

Living Well Locally Case Study: West Howe of Fife

January 2024



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INTRODUCTION

THE LOCAL LIVING AND 20 MINUTE NEIGHBOURHOODS APPROACH

Scottish Government defines 20 minute neighbourhoods as:

'A flexible approach to assessing our places against the concept of local living. A method of achieving connected and often compact neighbourhoods designed in such a way that people can meet the majority of their daily needs within a reasonable distance of their home preferably by sustainable and active travel methods.'

The principle can be adjusted to include varying geographical scales from cities and urban environments, to rural and island communities. Housing would be planned together with local infrastructure including schools, community centres, local shops and health and social care to significantly reduce the need to use unsustainable methods of travel, to prioritise quality of life, help tackle inequalities, increase levels of health and wellbeing and respond to the climate emergency.'

As part of work for Fife's second Local Development Plan we have explored the concept of local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods and considered how the concept can be applied in Fife. There are two aspects to this work.

Firstly, a quantitative, high level mapping exercise which plots key services and facilities across Fife and applies walking/cycling buffer distances. This work gives us an indication of which parts of Fife appear to have the services and facilities that support local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods and where there are gaps.

The second part of the work was to carry out a qualitative exercise which looks in more detail at the quality, frequency and accessibility of the services and facilities on offer and the distance and quality of the routes that people need to travel to access these services. Given the scale and number of settlements in Fife it is not possible for us to carry out in depth analysis work for all settlements. Instead, we identified three different character areas to use as case studies for the more detailed qualitative analysis work:

- An accessible rural cluster – villages in the West Howe of Fife;
- Remote rural villages – Saline and Steelend; and
- An urban settlement – Cowdenbeath

This case study forms part of the qualitative exercise.

The three case studies have been carried out to understand the type and quality of services and facilities in each area; and how and where people travel to access these services, both within and outwith the study areas. This information will help us to identify opportunities for interventions and contribute to discussions around 20-minute neighbourhoods and local living and inform the local policy approach in the forthcoming Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) for Fife.

SETTLEMENT BACKGROUNDS

WEST HOWE OF FIFE – ACCESSIBLE RURAL CLUSTER

This case study looks at a cluster of villages to the west of the Howe of Fife: Auchtermuchty, Falkland, Freuchie, Strathmiglo, Dunshalt, Newton of Falkland, and Gateside. These villages were chosen to consider in detail how the local living/20 minute neighbourhood concept would work in a rural cluster.

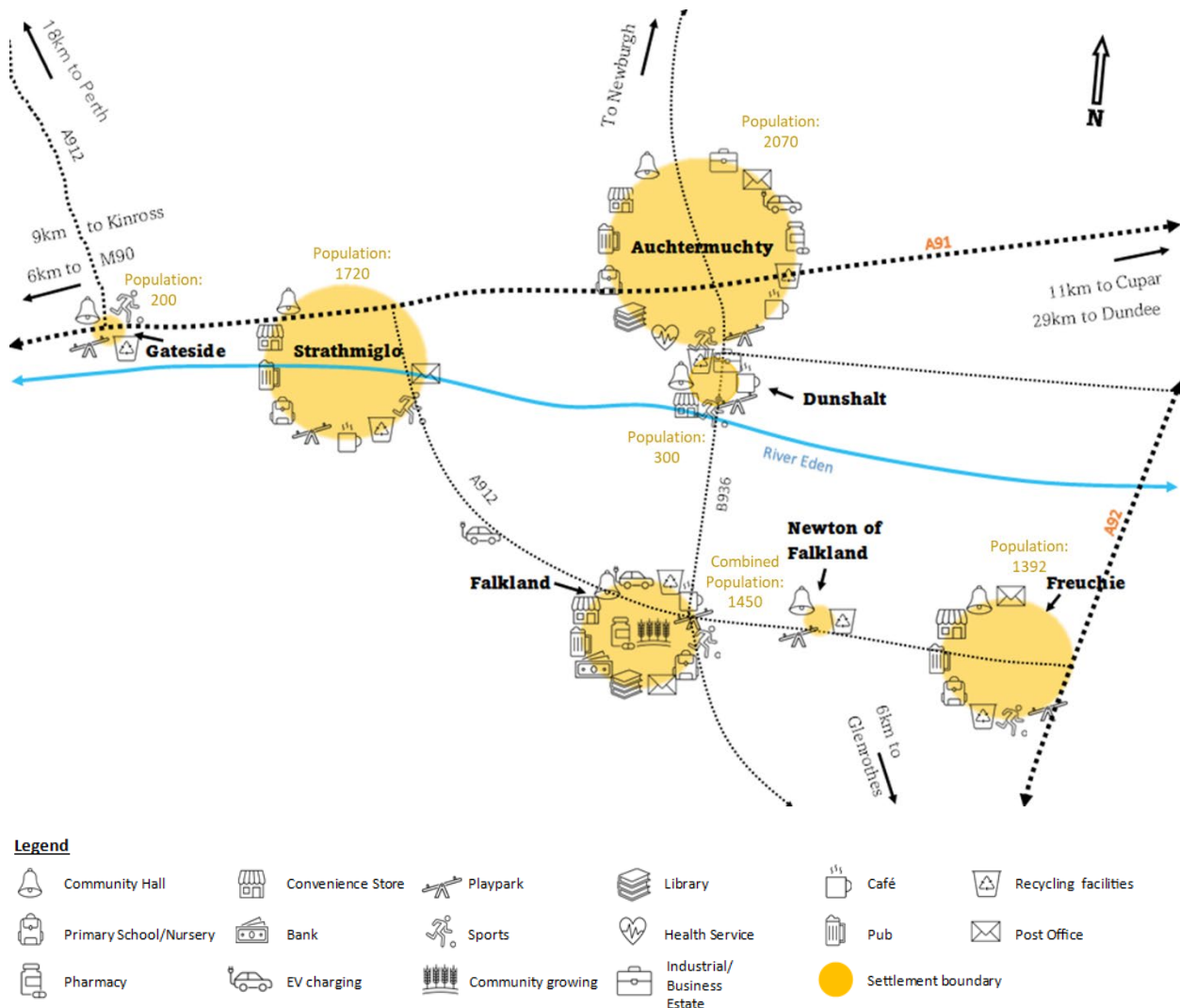


Figure 1: Diagram showing the relationship and relative size of the West Howe villages; the location of services; and distances to nearby centres.

The West Howe of Fife is a largely rural area located within North East Fife comprising of several historic villages. According to [Fife's Local Economic Profiles](#), the North East Fife area (along with Levenmouth) has the highest proportion (23%) of its population which are aged 65 and over of all the committee areas across Fife. North East Fife also has the largest proportion of its population that are of working age (63%), however North East Fife has the lowest proportion (14%) of children/under 16's. This would indicate that there is an aging population.

North East Fife has a much higher proportion of highly skilled workers (44.1%) than the Fife average (31.1%). It also has the highest proportion (58.3%) of people qualified to NVQ 4 or above, and the lowest proportion (3.4%) of its working age population who have no formal qualifications.

The [North East Fife Locality Plan](#) prepared by Fife's Health and Social Care Partnership, indicates that life expectancy in the North East Fife area is estimated at 83.1 years for females and 79.9 years for males, which is slightly above the Fife average. Furthermore, according to [SIMD \(Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation\) data](#), there are few areas of relative deprivation within the West Howe of Fife - so this is a relatively affluent area.

None of the individual villages have the full range of facilities and services considered necessary for the traditional definition of a 20-minute neighbourhood and local living. However, when considered together, settlements in the cluster have access to most of the required services within a short drive of home (see Figure 1). Local centres in Falkland, Freuchie, Strathmiglo and Auchtermuchty provide ranges of shops, leisure and sporting facilities, pubs and cafes, and community infrastructure such as libraries, post offices and EV charging facilities. A summary of how and where people access these services is discussed below with full detail of the qualitative assessment provided in [Appendix 1](#).

[Appendix 2](#) shows the distance an average adult could walk within 5, 10 and 20 minutes from the centre of each of the villages.

CONSULTATION

In Autumn 2022 we carried out some detailed analysis in the case study areas, gathering information on the provision of services and facilities. In October 2022 we ran an online survey, which asked local residents about their experiences of the quality of services and facilities as well as their ability to access them. We also visited the villages and carried out in person surveys. A detailed summary of this assessment is available in [Appendix 1](#).

In addition, we carried out some background research to investigate the availability of services and facilities in the area using a variety of locally and nationally available data and we visited each village to carry out on the ground assessments. This involved examining not only the presence of local services, groups, and clubs, but their quality in terms of hours of operation, capacity, costs of goods and services, as well as the availability of mobile services. We also conducted an assessment of the quality of key paths and active travel routes through the area (see [Appendix 3](#)).

To promote the online survey, we contacted community groups and community councils via direct e-mail and social media for their help in spreading awareness and generating community buy-in and posted about the survey on the Fife Planning Service Twitter account.

We contacted community halls and hung posters with QR code links to the online survey in the settlements. Flyers with QR code links were also handed out to people while doing in-person consultations in to encourage them and their family to participate in the survey at home and spread awareness.

We also provided paper surveys at local libraries and shops in each settlement so people who had issues accessing the survey online were able to respond.

We received 192 responses from the West Howe villages. The majority of responses were from those aged 50+. More than twice as many women than men responded. This was consistent across the West Howe settlements (see the breakdown of responses in Figure 2).

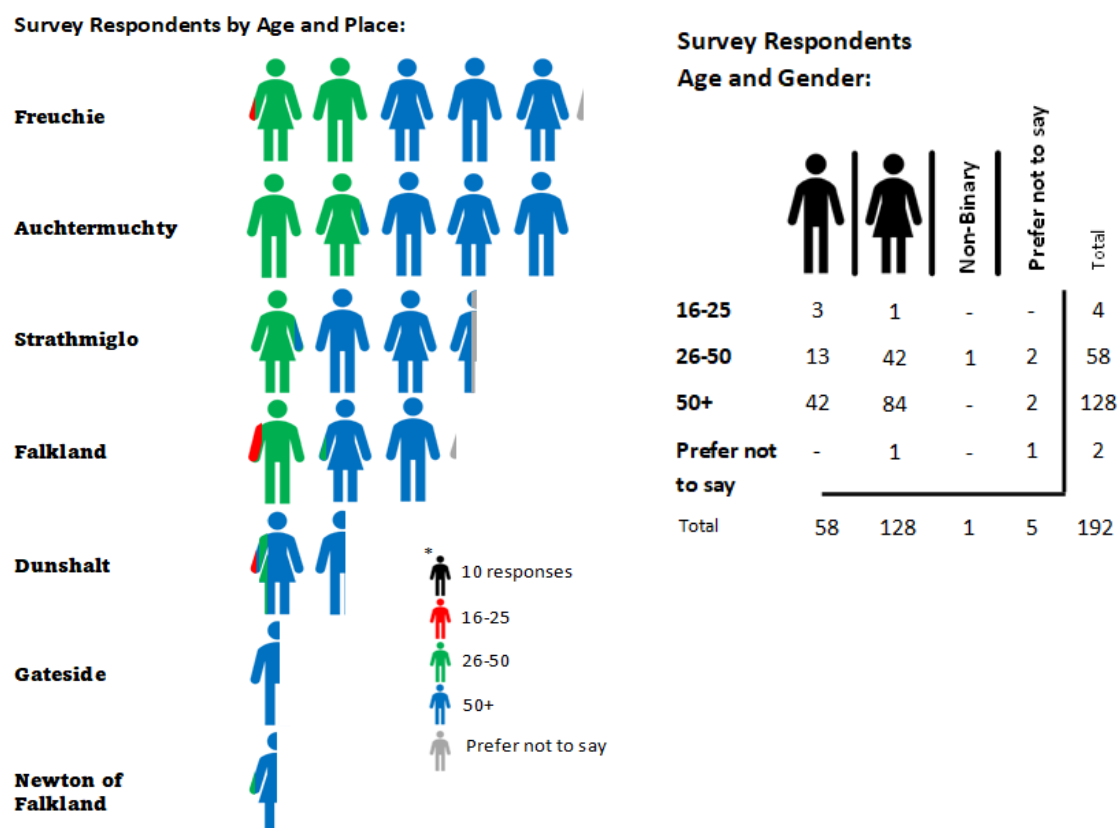


Figure 2: Breakdown of West Howe area respondents to the living well locally survey.

We also ran a survey for school aged children asking a number of questions about their experiences about where they live). This survey was made available for all children in Fife on the Council's website. Head Teachers in Fife were contacted, and we carried out in-person workshops with classes at interested primary schools. In this case study area, we engaged 55 children at Freuchie Primary School. 28 girls and 27 boys were surveyed across three classes, between the ages of 6 and 12 (see [Appendix 5](#) for the results of the childrens survey).

LIMITATIONS OF THE CONSULTATION

During the course of the analysis of the survey results we identified several limitations of the data:

- We realised we should have had an older age group category to clearly pick up responses from older age groups.
- Due to the weighting of the spread of responses the survey offers good representation of those 50+ but suffers from a relative lack of responses from those in younger age brackets, especially those 16-25.
- There was some confusion around the wording and purpose of question 27 in responses so this is something to be aware of for future consultations.
- Due to a desire to minimise the length of the survey answers to where people travelled for some services were difficult to isolate.
- For consistency the route assessments were conducted by the same officers across the case studies, the assessment information would have been enriched by being considered by people of different ages and abilities.

THE LOCAL LIVING FRAMEWORK ASSESSMENT

Scottish Government's [Local Living and 20 minute Neighbourhoods draft guidance](#) document sets out an approach to assessing local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods using a framework (see figure 3). This identifies several key considerations based on the Place Standard approach, which area grouped into 5 themes based on health and wellbeing outcomes.

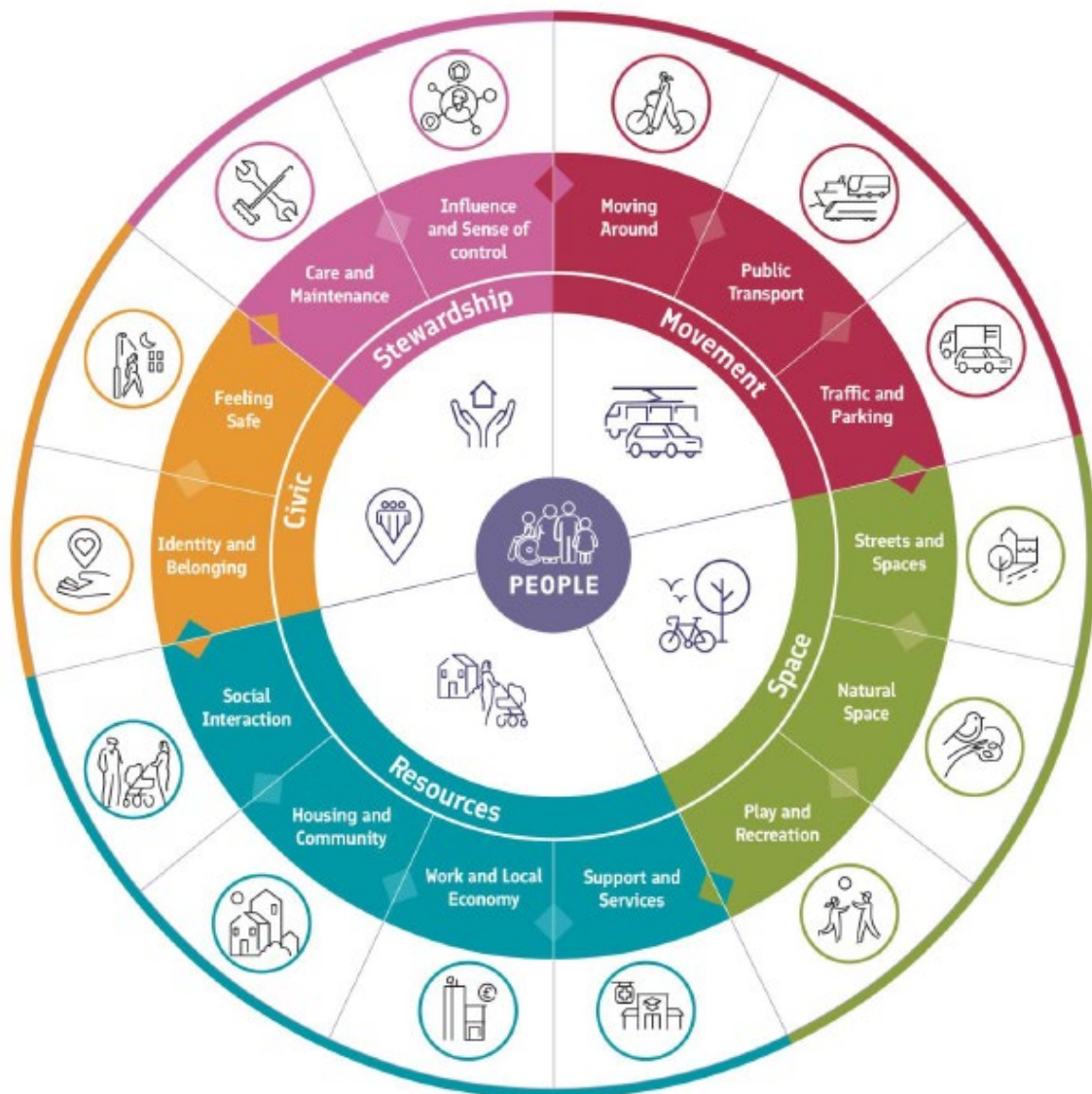


Figure 3: The Local Living Framework diagram

The key findings from the quantitative and qualitative assessments are summarised below using the local living framework approach.

MOVEMENT

Moving around, Traffic and parking:

All the West Howe settlements are walkable in scale although the quality of pavements is mixed. This is particularly the case in the historic centres of villages where pavements can be very narrow; have uneven surfaces such as cobbles; can stop suddenly; or have vehicles parking on them. This means that accessibility can be an issue. However, the tight geometries in these areas can slow the speed of traffic and effectively create areas of shared road space between pedestrians and vehicles. Most of the villages are fairly level although Auchtermuchty and Falkland do have some steep areas which can present barriers to pedestrian and cycle movement.

There are a number of walking and cycling routes between the West Howe settlements, although cycling infrastructure is fairly limited (see Figure 4). Pavements along the roads between the settlements are narrow; often overgrown; and lack lighting and the on-road cycle route between Falkland and Dunshalt doesn't meet acceptable requirements for a modern cycle route. The off-road cycle route between Falkland and Strathmiglo is good quality but circuitous so not ideal for daily journeys.

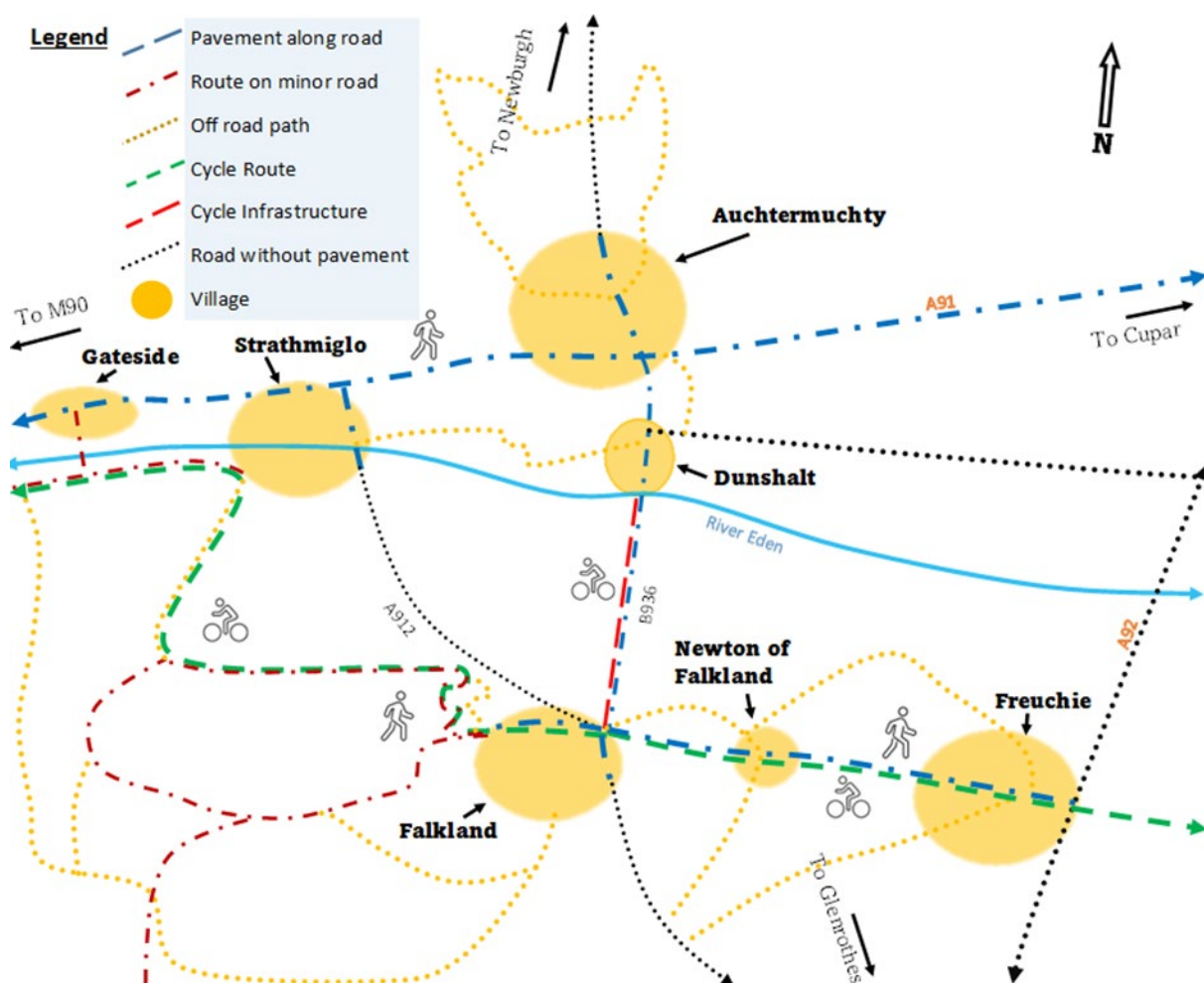


Figure 4: Active travel routes between the West Howe villages.

