older so there is a gap in volunteers aged 55-65. Younger volunteers don't have time to commit a set amount of time each week - they need more flexibility.”

“The Coop is the centre of the town if you want to speak to folk. There is no heart of the town - the war memorial gardens are the closest as an outsider”

“I avoid Pitlochry in the summer. There are people coming out of every orifice”

“In the past there was a great community spirit with dances and Christmas time was a big thing for locals with displays and lights and all the businesses participating. Now the town isn't investing in the locals.”

“Connectivity is linked to the local economy - visitors will search for info, maps etc. If no connectivity in town centre they may drive to the next town”

“The difficult part of community consultation is the project outcomes which are time consuming and there needs to be more of a partnership approach and tapping into existing structures”

## 2.3 Opportunities and suggestions for action included:

- Shake up of planning and new developments
- A community development trust
- A town square or defined central point to the town that can hold markets and events
- Heartland FM audio facilities could be used more
- Projects / activities to connect generations and share skills
- Fair with stalls for newcomers attracting them to join groups like before
- A community broadband scheme
- More progressive planning and public consultation for new development
- Better connectivity on main street - essential for transactions
- Atholl Centre to instal broadband in all its rooms
- Heartland can offer broadband connectivity projects, help businesses with google marketing and work with PHS to give pupils more media skills
- A centralised list of all the community groups in Pitlochry
- Forum / place for new parents to find others
- Diversify the town like Aviemore and Crieff have done - combine the Victorian with a more modern approach to attract a wider age of residents and tourists
- Create better structures for tourism in Pitlochry incl. Pitlochry Community Council with dignitaries to meet foreign guests, access to the chamber etc.

### Headlines

- An ageing population - need to attract younger people and families to live and work here for a dynamic community
- Over reliance on increasingly elderly pool of volunteers as younger people are unable to / not willing to replace them
- Heartland FM central point for communications
- No central point / town square
- Need for broadband connectivity throughout whole town
- Need for more ways to connect people across age groups

### 3. HOUSING

#### 3.1 Comments on the current situation:

- 12 new flats built behind RW Bell - with 3 gone to locals
- 87 houses approved to be built by developer AJ Stephen's above the caravan park including affordable housing options
- Residents at Fishers View very content with their setup

#### 3.2 Areas for concern are:

- No current schemes to help people get on the housing ladder
- Social housing list has 10 years' wait and Perthshire-wide so locals can be relocated - locals used to get priority
- Lack of affordable housing prevents young people from living here
- Second home ownership leaving houses empty most of the year
- People who are not local residents are buying houses, renting them out as holiday lets and taking stock away from local people
- Holiday home business owners not engaging with the local community
- Lack of housing stock for long term rent
- 3 bed family homes are too expensive to buy
- Difficult to buy land - local landowners sell to friends or in massive lots
- Seasonal workers eg. who work in hospitality, at hotels, caravan parks or at theatre cannot find accommodation
- There are only 8 x 3-bedroom council houses for a population of around 3000 people
- New green guidelines for housing means that rental housing stock owned by local landowners may be at risk due to cost of upgrading them to gov requirements - currently no housing improvement grants, tax incentives or VAT rebate schemes
- Amount of land for development is very limited due to geography and planning process can take up to 10 years

"Some of the older housing has been lost to second home ownership, some purchased by people with much higher levels of disposable income which is driving prices up"

"Second home ownership is pricing local people out and having a detrimental impact on community life...it should be challenged"

"A lot of people sell houses in big cities down south and buy large houses in the area"

"People hold onto the properties when their old relatives die and turn them into holiday lets"

"Local businesses won't develop, the workforce can't move into the area to solve the staffing shortages in care/medical and hospitality because there is no accommodation."

"Teachers have to travel vast distances and nurses try and take up jobs here but there's no housing for them."

"Prices compared to other towns is significantly higher here"

"There is no point in owning rental properties apart from providing for your own business"

#### 3.3 Opportunities and suggestions for action included:

- Identifying land for affordable housing
- Create a voice in the town to challenge second home ownership
- Government-wide initiatives to encourage first-step housing schemes

“The community need to accept that some areas of land need to be built on to resolve the housing problem”

“Second home owners need to put more into the town than just buying a house”

#### Headlines

- Lack of housing at the root of many issues in Pitlochry
- Too many second homes and holiday lets which are pricing people out of the housing market, preventing younger people from coming to live and work here, stopping businesses and services being fully staffed
- Lack of housing stock for long term rent
- Housing that is available is expensive
- Lack of social and affordable housing

## 4. LOCAL ECONOMY

### 4.1 Positive aspects to the local economy were seen to be:

- A good supermarket serving the local community and wider area
- Charity shops do well and independent butcher lauded
- The Pitlochry Partnership network for local businesses good for inter-business communication
- Some businesses eg. Fonab Caravan Park working in partnership with others eg. offering discounts for bungee jumping, free glass of wine at Victorias to customers
- Station Bookshop sells up to 30,000 books/year, raising thousands for local and national causes and acts as a library for residents
- Enchanted Forest donates around £40K/yr to local causes and more to 3 national charities. 2017 study suggests Enchanted Forest generates £7.6m annually to Highland Perthshire in the biggest event outside the central belt.
- Plenty of jobs in hospitality and retail
- Heartland FM offers work placements for digital media students, progresses future journalists and helps businesses with google marketing
- R W Bell take on at least one joiner, electrician and plumber apprentice/year
- Young people find their first job quite early (from S2/3) due to plethora of hospitality jobs, giving valuable work experience
- School leavers in Pitlochry are open minded to travel / move away for study/career opportunities and others interested in rural industries locally

"The local Coop has served Pitlochry well and whilst additional supermarkets could be beneficial, we would not like to see this as detrimental to the Coop"

"The business community are very busy so they are very difficult to engage but they want to see changes"

"There is a consolidation of businesses – owned by one person but not necessarily run by one. But they have invested a lot of money and run a reasonable service."

### 4.2 Concerns included:

- Existing businesses petitioning against new businesses coming into town if perceived as competition
- The derelict shops and buildings on Atholl Road - Tesco Metro was interested in the Old Lite Bite site but not enough parking for deliveries
- Lack of diversity of shops for the everyday needs of locals. There used to be shops for local needs eg. underwear but people didn't use them
- Expensive nature of shops and restaurants due to high rents and catering to single trade
- Shops mainly cater for tourists, locals lack many basic essential
- Seasonal nature of most employment with too few well paid, year-round opportunities
- All major businesses struggling for staff which reduces opening hours
- Lack of connection between school and local businesses eg. career fair
- Lack of evening entertainment / late night food and drink
- Lack of staff leads to businesses having to pay staff over the odds which is unsustainable - £12/hr is the going rate for hospitality

- Accommodation bookings through Pitlochry.org are decreasing for some interviewees
- Seasonal workers need to take on 2 or 3 jobs to afford to live here
- Accommodation prices very inflated as no competition from cheap modern options like Travelodge so people can't stay in the area long when they come for events
- The town has lost allocated money because of previous approaches to development

"Bus drivers have said they might not stop any more because the woollen shops have closed"

"The Old Bakers Oven has too much asbestos to convert it into something else. A specialist contractor is needed to demolish it and this is too expensive. The site can't be changed until planning permission for a new design is accepted"

"Lots of young couples ask where the nightlife is, looking for a late drink, people are glammed up at 10pm looking for somewhere to go and they have to just come back"

"Income taken by businesses compared to what they put back into the community is questionable"

"There is a disconnect between shop costs and online purchases, it is incredibly expensive to buy local. Most local people don't understand how expensive it is to run a business. Businesses may be detached slightly but usually their workers are from the area. It is good the new community council are business owners."

