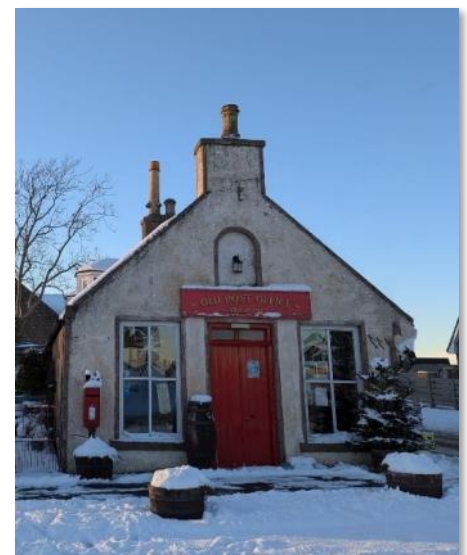
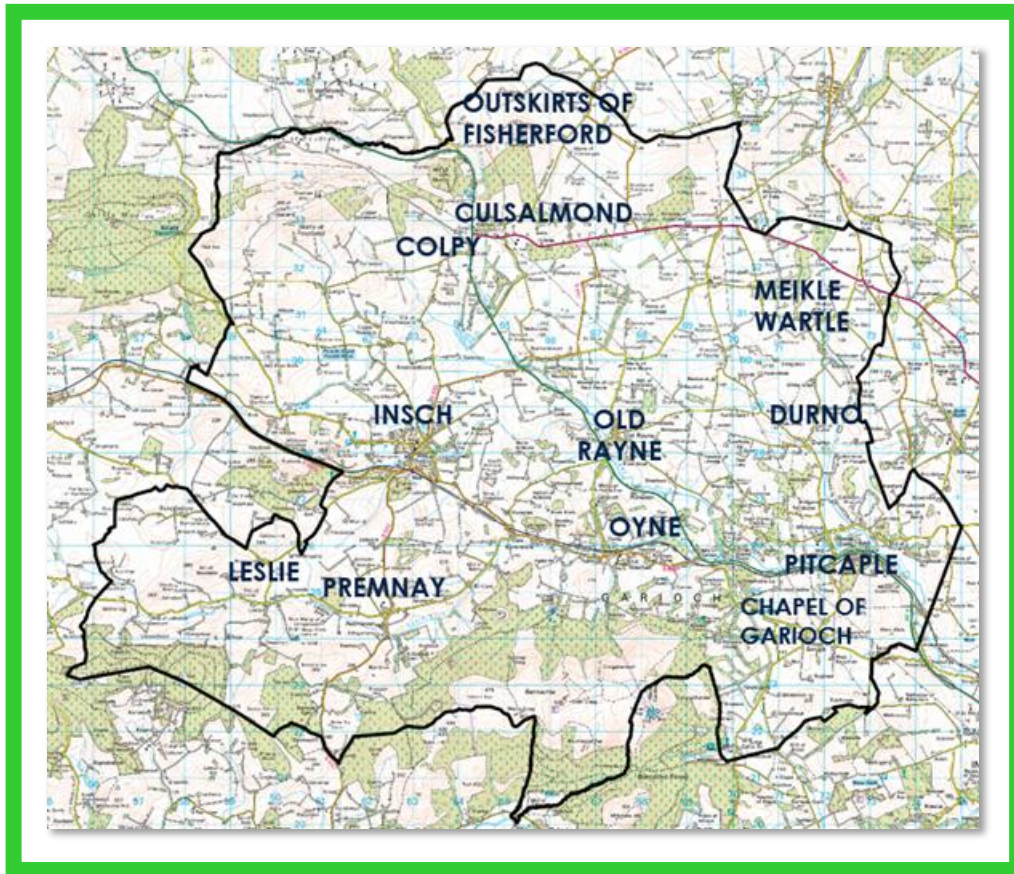




**BENNACHIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL  
AREA**

**Community Action Plan  
2024-2029**



This is the latest Community Action Plan (CAP) for Inch and the Bennachie Area. It is intended to be a live plan which will be kept under constant review as actions, projects and initiatives develop and are completed, as new information comes to light through further community engagement and as circumstances change.