Most people indicated that they used the closest local provision for services such as pharmacies and convenience stores, even if they could get cheaper products in another village. The survey showed that the majority of people walk to convenience stores and pubs/bars rather than drive to them.

The maximum distance people are willing to walk to access services was around 2km, with people choosing to drive over this distance in almost all cases. They also predominantly chose to drive if they estimated it would take over a 10-minute walk to access the service. This aligns with research which found that commuting distances over 2miles lead to increased mode switching from public transport, walking, and cycling, to private car.

The majority of people in the West Howe area use a car for most of their day-to-day trips (here classed as supermarket, post office/financial, pharmacy, leisure, sports, work, café/restaurant). This is reflected in the comparatively low percentage of people in the area who don't have access to a car ([10-14% vs 25% Fife-wide](#)).

Public Transport:

Regular bus services including school buses are available throughout the area and connect to Perth, Kinross, Glenrothes, Cupar and St Andrews. There are also demand responsive transport (DRT) bus services which run in the area.

Bus routes tend to be long and winding and no one bus services all the settlements in the area. The frequency, reliability and hours of operation also limit usage particularly at the weekends and in evenings. The Scottish Access to Bus indicator shows most of the area as amongst the least and slowest served areas. The cost of public transport was raised by some as an issue although a significant proportion of the population will have access to bus passes.

There were low results for public transport use in the area with contributing factors including frequency, reliability, and time of public transport journeys vs private car journeys; societal views; cost; and individual preferences. This relates to the perceived need for private cars to access services and the preference of this mode.

Comments on what would encourage people to use public transport were mainly concerned with the frequency and reliability of buses followed by the directness of routes and connection to other routes. Generally, the people who mentioned public transport improvements did not currently use public transport to access services. This indicates that there is willingness and an untapped demand in the area that is being let down by infrequent, unreliable, and poorly linked services.

SPACES

Streets and Spaces:

The historic street layout in the village centres are generally very permeable for pedestrians. The layouts of more recent development on the outskirts of the villages are generally less permeable due to the prevalence of cul's-de-sac and missed opportunities to provide connections that would create more direct access to the village centres. However, generally the villages have good permeability, and the streets in the centres have traditional buildings with active frontages. There are small

pockets of public greenspace in all the villages but mostly the green infrastructure which influences the streets is in gardens. Both Freuchie and Strathmiglo have more extensive greenspaces which extend through the villages and are a defining part of their character.

Natural Space:

Apart from Freuchie and Gateside the West Howe villages were found to have below average levels of greenspace in the 2010 Fife Greenspace Audit (Auchtermuchty was found to have very low levels). The numbers of houses with access to the greenspace within 250m was found to be low apart from Strathmiglo and the quality of greenspaces was generally considered reasonable at the time.

However, the below average amount of greenspace within the villages is partly made up for by the ease of access to the surrounding countryside.

Most responses reported using the greenspaces. Few people commented on the quality of greenspace, but it was generally considered to be good, with responses having more issues with lighting and paths than with the quality of spaces.

Several responses pointed to living in the countryside so access to greenspace was not an issue and several children in Freuchie highlighted the burn as a favourite place to play.

Play and Recreation:

Each village has some playpark facilities although some of these are identified as in need of improvements. Auchtermuchty has a small facility for skateboarders. Falkland and Strathmiglo have had recent improvements to their playpark facilities.

Almost all survey responses indicated they have access to a playparks; the low number of people who said they use playparks probably reflects the high proportion of people over 50 who responded to our survey.

Maintenance of the playparks was not raised as an issue.

Children from Freuchie Primary school said that playparks, multi-use games area and the burn were their favourite places to play. Many wanted improvements to the current facilities and several children wanted a skatepark in the village.

RESOURCES

Services and Facilities:

Schools – there are 4 primary schools in the area located in the larger settlements and the area is in the Bell Baxter High School catchment. The council provides a free bus service for children who live over a mile away for primary schools and over 2 miles away for high schools, so access is not a big issue. Some parents pay for a bus to provide transport to Kinross High School.

Food stores - All the villages in the West Howe cluster, except Newton of Falkland and Gateside, have at least one convenience or local food store. Many of these are open daily from early morning

to late evening. There are other specialist food shops in the area and a mobile fishmonger visits weekly. The cost of products in the stores varied considerably. The Dunshalt community store was the consistently the most expensive, but it tends to store local and organic food (see appendix 4).

Based on our survey results the price of goods at different stores does not appear to encourage travel to convenience stores further away in order to capitalise on less expensive prices – in general people tend to use their closest store.

Consumer retail data on found that all the villages apart from Auchtermuchty are in the highest priority for improving access to supermarkets.

Hi-speed broadband is available throughout the area although the more rural areas between the settlements have a poorer service. The survey results showed that 9% of people in the area use food deliveries, 6% use online banking and 17% of those in employment were working from home. Younger people tended use online food shopping and banking services more frequently so given the lack of responses from that age group the percentages are probably higher.

Healthcare – there is a medical practice in Auchtermuchty and a morning surgery in Strathmiglo which serve most people in the area although people in Freuchie tend to use Ladybank surgery. A lack of a capacity and difficulty getting appointments was raised by a number of people in the survey. There are pharmacy services in Auchtermuchty and Falkland. There are no dentists in the area, so people tend to travel to Cupar or Glenrothes to access dental services. In general, most people who live outwith the settlements where the services are located will drive to access health services.

Financial services – there is a bank in Falkland with limited opening hours and mobile banking services visit the area. There are Post Offices and ATM's in all the convenience stores except Dunshalt which has a mobile service once a week.

Recycling – all the villages have recycling facilities and there is a recycling centre at Ladybank.

Other shops and services – Falkland is a tourist destination and has the widest range of shops including gifts and crafts; Freuchie and Auchtermuchty also have a selection of businesses including florists and hairdressers. Mobile Hairdressers operate throughout the area.

Child care - There are three council run nurseries in the larger primary schools within the area. There is also a private nursery in Falkland and a children's day care service in Freuchie. Most people said they could access affordable childcare but some highlighted that childcare was expensive.

Although the villages within the cluster have a good variety of services, the survey results indicated that many of these took over 10 minutes to access by walking or cycling, which does not encourage walking and cycling behaviours.

The survey responses indicated a strong connection between Dunshalt and Auchtermuchty - this demonstrates how the villages work an interdependent cluster. People in Gateside, Strathmiglo and Dunshalt also frequently referred to accessing services in Auchtermuchty, whilst people in Falkland, Newton of Falkland, and Freuchie tended to access services in Glenrothes or Ladybank. The results showed that where people in a particular village travel to supermarkets and leisure facilities tends to

be similar. This suggests that although personal preference plays a role in where people access services, proximity is also a key factor.

Lack of awareness of services was a common theme in the survey, with many people not knowing about what was available in their area, particularly regarding childcare, social care, mobile services, and community initiatives. These are areas which could possibly be improved on through local action.

Work and Economy:

There is a mix of employment opportunities in the area. The services and small business which serve the area provide retail, service, agriculture, and trades employment, and there is an industrial park to the south of Auchtermuchty. In our survey most people who said they worked in the area worked from home; whilst others travelled to a wide range of places mostly by private car. This would indicate a lack of good employment opportunities in the area.

Housing and Community:

The majority of housing in the area is owner occupied although house prices are also well over the Fife average. The area is one of the least well served for social rented housing, Over the last 10 years there has been very little new housing built and no affordable housing. A development proposal for 21 houses including 4 affordable houses has recently been approved in Auchtermuchty.

There are comparatively low levels of smaller houses available which could impact on first-time buyers or older people wishing to remain in the area.

Care home/Sheltered Housing – There is a residential care home in Auchtermuchty and a nursing care home in Falkland, and both settlements also have some sheltered housing provision.

Social Interaction:

Each of the villages has a community hall with a wide range of local groups. In the survey comments about local groups were generally positive; although a majority of people said they did not know about events or groups in their village hall.

Auchtermuchty community hall has regular opening hours. The lack of access reported by some people, may relate to limited operating hours and a lack of public access outside of events and classes, reducing the utility of the community halls and libraries for residents. However, over 90% of people in each age group said they used their local hall.

Formal sports clubs are available in the four largest villages. Falkland has the greatest variety of sports clubs, with bowling, football, cricket, tennis, and golf present. However, many people travel outwith the area to access sport facilities, leisure centres and gyms usually travelling by private car.

There are a number of pubs, cafes and takeaways in the villages and mobile fish and chip and pizza vans occasionally visit. In Falkland and Auchtermuchty most people walk to access these facilities.

Auchtermuchty and Falkland have libraries which have limited opening times, Freuchie has a community book exchange. A mobile library visits most of the villages every other week.

Falkland has a small number of allotments.

CIVIC

Identify and Belonging:

All the West Howe Villages have numerous listed buildings and most of them have historic centres which are relatively unchanged. Falkland and Auchtermuchty have Conservation areas. All the settlements had local authority housing additions during the 20th Century which have influenced the appearance of parts of the settlements, but they all retain their historic rural village character. Falkland Palace and the Falkland Estate designed landscape give Falkland a distinctive character beyond being a traditional agricultural village. Strathmiglo and Freuchie have distinctive areas of green infrastructure and the high central square in Auchtermuchty has a particular character.

The Howe of Fife valley, the Lomond Hills to the south and foothills of the Ochils to the north provide the landscape setting within which all the villages sit – this provides a relationship between the villages and helps them to identify as a cluster.

Feeling Safe:

There are a few busy roads which pass through the villages, the A91 passes through Gateside and Auchtermuchty; the A912 passes through Falkland and skirts Strathmiglo; and Freuchie is split by the very busy A92. These roads impact on the feeling of safety in parts of the villages. Crossings have been provided in Gateside, Freuchie and Auchtermuchty to aid pedestrian movement. Safety concerns along active travel and cycle routes was raised most often in the survey responses.

All the children's responses from Freuchie Primary School said they felt safe in their village; this was mainly due to knowing people in the village.

STEWARDSHIP

Care and Maintenance:

There are few areas of vacant and derelict land in the area, the largest site is in Falkland where a factory was demolished in recent years. There are proposals for the redevelopment of the site being progressed. There are a few historic buildings within Auchtermuchty conservation area which are long term derelict but there is little dereliction in the other villages reflecting their popularity.

Overall, the villages are generally well maintained with relatively little litter and only occasional instances of graffiti. Pavement and road surfaces are often poorly maintained which creates hazards.

Influence and sense of control:

There are a number of community run facilities and services in the area including the community centres; Dunshalt community shop; Falkland Library; and Freuchie community book exchange. These

services have often been taken on by the communities when public or market led services have been withdrawn.

Most of the villages have community horticultural groups which look after public planters, hanging baskets, and flowerbeds which enhance the appearance of the villages especially in the summer months.

CONCLUSIONS

The West Howe area has a good range of services and facilities which serve the villages. For certain services such as convenience stores people will tend to use the nearest facility even if one in another village may be cheaper. For other services such as dentists and supermarkets which are outwith the cluster people's choices of where to access these usually depend on proximity.

Generally, journeys which are perceived to take longer than 10 minutes are most likely to be carried out by private car. Public transport in the cluster is fairly infrequent and slow and does not generally provide the flexibility required by the population for day-to-day journeys; this is reflected in the low use of public transport.

Walking and cycling routes between the settlements and beyond are not currently perceived as safe or particularly pleasant to use.

Improvements to active travel routes would help to encourage people to walk and cycle more between the villages by making it a faster and more pleasant experience. This includes:

- providing more direct routes between the settlements;
- segregated walking and cycling routes; and
- providing pavements which are wider, free from obstruction and better lit.

The communities themselves have demonstrated a willingness to pick up services and facilities which have been withdrawn by public bodies or which have proved unviable for traditional businesses, in order that they are maintained in the villages. There are also groups which provide and maintain planters and hanging baskets to improve the look of the area, indicating a sense of responsibility and pride in the area by local residents.

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APPENDIX 1. SUMMARY OF QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT

LOCAL SERVICE AVAILABILITY

As part of the work on 20 minute neighbourhoods we have classified different services and facilities into *essential*, *important* and *desirable* categories based on how large a part of the community would use these features and/or frequency of use:

- **Essential** - Features which are necessary for anyone of any age on a daily basis;
- **Important** – Features which are used regularly by certain parts of the community or used slightly less frequently by all members of the community;
- **Desirable** - Features which are used regularly by a smaller proportion of the community or used on less frequent basis by the whole community.

Figure A1-1 sets out which services and facilities fall into which category. More information is provided in the 20 minute neighbourhood Storymap



Figure A1-1: Fife Council's proposed breakdown of Essential, Important and Desirable services

In the West Howe villages most of the essential and important services and facilities and some of the desirable services and facilities are provided. The following section combines our background research with residents' survey responses to examine the quantity and quality of services and facilities locally.

ESSENTIAL SERVICES

HI-SPEED BROADBAND

Hi-speed broadband is available throughout the area, averaging over 24mbps in each village (enough to stream high-definition video), although many of the surrounding farms receive poorer service, with several registering less than 10mbps.

Research by the [Consumer Data Research Centre](#) shows the West Howe area as having a high proportion of people categorised as Digital Seniors and e-Rational Utilitarians (see Figure A1-2). These categories apply mainly to affluent, older, retired people in rural locations who use the internet for utility, such as online shopping to overcome lack of physical access to services.

E-Rational Utilitarians prevalently use the internet for service applications such as e-banking and online shopping, high demand for the internet by this group can be constrained by poor infrastructure. Digital Seniors tend to use the internet more infrequently. Both groups are typified by older, retired homeowners who use home computers rather than mobile devices for internet access and are less engaged than most of the other 8 classifications with social networks and entertainment uses of the internet.

The other two categories in the area (e-Mainstream and e-Veterans) represent average and experienced users who use the internet for a variety of uses, with e-Veterans more likely to be affluent highly qualified professionals over e-Mainstream users who comprise a mix of socio-economic classes.

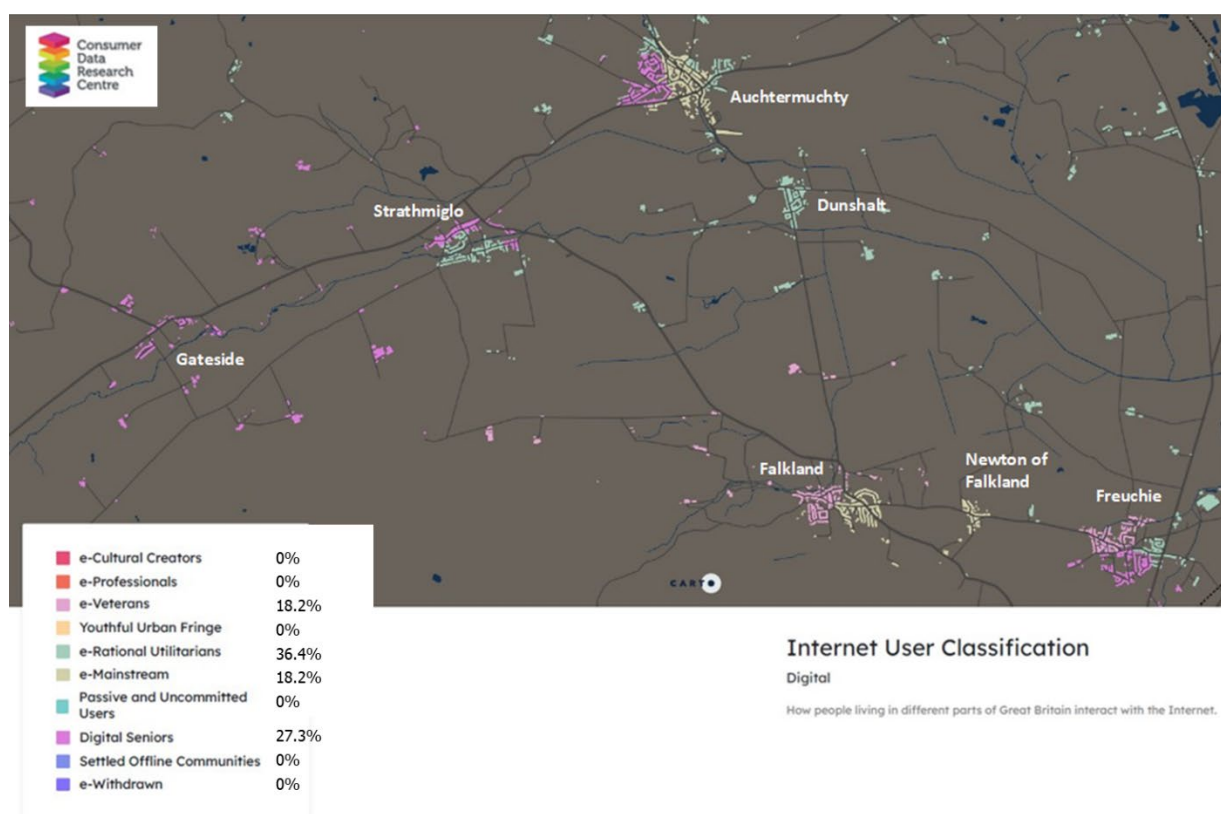


Figure A1-2: Internet User Classification for West Howe of Fife. Source: [© 2022 Consumer Data Research Centre](#)

Internet infrastructure has continued to develop and roll out since this data was collected and basic access and connection speeds will continue to improve, but the ability of some parts of the population to access and understand how to use online services will continue to be a barrier to full digital integration.

The presence of online shopping for food and access to online banking services in responses to the survey confirmed that food delivery services are available and that online banking is an option for those without physical access.

Survey responses:

- Through the survey answers for accessing food and financial services, and employment returned responses that showed the use of internet services, with 9% using food deliveries, 6% using online banking and 17% of those in employment working from home.
- 9% of those 50+ and 12% of 26-50s said they used online food deliveries.
- 5% of those 50+ and 9% of 26-50s said they banked online.
- Use of deliveries and online banking was not associated with working from home.

Impact of the internet

The internet has a significant impact on the lives and livelihoods of people, affecting all aspects of our daily lives, including health, education, employment, social networks, and is increasingly needed for participating in society. Poor quality access to the internet and poor digital literacy (the ability to understand and safely use digital technologies) can lead to worse health and wellbeing and entrench existing social, health, and economic inequalities.

Vulnerable people (older people, those with disabilities, socio-economically disadvantaged) tend to have lower rates of internet use and literacy. Results of a 2018 Citizens Advice Scotland survey, showed that of respondents aged between 65 and 79 years:



- 25% used the internet often
- 46% never used the internet
- 18% had difficulty using a computer
- 16% could not use one at all

COVID-19 has increased the numbers of people using the internet for everyday tasks partly as a result of many services moving online, and though use by those 75 and older has increased year-on-year, this group still have relatively low levels of internet usage compared with those 16 to 44. This is particularly relevant in areas like northeast Fife where older people are overrepresented compared to other areas of Fife. COVID-19 has also had an impact on the fast-forwarding of cashless transactions relying on bank cards and mobile banking, which have risks for those not familiar with these processes or have issues with access.

GREENSPACE

In the Fife Greenspace Audit 2010, the West Howe villages were generally shown to have below average levels of greenspace provision and often poor access. Only Falkland and Gateside were shown to have a quantity of greenspace above the Fife average per 1,000 population, but in both places the number of houses with access within 250m access was low. Strathmiglo has the largest proportion of houses within 250m of greenspace. The quality of the greenspaces at the time were

generally found to be reasonable except in Freuchie. In most cases greenspace was made up of open fields or pocket parks with a mix of established paved routes and those worn by regular use. Many included informal sports areas such as football pitches or play parks with equipment. A summary of the findings of the Fife Greenspace Audit 2010 is in table A1-1.