"Use it or lose it – we see a lot of Tesco deliveries etc. Residents don't seem to comprehend their part in this - if we don't use local shops and services, they shut"

4.3 Proposals and initiatives that were thought to be important include:

#### Town enhancement

- Lobby businesses to improve the appearance of shop frontages
- Plan the demolition / occupation of the old Lite Bite
- Take action on the closed and empty shops
- Increase receptivity of local residents to change and progress
- Allow fair-priced accommodation to enter the town eg. Premier Inn to provide competition to overpriced tourist accommodation
- Cafes to encourage breastfeeding by putting comfy chairs + 'tea for two' initiatives

#### Retail

- Wider selection of Polish and Hungarian food at food shops
- Wider range of shops for locals eg. school clothes, toiletries

#### Tourism And Town Brand/Identity

- Main hotels should pool marketing and promotion
- More businesses to work together to benefit from incentive schemes like Fonab Caravan Park does
- Motorhome waste disposal facility
- Left luggage facility
- Offer more evening entertainment / discos / later night drinking options

- One stop digital shop to find out what's happening in Pitlochry
- More experienced-based opportunities focusing on the outdoors rather than purchase based
- More sense of community ownership of twinning with France - need to send pipe bands there to encourage tourism from there to here
- Bring back info boards about walks and things of interest in the area / around town
- Need a tourism body / promoter

"The Scottish government local destination management organisation failed because they used external consultants. We are sandwiched between 2 national parks, not covered well by Visit Scotland and have a historic foothold in tourism. We can't rest on the legacy from the past though"

"We need to market Pitlochry better as a place for outdoor pursuits like Aviemore has done. Promote it as a natural stop up north with great transport links."

"We need a more cosmopolitan feel to evening places in Pitlochry - not just sitting down to eat places"

"Pitlochry needs to improve its offer - it has not moved with the times"

"Dunkeld used to have a short season and was tired and sorry as a place. Now it has an interesting range of shops, food, cycling and walking routes and its season has lengthened"

"Highland Perthshire has so much more than Aviemore but we need to create a brand and make Pitlochry a destination - maybe around 'big tree country'?"

#### Local training, employment and business opportunities

- Create co-work space for home/remote workers
- Pavilion could become a community enterprise like a tearoom
- Develop an online magazine for and by teenagers so they learn digital skills
- Industrial estate needed
- Enchanted Forest employs 80 paid local stewards each year

"An upgraded Pavilion could generate income and the site could be developed further as a homeworking hub"

"Tradespeople are looking for industrial estates to store their equipment and have their office, but there is no land for development and they have to use their garages"

#### Sustainable economy

- Lobby landlords to reduce rents on high street / create a subsidy scheme
- Local loyalty scheme for discounts for locals
- The Etape does not bring much income to the area as many people only come for the day
- Aberfeldy did better during pandemic as not solely reliant on tourism and cater better for mix of locals and visitors

"The people who own the high street don't live here. Many have only financial interest in the town"

"There is an urgent need to reduce rents to offer shops that locals want."

"If anyone tries to establish a non-tourist business they fail as rents are unsustainably high"

**Headlines:**

- Need to attract wider diversity of shops that provide locals with essentials
- Staff shortages across businesses
- Derelict and empty shops / buildings need action
- Rents on main street too high to attract independents
- Not enough well paid, year round work to make young people stay
- Lack of evening economy
- Need to diversify beyond tourism
- Some events and shops generate large amounts of money for local causes

## 5. EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE

### 5.1 Comments on the current situation highlighted:

- Pitlochry High School Nursery a real strength - have been offering 1140 hrs / year childcare for (2+)3-5yr olds for 5 years with wraparound care 8am-6pm for 45 weeks/year - helping families get back to work.
- Jelly Tots run by the school for babies up to 3 yrs starting up again post COVID - important service for the school to get to know families and offer early interventions, family learning and family support where necessary as well as speech language therapy and support for all children to be able to attend.
- School proud of its values of being small, family-oriented and inclusive with high teacher:pupil ratios and success in terms of experiences and qualifications
- Pitlochry High School (Secondary), as part of the School Estate Transformation Programme, was given the green light by the Council's Lifelong Learning Committee on 4 September 2019 to to develop a Highland Perthshire Learning Partnership (HPLP) to make Pitlochry High School a hub for learning across the community.
- HPLP will explore different models for the delivery of education across Pitlochry High School and Breadalbane Academy including the delivery of some aspects of S5 and S6 from Pitlochry High School which would not be detrimental to the educational offer at Breadalbane Academy. Eg. a 'virtual campus' where teachers would give classes to all students online.
- Community asked for distance learning for Pitlochry-based 5th and 6th years in 2019. 80% parents wanted this to happen.
- Difficult to run courses in conjunction with Breadalbane as one set of students would have a live (better) experience than those attending the same class virtually, as well as timetabling issues and the cost and time of teachers spent travelling is impractical
- HPLP will also look at a learning offer of college courses to adults from Pitlochry High School and explore closer ways of working between Breadalbane and Perth College for positive destinations for young people
- Funding for a self contained adult learning area as part of the Secondary School was secured pre-COVID.
- School work with hotels, tennis courts, golf club etc. to provide sports opportunities for pupils. Primary kids offered swimming at Breadalbane but not secondary as it takes too much time out of the curriculum ( a whole half day)
- Pupil numbers at free after school clubs provided by the primary school became too small as so many other private after school activity eg. Brownies, Scouts, dance classes (though not necessary inclusive / free)
- The Den at Heartland fantastic wraparound care for primary children - the only such provision in Perth and Kinross but their space in the school is too small. Perth and Kinross Council (PKC)is taking over the Den for a 6 month trial and taking responsibility for staffing etc. which is seen as very positive
- School keen to support / use other services in the community eg. library rather than amalgamating them all together
- The school recognises the worth of the church and will get in touch to ask for help
- Pitlochry Baptist Church supports the school with Fair Trade
- Difficult for parents and organisations who want to work with students to have direct access to teachers and to be involved with the school so limits opportunities

- for pupils
- The school and community would like to have 5th and 6th year in Pitlochry as it is better for young people to have continuity, but it is not feasible as it would be detrimental to Breadalbane - reducing their staffing and pupil numbers which would limit what they could offer and danger that both schools would suffer.
- Some parents moved their children to Breadalbane when threat of closing the secondary school was real and there have been recent dwindling numbers at the secondary school.
- No nursery or childcare provision for 0-3yrs - nearest nurseries at Aberfeldy/Dunkeld are often full and current childminders in Pitlochry stopping
- Night school and adult learning outpost of Perth College both no longer exist so very limited adult learning opportunities
- The school won't open up at night because they would need a janitor and cleaners
- Better facilities at Breadalbane means some students travel to Aberfeldy from S1
- Pitlochry High School (PHS) students do John Muir Awards and do conservation work twice a month
- Junior Ranger Scheme no longer operational

"Money has been invested at the Breadalbane Campus and Pitlochry has gradually died"

"We lose our young people to Aberfeldy at 5th year and that becomes the central point of their social lives and focus"

"Lots of families don't move here because school is not up to 6th year."

"Many of the secondary school kids have become 'hibernatory' since COVID. It's a bigger battle to get them to take part in after school activity than them just being able to again".