At the end of 2023 discussions began on the development of a new Community Action Plan for Inch. As this work was being led by the Bennachie Community Council (BCC), it was felt that the process should be extended to include feedback from the whole Bennachie Area to help the BCC better understand and represent the relationship between Inch and its surrounding settlements.

The community consultation began in March 2024 with some 850 participants completing the main survey and 48 young people feeding back to the short youth survey.

The results were analysed, and then key themes were validated at the Inch Strawberry Fayre at the beginning of June 2024.

This CAP sets out the challenges and issues facing the communities of the Bennachie Area with actions to address these.

This document shows you the resulting plan which has been agreed with Aberdeenshire Council for beginning to address our community's top priorities.

For each priority, or issue, it has been agreed which organisations/departments need to be involved, and over the coming months what resources will be required and target dates set for completion.

All the ideas in this Action Plan came from the community. The table at the back shows those ideas that can be taken forward by the community on its own, those which require help from an external partner and those which can only be taken forward by one or more external agencies, which can provide moral, technical and possibly financial support.

It is recommended that this Action Plan has a maximum lifespan of 5 years. Some projects may be completed quickly whilst others may take much longer but all should be reviewed regularly to ensure that they are still relevant.

It is important that this plan is seen by all interested parties, both within the local community and the other partners that may be able to assist with the implementation of any actions set out in the table.



Bennachie Community Council covers a wide geographic area of 19,337 Hectares within West Garioch and includes: Chapel of Garioch, Colpy, Culsalmond, Inch, Leslie, Oyne, Premnay, Meikle Wartle, Rayne, Pitcaple, Whiteford and Logie Durno. The population of the catchment area is approximately 6500. This is predominantly a rural area with Inch being the largest village of 2690 inhabitants.

The area is at the heart of Garioch in Aberdeenshire and is sheltered by Bennachie, Carrier's Hill, Christ Kirk's Hill and Dunnydeer to the South West and Foudland and Tillymorgan Hills to the North. The waters of the Urie, Gadie, Valentine and Shevock run through the area.

The primary road in the area is the A96 which connects Aberdeen to Inverness. There is also a railway station at Inch which goes South to Aberdeen and North to Inverness.

In historic times this part of Scotland was a strategically important area as it was seen as the gateway to the North of Scotland and also has fertile land for growing crops which is why people have lived here throughout the ages from Hunter Gathers in 13,000 BC to modern day. The area was known as the "Meal Giral" of Aberdeenshire.

Aberdeenshire has approximately 10% of all recorded Stone Circles in Britain. It's thought that these circles could have been used for rituals, burials or viewing platforms for the moon or sun, marking the solstices.

Aberdeenshire even has its own special style of Stone Circle called a Recumbent Stone Circle which are over 4000 years old. You will find these throughout the area.

The Picts who lived here between 300 to 900 AD also left their mark on the area with Pictish stones such as the Maiden Stone, Picardy Stone and Newton Stones being present here. Hill forts at Christkirk and Dunnydeer also remain. You can still see the remains of one of the earliest Tower Houses built in Scotland on Dunnydeer hill. It was thought to be built by David Earl of Huntingdon in 1178 but it is not until 1260 that it is documented as being a stronghold of Sir John de Balliol. This is built on top of earlier settlements and the remains of the outer defences can still be seen.

Inch is the largest town in the area. The name "Inch" is considered to be of Celtic origin to signify an island. It is thought to mean a village located on a low flat piece of ground. Standing 406 feet above sea level, Inch is bordered by the Shevock Burn to the West and South and the Valentine Burn to the North.

In the 1700's changes in agriculture transformed the countryside, creating bigger farms, forcing people and their skills into villages. With this increase in population, more houses were built and the village spread out from the church and market, formerly in Market Street.

The railway came in 1854, and this changed Inch dramatically.