Village	Quantity (hectares)	Quantity (hectares) per 1,000 population	Average Quality	Access (% of houses in 250m)
Auchtermuchty	2	2 = very low amount of greenspace	Reasonable	23% (very low)
Falkland	7	5 = around the Fife average	Reasonable	16% (very poor access to public greenspace but access to Falkland Estate compensates)
Dunshalt	1	3 = low amount of greenspace	Reasonable	65% (access is around the Fife average)
Strathmiglo	4	5 = below average amount of greenspace	Reasonable	81% (access is high)
Freuchie	5	4 = well below the Fife average	Below Average	58% (access just below the Fife average)
Gateside	2	9 = good amount of greenspace	<i>No Data</i>	31% (access is below average due to the linear nature of the village)
Newton of Falkland	<i>No Data</i>	<i>No Data</i>	<i>No Data</i>	<i>No Data</i>

Table A1-1: Greenspace quantity, quality and access by settlement. Source: [Fife Greenspace Audit 2010](#)

The below average greenspace within the villages is partly made up for by the ease of access to the surrounding countryside. Falkland is on the border of the Lomond Hills Regional Park and has access to Falkland Estate's grounds which provide leisure walking trails through multiple types of natural settings. The Regional Park is also accessible from Strathmiglo, Newton of Falkland, Freuchie, and Gateside via off-road trails, worn routes along the edges of fields, and farm tracks. Auchtermuchty has nature walks to the north around Auchtermuchty Common and through Pitmedden Forest.

Survey responses:

- The majority of responses reported using greenspace.



All settlements have access to greenspace

94% of people said they use local greenspace.

10% said they do not have access to greenspace.

- Only those who reported having no access to greenspace reported not using greenspace.
- Auchtermuchty had the highest proportion of those who said they did not have access, reaching almost 20%.
- Some responses from Strathmiglo had post codes a street away from the park running through the centre of the village but did not think they had access to greenspace.

- Negative responses from Auchtermuchty and Falkland raised concerns about the quality of greenspace.

*“The park is not a place you would go for a walk, as it’s just a square of grass, and my children are now adults.”
– Auchtermuchty*

“Whilst I appreciate commercial restrictions are tightening year by year it feels as if there has never been much investment in Falkland and I’ve been here for nearly 40 years. Specific greenspace out with the obvious Estate is limited, the local playpark was fundraised locally and built but caters for children under 5 really, other small play parks are all in poor condition and not really improved since I was a child. My two children always want to leave the village to go to other parks which offer more. Park space very much bias to one side of the village also.” - Falkland

- Several other responses pointed to living in the countryside so access to greenspace was not an issue.

“Greenspace – it’s a village in the countryside, I use the woods and hills.” – Auchtermuchty

- Few commented on the quality of greenspace, but it was generally considered to be good, with responses having more issues with lighting and paths than with the quality of spaces. The few comments were consistent with the Fife Green Space Audit in some places such as the south park in Auchtermuchty and the lack of greenspace in Falkland other than the Estate, but overall respondent’s concerns were for other services.

ACTIVE TRAVEL

Transport Scotland defines active travel as travel that is fully or partially people powered, including walking, wheeling, and cycling. The importance of active travel routes has become increasingly recognised and highlighted with regards to meeting climate change emission reduction targets and in relation to people’s health and wellbeing. COVID-19 led to an increased appreciation by people of walking around their neighbourhoods and there was a 250% increase in cycling compared to pre-pandemic levels and these are trends the Local Transport Strategy for Fife 2023-33 is pushing to embed.

There is a variety of active travel infrastructure in the West Howe area (see Figure A1-3), and many of the roads between the settlement have pavements on at least one side.

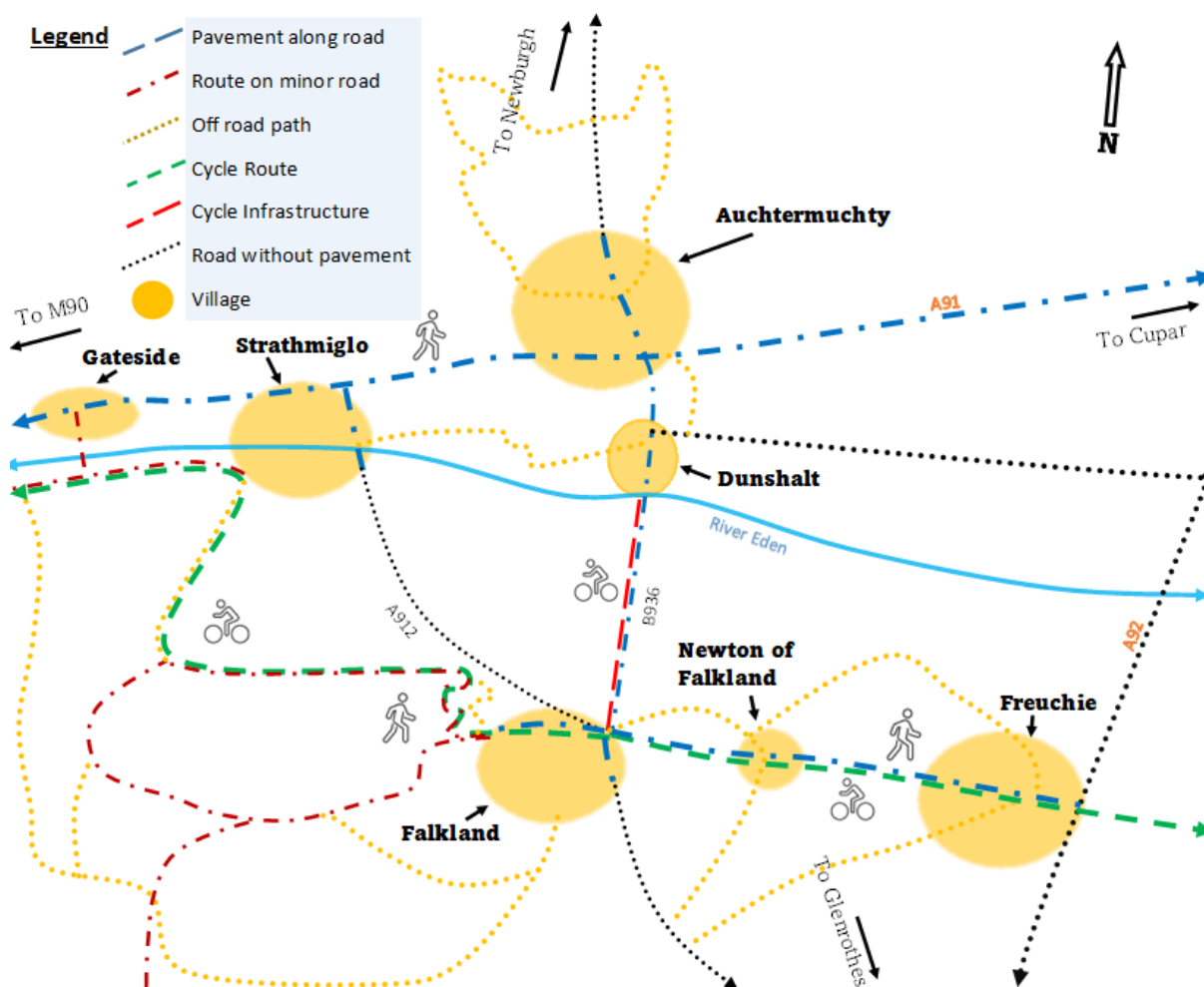


Figure A1-3: Main active travel routes by type through the West Howe of Fife cluster

All of the villages in the cluster are themselves very walkable in scale. Trips within them take less than 20 minutes in all cases and often less than 10 minutes (see Appendix 2 for isochrone walking maps). Outside of the villages there are a number of paths and cycle routes, though these routes are often indirect. One example is the walking/cycle route between Strathmiglo and Falkland, which is 1.5km further than the more direct A912 which doesn't have a pavement for most of the route. This would limit the use of this route for day to day trips between the settlement outwith leisure walking.

The villages, though walkable, often lack pavements or these end suddenly in many places, forcing users into the road due (see Figure A1-4 and Appendix 3). This is partly due to the adaptation of roads in historic villages for cars and has resulted in limited or unsafe access in some areas as pavements were added inconsistently and only where there was additional space after the needs of vehicles. In many places the pavements that do exist are also used for parking due to the narrowness of the roads between buildings and general lack of off-street parking. Tight historic streets can help to slow traffic speeds in some areas, effectively creating shared road space. However, the inconsistent and uneven pavements do create accessibility issues for some users.



Figure A1-4: Examples of road and pavement treatments in Falkland and Newton of Falkland

More modern residential areas, often located on the edges of the villages, are generally well provided with pavements. However, they are often culs-de-sac and poorly integrated with the surrounding areas, with potential opportunities to provide a pedestrian shortcut to services and facilities not being realised (see Figure A1-5). This means that routes which could be only a few minutes via a direct desire path takes much longer by having to follow a circuitous route via the road. This does not encourage people in these areas to walk or cycle to local facilities.



Figure A1-5: Example of cul-de-sac with poor pedestrian consideration, Auchtermuchty. Source: Google Maps

Most of the villages are relatively flat, although Auchtermuchty and Falkland have some steep roads. These present barriers to walking, particularly in Auchtermuchty where many of the services including the pharmacy and the library are at the top of a hill.

Pedestrian and cycle routes between settlements exist but are often not ideal. There is a pavement forming a direct route between Gateside and Auchtermuchty along the A91 but much of the path is narrow, directly next to a busy 60 mph road, often overgrown and lacking lighting (see Figure A1-6).



Figure A1-6: Photos showing the pavement condition along the A91.

Most of the routes between the settlements in this area have similar pavement conditions. Passing other walkers on most of the routes without entering the road is difficult and their usefulness for cycling is limited. Many are also bordered by large hedges or stone walls for most of the pavement's route, meaning users have nowhere to go if a car jumps the pavement or a lorry takes up more space.

Despite the presence of National Cycle Network Route 1, cycle infrastructure is largely absent from the cluster, with the notable exception of a segment of the B936 between Falkland and Dunshalt where cycle lanes were painted on the road travelling in both directions (see Figure A1-7).



Figure A1-7: Painted cycle lane on the B936 between Dunshalt and Falkland. Source: Google Maps

Cycle lanes painted within existing carriageways are not now considered an appropriate approach. [Studies](#) show they do little to encourage new ridership because they do not relieve concerns over safety, one of the greatest barriers to cycling.



Figure A1-8: Example of protected bike lane.

Source: [SUStans – Bike Life: Protected bike lanes will transform our cities](#)

Bike lanes which are separated from the road, preferably with some buffer space between cars and bikes (Figure A1-8), as well as off road paths, are generally considered safest by users, and are seen as the preferred option for most cyclists and motorists, particularly those people who are interested in riding a bike but are hesitant due to safety concerns. Protected cycle lanes, separated from traffic have been shown to increase bicycle trips.

Cyclists tend to prefer direct routes to destinations, with minimal interaction with vehicles and though willing to deviate from the most direct route to access a safer route they will generally limit their detour to less than 400m to access safe infrastructure.

The Core Path (805) between Falkland and Strathmiglo is the best example of an off-road route in the area that would fit most of the requirements for a safe, attractive route for cyclists.

Survey Responses:

- People generally responded that they thought it was enjoyable to walk, cycle or wheel around the area.

“Yes, very attractive and lots of great opportunities to access for recreation” - Falkland

- About half offered further comments and these tended to focus on the condition and presence of pavements and street lighting through the area, leading to some concerns over safety, especially at night, with many noting the new streetlights were not bright enough to see or feel safe at night.

“Poorly lit and the pavements are very unsafe with broken surfaces and in many cases overgrown” - Freuchie

- These concerns reflect those brought up in the Transport Strategy Main Issues findings although fewer people found their places unsafe and most concerns were to do with lighting at night, traffic, and concerns over cycling, especially between villages.
- Issues around access to some services in Auchtermuchty mentioned the speed of cars on the A91 and the trouble with accessing services in the south of the settlement due to the hill.

“Yes. The walk to Auchtermuchty is unpleasant and can be frightening because the path/pavement runs alongside the A91. There is a lot of traffic including HGVs and it usually travels fairly fast as this is a main road. I never choose to walk to Auchtermuchty but might do if there were a more pleasant way to do it.” - Strathmiglo

“Pavement into Auchtermuchty is dangerous on such a fast road, you could not use a pram or wheelchair safely & have to at points walk on the A91 as pavement is so narrow & the rest has to be walked in single file to be safe in most parts.” - Auchtermuchty

(Referring to access to GP) *“Down a large hill in Auchtermuchty which I am unable to walk up as it is so steep” - Auchtermuchty*

- Those with walking aids or wheelchairs said disruptions and barriers on pavements could cause issues.

“It is an attractive area and I do use my chair, but the pavements force me onto the road in places.” – Auchtermuchty

- Several comments mentioned issues accessing off-road paths due to poor upkeep by farmers or Fife Council.
- Auchtermuchty responses particularly mentioned the narrowness or lack of pavements in and around the village as an issue in getting around safely.
- The lack of cycle infrastructure and concerns over safety were reflected in many of the comments about the ability to bike in the area throughout the survey. Comments referred to busy local roads, poor or absent infrastructure leading to concerns over safety, with feedback stating better infrastructure would lead to them cycling more or at all.

“Off road cycle route to Dunshalt and Falkland and we’d use the shops in those villages more often.” – Auchtermuchty

“I dont feel safe to cycle on the main roads. They "cycle lane" to Falkland actually makes it more dangerous” – Auchtermuchty

- All the children’s responses from Freuchie Primary School said they felt safe in their village.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Regular public transport is available throughout the West Howe cluster, with four bus routes in the area as well as a provision of school buses to Baxter High School in Cupar (see Figure A1-9). The bus routes offer connections between the villages and Perth, Kinross, Glenrothes, Cupar, and St Andrews.

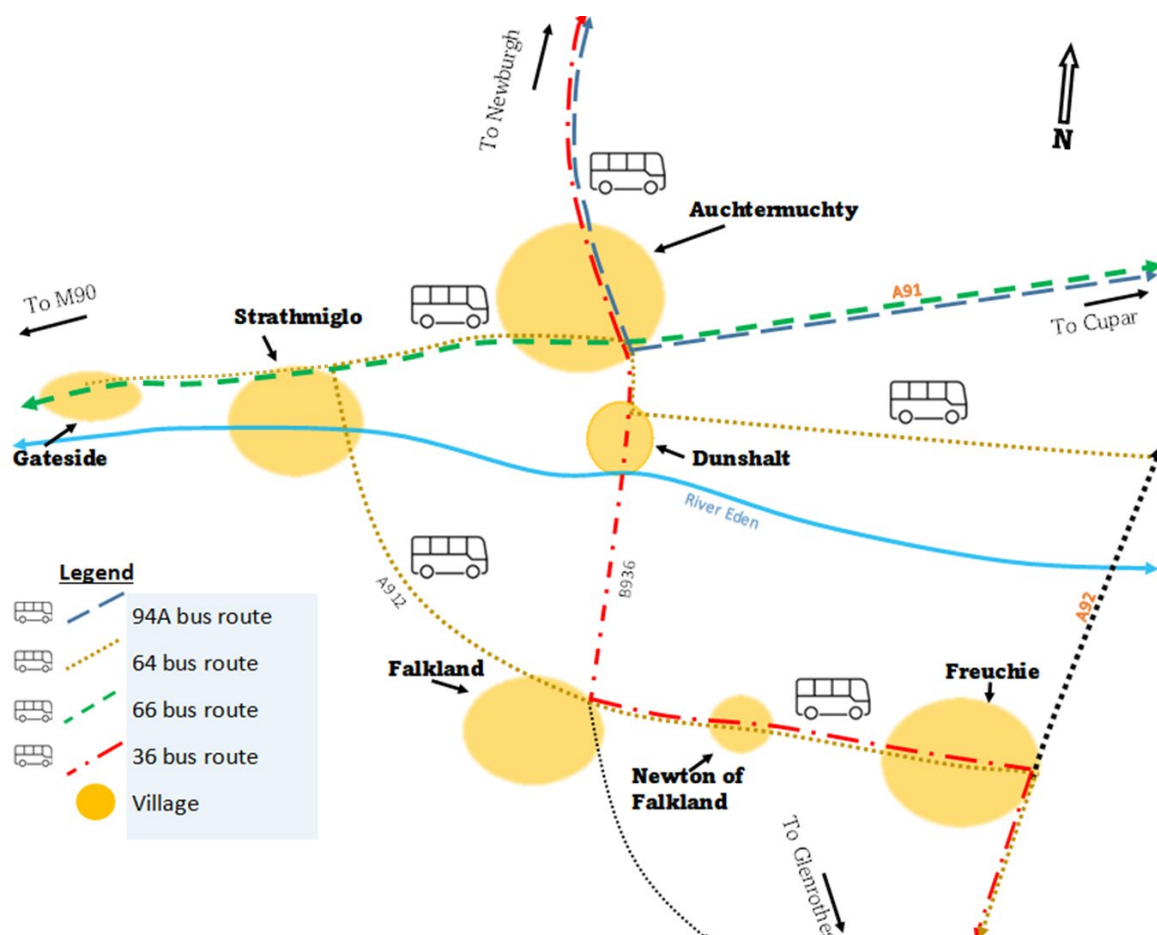


Figure A1-9: Bus routes through West Howe of Fife cluster

The regular bus routes through the area are provided by Moffat and Williamson and Stagecoach operators – see table 2.

Number	Route	Hours and regularity of service at May 2023		
		Weekdays	Saturday	Sunday
36	Glenrothes to Perth	Hourly 5.30am to 18.03pm		Every 2 hrs 9.35am to 15.35pm
	Perth to Glenrothes	Hourly 7.00am to 19.07pm		Every 2 hrs 11.05am to 17.05pm
64	Glenrothes to St Andrews	Hourly 5.27am to 22.37pm		Every 2 hrs 9.27am to 19.27pm
	St Andrews to Glenrothes	Hourly 6.12am to 21.12pm		Every 2hrs 9.12am to 19.12pm
66	Glenrothes to Kinross	Every 2 hrs 6.32am to 17.40 pm	9:20, 12:50*, 14:20, and 17:20* (*To Burnside and skipping Freuchie, Falkland and Dunshalt)	No Sunday service
	Kinross to Glenrothes	Every 2 hrs 6.58am to 17.40 pm	8:33*, 11:05, 13:33*, and 18:03 (*From Burnside and skipping Dunshalt, Falkland and Freuchie)	No Sunday service
94a	Newburgh to St Andrews	7.12 am, every 2 hrs 8.42am to 22.47pm, 23.37pm		No Sunday service
	St Andrews to Newburgh	Every 2 hrs 9:52 to 21:52, 20:52		No Sunday service

Table A1-2: Routes and times of regular bus services in the West Howe area as at May 2023

On-demand services are also available:

- [Fife Bus service](#) Z12, run by Fife Council, available to those with reduced mobility. This service is available Monday and Wednesday between 8:00 and 17:30 and provides access to all settlements in the cluster as well as Glenrothes, Giffordtown, Innerleith, and Kinloch.
- [Royal Volunteer Service](#) provides pre-arranged transport to GP and hospital appointments, as well as for shopping and social activities.
- [MyBUS CT](#) providing prearranged transport to GPs, shopping, days out, and other needs to members.

A train station in Ladybank offers direct rail links to Dundee, Perth and Edinburgh.

Public transport is considered by [Transport Scotland](#) and [Fife Council](#) as a priority for reducing inequalities, contributing to climate action, promoting economic growth, and improving health and wellbeing. So having access to frequent and reliable options which take people where they want to go is important for anywhere wanting to encourage public transport use.

The public transport provision through the West Howe villages is mixed. There are a variety of routes going between major destinations, however the bus routes tend to be long and winding.

The hours of operation also limit public transport use due to a lack of services on Sundays and most routes end by 22:00 during the week. For example, the 94A from St Andrews offers the latest departure possible from St Andrews to the cluster at 21:52. This service only visits Auchtermuchty and by the time it arrives all other bus routes through the area are finished, limiting the usefulness of this later service for residents of other settlements in the cluster, who then need to rely on someone driving to pick them up or walking along unlit paths between settlements. The next latest service from St Andrews is the 64, which now visits all settlements in the cluster, but its last departure is at 21:12 Monday to Saturday, making it difficult to attend evening events if you are reliant on public transport.

According to [Google Maps](#), it is estimated the 64 bus between Freuchie and St Andrews can take up to 1 hr 40 minutes compared to around 30 minutes by car. This is consistent with reviews of public transport in statistics published on [bus accessibility](#) (Figure A1-10) and information in the [Local Transport Strategy for Fife 2023-2033](#) (Figure A1-11), where the West Howe of Fife area was found to be amongst the least well and slowest served areas.