"My neighbour is giving up her job because the person caring for her children is giving this service up"

"More people are moving to the area who don't have family/friends closeby. More professionals are moving here too and have roles that don't fit around school. Incomers from other countries come without support networks. They all need safe and affordable childcare"

## 5.2 Suggested improvements included:

- Build a new community campus (with integration of faith groups)
- Help Puddleduck/ABC nursery find a space in Pitlochry as both interested in starting a branch here
- Incentives for local people to train as childminders/playworkers/childcare practitioners
- More talks at school by local businesses
- Support the Den to find a larger new space with good storage and potential to include a private nursery for kids 6 months+
- Train PHS and Breadalbane graduates as play assistants / offer work placements
- Approach developer across from school for building for Den / private nursery
- School to establish links with Station Bookshop - potential to offer parents books which are not high enough quality for the bookshop

**Headlines:**

- Serious lack of childcare options for 0-3yrs which prevents parents from working and stops families moving to the area
- The Den is a fantastic wraparound care service for primary kids but has inadequate space
- Nursery offer 8am-6pm childcare 45 weeks/year for 3-5yrs (some 2yrs)
- Many people see the benefits of a 5 and 6 year for the High School but not feasible as Breadalbane relies upon the intake of pupils for staffing / wide subject offer
- Possibilities of digital learning being explored
- Adult education hub at school approved pre-COVID and on hold
- Breadalbane Community Campus more extensive facilities than Pitlochry High School
- Emphasis on inclusivity and high quality experience at Pitlochry High School
- Recent declining numbers at secondary level

## 6. HEALTH, CARE AND SERVICES

### 6.1 Key points included:

- Atholl Medical Centre covers 700 miles, has a branch surgery in Blair Athol and hosts 13 clinics and services incl. diabetes, family planning, immunisations
- The Tryst offer day care
- Mental health team based at Pitlochry hospital
- Ambulance service based at Atholl Medical Centre available for GP emergencies, hospital transfers, 999 calls, A9 trauma work covering wide rural area.
- Fantastic mountain rescue service and air ambulance
- Health Board good at signposting to other services
- Medical services used by local residents as well as second-homers, seasonal workers and visitors
- Medical needs can be complex due to elderly population
- Recent Investment in new telephone system to keep patients informed
- Dramatic reduction in number of car crashes because of the dualling of the A9, 40 mph speed limit and increase in number of speed cameras.
- NHS Healthy Communities is the health and social care partnership for north Perthshire focusing on community health and wellbeing - working with groups like Men's Shed, Recovery Group at Atholl Centre
- The Old People's social work team hosts the social prescriber for the area
- Highland Perthshire Shopmobility hire out scooters and wheelchairs for public use
- The Baptist-run Atholl Centre provides many health services including the food bank, community food scheme, All Soup lunch and other programmes to reduce isolation and promote mental health and is soon to install an accessible toilet and changing facilities for the public and visitors. It also hosts a job club by Breathe Aberfeldy once a month.
- Balhousie Care Home facilitate a positive partnership with the school
- Happy Highlanders Dementia Group run monthly social club and trip
- Atholl Medical Centre Users Group a place to share views on the GP practice
- Employment opportunities for support workers and in third sector due to new rural health schemes eg. mindspace coordinator, mental health support workers
- Voluntary hospital drivers scheme allows locals to be driven to PRI or Ninewells for just £15 (the surgery has this list)
- Breathe Connect app being developed for young people in Highland Perthshire as a one stop shop for health services
- Most ambulance patients in area are 75yrs+ residents, tourists with emergencies relating to drinking, sports, car crashes as well as child emergencies
- Local fire service carry out home fire safety visits to people at increased risk of fire and in school and are creating a facebook page to promote their community activities
- Shopmobility scheme funded entirely by Station bookshop profits

### 6.2 Areas of concern include:

- Dementia ward, minor injuries and GP ward all closed so locals have to go as far as Ninewells for minor things
- Difficult to recruit GPs - currently short staffed
- COVID-19 put massive strain on workloads and extra screenings put in place before patients can see medical staff misunderstood by public
- Care and Wellbeing CIC have highly reduced members due to COVID
- Tryst daycare attendance suffered from lack of adherence to COVID rules by those

with dementia / alzheimers putting off those who were adhering to the rules and have reduced days from 4 to 2

- People in need of care scared to allow workers in their homes during COVID and not enough carers 'qualified' to care for people living at home with dementia/alzheimers
- Severe staff shortages, even in private care sector - Health sector competing with hospitality for employees
- Many visitors waste local resources eg. forgetting their medication from home
- Perception that because surgery doors closed, staff are not busy
- Drug and alcohol cases much higher now than 20 years ago
- Big waiting list for Balhousie Care Home and not enough other care homes
- Local people needing residential care not given priority for beds in Pitlochry
- Art therapy and other health groups recently folded
- Lack of cohesion between emergency services
- Rise in mental health emergencies since pandemic and no obvious links in community to ongoing mental health services - pattern of emergency then discharge and repeat rather than long term plan / care.
- Ambulance service don't have access to Pitlochry hospital - 999 calls can take ambulance from Pitlochry to Dundee then have to deal with cases local to there. Sometimes the team don't get back to Pitlochry for 9 hours.
- Regular 4-5 hour wait for an ambulance due to staffing and only one ambulance
- Not enough public toilets
- Local fire service don't have enough drivers
- Difficult to recruit retained fire service staff as it's not full time and you need to be on call which is difficult to get permission for from employers

"Deeply concerned regarding the closure of the 9 bed GP ward in the community hospital. This will put even more pressure on a very fragile and stretched care in the community service which already exists"

"Pay for carers is £11/hour, should be closer to £15 - they are involved with medication, dangerous roles and are on their own with people at risk"

"There are a lot of financial cuts coming down the line in public services and it will be a big fight to retain what we have, never mind getting more."

"Public toilets are at risk of closure/reduction. We need to preserve what we have and look at new ways of using what we have."

#### 6.2 Suggested improvements included:

- Upgrade direct payments system for care on PKC website
- Clear path, communication and work experience for young people considering work in the care sector - Perth College has a 6 week course in social care
- Mental health car service in addition to ambulance like in Dundee
- Ambulance service to have direct access to Dundee mental health unit rather than having to go through GP
- More public toilets with clear signage
- Full time fire service covering Highland Perthshire
- Retention of police provision

"Retention of police provision is a priority – we have a very unusual police station in that it has a front desk, manned on a constant basis because of the number of tourists, train station/services. Police have a large, busy area including the A9 and it can take time for a response – a major accident on the A9 can take all resource out of the town."

## Headlines

- Staff shortages in Pitlochry health sector from carers to GPs
- Services shut down recently include GP ward, dementia unit, minor injuries unit
- Increase in mental illness during pandemic and not enough long term support services
- Atholl Centre provides vital range of wellness activities
- Reduction in car crashes thanks to A9 dualling and speed restrictions
- Ambulance service stretched
- More public toilets needed

## 7. COMMUNITY FACILITIES, ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

### 7.1. Positive comments included mention of:

- Some very proactive and caring groups in town
- Lots of groups/clubs for retired residents
- Groups for all ages decimated by pandemic but beginning to start up again
- Fishers Hotel sympathetic to young people and let them sit inside in wet weather
- Town hall great acoustics and great floor for dancing (but stage too high) and Pitlochry Common Good Fund could potentially go to town hall renovations
- Moulin Hall a good venue to use - affordable, cosy and with kitchen on ground floor
- The Tryst acts as a hub for many community groups
- Town Hall Users Group formed to improve / help upkeep / use / promote The Town Hall / fundraise for improvements
- Baptist-run Atholl Centre a hub - run the foodbank, food larder, English lessons, a place to go for advice, accessible toilet and shower.
- Churches work well together, meet regularly and do Christian Aid together. Collections are 10-20 x the national average
- Increase in attendance at Church of Scotland recently
- Highland Main Line Partnership hoping to take over a part of the station building to use for community involvement
- Men's Shed a positive new development (and they're looking for a dedicated space)
- Parkrun and The Dell Dippers wild swim group both positive, free, intergenerational, healthy new activities
- Inner Wheel keen to man library to ensure extended opening hours
- Riders of the Storm hoping to develop their site into a full equestrian centre (funding dependent) and developing holiday packages