Insch became a bustling village with dozens of shops including a grocery store, bakers, watchmakers and jewellers, saddlers, boot and shoe shop, tailors, milliners and dressmakers plus a gasworks, sawmill, threshing mill and electric power station.

There have been some changes since the last action plan, but there still a variety of facilities within the area has. In Insch there are two churches, (the Parish and Episcopalian); two convenience stores; one of which houses a Post Office counter now, rather than the full Post Office service Insch formerly had; a chemist; DIY Shop; Bakers; Health Centre including doctor's surgery; veterinary surgery; upholstery shop; a hotel; an Indian restaurant; Chip Shop; Chinese Take Away; Creative Studio; Antique Shop; Hairdressers; Accountant firms; a Library; Podiatrist and day nurseries. There was a Community Hospital which offered palliative care and a minor injuries unit which unfortunately during the COVID pandemic had its staff relocated and has never opened again since, although it is not formally gone through an official closure process.

There are also Garages, Oil Companies, Forestry Company, Storage Company and Water Treatment Company.



There are various places to meet including the Community Centre which hosts clubs like the pre-school club, Scouts, Brownies and Guides and the Institute which has the Bowling Club attached to it. The Parish Church Hall is used as a meeting place for various clubs and dancing. The Bennachie Leisure Centre is purpose built with an all-weather pitch. There is also a football pitch, a golf course, a skate park, play parks and a boxing club. Oyne, Logie Durno, Meikle Wartle, Premnay, Chapel of Garioch and Old Rayne have village halls with active volunteer groups running them. Culsalmond has a Community Centre which is utilised by the community.

Also located in the area are Kellockbank, Morgan McVeighs, The Old Post Office Tea Room, The Café at Smile in Oyne and The Buzzard Café at Pitscurry as well as the Bennachie Visitor Centre at Essons Carpark in Pitcaple.

The area is lucky to host historic buildings such as Leslie Castle, Lickleyhead Castle, Wardhill Castle, Logie Country House and Pittodrie House which offer accommodation. There is also Pitcaple Castle which is family owned.

Insch previously had a community action plan and Oyne has a current plan. No other settlements within the area have an active Community Action Plan.



# Bennachie Area Community Action Plan

Have your say...



The Bennachie Area Community Action Plan is an opportunity to make changes and improvements in our community.

Please complete the survey to have your say, to share ideas and make specific suggestions.

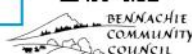
We will share the survey findings and at community events later this year.

You can fill in the survey using this link  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/F36N6CL>

or scan the QR Code below



Paper copies of the survey are available here:



**POPULATION OF BCC  
CATCHMENT AREA  
APPROXIMATELY**

**6,500**



**POPULATION OF INSCH**

**2,690**

## The Process

During 2023 the Community Action Plan (CAP) steering group led by the BCC consulted the community by way of a comprehensive questionnaire to help them understand how the community viewed their place and what positive changes and improvements can be made in Inch and the Bennachie Area. In addition, a short survey was promoted to young people to ensure these voices were heard.

The results of the consultation were further validated at a drop-by stall was sited at the Strawberry Fayre in June 2024 where residents were able to see the results of the consultation and have their say on the emerging themes.

The responses gave valuable insight to help inform the CAP. This action plan will have a lifespan of 3-5 years.



The steering group prepared and circulated a list of questions via an online survey. Paper copies made available for those who unable to access online.



**898**

**SURVEY RESPONSES RECEIVED**



**48**

**RESPONSES TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S SURVEY**



**300+**

**ENGAGEMENTS AT THE VALIDATION EVENT**

## Bennachie Area Community Action Plan Have your say...



The Bennachie Area Community Action Plan is an opportunity to make changes and improvements in our community.  
Please complete the survey to have your say, to share ideas and make specific suggestions.  
We will share the survey findings and at community events later this year.



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or scan the QR Code below



Paper copies of the survey are available here:



This successful consultation exercise started at the beginning of 2024 gathering just short of 900 responses which were further validated by 300+ residents at the Strawberry Fayre in June that year.