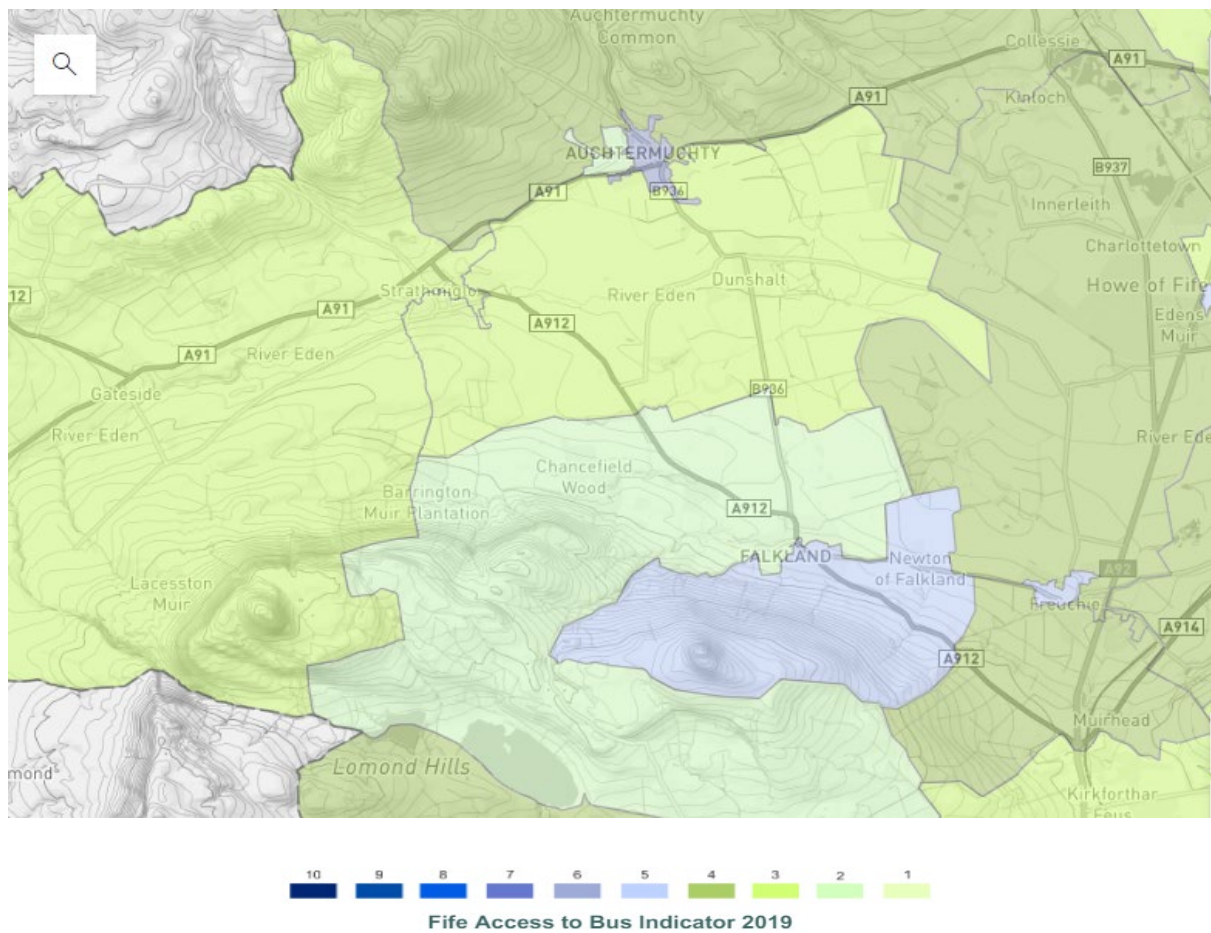


Figure A1-10: Map showing the accessibility of bus services in the West Howe area categorised into deciles where 1 indicates poorest accessibility and 10 greatest accessibility. Source: [Scottish Government Bus Accessibility 2019](#)



Figure A1-11: Map of public transport time to employment. Source: [Local Transport Strategy for Fife 2023-2033](#)

The [Fife Local Transport Strategy](#) highlights that public transport costs are rising faster than costs associated with personal vehicles, although many people in the area will have access to free bus travel. Nationally, [transport and travel results from the Scottish Household Survey](#) show there has been a steady decrease in the percentage of journeys made by bus from a high of 11.2% in 2006 to 7% in 2019. Public transport use [was further reduced by COVID-19](#) from which services are still. These aspects contribute to a reluctance in using public transport through both perceived and actual issues which was reflected in many responses to the Living Well Locally survey.

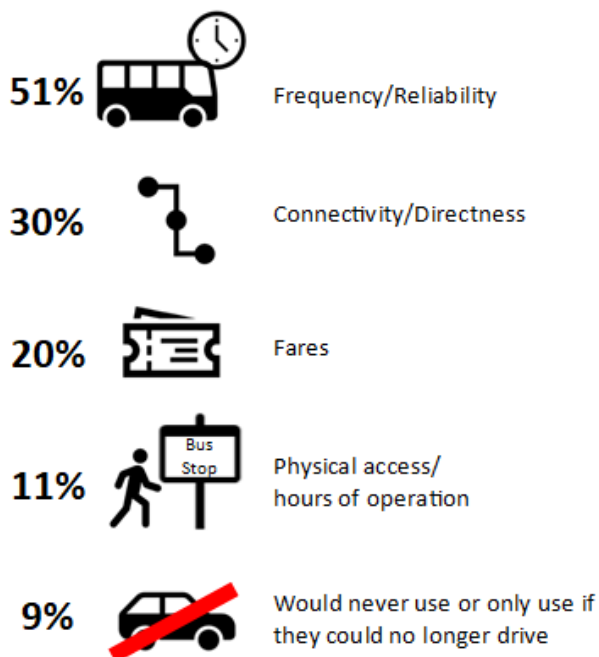
Survey responses:

- When asked if they used public transport the majority of people responded that they do not use public transport in the area, though a significant portion did, with a couple of people saying they use it all the time.



- Barriers to more frequent public transport use were similar across those who said they used public transport and those who did not. The themes brought up in responses were:
 - Frequency/reliability of services,
 - Connectivity/directness,
 - Fares,
 - Physical access/hours of operation.

Themes of Responses about Barriers to Public Transport*:



"I get free public transport but the withdrawal of services to the village, changes to routes requiring 2 buses to reach Edinburgh/Dundee, frequency of services, buses not connecting with trains, unreliability etc. does not encourage the use of public transport" – Freuchie

"A ticket that covers both bus companies. Falkland has Moffat buses (64 service) and Stagecoach (36 service)." – Falkland

- Several respondents thought that some routes, especially the route to St Andrews, wound through every village on the way to their destination so were not convenient. Several other related comments want to see a local bus that only serves the area, allowing quick and easy travel between villages, or free travel to adjacent villages.

"More useful bus service in Freuchie which linked to other villages in Fife. The current service we either have to walk to Welltree [accessed east of Freuchie, along A914] to get a bus or sit on a bus for 1.5hrs just to go somewhere local." – Freuchie

*Note many people included multiple themes in their responses so the figures do not add up to 100%

- Freuchie and Auchtermuchty had the highest proportions of those who used public transport.
- 63% of both 26-50s and 50+ age groups reported not using public transport.
- Answers to questions about encouraging more frequent use of the various services returned frequent comments related to improving local access to public transport and a concern that current services were impractical to use for some trips.

“Buses [to GP] are too infrequent to be practical to get to nearby villages especially if you’re unwell or would have to wait an hour to get back after a 10 minute appointment” - Dunshalt

“I have no problems at present as I am able to drive. Without a car I would use a bus. It would mean careful making [GP] appointments to mesh with the bus timetable.” – Strathmiglo

“There is no local supermarket. Glenrothes is 7 miles away yet takes a while on the bus and buses are infrequent. Local shop can support a bit with pints of milk and loaves of bread etc. New Co-op in Auchtermuchty may help but bus goes via Strathmiglo to get there.” - Falkland

- A significant number of other comments from those who did not use public transport said nothing would make them use public transport more often or said that they would use it only if they were unable to drive.

“If I found myself unable to drive” - Auchtermuchty

- These responses align with themes of comments made to the recent [Transport Strategy](#) for Fife Main Issues consultation, which returned similar concerns and perceived barriers to wider public transport use across Fife.

FOOD AND CONVENIENCE STORES

All the villages in the West Howe cluster, except Newton of Falkland and Gateside, have at least one convenience or local food store. Most stores are open between 6:00-22:00 most days although Falkland and Dunshalt’s stores have shorter hours, open to 18:00 and 17:00 respectively. Falkland also has a deli and a fruit and vegetable shop which have daytime hours of 9:30-17:00 during the week, and at the weekend the fruit and vegetable shop has reduced hours of 9:30-13:00 on Saturday and is closed Sunday. Between Falkland and Strathmiglo there is also a farm shop at the Pillars of Hercules, selling organic produce 9:00-17:00 in winter and until 18:00 in summer. There are also some mobile services in the area, consisting of weekly visits by fishmongers.

The largest grocery store in the area is a new Co-op along the A91 in Auchtermuchty, which offers the greatest variety of products. However, for larger supermarkets residents need to travel further and generally access services in Glenrothes, Cupar, and Kinross.

[Research by the Consumer Data Research Centre \(CDRC\)](#), examines supermarket use trends based on socio-economic SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) areas, using factors such as distance to stores, size and density of stores, and neighbourhood socio-economic and demographic characteristics. They found that all the villages except Auchtermuchty were the highest priority for improving access and proximity to supermarkets (those with floor space over 1400m²) and were only marginally better for proximity to other food stores when compared to the rest of Scotland. Although Auchtermuchty has better access to food with the larger Co-op store it was still considered

a priority for large supermarket access and just slightly less of a priority for access to other food stores (see figure A1-12).



Figure A1-12: Priority for supermarket access in the West Howe area Source: [CDRC Priority Places for Food Index](#)

Although the West Howe area is a high priority for improving access to food, it is categorised by the CDRC as amongst the lowest priority when considering e-delivery, as there are online services available from multiple supermarket chains (see figure A1-13).

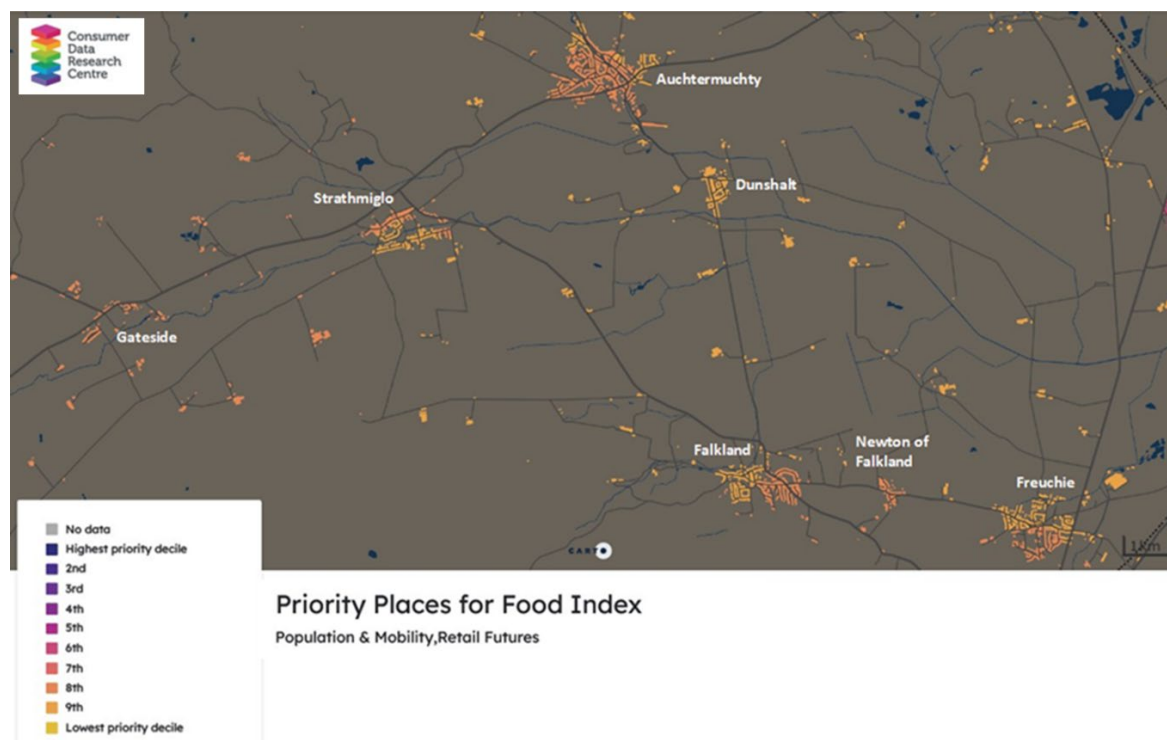


Figure A1-13: Access to online food deliveries showing good quality access for the West Howe area

Source: [CDRC Priority Places for Food Index](#)

Food prices and encouraging local service use:

In October 2022 we carried out analysis of relative prices of certain key food and household items. When looking at prices in convenience stores across the cluster there was a wide range and no store was consistently more or less expensive (full list of prices available in Appendix 4). The Dunshalt Community Store was generally more expensive, though much of this difference is explained by the predominance of local/organic produce and the bread available being baked on-site. A single brand was available for most categories at each store and for some things like digestives prices were largely consistent due to prices determined by the brand rather than the store.

Grocery List—October 2022—high and low prices













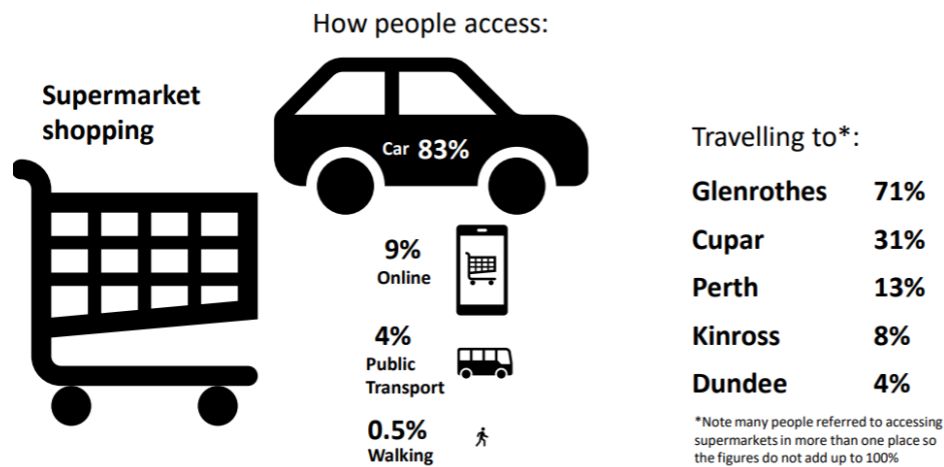
	£££: 1.60 McColl's, Strathmiglo £: 1.19 Premier, Auchtermuchty		£££: 2.89 Premier, Falkland £: 2.10 Co-op, Auchtermuchty
1l S-Skimmed Milk		250g Butter	
	£££: 2.75 Community Shop, Dunshalt £: 0.95 Co-op, Auchtermuchty		£££: 1.29 Premier, Falkland £: 0.70 Community Shop, Dunshalt
1 Loaf White Bread		1kg Sugar	
	£££: 0.65 Community Shop, Dunshalt £: 0.21 Co-op, Auchtermuchty		£££: 1.59 SPAR, Freuchie £: 1.10 Co-op, Auchtermuchty
1 Banana		1L Orange Juice	
	£££: 1.43 Community Shop, Dunshalt £: 0.89 McColl's, Strathmiglo		£££: 1.60 Co-op, Auchtermuchty £: 0.95 SPAR, Freuchie
100g Bacon		1 Pack Digestives	
	£££: 1.89 Premier, Falkland £: 1.00 SPAR, Freuchie		£££: 1.49 Premier, Auchtermuchty /Falkland £: 0.75 McColl's, Strathmiglo
6 Eggs		1 Pack Paracetamol	
	£££: 1.10 Premier, Falkland £: 0.57 Co-op, Auchtermuchty		£££: 2.79 Community Shop, Dunshalt £: 1.39 McColl's, Strathmiglo
1kg Potatoes		4-Pack Toilet Roll	

Figure A1-14: Highest and lowest prices for some key items in the village shops.

There was a large variance between the stores in the price for most goods (see figure A1-14). Milk, bread (except in Dunshalt), butter and orange juice had the least variance in price between cheapest and more expensive. The other products all varied by at least an additional 50% over the lowest price, with the highest price for toilet paper, paracetamol, bananas, and sugar being close to double the lowest price. These results align with findings by [Nourish Scotland in Our Right to Food report](#) which reports a lack of choice in convenience stores and general higher prices over supermarkets. However, based on our survey results the price of goods at different stores does not appear to encourage travel to convenience stores further away in order to capitalise on less expensive prices; despite there being sometimes large differences in price.

Survey responses for supermarket use:

- Survey responses indicated that travel to the supermarket was overwhelmingly by car which was consistently the majority form of transport in all villages within the cluster.



- Strathmiglo and Auchtermuchty were the only places where people estimated travel to a supermarket without a car would take less than 10 minutes.
- Most people access supermarkets in Glenrothes, except in Gateside where responses mentioned Kinross and Milnathort more often (Figure A1-15).
- An online shop was the second most common answer for how people did a food shop.

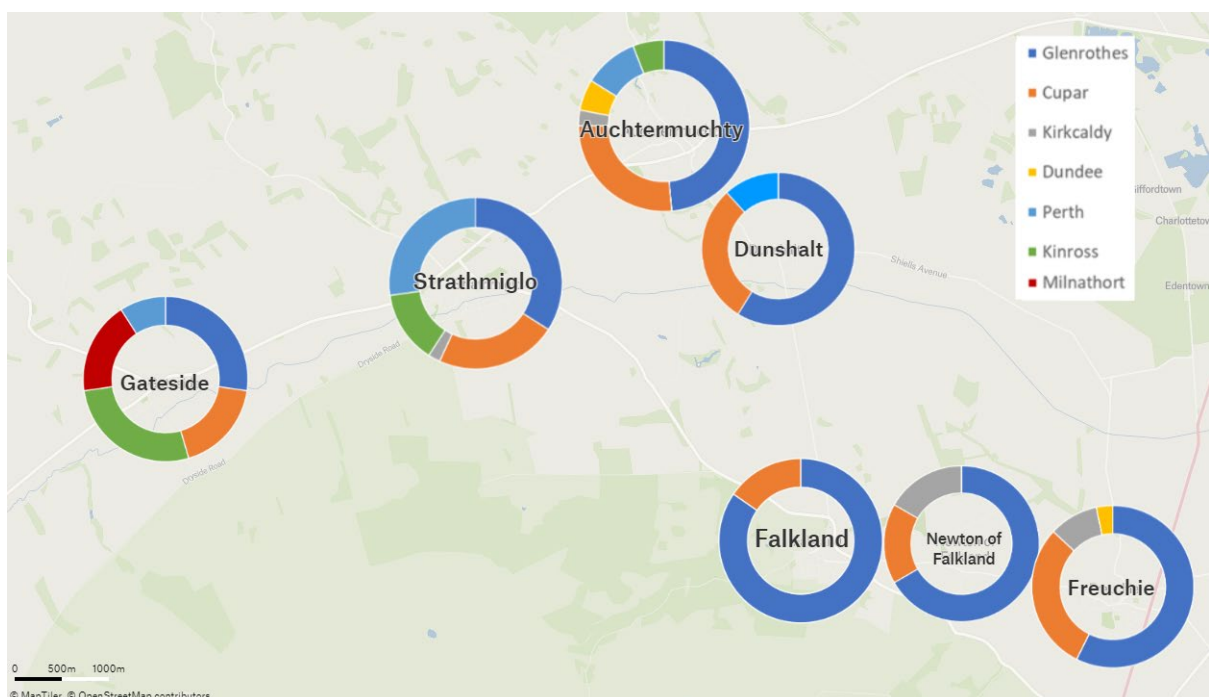
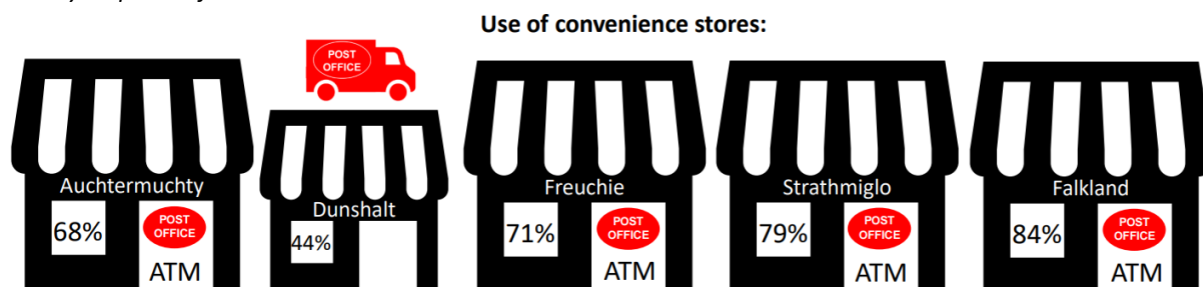
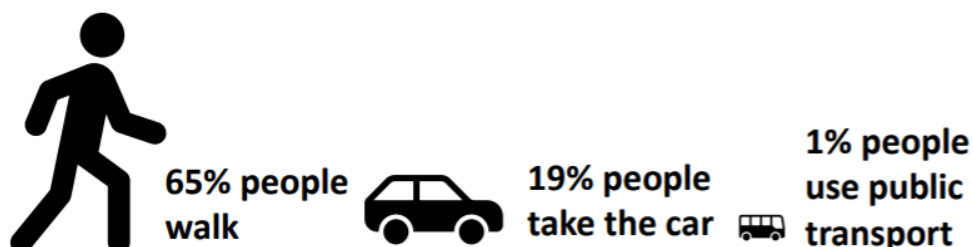


Figure A1-15: Map Showing the breakdown of where people access supermarkets outwith the villages

Survey responses for convenience store use:



- For each village which has a convenience store a majority of their residents report using the store.
- The majority of people walk to access a convenience store and most people reported that it took 1-5 minutes to travel there.
- 14% of people did not fill in a response to this question possibly indicating they do not use local convenience stores.
- A significant proportion of people drive to the convenience store and these answers tended to align with those who reported travel would take over 10 minutes without a car.
- The highest proportion of drivers were in Gateside, where there is no convenience store.