### Concerns

#### 7.2. Concerns included:

- Many activities for 0-3yrs not started again post pandemic
- Lack of provision / facilities for children and especially teenagers/young people - eg. no youth music groups, choir, sports facilities, drama clubs, public swimming pool
- Lack of younger people/ diversity in most of the groups that exist
- Out of date noticeboards managed by Live Active
- All churches affected significantly by COVID restrictions
- Problem with drugs in the community, connected to lack of things to do and poor police presence
- Atholl Centre would like to do more for young people but often when faith based, funding is not available
- The oldest amateur football club in Scotland (1886) - The Vale of Atholl - is now in abeyance as there are not enough men of playing age living locally
- Hardly any activities for the very elderly (85+) except indoor bowls
- Lack of places for choir to rehearse / perform with a good piano
- Lack of evening activities / entertainment
- Difficult for older people to get involved with groups as are relied on for childcare
- Nowhere for older people to go - the Coop is the hub!
- In the past there was ice skating, curling, a roller disco, horseriding, for locals and visitors
- Kitchen at Town Hall upstairs so limits accessibility and heating is on all summer, wasting resources

“Young people meet at the Rec and the bus stop where it is dangerous because of all the drunks coming out of the pubs. Younger kids have groups opening up but not teenagers”

“Aberfeldy has lots of things for young people that Pitlochry doesn't have and warm, dry places where they feel welcome eg. cinema, leisure centre. Red tape like insurance and child protection measures stops groups being set up. The leisure centre was hardly open even before COVID!”

“If young people are into Scouts, Guides and the Pipe Band it's fine but if not, there is nowhere to hang out”

“PKC say to young people that there are things ‘in your area’ talking about Aberfeldy and Perth. But kids can't stay after school in Aberfeldy because there are no direct evening buses.”

“It is getting more and more difficult for people ‘our’ age to stay/get involved in groups because we are needing to help the next generation down - both parents usually work these days and we are needed for childcare. So groups don't want to take on major projects”

“We get asked by customers ‘where is the local swimming pool?’ ‘Where is the cinema?’ ‘What is there to do in Pitlochry on a rainy day?’ We have to send everyone to Aberfeldy for leisure activities. Some people cut holidays short as there is nothing to do. Tourists won't stay again realising there are no amenities. The parents are looking for a rest too but there's nothing to occupy the kids”

## **Opportunities**

7.3. Opportunities highlighted to make most of existing provision included:

- There is a full time Active Schools coordinator who covers Pitlochry and Breadalbane - primary and secondary - to provide free extra-curricular clubs plus targeted work but due to losing the Leisure centre, there is no suitable space to run this work. Only provision in Pitlochry is lunchtime sports club for secondary students. Need volunteer coaches and a space to run these clubs which are free for users
- Completely renovate town hall and incorporate a youth club, soft play, move kitchen downstairs
- Use skills of people offering existing activities to adults to kids and families eg. Scottish country dance/ceilidhs, art, choir, outdoor bowling etc.
- Set up a programme of activities for children including 0-3yrs
- Reopen Town Hall fully and adapt to different groups eg. kids parties, gigs
- Town Hall could be community owned but needs a roof / structural report and upkeep and energy bills are expensive
- Lots of spaces available in existing buildings

“Focus should be on having enough and viability – huge police station, hospital, school – all have empty spaces that could be used for other purposes. People only kick into gear when something is at threat”

“You don't want that millstone around your neck if you don't know everything about it”

"Lots of buildings are competing for community use - Live Active, Town Hall, Moulin Hall, The Tryst. All require maintenance, none of them are adequate for purpose, all of them are 'make do'"

"We want an attractive, redeveloped community-owned multi-functional space located in the heart of the community offering space at reasonable rates to local residents"

"The town hall used to be thriving and run dances, jumble sales, pantomimes. Now it is dead"

"Live Active have no interest in the town hall. It needs a community takeover"

"Facilities like the scout hall and Moulin hall are cheap but it is difficult to know the right person to contact. The Atholl Centre is an open, churchy place and puts people off"

"There are 50 toddler mothers needing activities"

## **New Provision**

7.4. Suggestions for new additional provision included:

- A modern new purpose-built, eco friendly central community hub with library/meeting space/breastfeeding friendly cafe/softplay area/indoor sports - multifunctional and energy efficient
- A community swimming pool and indoor sports provision
- Mother and baby room installed at the Rec with baby changing, chair for breastfeeding and toilet
- More initiatives for new parents eg. group for pregnant women / yoga for mums / buggy club
- Using the Pavilion for multi-use events eg, cinema, meeting space, arts space
- Warm, dry, safe place for older youth/young adults to go, a place to get away from drugs
- Running Club and gymnastics classes

"More wet weather options for locals and visitors"

"More choice of activities for elderly people in the town to support connectivity and keep people physically and mentally active"

"Develop a serenity garden to come and sit in, play in, pray in, sign in. United Free Church building could be shared by all faith groups and be a community facility. Build new community campus with a faith presence"

"We can't go to the baby groups in Aberfeldy as the drive ruins their naps - Aberfeldy is good for Aberfeldy. But we live in Pitlochry and want stuff here"

"There are opportunities for children to P7 but secondary is where the problems start. Bring them together through music, talking and being unashamedly Christian"

"A business wanted to put in a soft play area but people said we don't need it in Pitlochry. It is like a glorified old age town. There is bus service for older people. What about families with

young kids who don't drive?"

### **Headlines**

- Lack of provision for kids and young people, especially 0-3yrs and teenagers
- Need a programme of activities for all age groups
- No public swimming pool and kids are missing out on basic life skill
- Lack of indoor facilities for wet days
- The town hall not being used in the way it should - needs redevelopment and community buyout or a whole new community hub to be built - a better hub than the Coop!
- Lack of recreational options for very elderly

## 8. ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SPACES

### Environment

#### 8.1 Positive features identified included:

- Wonderful open and green spaces in the area
- Recent installation of 750 seater stadium at Rec through Pavilion User Group
- Rec can accommodate large crowds/events eg world piping championships (10,000 people, Highland Games 6,000)
- Pitlochry in Bloom umbrella organisation for paths group and litter picking group - all of which do invaluable work
- Money agreed by PKC pre pandemic to upgrade the Pavilion downstairs
- Will of current owner of Bank House to demolish the site and create new development but needs planning permission for new development first
- Plan by owner to put a facade on old bakers oven in next 6 months
- Victorian awnings on the high street are attractive (but needing revamped)
- Handam provides residents opportunities to reduce household, plastic and food waste via zero waste shop / refill store and neighborhood food scheme
- Monthly local producers markets
- Climate Cafe provides information, sharing, inspiration about sustainable living + climate change and a vehicle for taking action
- The Community Eco hub runs workshops and provides information via Facebook
- HEAT Project, based in Blairgowrie offer free energy efficiency assessment
- Bike scheme from the station is being researched
- Dog park being set up this year, Tomcroy Crescent
- Lend and Tend scheme to share growing space in existing gardens
- Perthshire Seed Library and Seed and Plant Exchange Box at Handam Refill shop
- Increased rewilding / less weedkiller / no verge cutting schemes being introduced
- Recycling bins at all major events a success
- Atholl estates keen to support development on their land behind the bus stop that is significant for Pitlochry
- Atholl Estates supported John Muir Awards at School in the past
- Focus on outdoor learning in the primary school and strong outdoor focus in secondary with John Muir and Duke of Edinburgh Awards, junior rangers and rural skills development

“Lots of hope with places like Handam”