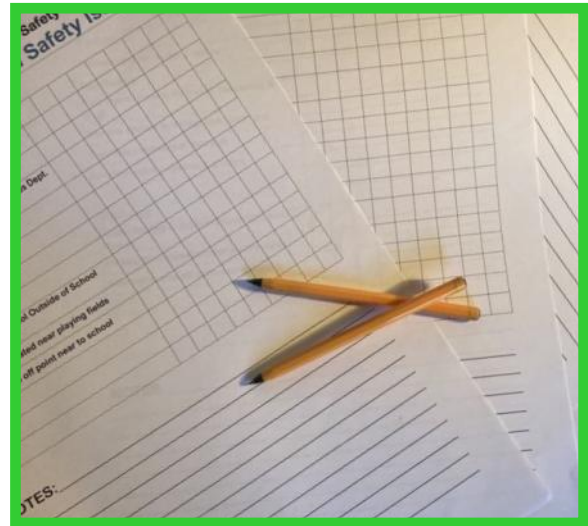
In terms of the relationship between Inch and its surrounding settlements the survey highlighted Inch and Inverurie as the main hubs for work, shopping and socialising; less so but still significant numbers of residents accessing places in Huntly and Alford. However, 83% of respondents look to Inch for GP services.



The issued questionnaire was detailed, and the results yielded some interesting and valuable data which may inform projects and actions beyond the CAP delivery.

## The Feedback

The survey and validation event results were collated and analysed and several themes emerged. The following lists of potential actions were compiled from the results of the consultation and potential stakeholders were identified and invited to a round table discussion to agree available support.



## Suggestions for improvement: Key Themes

There was strong agreement between most responses, which fell into one of the six key themes listed below.

- Green Spaces
- Getting About
- Facilities
- Future Planning
- Resilience
- Young People's Voices
- Health & Wellbeing

Many of the ideas put forward have been noted as either capable of being taken forward by the community themselves, or progressed by the community in association with an external partner or partners, or projects that can only be undertaken by external partners.



The Feedback



**Green Spaces**

The Bennachie Area communities enjoy great views of Bennachie and have several green spaces. Improvements to and the promotion of walking and cycling routes emerged as common themes.

Projects which can be taken forward by the community themselves:

- Develop a leaflet detailing walks already in the area
- Organise regular litter picks

Projects which will require action by the community in association with outside partners:

- Establish more structured paths for walking
- Establish more structured paths for cycling
- Form a Paths Group to work on paths to connect villages
- Form a Group to develop and maintain Green Spaces
- Establish a location for Allotments and Community Garden

**Getting About**

Getting about Insch & Bennachie despite transport links including a train station is reported as needing improvement in terms of frequency and connectivity. Many respondents felt they still needed a car to get around the area and beyond. The following are issues highlighted during the consultation.

Projects which can be taken forward by the community themselves:

- Share concerns raised regarding Public Transport, reliability, routes and information with PTU/Stagecoach perhaps at Bus Forum
- Increase awareness of A2B Insch Rural services

## The Feedback



### Getting About (cont.)

Projects which will require action by the community in association with outside partners:

- Identify locations for safe crossing areas in Insch
- Explore alternative approaches/projects to connect villages (e.g. car share, transport on demand, Car Clubs)
- Develop cycle/walking paths between villages
- Undertake a Local Place Plan to identify land use potential for car parking

Projects which will require action by an external agency:

- Improve the reliability of public transport:
  - Improve Train availability
  - Improve Bus availability
- Provision of Disabled Access at Insch Station
- More EV Chargers
- More Car Parking
- Install Pavements in villages
- Safe Crossing Points in Insch
- Consider 20 mph areas in villages
- Increase speed checks in villages



### Facilities

There was a strong call for more social activities in the evenings, in particular places to dine after 6pm. At the validation event there was interest raised in a community buy-out of the Station Hotel. More activities for older people emerged as a theme during the consultation.