- Many who drove in Auchtermuchty reported that it would take over 10 minutes by means other than car to get to a convenience store, possibly reflecting the location of the Co-op at the southern edge of the village.
- Residents in the smaller villages of Newton of Falkland, Gateside, and Dunshalt reported using convenience stores in their neighbouring villages.

When asked about what would encourage people to use local convenience stores more often:

- Almost a quarter of respondents were either happy with current levels of service or did not offer any response.
- Responses largely focused on needing improvements to the range and prices of goods before shopping locally more.
- Some indicated more local and fresh produce would help.

"Fresh, local produce in an attractive well laid out shop. Reliable stock. Affordable. The Dunshalt store is a great example of this." – Falkland

"If I could avoid the supermarket I would. Finding bakery, butchery, bulk shop for essentials in a walkable/cyclable distance." – Freuchie

- Some responses suggested they considered the Co-op in Auchtermuchty a supermarket, while others thought it a convenience store.

- Some responses from Strathmiglo suggested that they use the Co-op in Auchtermuchty in favour of their local convenience store and they were concerned about the lack of safe active travel routes between the two villages.

"We have no path to get to the local shops. We have to drive. We would like to walk or cycle safely but cannot because A912 is too dangerous and has no speed restriction" – Strathmiglo

- Several responses from Auchtermuchty were concerned about access to the Co-op given its location at the edge of the settlement, across a busy road, and down a steep hill.

IMPORTANT SERVICES

COMMUNITY HALL

Each of the villages has a community hall and most are run by local groups and provide a wide range of classes, events, and bookable space (yoga, dance, coffee mornings, theatre group, etc.). Only Auchtermuchty's hall has general open hours, with all the others only open during events and classes.



All settlements had a community hall and over

90% of people said they used their local halls.

Survey responses:

- Each of the villages returned between a third to half of responses saying they did not have access to a community hall - that might indicate that they don't have activities that those people are interested in.
- Despite a perceived lack of access, over 90% in each age group reported using a community hall.
- Only Gateside responses were unanimous in saying they had access to a community hall.
- There were many responses about the quality of events held at community halls and concerns around access for some age groups, with several comments similar to:

"My community hall doesn't have much on for what I am interested in." - Auchtermuchty

"I would use the community centre more often if it had an exercise class applicable to my needs eg. for people over 70 eg seated exercises or gentle exercises . At the moment I feel classes are much more geared to younger age groups and I think seniors should be more considered. I also feel that the community hall could be more utilized for cultural events like touring plays and opera groups." - Strathmiglo

- A majority of people seemed to not know about events or groups in their communities, with over half of responses in each community indicating not using or being aware of local initiatives or providing no

answer. Those that did respond had generally positive responses and mentioned a wide variety of programmes and clubs, including Auchtermuchty Angels, local scout groups, cooking lessons, community foodbank/pantry, Freuchie in Bloom, and others.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The majority of housing in the area is owner occupied (71%) and there is an average of 14% social rented housing compared to a Fife average of 23% (see figure A1-15). The number of private rental properties is fairly low (8%). [Fife's Housing Land Audit](#) details that over the last 10 years there have only been 5 house completions in the area and none of those were affordable houses.

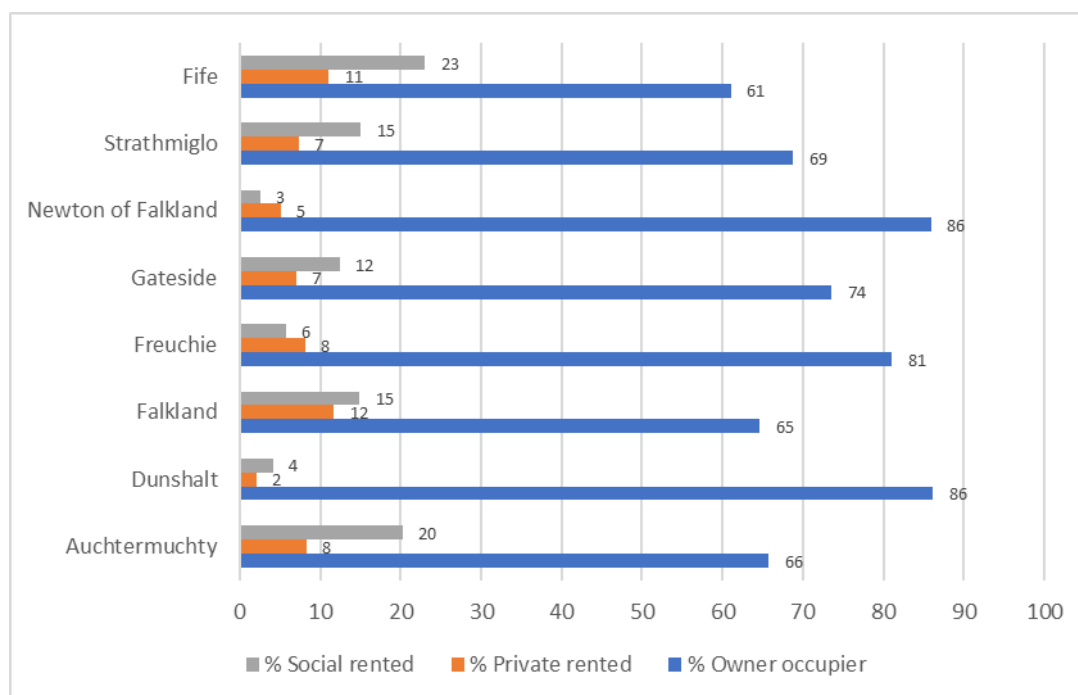


Figure A1-16: Breakdown of housing tenures in the West Howe area. Source: Cupar Housing Need and Demand Area profile 2021

[Statistical data](#) shows that Cupar and the Howe of Fife has higher house prices than the Fife average (about 17% higher in 2022); there were 118 house sales in the area in 2022.

Data collected for the Cupar Local Housing Strategy Area - Housing need and demand profile found that:

- There is a demand for new housing in all settlements with a particular need for larger family homes.
- Short term lets are reducing housing opportunities across the private rented sector and ownership.
- Private rents are unaffordable for most low/average income earners.
- There is a high demand for social rental properties in Freuchie and Newton of Falkland with Freuchie having a low number of social rental properties.
- There is a high need for specific needs properties.

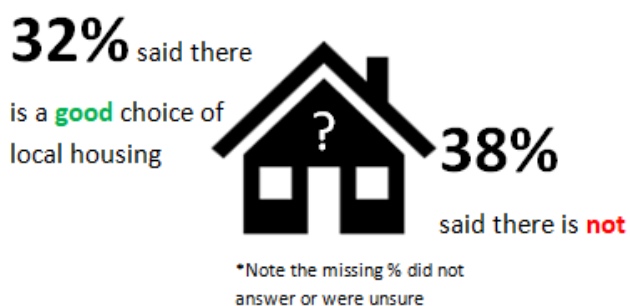
A development proposal for 21 houses including 4 affordable houses has recently been approved in Auchtermuchty.

The majority of housing in the area consists of 3-5 habitable rooms; typically bedrooms and living rooms are considered habitable rooms but not kitchens, as defined by [National Records of Scotland](#). [Scottish Government statistics](#) show that in 2017 this accounted for 78% of housing and 35% consist of 1-3 rooms (1-2 bedrooms).

Moving statistics show little to no change to demographics in the area over the last 10 years, with movers in and out of the area moving to and from similar socio-economic areas (moving cannot be directly applied to the cluster but is an average across Fife).

Work carried out for the [2021 Tayside Housing Needs and Demand Assessment](#)

found that in 2018-19, 50% of the house purchasers came from within the Cupar Housing Market Area and 71% from within Fife.¹



The comparatively low levels of smaller houses could impact older residents who wish to remain in the area. According to the [World Health Organisation](#), a variety of housing and provision of supportive housing is important for older people, giving them the option to move to a suitable home but remain within the community. Those who wish to maintain their connections to the community but want to live in a more manageable sized home once children have left, have mobility restrictions, or generally want to maintain their independence but with the option of assistance may have trouble finding somewhere locally. The lack of variety and slow delivery of new housing may also have a negative impact on first time buyers wanting to settle in the area or stay in the communities they grew up in, whose budgets and access to funding may limit or exclude them from the local market, particularly given [Scottish Government statistics](#) show that the house prices in the area exceeded Fife averages between 2014 and 2018.

Survey responses:

When asked whether they thought there was a good choice of housing in the area:

- Most responses said there was not a good choice of housing in the area.
- About a third of responses thought there was a good choice of housing.
- Almost all the villages reported similar ratios of those who thought there was a good choice of housing where they lived. Dunshalt was the outlier reporting three times as many “yes” responses as “no”.
- Some comments pointed to the lack of affordable housing of various types (social, affordable) and the lack of affordability for young people due to rising prices and lack of variety in housing types and sizes, as well as supply.

¹ Tayside Housing Market Partnership (2022) Tayside HMP HNDA Final Report.

“Not a lot of social housing but good mix of private housing including traditional cottages/houses, modern bungalows/houses, apartments. Rural area so development sites for new housing limited which may impact on younger people who want to remain in the village.” - Freuchie

“Yes, though people tend not to move so it’s difficult for the young ones to obtain housing here in Auchtermuchty.” - Auchtermuchty

“No. No significant new developments in years. Existing stock now ageing and prices pushed up by people buying second homes or retiring here.” - Falkland

NURSERY AND CHILDCARE

There are three council run nurseries within the area, in each of the primary schools in the larger villages. There is also a private nursery in Falkland. Fife Council provides up to 1140 hours of free childcare to children between the age of 3 and when they start school, and for 2 year old children who meet the eligible criteria set out by the Scottish Government. There may be childminders in the area, but this is something we did not pick up in our data collection.


The four primary school nurseries offer sessions 38 weeks a year, 5 days a week, between 9:00-15:00:

- Auchtermuchty Primary School Nursery has capacity for 39 children, as well as after school and holiday clubs for school age children. It also has facilities for people with disabilities.
- Freuchie Primary School Nursery has capacity for 20 children, as well as lunch, after school, and holiday clubs.
- Falkland Primary School Nursery has capacity for 16 children, as well as breakfast, after school, and holiday clubs.
- Strathmiglo Primary School Nursery (no data).

The private nursery in Falkland is open 8:00-18:00 and has full day and half day (morning 8:00-13:00 and afternoon 13:00-18:00) sessions. The prices are £27.50 for a half day and £55 for a full day (outside of 1140 free hours funded provision) (prices from November 2022).

There is a Little Rookies day care service in Freuchie for ages 2-12 open 7:45-17:45. It offers before and after nursery clubs of varying lengths, including dropping off and picking up from Freuchie Primary School Nursery. They offer 30 hours a week free cover during term time. The prices are £27.50 for 9:00-15:00 or £40 for full day sessions. Prices are reduced to £20 and £25, respectively, for non-term time sessions for children 3+.

The estimated private nursery costs in Fife is around £5.12 per hour. Costs across the various types of childcare (nannies, childminders, babysitters, nurseries) in Fife trend below the national average (Feb. 2023 prices obtained from [Childcare.co.uk](https://www.childcare.co.uk)) – see table A1-3.



cost/hour	Fife	Nationwide
Nanny	£11.00	£12.13
Childminder	£4.71	£5.79
Babysitter	£9.72	£10.66
Nursery	£5.12	£5.76


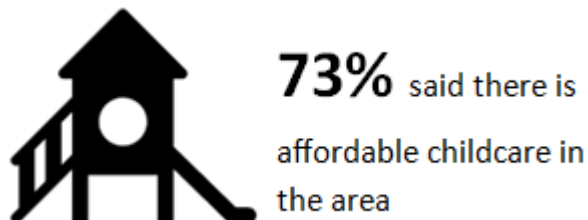


Table A1-3: Average private childcare prices in Fife and nationwide

Survey responses:

- Only 17% of people answered this question, but most of these said they had access to affordable childcare.



- One person in Auchtermuchty mentioned volunteer groups run at the community centre including a sensory play group.
- Those who offered further comments tended to say childcare was expensive, with one in Auchtermuchty saying they were unable to work due to the cost. Another in Freuchie acknowledged that it was affordable for them but expensive, and another said that it was challenging with multiple children.

“Depends what is meant by affordable! All childcare is too expensive before a child turns 3 when you get funded hours. Most workplaces allow women a year off (not all paid though) but when we have to go back to work after a year we have two years to pay for childcare before funded hours are available. Doesn’t match up. But yes Little Rookies is reasonably priced comparatively.” - Freuchie

- Three in both Falkland and Freuchie specified that they used the available local private childcare.

PRIMARY SCHOOL

All the four larger villages have a primary school; but the primary schools in the smaller villages of Gateside and Dunshalt have closed. Fife Council provide free travel to schools over 1 mile away.

- Falkland Primary School
- Freuchie Primary School
- Auchtermuchty Primary School
- Strathmiglo Primary School



Survey responses:

- 91% of children surveyed at Freuchie Primary School said they walked or scooted to school.

SECONDARY SCHOOL

There are no secondary schools within the West Howe cluster. The villages are in the catchment area for Bell Baxter High School in Cupar; free school bus travel to the school from the area is provided by Fife Council. Other nearby high schools are located in Glenrothes and Kinross but require students in the area to supply their own transport. Parents in the area recently began paying for a bus to Kinross High School, as enough local children now attend the school.

Falkland House School in Falkland provides specialist education services for children with extra support needs.

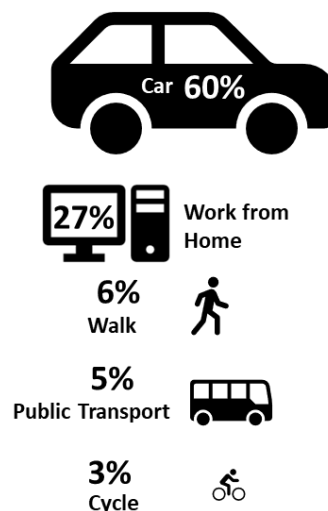
EMPLOYMENT

There is a mix of employment opportunities in the area. The highest concentration of industrial activity is in the industrial park to the south end of Auchtermuchty; but there are a variety of local businesses providing retail, service, agriculture, and trades employment throughout the area.

Survey responses:

- About a third of responses did not answer how they travel to work or said they are retired.
- Those who did respond overwhelmingly travelled by car, with the next largest share working from home.
- Cycling was the least represented number and walking and public transport were equally represented but a minority.
- Most people who said they worked in the cluster worked from home.
- The majority of those who travelled outside the cluster for work travelled to Edinburgh, Glenrothes, and Dunfermline, with the rest working in a wide range of places across northeast and central Fife and neighbouring regions.
- Respondents tended to not change their mode of travel through the year, though some did mention

How survey respondents who answered travel to work:



using a car more in wetter or colder weather when usually they cycle or walk. A couple who usually drive said they use a bike more often in the summer.

RECYCLING FACILITIES

Each village has recycling collection points which are well used.

Survey responses:

- The majority of people reported having access to a recycling facility and using it.
- A handful said they had access but did not use it.
- Most of those who indicated they did not have access lived on the periphery of the villages, though those from Dunshalt were located in the north half of the village.
- Despite reporting having local access responses from Freuchie mentioned the need for a wider variety of recycling options locally, with only a bottle bank available, and for other materials they needed to travel to the major recycling centre at Ladybank.



"Nearest Recycling Centre is at Ladybank (there is a bottle bank in Freuchie. Need a car to go to the recycling centre. It is one of the few where you still have to book. Would use more if you could just turn up." – Freuchie

PLAYPARK

There are playparks in each of the village. Several within the cluster are identified for improvements, including The Riggs in Auchtermuchty, Factory Road in Falkland, and the playpark in Gateside. Auchtermuchty has a simple skate park at the southern edge, while all other playparks have a variety of manufactured equipment and surfacing.

Survey responses:

- Almost all responses said they had access to a playpark.



- A higher proportion of those 26-50 reported using the play park than those 50+.
- The quality of playparks or the need for new facilities were mentioned several times.

"Playpark in the village has been updated recently and is well used" – Strathmiglo

(When asked about improvements to community facilities) *"Potentially an update to our play park." – Freuchie*

“There was interest in building a skate park in Freuchie a few years ago but this seems to have stalled.” - Freuchie

- Play parks were reported as the least used community facilities, and least likely to be used by those 50+ (60% said no compared to 29% of 26-50s), many of whom reflected that they were too old or their children grown.

“I’m of a certain age, no use for a play park!” – Falkland

- The playpark and burn were frequently mentioned as favourite places to play by children at Freuchie Primary School. 15% of children surveyed here wanted to see a skate park in the settlement, and 22% wanted improvements to existing facilities, such as adding nets to goals on the football field or improving the play park, including adding a zipline.
- The Freuchie Primary School children also said they played across the village, with many indicating they played on the cricket pitches (27%), in the parks (47%), and around the burn (16%).

INFORMAL/FORMAL SPORTS FACILITIES

Formal sports facilities are available in each of the four larger villages, with each having a bowling club. Freuchie also has a cricket pitch. Falkland has the greatest variety of sports clubs, with football, cricket, tennis and golf present. All the villages have informal playing fields.

Physical activity is recognized by the Scottish Government and NHS Scotland as being important for physical and mental health and is included as one of the [six priorities for public health in Scotland](#). [Fife’s Strategy for Physical Activity 2021 to 2024](#) aims to create an active Fife, encouraging access and take up of sports, leisure, and physical activity. It has the potential to strengthen community ties and connections between neighbours as well as tackling issues of social isolation alongside contributing to preventative health through having a positive impact on sleep, mood, stress, depression and others.

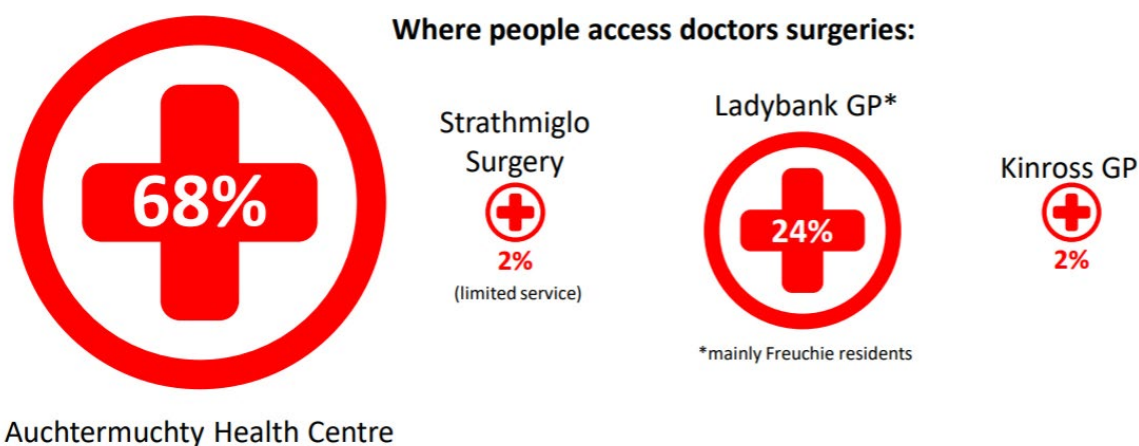
Survey responses:

- Without a car 88% estimated it would take over 10 minutes to access gyms or leisure centres and 79% said the same about sports facilities.
- Combined with responses for where facilities were accessed most trips to these facilities were outside the area, with Glenrothes and Cupar heavily represented, with some travelling to Dundee, Perth, or Edinburgh. The Michael Woods Centre in Glenrothes was the most commonly reported facility.
- The MUGA (Multi-Use Games Area) was frequently mentioned as a favourite place to play by children at Freuchie Primary School. The children play a variety of sports including football (22%), cricket (40%) and swimming (15%), reflecting the availability of facilities in the settlement.
- When asked about improvements to local facilities 22% of children surveyed at Freuchie Primary School wanted specific types of activity centre like soft play centre or ice-skating rink added to the area.
- Some children said they had to travel for clubs and sports with Cupar mentioned for gymnastics, and Auchtermuchty for football.
- A couple responses in Auchtermuchty said the local facilities (football club) were not suitable so had to travel to Glenrothes for training.

“We have to go to Glenrothes for sports facilities and leisure centre as there are none here, and the children have to travel to Glenrothes to train with their local football team the Bellevue Colts because the park is not suitable here.” – Auchtermuchty

GP PRACTICE AND HEALTHCARE SERVICES

There is a medical practice in Auchtermuchty open between 8:00-18:00 Monday-Friday and which also runs a morning weekday surgery held in Strathmiglo between 8:30-11:30 and an afternoon slot from 15:45-17:15 on Thursdays. The practice has incorporated Near Me online video consultations and specialist Practice Nurses offer services for health promotion, asthma, diabetes, contraception, cervical smears, and HRT examinations in addition to standard treatments for wound care, injections, etc. There is also District Nursing capacity for those with disabilities or severe illness. Other GP facilities are available in Ladybank, Kinross and Glenrothes.