### Concerns

#### 8.2. Issues and concerns included:

- Derelict buildings on the high street
- Playgrounds are not fenced in and the one at the Rec is especially dangerous due to location near river and on major dog-walking route (dogs off leads)
- Parks lacking play equipment for 0-3s ( too dangerous) and teenagers and parents were not consulted when installed
- Not enough seating areas at any of the parks
- Dog poo issues
- Some people upset at ‘untidy’ parks purposefully not mowed for rewilding - viewing it from a gardener, not a wildlife perspective
- Litter a big issue for wildlife
- Victorian facades need some TLC

“The town is shabbier than ever, there's a gradual degradation of the high street”

“Parents were not consulted when the parks were built and some of them are a death trap for young kids. They didn't put the right equipment in when they had the chance”

## Opportunities

### 8.3. Suggested opportunities included:

- Toilets needed at Rec
- More dog poo bag dispensers around town / in parks
- Upstairs at The Pavilion to be used for wider community use
- Development of the Rec - outdoor gym, extension of skate park, trim trails, pump track
- Community buy-out of land near the Rec
- Give part of the Black Spout Wood to the Scouts cub section along with a woodland plan and they can follow it
- Volunteers needed for rebuilding the Ben Vrackie path washed away
- Bring back kids nature / environmental activities eg. nature detectives as well as bug+bee incentives and wildlife corridors
- A cycling network through the town and beyond
- Community based website to include info about walks, swans nesting, wildlife spotting
- Recycling bins on the main street and at parks
- A repair shop for the community to fix broken things, use existing skilled residents
- A tool library for communal lending
- Mens Shed need a space
- Create a community eco-hub which would house a repair shop, swap shop, crochet groups, toy library, nappy library, craft and upcycling workshops, Mens shed - bring all smaller projects under one roof
- Scheme to recycle paperback books that are not good enough to sell at Station Bookshop
- Create community led power generation using Hydropower from the Moulin burn
- Scheme for mass installation of solar panels on homes/buildings
- More local food growing and food sharing schemes eg. community orchard, allotments, community gardens, communal harvesting
- Plant fruit trees around Pitlochry for free fruit for the community
- A community woodland for education and recreation and a forest garden
- Encourage rainwater collection and promote water efficiency
- Continue to promote water bottle refill scheme
- Promote local wildflower scheme
- Regular thrift shop at Town Hall for benefit of different groups?
- Create close links with the school eg. junior climate cafe, climate change group
- Tap into / create a local freecycle group
- Environmental education for the community - re ethical banking, circular economy, waste management
- Local Accommodation Providers to provide their visitors with the link to <https://www.pitlochrycc.co.uk/car-free-pitlochry.html> for car free tourism advice

“Fresh town centre regeneration bids are needed”

“My memories of lockdown are families with little kids on bikes but there isn't a cycling network”

## Headlines

- Fence around playground at Rec
- Toilet and baby changing facilities at Rec
- Development of sports provision at rec - eg. outdoor gym, better play equipment for older and younger kids
- Cycling network and cycle lanes
- Community growing schemes
- Ecohub and environmental education
- Repair shop /cafe

## 9. PARKING, ROADS, PAVEMENTS AND TRANSPORT

### 9.1 Positive comments included:

- The area feels remote but we are so well connected
- A peer-peer car hire scheme is being explored
- Stakeholders are speaking with LNER for a second train service
- Dualling of the A9
- Council funds for additional parking

“Potential impact of the dualling of the A9 could be good news and bad news. Pitlochry could be a commuter town with better housing development. However, if you can get from Edinburgh to Inverness quicker you might not stop in the town. On balance it is positive.”

“There are council funds for additional parking but unfortunately due to the pandemic, availability of space has caused a problem to resolve. There are issues around community asset transfers”

### 9.2 Areas of concern were:

- 30 minute parking zones not working
- Enchanted Forest causes major parking issues
- Proposed changes to rail timetable / no direct service to Edinburgh
- Many trains not stopping at Blair Atholl
- Poor transport links to outlying villages
- No evening transport links between Pitlochry and Aberfeldy so young people can't see their friends / attend after school activities
- No buses on a Sunday / in the evenings / to Perth
- Community minibus struggling to find volunteer drivers partly due to change in insurance demands
- Traffic flow through town a problem
- Many pavements too narrow / bumpy for prams/wheelchairs/kids scooters

“Consultations show more leisure users and not commuters on our trains - need to be offering a cheap day out that leaves early enough to make use of the destinations - if cheaper fares are restricted to off-peak, it isn't worth the day out timewise”

### 9.3 Suggestions for improvement included:

- More and alternative longer-term parking and solutions for motorhome parking
- Develop car park on land next to Rec
- Green bus (like a tram) to go along the main street, dropping people off along the way
- Improve pavements
- More speed bumps on certain stretches of road including Lower oakfield
- Reduce speed limit to 20mph in whole town
- Less parking on main street
- Special buses for evening events in Perth
- Bus directly to big supermarket in Perth
- Pedestrianise a part of the high street during peak tourism season
- Create pavements on every route to school
- Make Delta Road triangle one way
- A shuttle service with costs shared between accommodations - to take people to eg. the theatre - to help the evening economy

“There can be 22 coaches coming in per hour to town at times and there are only 4 motorhome spaces. Caravans should be directed to other car parks.”

“We want people to get out of their cars and get on trains....If people want a train station to be there you have to use it or it will be cut back”

### **Headlines**

- Pitlochry well connected in general but lack of evening transport and direct buses to neighbouring towns a big problem
- Pavements need improving especially for wheelchair users and buggies
- Need for large new car park especially during events- potential for land next to Rec
- Issues with Traffic flow through town and parking on the main street

## 10. Arts, Culture, Events and Heritage

### 10.1 Positive features identified included:

- Enchanted Forest and New Year Street Party bring thousands of people EF = 83,000 NYSP = 5,0000 to the area and integral to annual calendar of events
- Enchanted Forest trying to offset carbon emissions through tree planting rather than encouraging more local audiences to come / offering local discount scheme
- Annual Perthshire Open Studios which includes a trail in Pitlochry
- Adult art classes through Pitlochry and District Adult Education Association and in Atholl Centre
- Heritage Centre Open to new ideas, workshops, exhibitions and projects
- PFTheatre brings 10,000 people to the area each year with 80% from outside PKC and this season producing 14 different productions
- New studio space (172 seats) complete and foyer developments. Auditorium, front of house, pre and production facilities next phase.
- Studio space doubles as learning / technical development space with apprenticeships and placements, in partnership with colleges
- Pre-pandemic the theatre worked with local schools around national curriculum and digital offer, backstage tours and archives and will offer again when opens
- Theatre have visual arts remit and have studios in Fonab rehearsal rooms when not in use. Exhibition opportunities but less wall space than before. Interested in visual arts engagement programmes. Have a screen and projector.
- Theatre can offer engagement programmes like courses and classes like before, linked to shows and provide space and in-kind joint projects to collaborating partners

“It’s good that different events are run by different people”

“In the past, everything was closed from October to Easter. Now we have more at the theatre, the Enchanted Forest, March into Pitlochry, The Etape. It’s all good”

### 10.2 Concerns included:

- Difficulty to find a space to run creative workshops or hold exhibitions
- Xmas market group not operating any more and other events for locals diminishing
- ‘Limelight’, who run the Etape do not give value for money to competitors as they do not create a ‘village’ feeling
- Heritage sites not well advertised
- Lack of local staff working at Pitlochry Festival Theatre and a lack of community focus
- Marketing opportunities are being missed - Heritage Centre in Moulin, battle site in Killiecrankie, Bonnie Prince Charlie in Blair Castle, Stewart heritage tours, Black Castle
- Theatre closing had big impact on community groups who used the cafe as a meeting point
- Theatre not planning to incorporate cinema into its offer (Although it has projector and screen) so no film venue in Pitlochry
- Concerns about unlimited growth of Enchanted Forest for the environment and the infrastructure of the town - it aims to be the biggest and best sound and light show in the UK

### 10.3 Suggestions for improvement included:

- Create a coordinated events calendar that is publicly easily accessible
- Re-establish the local art trail / art walk and use empty shops for pop up exhibitions
- More collaboration between artists at Perthshire Open Studios
- Auditing the disused/unknown buildings in Pitlochry to use as studio/exhibition/workshop spaces
- New art club for kids / incorporating outdoor art
- Projects / schemes to develop digital media skills in young people
- Convert the Bank House into a creative hub and Heritage Centre
- Enchanted Forest to better promote the benefits to the local community eg. who the money is benefitting
- Enchanted Forest would use electric buses if local provider could offer at same price

"It would be nice to have a space to just put stuff up"

"There is an opportunity for Pitlochry to have a market - the grassy land behind the monument could be used for this. How about a Victorian themed market with the kids dressed up and traditional games and reindeers at Xmas down the main street like at Dunkeld?"