Projects which can be taken forward by the community themselves:

- Activities for Older People
- Activities for Teenagers
- Activities after 6pm for people who work
- Encourage patronage of BLC

Projects which will require action by the community in association with outside partners:

- Activities for Older People
- Activities for Teenagers
- Establish a 50+ Organisation
- Christmas Lights and Tree for Insch
- Astro Turf/ All Weather/Multi-Use Pitch
- Community Ownership of an asset to create a social space

Projects which will require action by an external agency:

- Restaurant in Insch
- Increased Health Care Provision
- Library open hours so working families can access the facility



**Future Planning**

95% of respondents supported the undertaking of a Local Place Plan (LPP) for Insch. Work will begin on creating a Local Place Plan for the area.

Projects which can be taken forward by the community themselves:

- Impact of Correen Hills Windfarm Proposals – Survey
- Establishing a BCC Development Trust
- Establish an Oyne Development Trust

Projects which will require action by the community in association with outside partners:

- Produce a Local Place Plan
- Highlight the need for more Affordable Housing
- Highlight the need for more Sheltered Housing
- More land for Business
- Explore forming a Development Trust

**RESILIENCE**



**Resilience**

Bennachie Community Council covers a wide predominantly a rural area including the settlements of Chapel of Garioch, Whiteford/Durno, Culsalmond, Insch, Leslie, Oyne, Premnay, Colpy, Pitcaple and Meikle Wartle/Rayne. The area sits at the edge of the Bennachie Range and can be exposed to heavy snow fall during the winter. The primary road in the area is the A96 which goes through the Glens of Foundland. This is an area which will block up during snowstorms.

Poor broadband and variable mobile reception means the resilience of communications lines in a power cut are poor to non-existent. This has been noted in the last few power cuts seen in storm Arwen, Malik, Corrie and Otto where mobile communications were non-existent for approximately a week. Private Water supplies by their very nature are variable and are subject to climate change potentially causing them to dry up. Mains water supplies need to be pumped large distances and if there is a prolonged power cut the water supply can't be pumped to the rural locations. This was also noted during storms Arwen, Malik and Corrie. As more intensely heavy rain showers are becoming common, areas such as Premnay, Oyne and Insch becoming subject to flooding. With prolonged periods of dry weather, there has been an increase in wildfires.

## The Feedback

# RESILIENCE



### Resilience (cont.)

It is against this background that the resilience questions were asked. Covid also impacted on the resilience of the area both economically and socially.

#### Projects which can be taken forward by the community themselves:

- Promote buying local
- Promote local businesses

#### Projects which will require action by the community in association with outside partners:

- Develop and promote Resilience Plan for the BCC area
- Have back-up power at Village Halls and open these in time of storms/power cuts
- Have a place for showers during power cuts

#### Projects which will require action by an external agency:

- Improve digital Connectivity



### Young People's Voices

Great response from young people with some well thought out comments drawing on what they have seen in other areas, such as cycle routes away from roads and outreach sporting activities in villages.

#### Projects which can be taken forward to the community themselves:

- More Social Clubs for Young People

#### Projects which will require action by the community in association with an outside partner:

- Astroturf/All-weather/Multi-use Pitch
- Out-Reach Sporting Activities in Villages
- Youth Clubs
- Community Garden
- Gym for young people
- Off Road Cycle Paths
- Cycle Paths not routed along roadside
- Cafes and recreation areas for young people
- Improved playpark facilities

#### Projects which will require action by an external partner:

- Better timetabling and links for public transport
- Provision of Disabled Access at Insh Station (Transport Scotland/ NESTRANS)

## Health and Wellbeing

Many respondents called for the reopening of Inch Hospital and return the hospital beds, respite care and minor injury unit to serve the residents of the local area. Although the Integration Joint Board (IJB) have confirmed that the Inch Memorial Hospital will not reopen in it's pre-covid status, local organisations such as Friends of Inch Hospital, Inch Medical Practice and Bennachie Community Council are working with the IJB to try and ensure that the alternatives they proposed (investigating new builds, use of the hospital building as a wellbeing hub with additional clinical services and interim arrangements in the absence of Inch hospital beds) are pursued. The Inch and Bennachie area has a higher proportion of elderly people than average which will inevitably increase over time. This combined with poor transport links creates issues with older people, who are unable to drive, attending health appointments which are in Aberdeen or other community health facilities.