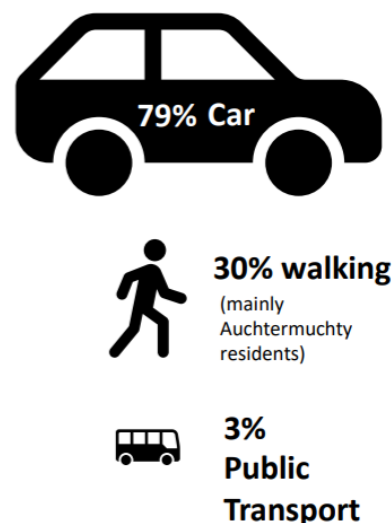


The closest A&E hospital is the Victoria Hospital in Kirkcaldy. Patients may be sent to different hospitals depending on their medical needs or personal choices and there are community hospitals in Glenrothes and Cupar. Based on information gathered from the [Traveline Scotland website](#), it is estimated that travel to the Victoria Hospital from each of the individual settlements within the cluster takes over an hour with at least one change via public transport.

GPs in Scotland have been under pressure for several years, with a [recent survey by the British Medical Association](#) finding that 8/10 practices reported “demand was exceeding capacity” and 34% having at least one practice vacancy. Pressures on the system were exposed by COVID-19 and continued with current economic strains and services are moving online with Near Me video consultations and other digital solutions supported in the [Scottish Government’s Care in the Digital Age: delivery plan 2022 to 2023](#) and set out in the original 2018 Digital Health and Care Strategy. These continuing issues and emerging tools will have an impact on the availability of in-person health infrastructure in Fife, potentially leading to a reduction in local service levels in the West Howe of Fife in coming years. How this will impact the future consideration and measurement of this service in relation for Living Well Locally is unclear, and services may come to rely more on home visits alongside virtual consultations, potentially reducing the number of local GP practices.

Survey responses:

- Most reported driving to access health care services.
- The majority who reported walking to access medical facilities were in Auchtermuchty.
- Auchtermuchty, Strathmiglo, and Dunshalt were the only settlements to report walking to health care and where access could be in less than 5 minutes.
- Auchtermuchty was the most common response as to where people access health services, and was the majority in all villages, except Freuchie where most use the GP in Ladybank.
- A lack of capacity locally was reflected in a significant number of comments. These might also have to do with the location of the practice and several concerns were raised, saying it was,



“Down a large hill in Auchtermuchty which I am unable to walk up as it is so steep.” - Auchtermuchty

- Close to half of respondents did not offer any comments when asked what would encourage them to use local services more often. Of the half who did comment, the majority were concerned about basic access issues, either in terms of being able to book an appointment due to staffing levels or having physical access to local services as represented in the comment, “if they existed”. Some respondents wanted better paths for cycling and walking between local settlements and several others pointed out the need for a car and were concerned about the convenience and timing of trips by bus to access services outside of the area.

PHARMACY

There are pharmacies in Auchtermuchty and Falkland.

Their hours are:

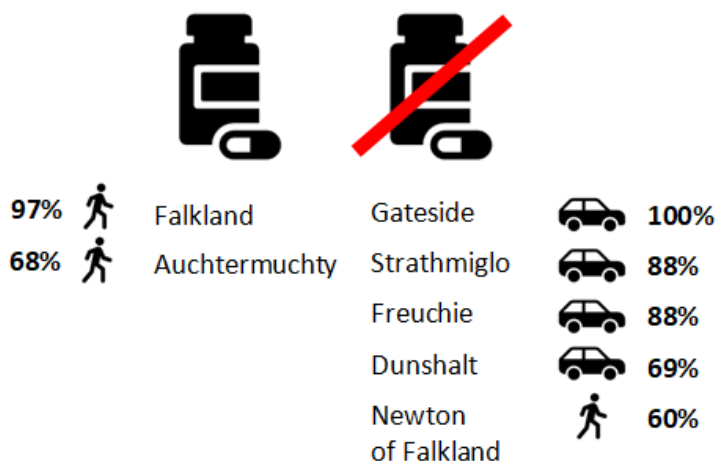
- 9-17:30 Monday to Friday (Falkland stays open until 18:00)
- 9-12:30 Saturday (Falkland stays open until 13:00)

Pharmacies are important primary health infrastructure for communities, providing not only access to medication but to consultations, referrals and health literacy, relieving pressures on other health services. The Royal Pharmaceutical Society Scotland stated in their 2021 manifesto the potential pharmacies have for outreach and community engagement and their intention to expand the role of pharmacies to include managing common ailments and long-term conditions. They also offer weekend access to health services outside of GP hours, increasing access for those who have other responsibilities during the week.

Presence of Pharmacy and most common travel mode by settlement:

Survey responses:

- Most people in Falkland and Auchtermuchty and Newton of Falkland walk to the pharmacy.
- Those within Auchtermuchty and Falkland who walked represent most people who can access services within 5 minutes and the majority of those who can access services in under 10 minutes without a car.
- Most people in other villages access a pharmacy by car.
- 28% of people in Auchtermuchty drive to the pharmacy, and 71% of these reported it would take over 10 minutes to access without a car, despite the centrality of the pharmacy.



DENTIST

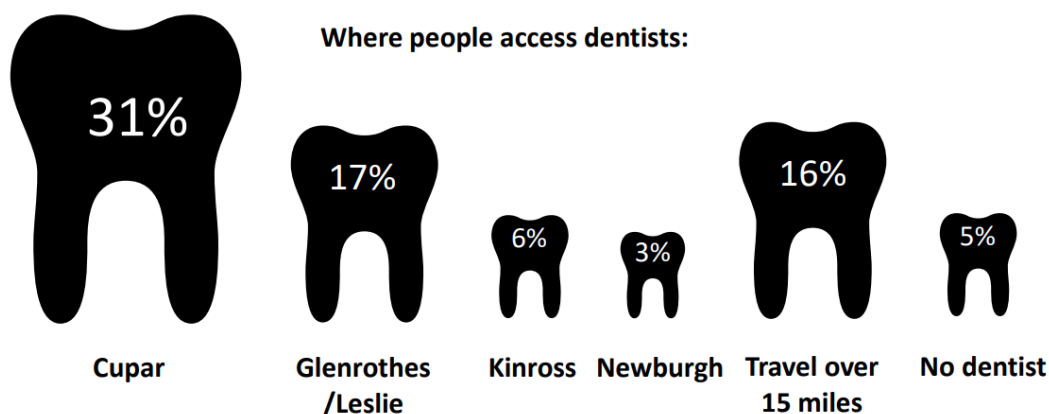
There are no dentists currently in the West Howe villages. With the dental surgery in Auchtermuchty closing several years ago the nearest dental surgeries are in Glenrothes or Cupar.

An article from the [Journal of Dentistry](#) published in 2013 highlighted that oral health is an important aspect of general health and wellbeing so access to a dentist is as important as access to a GP. Another [article](#) published in 2012 outlined that lacking or perceiving to lack access to dental services has been linked to worse oral health outcomes, contributing to longer periods of time between visits, increased oral health issues, and subsequent impacts to the overall nation's oral health. The British Dental Journal published an [article](#) in 2019 which raised the fact UK dentistry has been facing issues around stress, burnout and resulting loss of dentists for years, and more [recent studies](#) have found that COVID-19 has led to many in the profession considering their future due to restrictions placed on services during the pandemic and the resultant service and personal stresses. According to a [2022 BBC survey](#) of dental practices with NHS contracts, 90% of those in Fife were not accepting new NHS patients.

Survey responses:

- Almost all respondents said they travelled to the dentist by car, with only 4% using public transport.
- Local access to a dentist was a consistent issue that was raised, specifically mentioned by 11% of responses.

- Dentists used were as far away as Dunfermline and Inverkeithing within Fife, with some travelling outside the county to Dundee and Glasgow.



- Several others in Auchtermuchty said they did not have a dentist and commented on the local practice closure, reflecting the widespread responses about difficulty in accessing dentist services in general and which was reflected in additional comments.

“You go to wherever you can get a NHS dentist which may be far away.” - Strathmiglo

- The distances many travelled may reflect the difficulty (real or perceived) in registering with an NHS dentist, with some respondents keeping their former practices in other places.

“NHS Dentist I have been with for years and almost impossible to transfer”. – Falkland

FINANCIAL SERVICES (POST OFFICE/BANK)

There is a Bank of Scotland branch in Falkland open 10:00-14:00 on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

ATMs and Post Office services are available in the convenience stores across the cluster, except the shop in Dunshalt:

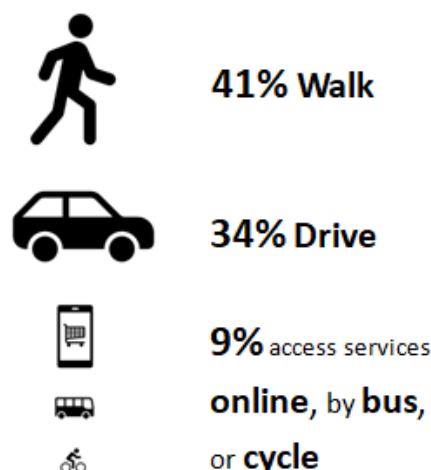
- Auchtermuchty Co-op Post Office counter open 6:00-22:00 7 days a week
- Strathmiglo McColls Post Office counter open 9:00-16:00 Monday-Friday; 9:00-14:00 Saturday; Closed Sunday
- Falkland Premier Post Office counter open 10:00-16:00 Monday-Thursday; 10:00-13:00 Friday; Closed Saturday and Sunday
- Freuchie SPAR Post Office counter open 9:00-15:00 Monday-Friday; 9:00-12:00 Saturday and Sunday.

A mobile Post Office serves Dunshalt on Tuesdays 9:00-9:45.

Survey responses:

- Of the responses to this section the results for travel to post office/bank returned an almost even spread of travel modes, with walking and car travel in Freuchie, Auchtermuchty and Strathmiglo being fairly evenly represented, though cars continue to be most common form in the smaller communities of Dunshalt, Gateside, and Newton of Falkland due to their lack of facilities.
- In Falkland, Freuchie, and Strathmiglo walking was most common of any answer and possibly reflects the central location of the service in these villages and their small size, whereas Auchtermuchty was more mixed due to the post office being in the Co-op at the southern edge of the village and the larger size of the village. Those in Falkland responded most about financial services with main concerns over opening hours for the bank.

How people travel to financial services:



Research shows that access to in-person banking has declined dramatically over the past few decades, with 53% of (often rural) branches closing or reducing their hours since 2015. Access to online services is being pushed by providers as a replacement, though that risks excluding vulnerable populations and doesn't allow for the social interactions which come from accessing services in person.

Post Offices provide day-to-day personal banking services including transactions for many high street banks, as well as cash services which do not require a bank account. As bank branches continue to close, these services have become more relied on, seeing consistent rises in cash deposits in areas where nearby branches have closed.

Citizen Advice advise access to these services are especially important for those who rely on cash for everyday spending and deposits and are important lifelines for communities, especially for older people and other vulnerable groups. Research conducted by Age UK found that around 1 in 5 of those over 65 rely on cash for their day-to-day spending in the UK, making it especially important that an area like the West Howe of Fife has sufficient access to financial services, with its above average and growing number of older residents.

LIBRARY

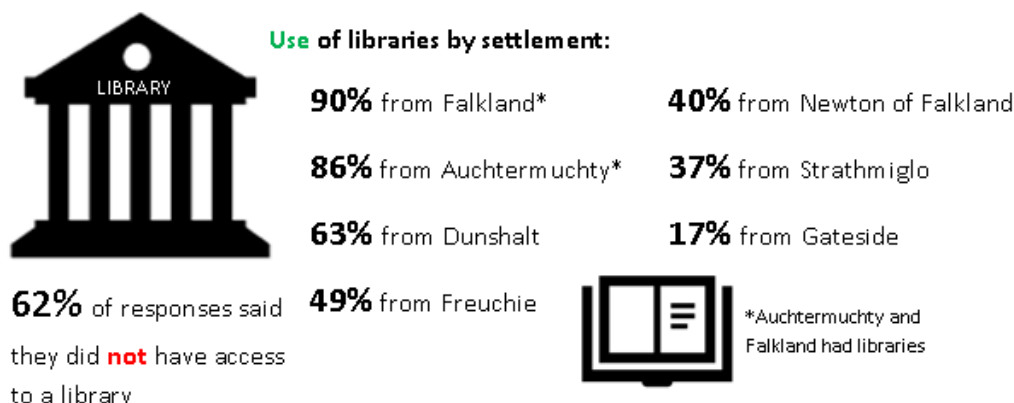
Auchtermuchty and Falkland have libraries and Freuchie has a book exchange open to the public. Auchtermuchty's library is financed by Fife Council and operated by OnFife. Falkland's library is run by the community after Fife Council closed the previous service. All rely on volunteers to operate. Auchtermuchty and Falkland libraries have restricted service hours.

- Auchtermuchty Library's accessibility is as follows:
 - Open Mondays (14:00-17:00), Thursdays (14:00-19:00), Fridays (10:00-13:00) and Saturdays (10:00-13:00).
- Falkland Library's accessibility is as follows:
 - Open Wednesdays (14:00-18:00) and Saturdays (10:00-12:00)
- Freuchie's book exchange is unstaffed, but accessible Monday-Friday (10:00-12:00) and hours can be found on their Facebook page.

A mobile library visits each village, except Newton of Falkland and Auchtermuchty, every other week for half an hour to an hour during the day.

Survey responses:

- The majority of responses said they did not have access to a library.
- Responses reporting using a library were consistent with where libraries are located, with the largest proportion of library users in Auchtermuchty and Falkland.



- The settlements without a library were most likely to have more responses saying they did not use the library than those settlements with a library.
- A majority in each age group said they used the library.
- Most people reported not having access to a library.
- Despite the presence of libraries about half of people in Auchtermuchty and Falkland said they did not have access to a library.
- Auchtermuchty was the only settlement to return more responses that said they had access than they did not.
- In every village except Auchtermuchty a third to half of respondents were unaware of any mobile services.
- There was a general lack of awareness of the mobile library through the area. Many comments stating that the times were inconvenient for people who work or were unsure about when the mobile library came and how often, with different responses saying that it visited every week, every 2 weeks, and every month. Further responses were uncertain whether the service was still operating post-Covid 19.

"I think a library bus but don't know the times and don't know how to find out." - Freuchie

- Generally, comments related to improving hours, with some wanting the return of a now absent service, particularly in Freuchie.

"Library is Auchtermuchty and infrequently open (closed during Covid). Requires a car between villages with difficult parking. A mobile library would be a potential solution, but is not available if you are working full time." – Gateside

Libraries are an important part of communities in Scotland and provide a host of services while being one of the few free to use indoor public spaces. Library use in Scotland has been declining in the last decade, with data from Scottish Government showing [from 2011 to 2016 overall library use declined from 61% to 50%](#) of people using a library, though still remains at a higher level than other parts of the UK. In 2016 over three quarters of people considered libraries as important to communities. Those 25-54 were found to have the highest levels of library use, while those over 55 used the library the least.

According to [The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy](#), library funding and visits have been directly affected by the impacts imposed by COVID-19. Despite this, the results of the CIPFA Public Library Actuals Survey 2019-2020 detail that Fife was ranked second compared to library services across the UK for number of issues per annum at 114,455.

OnFife, Fife's library service, ran a successful [summer reading challenge](#) for children in 2020-22, securing funding in 2020 and has achieved high participation rates. [Scotland's Library Strategy 2021-2025](#) promotes libraries as way to combat issues around digital exclusion and social isolation, having the potential to offer community resources to enable literacy and re and upskilling, particularly in combination with Connecting Scotland programme offering devices to digitally excluded families to enable internet access and literacy.

A [report by Arts Council England](#) discussed the evolution of the role of public libraries and how they have expanded to include health and wellbeing spaces promoting mental health, adult education, skills and employability resources, digital literacy and resources, heat-hubs, makers spaces, and overall contributing to community support and cohesion. Staff contributed to responses to COVID-19 in a number of ways which highlight their flexibility, such as [delivering food and care packages or providing phone line support services for vulnerable individuals](#). Despite these strengths and potential there has been a dramatic reduction in funding and volunteer numbers in the last few years, putting strains on already stretched services overly reliant on volunteers.

CARE HOME/SHELTERED HOUSING

Residential care home accommodation is available in Auchtermuchty, while nursing style care is available in Falkland. The next closest facilities are in Springfield outside Ladybank, in Milnathort, Cupar, and Glenrothes. Lomond View in Falkland has capacity for 50 people and Strathview in Auchtermuchty has capacity for 25 people. There is some sheltered housing provision in Auchtermuchty and Falkland.

[Information from Turas Care Management tool](#) showed that Fife-wide there was a significant and steady increase in the monthly use of care home beds through 2022, consistently up from 2021 occupancy rates. Moreover, [population data](#) suggests that the number of over 65s in Fife is expected to rise significantly over the next 20 years.

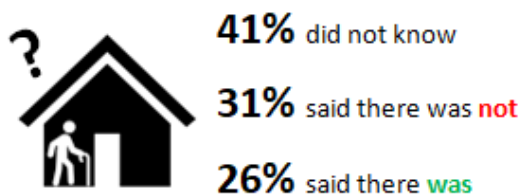
[Studies](#) have shown the area within 500 metres of older people's residences has a much higher impact in influencing older people's travel behaviours, particularly access to safe and attractive active travel routes to parks and shops, than is seen in younger adult groups.

Survey responses:

- Most people were unaware of what was available locally or did not answer.
- A small majority of other responses said that they did not have access to local care facilities.
- A handful specifically mentioned the care facilities in Falkland, Auchtermuchty, and Ladybank.

"I am not aware of care facilities in our area; getting help at home is almost impossible, even if privately funded." – Gateside

Access to Care Homes and Sheltered Housing:



DESIRABLE SERVICES

CULTURAL AND LEISURE FACILITIES

Auchtermuchty, Strathmiglo, Freuchie and Falkland each have pubs which serve food. They are open past midnight Friday and Saturday but generally closed by 23:00 the rest of the week. Most are open from 17:00 during the week and have lunchtime openings on the weekends.

Auchtermuchty, Freuchie, Dunshalt, and Falkland have one or more cafés, all of which close by 17:00.

There is a Chinese takeaway in Auchermuchty and several of the pubs and cafes also do takeaway in Auchtermuchty and Strathmiglo.

Falkland has the cultural attraction of Falkland Palace and Gardens, a Scheduled Monument and Designed Garden & Landscape, as well as direct access to Falkland Estate and the House of Falkland Designed Garden and Landscape to the west.

Fish and chip and pizza vans also visit the cluster on a regular basis.

Survey responses:

- In those places with a pub/bar the great majority of responses were that people walked.
- Those in Falkland and Freuchie largely reported being able to access a pub/bar in 1-5 minutes, and almost all under 10 minutes.
- Strathmiglo and Auchtermuchty responses were evenly split between 1-5 minutes and 6-10 minutes, with a minority over 10 minutes.
- Those that drove in all the villages most often said local services would take over 10 minutes to get to without a car.
- Cafes and restaurants were accessed mainly by car, except in Falkland and Auchtermuchty, where walking equalled or exceeded car use.
- Auchtermuchty and Falkland had the highest proportions of people able to access café/restaurants in under 10 minutes. Dunshalt and Freuchie returned a minority able to access these under 10 minutes.

LOCAL CENTRE WITH RANGE OF SHOPS

Falkland has the largest number of facilities classed as desirable, with numerous shops, pubs, and cafes. This difference reflects Falkland's attractiveness as a tourist destination as it is able to support more businesses than surrounding settlements. However, many of the shops are directed at visitors to the area, selling gifts, crafts, or boutique items which can be expensive. Auchtermuchty and Freuchie also have local centres identified in Fifeplan (2017) and they both have a selection of businesses (such as hairdressers, florists), pubs, and convenience stores, although the number of facilities available in Freuchie has reduced in recent years.

Survey responses:

- Some in Falkland wanted more focus on retail and food services for locals over tourists.

FURTHER EDUCATION FACILITIES

The nearest further education facilities are in Cupar (SRUC Elmwood Campus) or Fife College campuses in Glenrothes and Buckhaven. The nearest universities are the University of St Andrews and Dundee University. The M90 to the east also provides access to the various universities in Edinburgh.

HAIRDRESSER

Auchtermuchty, Freuchie, Falkland and Strathmiglo have hairdressers which all have one day a week where they are open past 17:00, until 19:30 or 20:00. There are also mobile services which operate through the cluster.

EV CHARGING FACILITIES

Falkland and the neighbouring Pillars of Hercules farm and shop offer a stand of standard EV charging each. Auchtermuchty provides a stand with fast charging capacity. The next closest points in the network are in Cupar, Newburgh, and Glenrothes.

COMMUNITY GROWING OPPORTUNITIES

The only group of allotments in the cluster is in Falkland, though most of the villages have community horticultural groups which look after public planters, hanging baskets, and flowerbeds.

RAIL STATION

The closest rail station's are in Ladybank and Markinch, with direct services to Edinburgh, Perth, and Dundee.

APPENDIX 2: ISOCHRONES - WALKING DISTANCES FROM THE VILLAGES

Isochrones are used to display travel time from a point. Below are isochrones generated from a central point within each West Howe settlement using data provided by Parish.com. They display how far a person can reasonably be expected to walk in 5 (green), 10 (yellow), and 20 (red) minutes based on an average adult walking pace.