"Pitlochry could be promoted as a town for artists and for art - with its history of linen and tweed, light and landscapes and people passing through"

"The empty Pringles shop could be a showcase exhibition / shop / work space for local artisans. There are lots of local makers who would buy into that - a place to make and sell their work inside"

#### Headlines

- Enchanted Forest, Etape and New Years Street Party bring thousands of people to the area, boost the local economy and give back money to the community
- Issues with parking re these big events
- Need for a place for local artists and makers to make and showcase their work
- Need for coordinated town events calendar
- New developments at theatre include studio space where educational work can happen
- Need for theatre and Enchanted Forest to work closely with the local community to maintain local support

## 9. SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

### STRENGTHS

#### Population, community + communications

- Strong sense of place + community
- Friendly, helpful population
- Many people do/run things in the town
- Large, strong networks of volunteers
- Community generous at raising funds
- Coop acts as a hub for local people
- Faith groups work well together and with the school
- Heartland FM key to local communication
- Pitlochry.org provides useful info
- Pandemic has changed attitudes e.g. where to live/work
- Digital connectivity
- Current police station status
- New people/families are moving to the area

#### Housing

- New development at Fonab includes affordable housing

#### Local economy

- Charity shops well supported
- Coop serves town and area well
- Enchanted Forest, New Year Street Party and Station Bookshop all generate income for the town and local causes
- Major events boost year-round economy
- Business community want to see changes in the town
- Still a good % of locally owned businesses
- Some evidence of partnerships between businesses to spread income
- Wide range of shops + restaurants
- Easier to commute/work from home

#### Education and Childcare

- The Den is an invaluable wraparound childcare service for primary kids
- Nursery been offering 8am-6pm childcare for last 5 years
- Jelly tots introduces families to the school from age 0-3
- Openness of school for partnership working eg. with golf club, hotels and supporting existing provision eg. library
- Emphasis on inclusivity at school

### WEAKNESSES

#### Population, community + communications

- Some consider a lack of community spirit compared to previously
- Pitlochry an ageing population with few of working age
- Town too dependent on tourism
- Community Council needs wider demographic representation
- Public services heavily reliant on volunteers eg. litter picking, paths
- Physical and financial volunteer fatigue with older members not being replaced on committees
- Church member numbers falling dramatically
- Old fashioned planning and public consultation system prevents change
- Pitlochry not eligible for wind farm funds
- Few opportunities for intergenerational mixing
- Finding out what is happening difficult
- Lack of tech skills isolates older people
- Misinformation spread on social media

#### Housing

- Severe lack of affordable housing
- Second homes/ holiday lets price locals out and take stock off market
- Not enough social housing
- Lack of long term rentals prevents people coming to the area to live and work
- Second home ownership / existing housing become holiday lets when elderly relatives die
- Lack of accommodation for staff
- Lack of land to buy

#### Local economy

- Shops for local needs were not used and have gone - focus on tourist shops
- Many empty units and lack of diversity of shops - too many outdoor shops
- Lack of evening economy
- Trade apprenticeships/careers need to be better promoted / encouraged
- Hotels not working together
- Online buying has an impact on local business

#### Education and Childcare

- Lack of childcare for 0-3s
- The Den need new venue
- Local demand for 5th + 6th year at

- Strong outdoor learning opportunities at school incl John Muir and Duke Of Edinburgh and rural skills development

#### **Health, Care and Services**

- Voluntary hospital drivers scheme
- The Tryst offers daycare
- NHS/PKC support for rural wellness organisations
- The Atholl Centre as a hub for wellness activity

#### **Community facilities, activities, events**

- Many retired people involved in groups - good range of activity
- Rainbows, Brownies and Scouts all excellent and volunteer-led
- Many private classes for young kids
- New parkrun and wild swim group set up during pandemic
- Good recent development at The Rec eg. tired seating, playpark, skatepark
- Full time Active Schools Coordinator providing school lunch sports club
- Good community use of Tryst, Atholl Centre and Moulin Hall
- Town Hall central location and good acoustics for performance
- Lunchtime sports and arts clubs in primary and secondary schools decided by kids (to start again)

#### **Environment + Open Spaces**

- Local people support Pavilion developments
- Historical town centre attractive and brings tourists
- Handam, Climate Cafe and Community Eco Hub bringing positive zero waste opportunities
- Station Bookshop gives new home to unwanted books
- Theatre green new build and operations seen as best practice.

#### **Heritage, Culture and Events**

- Enchanted Forest attracted 83,000 people, New Year street Party 5,000 and Pitlochry Festival Theatre 100,000 visitors in 2019
- Theatre to open new studio space and foyer in May 2022
- Heritage Centre open to collaboration and ideas

Pitlochry High but not feasible as standalone option as would reduce capacity / staffing / pupils / offer at Breadalbane

- Limited adult education options
- No swimming option for secondary school as takes too much of the school day to use Breadalbane
- Lack of free after school clubs through clubs because lack of intake / competition with existing private options

#### **Health, Care and Services**

- Low pay for carers + major staff issues
- Closure of minor injuries/dementia unit/GP ward
- Reduced ambulance service
- Lack of public toilets + police presence
- Retained fire service crew depends on local people being available – need a full time crew
- Response times for ambulance etc

#### **Community facilities, activities, events**

- Not enough for kids / teenagers to do
- No indoor recreational facilities for visitors / locals on wet days
- No public swimming pool
- Football clubs in abeyance
- No free after school clubs
- Lack of things to do in the evenings contributes to antisocial behaviour / drugs
- Prolonged use of leisure centre as a vaccination centre
- Inadequate library service
- Hardly any activities for the very elderly
- Communication between groups poor
- Ageing membership in all groups
- Lots of red tape working with kids
- Tennis courts only for people who know a member
- Town Hall underused - high heating bills and rent rates + inaccessible kitchen

#### **Environment + Open Spaces**

- Lack of signage to places of interest including theatre and heritage centre
- Rewilding has had mixed response
- Playgrounds dangerous and limited
- Town centre looks tired

#### **Heritage, Culture and Events**

- Theatre lacks community outreach programme

#### **Transport, Roads, Traffic and Parking**

- Off-peak travel too limited
- Parking a major issue

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Poor local public transport connections</li></ul>
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## OPPORTUNITIES

### Population, community + communications

- Develop modern elements and retain Victorian charm
- Form a development trust to take forward the ideas from CAP and for small unincorporated projects to get funding
- Rotary / Inner Wheel offer support and resources for new community ideas
- Tech training for older people
- Town Broadband Scheme
- Directory of local groups /events calendar