### Projects which can be taken forward to the community themselves:

- Encourage participation with opportunities for activities to aid wellbeing, such as walking and cycling.
- Activities aimed at tackling social isolation such as coffee mornings, book clubs, gardening, etc

### Projects which will require action by the community in association with an outside partner:

- Establish a Organisation offering services such as transport, shopping, social, gentle exercise, gardening, lunch clubs, walking groups etc.
- Continue dialogue with partners to address community health service needs.
- Linking paths to villages

### Projects which will require action by an external partner:

- Patient Beds
- Local palliative care
- Healthcare provision aligning with the needs of local community
- Local Dental Practice



## Stakeholder Meeting

A Stakeholder Meeting was held on Monday 4th November 2024 between members of the Inch & the Bennachie Area CAP Steering Group and Aberdeenshire Council Officers including representatives from the Roads, Landscaping, Waste Departments, Transport Strategy Team, Outdoor Access and Garioch Area Office.

Other stakeholders unable to attend were updated of the outcome of the meeting.



## Green Spaces

The importance of improving green spaces and active travel routes, including developing new paths and promoting active travel was discussed. The need for safe walking routes and pavements in smaller villages was also highlighted.

A Paths subgroup of the BCC is being established to work on improving and developing a path network which could link Inch and the surrounding settlements. Once established the Paths Group is encouraged to connect with the Outdoor Access Team for support on appropriate and effective community-led action on paths in the area.



There are ongoing efforts to establish a community garden and improve green spaces for recreational activities. These initiatives aim to enhance the quality of life for residents. AC Landscape Services



offer support in general regarding allotments, green space advice, and community garden food production in each settlement. NESCAN can be approached to consider any funding opportunities supporting community food growing initiatives, circular economies and nature and biodiversity. The community were also encouraged to reach out to NESCAN who can link them with feasibility support such as peer conversations, needs analysis and community voluntary initiatives.

Applications for funding have been submitted to support consultancy work for developing new paths and improving green spaces.

## Getting About

Getting about Inch & Bennachie despite transport links including a train station is reported as needing improvement in terms of frequency and connectivity. The challenges of public transport in smaller villages and the potential for innovative solutions like car sharing projects was discussed.

The need for community involvement and support from organisations for example: Nestrans, was emphasised. The BCC actively promotes the A2B service through social media and newsletters. The BCC is a participant of the Bus Forum and will continue to raise their concerns. With regard to transport access to medical appointments the BCC and local organisations such as the Bennachie Leisure Centre are encouraged to promote better use of NHS patient transfer services THiNC for advice.



Concerns were raised about road safety and crossings. AC Roads Department have specific criteria for pedestrian crossings, including traffic volume, sight lines, and accident data. They note there are challenges in implementing crossings in areas with poor sight lines. Community input is crucial for identifying priority areas for pedestrian crossings. The council encourages residents to report near misses and other safety concerns to help to build a comprehensive data set.



Education is essential for improving road safety. Aberdeenshire Council works with schools and communities to promote safe practices for pedestrians and drivers. Due to budget constraints, the council can only implement a limited number of crossings each year. Prioritisation is based on a risk assessment and available funding.

Innovative solutions including car sharing projects were discussed as potential ways to improve transport options. These projects would require community involvement and support from organisations like Nestrans.

Community involvement is crucial for the success of transport initiatives. Residents are encouraged to participate in surveys and forums to voice their needs and support potential solutions.

It was suggested that a round table discussion between partners to look at road safety and specific issues and potential solutions including education initiatives.

In relation to Community Transport, Huntly Community Bus are looking to expand their existing network which may offer potential additional connectivity. Westhill and Kemnay also run Community Transport initiatives where there would be opportunities to share best practice and gain peer support, should the community be considering a local project.

Information relating to the need for pavements in local settlements will be helpful AC when working with developers considering new sites.



The roll out of the 20mph policy is expected to be seen in June 2025. AC are moving towards private investment in EV chargers in the future.