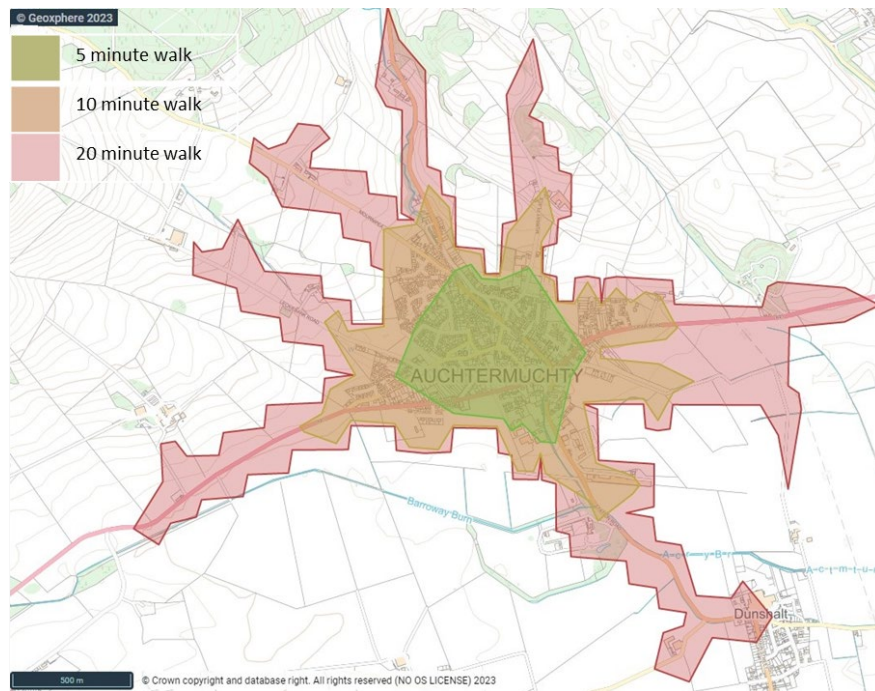


Figure A2-1: Walking Distance from Auchtermuchty High Street

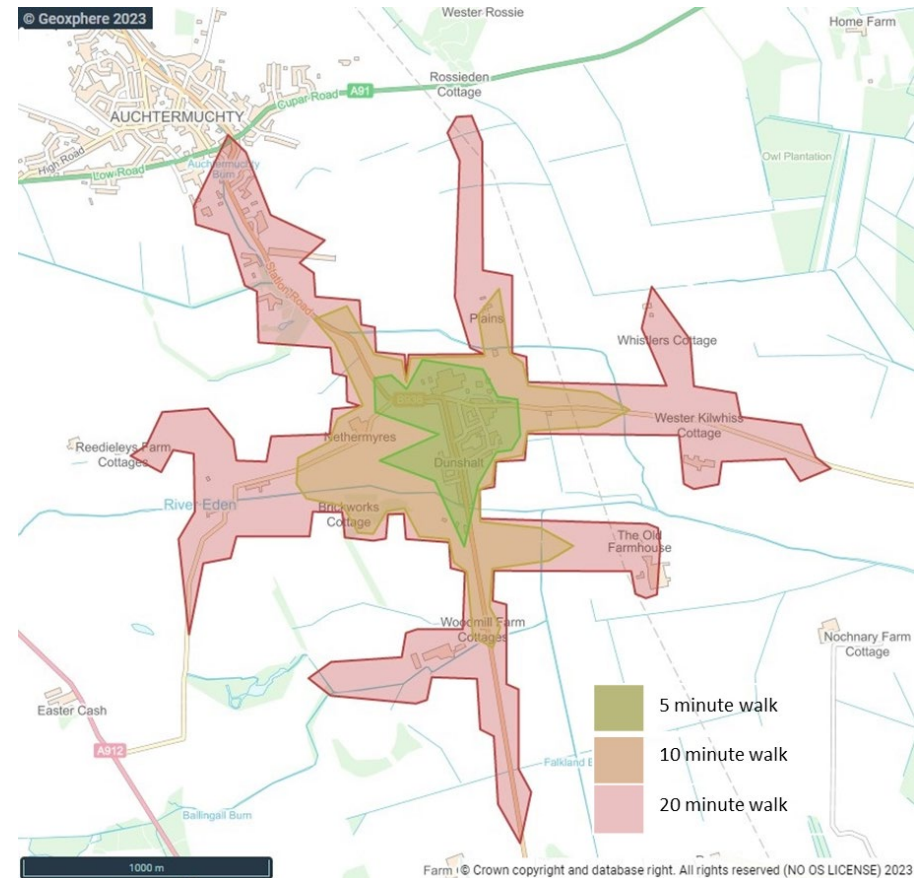


Figure A2-2: Walking Distance from Dunshalt Community Store

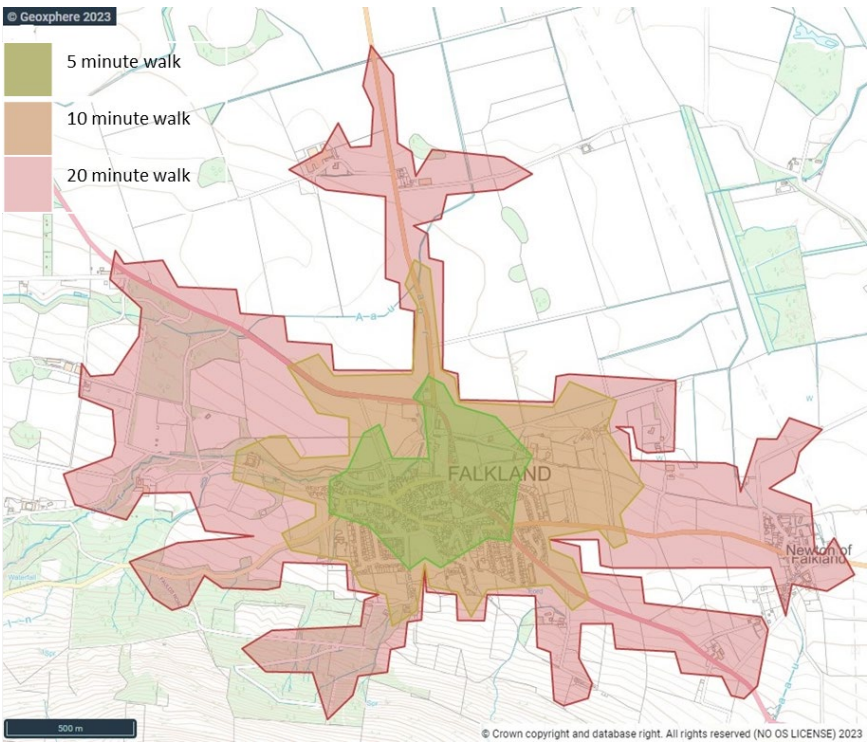


Figure A2-3: Walking Distance from Falkland Community Hall

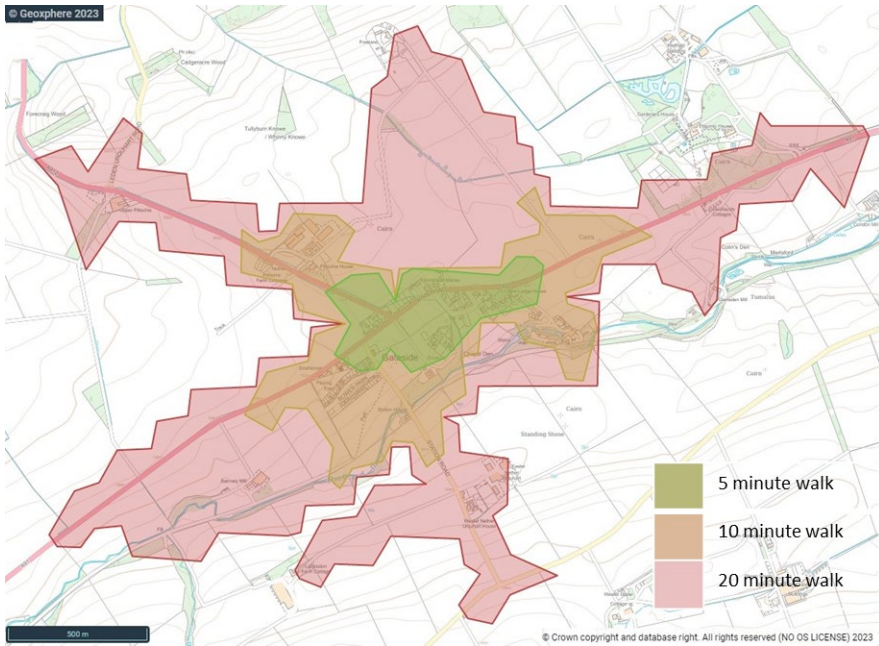


Figure A2-4: Walking Distance from Gateside Memorial Hall

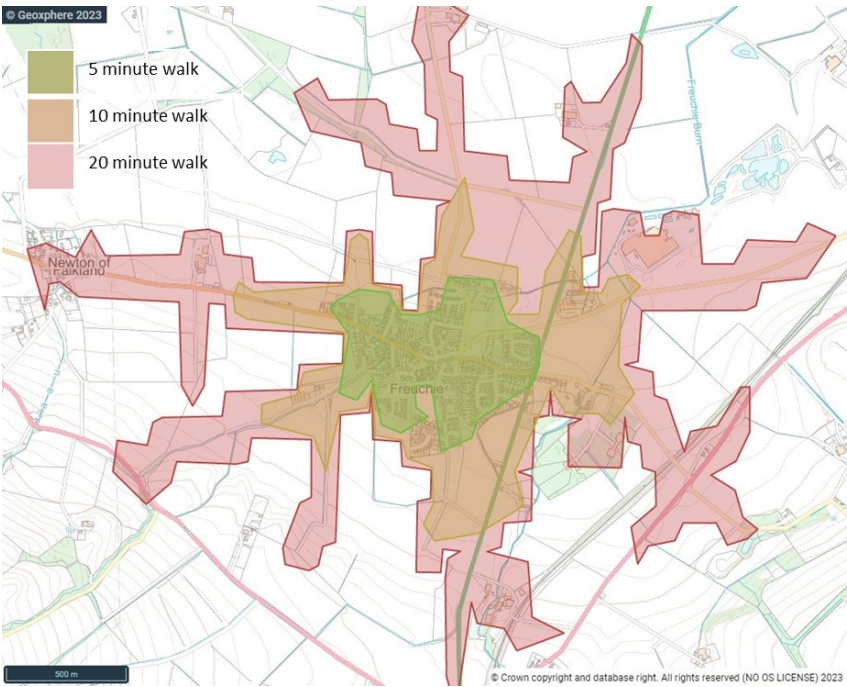


Figure A2-5: Walking Distance from Freuchie SPAR

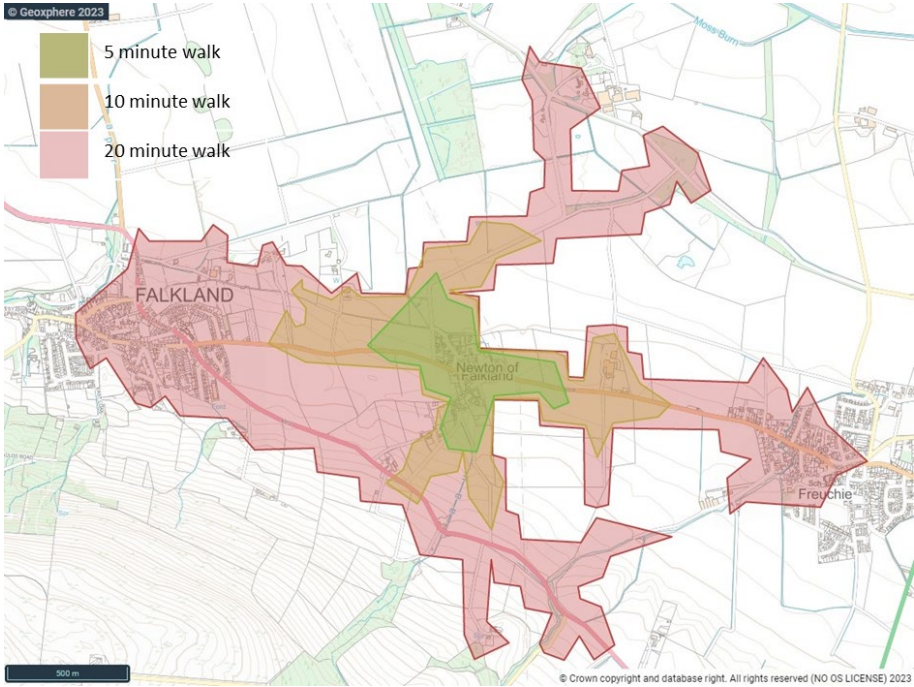


Figure A2-6: Walking Distance from Newton of Falkland Community Hall

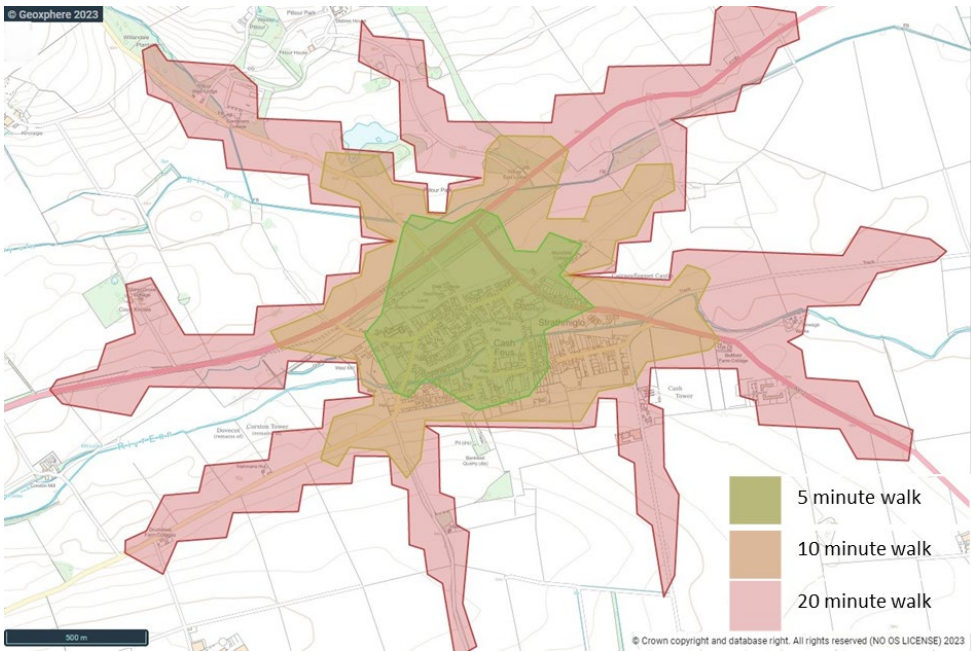


Figure A2-7: Walking Distance from Strathmiglo McColls

APPENDIX 3: SURVEY OF KEY WALKING AND CYCLING ROUTES

We carried out a survey of key walking and cycling routes through the West Howe of Fife cluster. Routes were surveyed in person in February 2023, on a dry day. Routes within settlements were walked for their entire length, while routes between settlements were walked for a about a quarter of their distance from either end and completed by visual survey and Google Street View.

Route Quality Checklist: Auchtermuchty to Dunshalt, 18/2/23	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?		x	
Is the route attractive/interesting?		x	
Are there shelters/places to rest?		x	
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)	x		
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)		x	Busy, fast road
Does the route connect to other routes?		x	
Is there signage?		x	No signage
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		
Is the route shaded?		x	
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		Follows along road
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)		x	Only along west side
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?		x	Wide enough for walkers to pass but difficult for bikes or wheelchairs
Are pavements well maintained?	x		
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?	x		
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	
For longer routes between settlements:			
What is the distance and the quality of the route for walking and cycling (how safe would it feel?)	>1km		No lights or shelter so only appropriate in good weather and during day

Route Quality Checklist: A91 in Auchtermuchty	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?	x		
Is the route attractive/interesting?		x	
Are there shelters/places to rest?		x	
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)		x	Not consistently - pedestrian crossing without lights
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)		x	
Does the route connect to other routes?	x		Links to routes to Dunshalt and and Strathmiglo and Auchter High St.
Is there signage?		x	
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		
Is the route shaded?		x	
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		Straight, not winding
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)		x	One side for part from west, then both
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?	x		
Are pavements well maintained?	x		
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?		x	
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	

Public Transport			
Are bus stops/train stations conveniently located for access to houses and services by walking or biking?		x	Far from Co-op
Are bus stops/train stations comfortable and provide shelter day and night?		x	No shelter
Are stops clear of barriers (steps, street furniture, etc.) to accessing public transport?	x		
Is there enough space provided for buses to pull up to pavement for those with disabilities?	x		

Route Quality Checklist: High Street, Auchtermuchty	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?	x		
Is the route attractive/interesting?	x		Heritage
Are there shelters/places to rest?	x		Near pharmacy
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)		x	Some
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)	x		Slopes at south end and roads to east
Does the route connect to other routes?	x		To A91 and Madras Road
Is there signage?		x	
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?		x	Inconsistent around square
Is the route shaded?		x	
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)		x	Lacking at N end of square and inconsistent throughout
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?	x		
Are pavements well maintained?	x		
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?	x		some lamps and bins, but mostly clear
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	

Route Quality Checklist: Madras Road, Auchtermuchty	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?	x		
Is the route attractive/interesting?	x		
Are there shelters/places to rest?		x	
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)		x	
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)		x	Steep slopes or adjust streets to east
Does the route connect to other routes?	x		
Is there signage?		x	
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?		x	Inconsistent
Is the route shaded?		x	
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		parallel to main road with buses; direct route to pharmacy
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)		x	Mixed and alternating
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?	x		Where they are present
Are pavements well maintained?	x		
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?	x		
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	

Route Quality Checklist: B936 Burnside, Auchtermuchty	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?	x		
Is the route attractive/interesting?	x		River alongside, trees along course
Are there shelters/places to rest?		x	
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)	x		Until Madras Rd.
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)	x		
Does the route connect to other routes?	x		Madras Road and A91
Is there signage?		x	Bike route sign by pub
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	Bike racks outside Cycle tavern but none near store
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		
Is the route shaded?	x		
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)	x		
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?	x		Excellent pavements
Are pavements well maintained?	x		
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?	x		
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	

Public Transport

Are bus stops/train stations conveniently located for access to houses and services by walking or biking?	x		
Are bus stops/train stations comfortable and provide shelter day and night?	x		
Are stops clear of barriers (steps, street furniture, etc.) to accessing public transport?	x		
Is there enough space provided for buses to pull up to pavement for those with disabilities?	x		

Route Quality Checklist: A91 Gateside to Auchtermuchty	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?		x	
Is the route attractive/interesting?	x		
Are there shelters/places to rest?		x	
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)		x	
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)		x	
Does the route connect to other routes?	x		
Is there signage?		x	
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		Although narrow and often right on the A road
Is the route shaded?		x	
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)		x	
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)		x	
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?		x	Often not even paved
Are pavements well maintained?		x	Particularly bad
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?		x	Signs block it, as well as hedges
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	

For longer routes between settlements:			
What is the distance and the quality of the route for walking and cycling (how safe would it feel?)	5.3 km		Unlit route. Narrow and next to road lend unsafe feeling. Discontinues in places

Route Quality Checklist: A91 through Gateside	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?	x		
Is the route attractive/interesting?	x		The main road low attractiveness, but nice setting
Are there shelters/places to rest?		x	
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)		x	Lack of curb cuts in places and no pedestrian crossing near east bus stops
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)		x	
Does the route connect to other routes?		x	
Is there signage?		x	
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		
Is the route shaded?	x		In parts
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		Only services are bus stops and park but both along the pavement
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)	x		
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?	x		
Are pavements well maintained?		x	Small and damaged
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?	x		
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	

Public Transport			
Are bus stops/train stations conveniently located for access to houses and services by walking or biking?	x		
Are bus stops/train stations comfortable and provide shelter day and night?		x	
Are stops clear of barriers (steps, street furniture, etc.) to accessing public transport?	x		cars blocking
Is there enough space provided for buses to pull up to pavement for those with disabilities?		x	Narrow road with on street parking

Route Quality Checklist: California, Strathmiglo	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?	x		
Is the route attractive/interesting?	x		
Are there shelters/places to rest?	x		Community garden and benches/tables nearby under tree cover
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)	x		
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)		x	
Does the route connect to other routes?	x		Connects to the route to Falkland
Is there signage?		x	
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		Yes, very separated, path runs through blue/green network along road
Is the route shaded?	x		Tree cover
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)		x	
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)		x	
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?	x		on one side
Are pavements well maintained?	x		
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?	x		
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	

Route Quality Checklist: Cash Feus, Strathmiglo	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?	x		
Is the route attractive/interesting?	x		
Are there shelters/places to rest?		x	
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)		x	Unfriendly curbs and pavements
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)	x		
Does the route connect to other routes?	x		To California and off-road route to Falkland
Is there signage?		x	
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		Some but narrow
Is the route shaded?		x	
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)		x	4 bike racks
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)		x	
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?		x	
Are pavements well maintained?		x	Small and missing in parts
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?	x		
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	