### Housing

- Mechanism to support locals/housing

### Local economy

- Shops selling essential things for locals
- Attract new industry to area
- Establish new industrial estate
- Paid trade apprenticeships for local people available
- Promote Pitlochry as a highly accessible place for outdoor pursuits
- Fresh and modern accommodation options for tourists
- Support / promote experience-based activities
- Ways to engage businesses more in community activities
- More cohesion in town development
- Educate local people on the local economy and the impact of buying online etc
- PR and branding as Big Tree Country and a place for multitude of outdoor pursuits with fresh, modern accommodation

### Education and Childcare

- Highland Perthshire Learning Partnership approved - the school as a learning hub for the whole community incl. Special area in school for adult education
- Restart nature education activity
- Support The Den to find new venue and expand its offer to other schools
- Re-open adult learning centre
- Unwanted books at Station Bookshop to be offered to parents / school
- Talent developments schemes at Theatre
- Parents can get involved to run clubs through Daria, Active Schools Coordinator

## THREATS

### Population, community + communications

- Scepticism that nothing will change
- Difficult to recruit new volunteers onto boards and committees
- Dwindling numbers in clubs eg.rotary down from 50 to 21 in 10 yrs and Probus in abeyance
- Town too busy for locals in summer
- Small group of people making decisions for the town
- Lack of ownership over twinning
- Differing personalities have an impact on town development

### Housing

- Affordable housing – the one biggest impact on the community
- Housing market is very competitive and can exclude local people
- Only 8 x 3-bedroom council houses in town
- People from outwith who have more disposable income drive house prices up
- Staff shortages in health and hospitality sectors due to lack of housing
- Young people have to live at home due to unaffordable housing which pushes them to leave the area
- Lack of staff accommodation is a threat to businesses
- Landowners unable to afford the renovation of rural properties in line with new zero carbon gov. guidelines so rental market at risk
- Traditional stone houses may become for wealthy only as difficult to heat
- Very limited land for development

### Local Economy

- Business rates
- Business rents overly expensive
- Prices not aimed at local trade
- Funding applications often don't meet socio economic criteria
- Living/fuel costs too high
- Fear that Visit Scotland may close
- Business lost during pandemic
- Many workers have left the area because of Brexit/unaffordable housing
- Lack of staff to run hospitality to capacity
- We could lose tourists to Aberfeldy where there are many more recreational facilities
- Seasonal workers need 2/3 jobs to live here
- No central body to promote Pitlochry

- Potential for S4-6 to study different subjects through virtual learning scheme
- Opportunities to run courses in conjunction with Breadalbane

#### **Health, Care and Services**

- Recruit young people into care sector in a considered way
- Government proposals to pay family members £15/hr to look after their relatives
- Bring back full use of hospital
- Community hub to include 3rd sector health organisations (Kinross good example) with weekly calendar of wellness activity and IT facilities

#### **Community facilities and activities**

- A community hub for all
- More activities / facilities / events / for toddlers / kids and teenagers
- Wet weather options
- Better promotion of available facilities and how to book
- Recruit volunteer coaches
- Make more use of Tryst and Town Hall
- Community takeover of the Town Hall but full structural and survey reports needed.
- Develop The Rec - outdoor gym, toilet, fenced and better playground, bigger skatepark, pump track, Pavilion
- Library double-up as co-work space - Crieff a good example

#### **Environment and Open Spaces**

- Plan by owner of Baker's Oven to put a facade on the derelict building in the next 6 months
- Restore derelict/iconic buildings
- New paths/pavements for outlying areas/houses
- Create focal point to town
- Creation, extension and promotion of trails for walking, running and biking
- New town centre regeneration funding bids
- Continue encouraging locals to use the great outdoors eg. Ben Vrackie
- Community website to highlight wildlife in the area, places to spot etc.
- Marketing plan to attract outdoors clientele to the area
- Eco hub / repair shop/tool library/swap shop
- Recycling bins on the main street
- Community gardens, community

as a tourist destination in its own right

#### **Education and Childcare**

- No childcare provision for 0-3s = no options for working parents
- Senior pupils having to leave to go to Aberfeldy
- Impossible for outside organisations and businesses to go into the school to inspire / involve students
- Lack of contact between school and eco hub / climate cafes / projects actioning climate change themes
- The Den can't continue in the small room it inhabits
- PKC do not want to build on any of their green spaces so community campus at school unlikely
- Kids (esp secondary aged) have become used to hibernating / being at home so reluctant to join things
- Decline in secondary school numbers - recent threat to school led to some families transferring to Breadalbane

#### **Health, Care and Services**

- People worried about receiving care in their home since the pandemic
- Many services being stopped at Pitlochry Community Hospital = increased pressure on other services
- Pitlochry community minibus lacks drivers
- Not enough staff in Pitlochry Fire Service as difficult to recruit on retained basis
- Future of key services is at risk e.g. school, police, ambulance, hospital

#### **Community facilities and activities**

- The town is really missing out on solid sports facilities
- COVID has impacted churches and many other groups attendees with danger they may not return
- Activities very Perth/Aberfeldy centric
- Young people not getting involved with groups, need to make it easier to bring them on board
- Many groups in abeyance due to COVID / lack of volunteer board members
- No wet weather activities
- Council offices closed
- Hotels no longer offering free space for community meetings and gatherings

#### **Environment and Open Spaces**

- Eyesore buildings can only be demolished/replaced if have planning permission for a new project
- Beaver shooting

- woodlands, allotments, orchard
- Models for renewable energy in Pitlochry
- Landowners keen to develop something significant behind bus stop which works aesthetically and commercially
- School keen to engage with climate cafe

#### **Heritage, Culture and Events**

- Town can support large events
- Enchanted Forest and Theatre to involve the town and engage with the community again
- A coordinated events calendar and tourism marketing team
- Better marketing of heritage sites
- Start 10K run event again
- Reinvigorate twinning opportunities
- Resurrect popular community events of the past eg. Big Xmas party hosted at Fishers
- Create resident arts community around the theatre
- Theatre to start up engagement programmes + sell local artwork
- Enchanted Forest to promote the recipients of their local funds better

#### **Transport, Roads, Traffic and Parking**

- Promote more use of public transport and better coordination of trains/buses.
- Later public transport to enable evenings out
- Second rail service for the town
- Establish safe cycling networks
- More community minibus drivers
- Bikes available to people when they arrive at the station
- Exploring hiyacar - a peer-peer car rental scheme
- Part of station to be used for community
- Create large parking area using field next to Rec but would need drainage
- Dualling of A9 – easier to commute
- Shuttle bus between hotels and evening economy

- Discarded plastic bottles / bags etc a big risk for wildlife
- Bank house not preserved
- Playground equipment in parks dangerous for young children and not fenced in with rivers nearby and many dogs
- Threat to town hall that there are many multi-use buildings to compete with which offer lower rates and that the community want a built-for-purpose energy efficient modern buildings rather than make do and plaster
- Dam to be drained in 2023 (every 25yrs)

#### **Heritage, Culture and events**

- Etape organisers not engaging locally
- A9 completion may take people to Perth Theatre rather than PFT
- Theatre will have to build back trust with local community
- Enchanted Forest want to increase audience without limits which has impact on local infrastructure

#### **Transport, Roads, Traffic and Parking**

- No dedicated parking site for Enchanted Forest leads to problems with the community
- Dualling of A9 – people may not stop

## 9. VISION FOR THE FUTURE

### **A more cohesive community, sense of ownership and a bit of pride in what we are trying to do**

A tourist destination which is modern and fresh and has also retained its Victorian charm, with plenty of accommodation for the many people who want to come and work here, to live here and be part of the community

### **A community with joined-up thinking and joined-up communication and services, making the most of digital technology**