## Facilities

The need for more social activities and evening facilities in Inch was highlighted during the consultation. There were suggestions for 'community buyouts' or a development trusts to support such initiatives.

The Bennachie Leisure Centre (BLC) is a key facility that offers various services and activities. The community is encouraged to support and utilise this centre to its full potential.



The scope of service offered from the BLC has the potential for activities for a range of communities of interest to be run from the centre and for the café to have a late night opening, however, the community would need to get behind and support these initiatives for them to be sustainable. The BLC is currently in the process of working towards upgrading their current pitch.

There is also interest in a potential asset transfer of the playing field and pavilion, however more partnership working between local groups would be required for this to be considered.



The Community groups worked to bring Christmas festivities to Inch. In November there was a Christmas Shopping Night, Friends of Inch Hospital and Community organised Christmas lights and St Andrews Lodge organised a Christmas Tree.



### Future Planning

95% of respondents to the consultation activities supported the development of a Local Place Plan (LPP) for Insch.



*The community council are actively preparing their response to local potential developments with a survey to understand the impact of the Correen Hills Windfarm Proposals.*

As mentioned previously there is significant interest in establishing a local Development Trust to bring together a number of local community groups, clubs and organisations under one umbrella to strengthen the case for support for larger projects for example Asset Transfers.

Funding has been secured to develop a Local



Place Plan for Insch and surrounding area in early 2025

### Resilience

The community council have been developing a Resilience Plan, including the identification of resilience halls and the need for generators to ensure these facilities can operate during emergencies.

The importance of local businesses and community support in resilience planning was emphasised with efforts being made to engage local businesses in resilience initiatives.

Draft resilience plans have been created, identifying key facilities and resources. The BCC is working to finalise these plans and ensure they are ready for implementation.

The Snow Warden Scheme can encourage community involvement in snow clearing and pavement maintenance during winter.



Digital connectivity needs to be improved within the area. The BCC have already made links with the Digital Stakeholder Lead Officer from Aberdeenshire Council. Chapel of Garioch now has a high percentage of residences with fibre and Oyne is making good progress. Superfast Broadband is due to be rolled out in Insch by the end of 2026. There are plans for BCC to lead a further Consultation Event around digital connectivity in 2025.

## Young People's Voices

The consultation yielded a great response from young people with some well thought out comments drawing on what they have seen in other areas, such as cycle routes away from roads and outreach sporting activities in villages.

Engaging young people in community projects, such as the path group, was suggested. The need for outreach events and activities for teenagers was also highlighted.

In relation to the community developing Youth Clubs, AC Community Learning and Development may be able to support local people to access training through organisations like Youth Scotland to become Youth Workers who would be able to take such projects forward.



Upgrading playpark equipment was mentioned. AC landscape Services will update the community council on potential Government Funding for Playpark equipment for 2025/2026

## Health & Wellbeing

The need for improved health and well-being services in the community was emphasised. The ongoing discussions with the Health and Social Care Partnership regarding the closed hospital were highlighted. Efforts are being made to find solutions for utilising the facility to benefit the community. The community is seeking ways to enhance local health services and support. Community support and involvement are crucial for addressing health and well-being needs. To this end, the community is encouraged to participate in discussions and initiatives to improve local health services.

There were significant calls for a dental practice for Inch.

Focus was made on preventative measures such as encouraging community participation with opportunities for activities to aid wellbeing, such as walking and cycling, or education on healthy eating, dental health etc.



Also activities aimed at tackling social isolation including coffee mornings, lunch clubs, book clubs, gardening, could be provided by existing groups, clubs or organisations or may be the basis to start an older people's group similar to ones seen in other areas.