Route Quality Checklist: Sandygates, Strathmiglo	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?	x		
Is the route attractive/interesting?		x	Other than graveyard
Are there shelters/places to rest?			
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)	x		Not everywhere, some unmarked crossings
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)		x	fast road and limited access points
Does the route connect to other routes?	x		
Is there signage?		x	
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		
Is the route shaded?		x	
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)		x	
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)	x		Both sides
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?	x		
Are pavements well maintained?	x		
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?	x		
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	

Public Transport			
Are bus stops/train stations conveniently located for access to houses and services by walking or biking?	x		

Are bus stops/train stations comfortable and provide shelter day and night?		x	No shelters
Are stops clear of barriers (steps, street furniture, etc.) to accessing public transport?		x	Access to stops near Cash Feus lack road crossing and curb cuts
Is there enough space provided for buses to pull up to pavement for those with disabilities?		x	

Route Quality Checklist: High St., Strathmiglo	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?	x		
Is the route attractive/interesting?	x		Good preservation of built heritage and consideration of natural landscape surrounding the route
Are there shelters/places to rest?		x	Other than the bus shelter
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)	x	x	In sections, it is also narrow and difficult to navigate at others
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)		x	
Does the route connect to other routes?	x		
Is there signage?		x	
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		Although missing in sections with heritage buildings up against the road
Is the route shaded?		x	
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)	x		
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?		x	Not on both sides
Are pavements well maintained?	x		disappears in sections
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?	x		
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	

Public Transport			
Are bus stops/train stations conveniently located for access to houses and services by walking or biking?	x		
Are bus stops/train stations comfortable and provide shelter day and night?	x		
Are stops clear of barriers (steps, street furniture, etc.) to accessing public transport?		x	Narrow pavements
Is there enough space provided for buses to pull up to pavement for those with disabilities?		x	

Route Quality Checklist: Cycle between Falkland/Strathmiglo	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?		x	No lights
Is the route attractive/interesting?	x		Very, through forest and Falkland Estate
Are there shelters/places to rest?	x		
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)	x		
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)	x		
Does the route connect to other routes?	x		
Is there signage?	x		
Is signage appropriate?		x	Old and faded
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?			
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?		x	
Is the route shaded?	x		
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)		x	winding and recreational
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)		x	a walking and cycling route which shares a farm road
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?		x	
Are pavements well maintained?	x		Paths are high quality
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?	x		
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?	x		Gravel paths

For longer routes between settlements:			
What is the distance and the quality of the route for walking and cycling (how safe would it feel?)	6.3 km		Unlit but very safe

Route Quality Checklist: A912 between Falkland and Strathmiglo	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?		x	Unlit until edges of settlements
Is the route attractive/interesting?	x		Fields and trees

Are there shelters/places to rest?		x	
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)		x	No pavement
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)	x		National speed limit road
Does the route connect to other routes?	x		Links to routes through Falkland and Strathmiglo
Is there signage?		x	
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?		x	None
Is the route shaded?	x		Especially south west section of route
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)		x	none
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?		x	
Are pavements well maintained?		x	
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?			
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	

Public Transport

Are bus stops/train stations conveniently located for access to houses and services by walking or biking?	x		Bus stop at Pillars of Hercules offering access
Are bus stops/train stations comfortable and provide shelter day and night?		x	No benches or shelters
Are stops clear of barriers (steps, street furniture, etc.) to accessing public transport?		x	No controlled crossing to access bus stop on other side of road
Is there enough space provided for buses to pull up to pavement for those with disabilities?		x	

For longer routes between settlements:

	4.4		
What is the distance and the quality of the route for walking and cycling (how safe would it feel?)	km		Unlit and no pavement

Route Quality Checklist: East Port/High Street/West Port Falkland

	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?		x	Just heritage lamp post
Is the route attractive/interesting?	x		
Are there shelters/places to rest?	x		
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)	x		benches along East Port
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)		x	Lots of on street parking obstructing
Does the route connect to other routes?	x		Through centre
Is there signage?	x		
Is signage appropriate?	x		signs to attractions and facilities
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		
Is the route shaded?		x	
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)	x		
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?	x		But vary in width widely, especially to west. As of West Port pavement narrows then disappears for a block then reappears on one side
Are pavements well maintained?	x		
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?		x	
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	Though part of Cycle Route 1

Public Transport

Are bus stops/train stations conveniently located for access to houses and services by walking or biking?		x	
Are bus stops/train stations comfortable and provide shelter day and night?		x	
Are stops clear of barriers (steps, street furniture, etc.) to accessing public transport?		x	
Is there enough space provided for buses to pull up to pavement for those with disabilities?		x	

Route Quality Checklist: South St, Falkland

	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?		x	Some lamp posts - but few and far apart
Is the route attractive/interesting?	x		
Are there shelters/places to rest?		x	
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)		x	curb cuts are in place infrequently
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)	x		
Does the route connect to other routes?	x		
Is there signage?		x	

Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		Not consistently
Is the route shaded?		x	
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)		x	one side for a section/totally missing at others
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?		x	
Are pavements well maintained?	x		
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?	x		
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	

Public Transport

Are bus stops/train stations conveniently located for access to houses and services by walking or biking?		x	
Are bus stops/train stations comfortable and provide shelter day and night?		x	
Are stops clear of barriers (steps, street furniture, etc.) to accessing public transport?		x	
Is there enough space provided for buses to pull up to pavement for those with disabilities?		x	

Route Quality Checklist: A912, Falkland

	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?	x		
Is the route attractive/interesting?	x		
Are there shelters/places to rest?	x		
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)	x		Would be ok - road works cause issue
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)		x	busy road
Does the route connect to other routes?	x		
Is there signage?	x		Cycle route signs
Is signage appropriate?		x	
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		
Is the route shaded?		x	
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)	x		
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?		x	
Are pavements well maintained?	x		
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?		x	Planters
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	NCN, but none

Public Transport

Are bus stops/train stations conveniently located for access to houses and services by walking or biking?	x		
Are bus stops/train stations comfortable and provide shelter day and night?	x		
Are stops clear of barriers (steps, street furniture, etc.) to accessing public transport?	x		
Is there enough space provided for buses to pull up to pavement for those with disabilities?	x		

Route Quality Checklist: B963 Between Freuchie and Newton of Falkland

	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?		x	
Is the route attractive/interesting?	x		
Are there shelters/places to rest?		x	
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)		x	
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)	x	x	Road not busy, slower speed limit, but small pavement means pedestrians are right next to traffic
Does the route connect to other routes?	x		
Is there signage?		x	
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		
Is the route shaded?		x	
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		Direct, but little done to encourage eg. No signage or shelter
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)		x	One side
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?		x	
Are pavements well maintained?	x		gritted with salt

Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?	x		
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	

Public Transport

Are bus stops/train stations conveniently located for access to houses and services by walking or biking?	x		
Are bus stops/train stations comfortable and provide shelter day and night?	x		
Are stops clear of barriers (steps, street furniture, etc.) to accessing public transport?	x		
Is there enough space provided for buses to pull up to pavement for those with disabilities?		x	

For longer routes between settlements:

What is the distance and the quality of the route for walking and cycling (how safe would it feel?)	1.2 km		Unlit but safe feeling
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Route Quality Checklist: B936 through Freuchie

	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?		x	Wide spacing between lights
Is the route attractive/interesting?	x		Old buildings
Are there shelters/places to rest?	x		bench
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)		x	Mixed - curb cuts lacking at Queen St., King St., and Dykeside
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)		x	Main Road
Does the route connect to other routes?	x		All link + Dykeside right of way
Is there signage?	x		community notice board
Is signage appropriate?		x	
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		
Is the route shaded?		x	
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)	x		
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?	x		2 abreast but narrows in places
Are pavements well maintained?	x		Though ice on day
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?		x	Bins and bollards near shop
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	

Public Transport

Are bus stops/train stations conveniently located for access to houses and services by walking or biking?	x		
Are bus stops/train stations comfortable and provide shelter day and night?	x	x	some have shelter
Are stops clear of barriers (steps, street furniture, etc.) to accessing public transport?		x	No curb cuts near stops by shop and narrow pavement, no bus stop marking on road so cars park in spot
Is there enough space provided for buses to pull up to pavement for those with disabilities?		x	

Route Quality Checklist: East end High St, Freuchie

	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?	x	x	East end lights over pavement but over road and not pavement to west
Is the route attractive/interesting?	x		Fields and horses
Are there shelters/places to rest?		x	
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)	x		but need to cross halfway
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)		x	A92 at east end but flat otherwise
Does the route connect to other routes?	x		To B936
Is there signage?		x	no crossing signs - no pedestrian info or distance
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		
Is the route shaded?		x	
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		Off road path to bus stop on A92 worn by regular use
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)		x	one side
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?	x		
Are pavements well maintained?	x		
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?	x		
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	

Route Quality Checklist: Freuchie Mill Rd	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?	x		One side
Is the route attractive/interesting?	x		Farmland views and old buildings
Are there shelters/places to rest?		x	
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)	x		not flush
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)	x		Busy A92 at west end as barrier to access to Freuchie
Does the route connect to other routes?	x		Cross country to N, and routes into Freuchie
Is there signage?		x	
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		
Is the route shaded?		x	
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)		x	One side
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?		x	narrow pavements, single file only
Are pavements well maintained?	x		
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?	x		
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	But on cycle route 1

Public Transport			
Are bus stops/train stations conveniently located for access to houses and services by walking or biking?	x		Along A92
Are bus stops/train stations comfortable and provide shelter day and night?	x		
Are stops clear of barriers (steps, street furniture, etc.) to accessing public transport?	x		
Is there enough space provided for buses to pull up to pavement for those with disabilities?	x		

Route Quality Checklist: B936, Dunshalt	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?	x		
Is the route attractive/interesting?	x		
Are there shelters/places to rest?		x	
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)	x		
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)		x	Not too fast traffic
Does the route connect to other routes?	x		
Is there signage?		x	
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	Especially bad cycle infrastructure. Tiny and part of the road. Poor pavement also
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		
Is the route shaded?		x	
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)	x		
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?	x		
Are pavements well maintained?	x		
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?	x		
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	

Public Transport			
Are bus stops/train stations conveniently located for access to houses and services by walking or biking?	x		
Are bus stops/train stations comfortable and provide shelter day and night?		x	
Are stops clear of barriers (steps, street furniture, etc.) to accessing public transport?	x		
Is there enough space provided for buses to pull up to pavement for those with disabilities?	x		Not load of space, but enough to be comfortable

Route Quality Checklist: Dunshalt to Falkland	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?		x	
Is the route attractive/interesting?		x	
Are there shelters/places to rest?		x	
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)		x	
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)		x	

Does the route connect to other routes?		x	
Is there signage?		x	
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		But gravel
Is the route shaded?		x	
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)		x	One side
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?		x	Not suitable for wheelchairs, and crosses a fast road with no crossing provisions
Are pavements well maintained?		x	
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?	x		
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?	x		But extremely narrow and part of the road traffic space
For longer routes between settlements:			
What is the distance and the quality of the route for walking and cycling (how safe would it feel?)	2.85 km		Unlit and unsafe feeling due to need to cross road and gravel pavement lending a temporary feel to the infrastructure

APPENDIX 4: FOOD PRICES AT LOCAL CONVENIENCE STORES

Below are prices for basic goods available at convenience stores in the West Howe of Fife cluster. The list of goods was determined by researchers considering the most commonly used items alongside what was most likely to be available across supermarkets and convenience stores. Prices were obtained by in-person survey during November 2022.

Food Prices		Price (£)	Lowest	Highest									
Settlement	Store	S-Skimmed Milk 1L	White bread	6 eggs	1kg potatoes	1 Banana	Pack of bacon (per 100g)	250g butter	Orange juice 1L	Digestives	1KG sugar	Paracetamol	Pack of 4 Toilet Rolls
Auchtermuchty	Co-op	£1.35	£0.95	£1.35	£0.57	£0.21	£0.98	£2.10	£1.10	£1.60	£0.95	£0.80	£2.75
Auchtermuchty	Premier	£1.19	£1.19	N/A	N/A	N/A	£0.95	£2.79	£1.19	£1.59	£0.79	£1.49	N/A
Strathmiglo	McColl's	£1.60	£1.55	N/A	£0.83	£0.25	£0.89	£2.25	N/A	£1.59	N/A	£0.75	£1.39
Falkland	Premier	£1.29	£1.45	£1.89	£1.10	£0.30	£1.29	£2.89	£1.19	£1.59	£1.29	£1.49	N/A
Dunshalt	Community Shop	£1.20	£2.75	£1.44	£1.10	£0.65	£1.43	£2.75	N/A	N/A	£0.70	N/A	£2.79
Freuchie	SPAR	£1.39	£1.00	£1.00	£0.79	£0.24	£1.00	£2.59	£1.59	£0.95	£0.95	£1.00	£1.50
High/low Difference (£)		£0.41	£1.80	£0.89	£0.53	£0.44	£0.54	£0.79	£0.49	£0.65	£0.59	£0.74	£1.40

APPENDIX 5: RESULTS OF CHILDRENS SURVEY

Which town or village do you live in?	What age are you?	Are you a girl or boy?	What is your favourite part of your town or village, and why do you like it so much?	Do you feel safe walking about your town or village?	What clubs or sports do you take part in, in your town or village?	How do you get to school?	Where do you play in your town or village?	If you could add one thing to your town or village, what would it be?
Strathmiglo	12	Boy	Park for playing, community woodland for walking and looking at nature	Yes	Bowling	Walk	Park, cricket pitch, and picnic area	Another shop
Freuchie	8	Girl	school and play park	yes!	brownies and swimming	walk	play park	a swimming pool
Freuchie	10	Girl	everything	yes!!	cricket	walk and bike	my street and everywhere	more stuff in the park
Freuchie	10	Girl	burn and muga	yes because I know the village very well	cricket	scoot, cycle or walk	everywhere!	nets to the football goals, skate park, fast food machine, proper tree swing
Freuchie	11	Girl	park (swing), park (general)	yes	cricket	walk, bike, scooter	everywhere	new spar, people, cheaper stuff in spar
Freuchie	11	Boy	the Burn	yes (good community feeling)	cricket	walk (run if raining)	park, playing field, cricket pitch	skate park
Freuchie	11	Girl	the amount of freedom in it	I feel safe because I know mostly everybody that lives in the village	cricket	I usually walk but sometimes I either scoot, cycle or car if it rains	the park, burn. cricket pitch, farm and in my garden	more shops
Freuchie	11	Boy	the burn	yes	cricket	car	cricket pitch, football pitch, school, the burn	football net in the football posts and an airport

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Freuchie	7	Boy	Friends	Yes	Cricket	walk	street	stadium
Freuchie	7	Girl	Friends	yes	cricket	walk	garden	castle
Freuchie	7	Girl	the street	yes - no (heard of some crime)	cricket	walk	the street	a park
Freuchie	8	Girl	Cricket club	yes	cricket	walk	cricket club and house	water park
Newton of Falkland	7	Girl	Newton of Falkland Park	very safe with my neighbours and village	in Strathmiglo I go to taekwondo, Kinross - swimming, Glenrothes - gymnastics, Kettle - piano	most of the time by car	park or my garden and house	a nature walk
Freuchie	8	Girl	Horse field, Spar, burn	Yes because i know most people and everyone is nice	cricket	walk	cricket pitch, street, park	zip line
Freuchie	7	Boy	park and the people		cricket and rugby		park	soft play
Freuchie	9	Boy	Watter Lumsden Court, Park, Cricket Pitch, My house	Yes	Cricket club	Walk	Everywhere	Sweet shop, Ice cream shop, high school, amusement park, leisure centre
Freuchie	9	Girl	house, park, burn	yes	cricket little rookie	car or walk	school, garden, park	zipine
Freuchie	9	Boy	House, Burn, noah's house, ross's house	yes	cricket little rookie	walk	burn, garden, noah's house	a big statue of a stick
Freuchie	10	Girl	park or cricket pitch	yes! because it's very quiet	cubs	walk or car	my street, park, school	sweet shop, ice-cream shop
Freuchie	10	Boy	our street, muga, park	yes because the roads are quiet and everyone knows everyone	cubs	walk	school, football pitch, park	skate park
Freuchie	8	Boy	it has my friends	yes	cubs	walk	hills	swimming pool
Freuchie	8	Boy	my house	yes	cubs	walking	my house on xbox	sweet shop

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Freuchie	9	Boy	my house	yes	cubs	walk	random places	a climbing wall
Freuchie			Spar and my house	yes!	cubs, tennis in Falkland	Drive	random places	the school with churchsieens in the school
Freuchie	6	Boy	everything where I live	Definitely	dance, gymnastics (Cupar)	walk	school, cricket grounds	ice skating rink
Freuchie	11	Boy	Park, muga	yes!	football	walk/scooter, car sometimes	everywhere!	better football pitch, zebra crossing
Freuchie	10	Boy	the burn	yes	football (Auchtermuchty)	walk	the burn	stick pile
Freuchie	7	Girl	the play park	yes	football (Auchtermuchty)	walk	play park, football pitch	cinema
Freuchie	8	Girl	playing with friends	yes!!	football and cubs	walk 95% car 5%	park	sweet factory
Freuchie	8	Boy	My house	yes	football and swimming	walk	park	football stadium
Freuchie	8	Boy	friends	yes	football, cricket, swimming	it depends	it depends	more video games
Freuchie	8	Boy	football pitch	yes!!	football, cricket, swimming, golf	walk 50% car 50%	streets and football pitch	Liverpool football stadium
Freuchie	11	Boy	park	yes	football, guitar	walk or car	everywhere	better football pitch, traffic lights
Freuchie	8	Girl	football pitch	yes!!	football, little rookies	walk and car	the park and street	sweet shop, football stadium, ice cream shop
Freuchie	8	Boy	water lumsden court	yes	football, swimming, beavers, piano (all outside Freuchie)	walk and car	Cricket pitch, park, car park	football stadium, bowling alley, ice skating rink, trampolining area, swimming pool

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Freuchie	8	Girl	Park	yes	football, swimming, cricket	walk	garden	fun factory
Freuchie	9	Girl	Mt favourite part of Freuchie is the park	I do feel safe in Freuchie	I do cricket	I walk to school	I play in the park and the Burn	I would add a cafe
Freuchie	10	Boy	the burn	yes because I have my friends and family which makes me feel safe plus it is a small village so it's quiet	karate, cricket	walk	the burn, school, garden, cricket pitch, football pitch	football nets
Freuchie	8	Girl	my house	yes	little rookies, football, scouts	walk	street and park	roller rink, football training, sweet shop, cool shop
Freuchie	10	Girl	Grammas, park, marje	Yes	none	car/bike	garden, park	Go ape, zipwire
Freuchie	11	Girl	The spar - shop and the park	yes I feel safe because most people know each other	none	I walk to school and when it rains I only walk sometimes	park, burn, my street, cricket pitch	maybe another shop but we do have everything we need
Freuchie	11	Girl	shop and Tellytubby hill	yes	none	walk but if it rains I take the car	park, burn, Tellytubby hill, cricket club	swimming pool, skate park, chippy, dominos takeaway
Freuchie	9	Boy	My house, play park, my aunt house	Yes	None	Walk/bike	Queen Street, Waterlumston	Skate park, fun park
Freuchie	9	Boy	nan, cousin, burn, auntie	Kind of	none	walk, scoot	school home	homeless home and a cat statue
Freuchie	10	Girl	the shop and park	yes	none because it's quiet and I know people	car or walk	park or muga, school	a horse-riding place, skate park, tree swing, zipline in park
Freuchie	8	Boy	Walter Lumsden Court and Cricket Pitch	Yes very safe	nothing	walk	Walter Lumsden Court	Dentist and hospital

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Freuchie	7	Girl	school and water lumsden	yes	Rookies and cricket	walk - sun, car - rain	field and garden	trampolining place
Freuchie	9	Boy	Shop, Park	Kind of?	Rugby, druming	walk or scooter or skateboard	go to my friends or go to the park	skate park 1000000%
Freuchie	8	Boy	Parck, burn	yes	scouts	scoot, car, walk	cricket pitches/ garden	hours parck
Freuchie	11	Girl	not sure	yes	scouts, 3 dance classes - ballet, contemporary, aero	walk - I live really close	park, burn, my street, my house, my friends houses	cafe, swimming pool, chippy
Freuchie	9	Girl	I like the SPAR and home	Yes, I grew up in Freuchie	swimming and cricket	I walk to school	Friends house and burn, park, cricket pitch	swimming pool for free time
Freuchie	9	Girl	Probably the park	yes	taekwondo, swimming, horse riding	normally walk or if we're in a rush I go in a car	park, football pitch, cricket pitch, sometimes bowling club if something for kids is on	sweet shop
Freuchie	10	Boy	Football pitch	yes		run/walk	football pitch, cricket pitch, park	sweet shop in front of my house
Freuchie	11	Girl	Tellytubby Hill	yes		walk	park and Tellytubby hill	skate park
Freuchie	11	Girl	Tellytubby hill	yes		walk	tellytubby hill, park	more stuff to do
Freuchie	7	Girl	field	yes!!		walk	my street and my garden	