Pitlochry to look like the best of the past - like a high st in the 1960s - with local independent businesses that serve the local community

### **A thriving creative town - a place people come to make and buy art, where we can keep talent, with a good range of events throughout the year and a cohesive cultural centre**

A town which thrives year-round, with lots of useful and independent shops for locals and tourists, vibrant, cosmopolitan hospitality options for a wide range of tourists and many recreational activities for families which will encourage them to visit annually

### **A place that is outward focusing with good connectivity with other local towns**

Enchanted Forest to be bigger and better and make more money to go back into the event and the community

### **More than just a rest stop - a place with lots of exciting events and activities for locals, including young people, and with a real community spirit**

A place where people enjoy and protect the creatures we live alongside, including beavers

### **Parkrun is still going strong, surrounded by trails for running, walking and biking. Marketing what the area has to offer to outdoor clientele**

A place which is far from being just a retirement village - with places to work and work from, a high spend destination and a great place to live and bring up your kids. A place that is safe, with a great school, good internet and with a village hub feeling

### **The school as a hub for learning - a place where adults can come back to and engage with college courses, where we connect with partners to provide a thriving range of opportunities for all of our community with a healthy viable intake, making most of digital opportunities for learning and where we continue to connect with the incredible environment that surrounds us**

## 12. SUMMARY OF THEMES AND PRIORITIES

### THEME 1 LOCAL ECONOMY AND HOUSING

#### Priorities

- Reduce rates and rents of main street shops / provide subsidies / community buyout to encourage innovative and practical independent businesses
- Develop new industrial estate(s) for tradespeople and other businesses to operate from
- Promoting trade apprenticeships - work with the school and community to provide easy feeder for local people into opportunities by companies like RW Bell
- Encourage fresh and modern accommodation for visitors
- Promote Pitlochry as THE place to come for accessible outdoor pursuits
- Work with government to help the town stop/cap second home ownership and the number of holiday lets
- Identify land for new affordable housing developments
- Prioritise local people / workers for housing opportunities

### THEME 2: TOWN DESIGN & ENHANCEMENT, PARKING, TRAFFIC & ROADS

#### Priorities

- Town hall redesigned and renovated with research into community ownership and structural and energy reports complete
- Find out how the community can support the development / demolition of Old Greggs and Bank House
- Create a town centre focal point around the bus stop area or behind war memorial with ideas for pop up shops, a bandstand and marketplace
- Encourage Highland Main Line Partnership to take over part of the station building for community involvement
- Investigate the build of a large car park on the field beside the Rec which can help with traffic and parking during our many events
- Solve traffic flow issues coming into town
- Plan in place to improve pavements especially on routes for kids to school

### THEME 3 ARTS, CULTURE, HERITAGE AND EVENTS

#### Priorities

- Investigate the possibility of an arts and cultural space as part of a community hub or a dedicated arts centre
- Establish subsidised, supportive artist/creative work space / artist studios (a creative hub) with exhibition and workshop space, hot desking, artist development training and a face/storefront for passing trade
- Art supply shop incorporating donated materials, tool share, recycled textile scraps etc (like Remake in Crieff)
- Creative club for children and young people (especially 11yrs+) with regular workshops/projects eg. sustainable fashion and hang out space and exhibition space

- Artist in residency programme to engage and inspire young people in rural places
- Renovate drama hut into a multi-arts workshop space
- Establish a 'paintings on railings' regular event at the Pavilion at the Rec
- Create a community-wide events calendar which is a central point to advertise what is on and when in the local area - for tourists and locals alike
- Resurrect the 10K running event
- Support the New Year Street Party, Etape and Enchanted Forest to run this year
- Promote Pitochry twinning arrangement
- Ensure large events providers engage the community and give a voice to locals to ensure the events benefit the town
- More live music and venues providing fun nightlife and entertainment

#### **THEME 4 COMMUNITY AND RECREATION**

- New modern building (or renovate town hall) to create a central community hub consisting of some or all of: tourist info, heritage centre, meeting rooms, community cafe, softplay, classes and workshops, cowork space, a drop in advice space, health and wellness support, local information hub, sports centre, swimming pool, ice rink, curling rink - could be a centre dedicated to Eve Muirhead
- Better sports facilities for all age groups
- A dedicated youth space like Breathe in Aberfeldy which is warm and dry
- Free / low cost swimming for local kids - build swimming pool or work in partnership with local hotels
- Recruit / support / reward / retain valuable volunteers and not overload existing ones
- Heartland to help local groups communicate what they are doing and serve as informal and formal training ground for digital media
- Increase number and range of volunteering opportunities and promote better
- Recruit more volunteer sports coaches to deliver a varied programme of sports to primary and secondary pupils
- An events planning group who would run an annual programme of events aimed at locals eg. Xmas market, Victorian market, May day festival, Autumn Festival
- Use United Free Church building as multifaith social and community space - Bankfoot a good example of how this can work
- A planned programme of free and paid for activities for children and young people
- Re-start indoor bowls in any venue to help motivate older people to keep in touch/stay active and range of activities for very elderly
- Investigate structure and energy requirements of Town Hall leading to a development plan
- Kickstart community events at the Town Hall to reinstate the Hall's central position in Pitlochry life

#### **THEME 5 OUTDOOR SPACES, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY**

- Develop the Pavilion and Rec - create a facility that can be used for training, has changing facilities, a place for families to hang out, trim trails, outdoor gym, equipment for kids football teams, upgrade toilets/showers, extend, fence in and improve the playground and skatepark
- Start a running club
- Recycling bins on the main street
- Promote new park run (where you can walk) and wild swim groups to locals
- Create interesting tracks and trails for walking / cycling, signpost and advertise well
- Swap shop, repair shop and tool lending library to be established
- Community growing schemes to be set up - orchard, allotments, food swapping, community woodland
- Find a venue for Men's Shed

- Recycling bins on the main street and book recycling bin at the Station
- Enchanted Forest to continue to develop ways to be more carbon neutral

## **THEME 6 SERVICES, TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION**

### **Priorities**

- Better local public transport links between villages
- Evening bus services to Perth and Aberfeldy
- Direct buses for special events
- Promote public transport and encourage people to use train service
- Day pass at off-peak rate for leisure travellers on train
- Create safe cycle networks in around the town to encourage active travel
- Re-establish care services/provision in the area
- Support local young people into childcare and care careers through training, work experience, competitive pay and a support network
- Public toilets near the tourist office and at Rec
- Left luggage facility for tourists
- Motorhome waste disposal facilities
- Fiber broadband throughout the whole town to encourage remote workers
- IT skills training for seniors eg.to set up online accounts, do online shopping etc.
- Directory of local groups (online and physical) for local groups to advertise what they do and attract new members
- Community events calendar - everyone can easily add a new event- a way of creating and disseminating info clearly about year-round events

## **THEME 7 EDUCATION, CHILDCARE, HEALTH AND CARE**

### **Priorities**

- New Pitlochry community campus including 5th and 6th year
- Virtual campus where students can learn new subjects remotely (as part of S4-6 offer)
- Adult education hub at school to be built (funding already secured)
- Volunteers needed for lunchtime / after school provision
- Develop top field as an outdoor learning hub with access to equipment on site
- Retain healthy intake of secondary school students
- School to engage with climate cafe as an active school initiative
- Restart education programmes for kids to connect with the outdoors and nature
- Create a learning centre - a place where people can go to enhance their employability skills and access computers
- Support existing Childcare provision and secure a private nursery for 0-3 years
- Find new bigger space to accommodate The Den near or in the school
- Bring back local hospital services like minor injuries unit / GP ward / dementia ward
- Incentives for care workers
- Prioritise local people into care homes
- Provide longer term mental health services and projects
- Another ambulance to cover the local area