*The consultation process reached out to the whole area covered by Bennachie Community Council to help understand the relationship between Inch and the smaller settlements. In terms of work, shopping and social activities Inch or Inverurie would be the main destination followed by Huntly and Alford. However, 83% of respondents look to Inch for GP services. The steering group are keen to understand what changes these communities would like to see in the individual settlements.*

## Rayne , Meikle Wartle \*

Rayne covers a wide, predominantly farming, area and encompasses several rural settlements, namely Kirkton of Rayne, Meikle Wartle, North Rayne, Old Rayne and Pitmachie which, although not in the parish, adjoins Old Rayne and is very much part of the community. The area is very fortunate in that it still retains its own Church situated at Kirkton of Rayne as well as two thriving primary schools, Old Rayne and Rayne North. There are also two public halls, one in Meikle Wartle and the other, the St. Lawrence Hall which sits in the heart of Old Rayne, a much used and well supported facility relying mainly on funds raised at Lourin Fair, a traditional country horse fair, which is held annually on the third Saturday in August. Public transport is available via the No. 10 bus which stops at Pitmachie on the A96 providing hourly links to both Aberdeen and Inverness.

## Premnay \*

Premnay incorporates the village of Auchleven which lies four miles south of Inch. It is a thriving community with its own school, which has served the community for over 120 years on the present site. With its own village hall, the community association is very active and hosts many events including the spectacular annual bonfire night and firework display. The school emblem is a depiction of the local castle, Lickleyhead, thought to have been built in 1560 possibly on the site of an earlier structure. Added to and restored through the ages, it still remains a residence of the Clan Leslie.

## Culsalmond \*

Culsalmond is dominated by the Hills of Skares and Tillymorgan, and dissected by the River Urie and the A96. There are two estates in the parish, Williamston and Newton, whose agricultural productivity would have brought prosperity to the area.

## Colpy \*

The village of Colpy sits within the parish and was its centre until the post office and shop closed in the early 1990s. The original school closed in 1970, and is being used as a Community Education Centre. Today the Parish is more likely to be identified by the two retail outlets on the A96, Kellockbank Country Emporium and Morgan McVeigh's Restaurant and Shop.

## Leslie \*

Follow the flow of the Gadie Burn west from Premnay to reach the small settlement of Leslie, where, if you continue on to the cross-roads, the left hand turn leads to the Bogs of Leslie, the right hand turn to Old Leslie and straight ahead to the Mill



of Leslie then leave the settlement heading towards Clatt. The Church, Graveyard and School building remain at the heart of the settlement, no longer used for their original purpose. However, Leslie Castle, the core of which dates from the 14th century, is the main historic landmark. The restoration of the castle, which is the historical seat of the Clan Leslie, was completed in 1995. Leslie is also home to Inch Airfield and the Grampian Microlight Flying Club (GMFC). The Club, which was founded in 1985, is home to a number of flex-wing, 3-axis microlights and light aircraft and membership is open for anyone interested in light sport aviation.

*\*Local information taken from the Bennachie Community Council Website*

## Chapel O Garioch, Durno \*

The parish of Chapel of Garioch formerly lay in the area represented by the East Garioch Community Council but, when the CC was dissolved in 2013, the parish of Chapel of Garioch was divided amongst neighbouring councils. About 60% of the parish (including the settlements of Chapel of Garioch, Pitcaple, Whiteford and Durno) was ceded to BCC. Of the remaining area, the section roughly to the south of the Bennachie Visitor Centre was ceded to Kemnay CC, and the area to the east became part of the Inverurie CC area.



## Oyne\*

The village of Oyne is a thriving and vibrant community and it has an active Community Association. The village school is a popular and well respected primary with a roll of over 50 pupils, supported by an active Parent Council. The village hall provides a focus for much of the social life. There are regular pilates and yoga sessions in the hall, and the village also boasts a reels club, a book club, wine club and cafe at Smile. Back O' Bennachie car park provides access to the hill and path network supported by Forestry and Land Scotland and the Bailies of Bennachie.



## Additional Potential Actions Particular to Chapel of Garioch, Culsalmond, Leslie, Oyne, Premnay, Meikle Wartle and Rayne

Many of the points highlighted for the surrounding settlements aligned with the main themes. For example, the need for pavements which could be addressed in the event of any new developments, connecting with the AC Digital Stakeholder Lead Officer could open discussions regarding broadband need in Leslie and better transport links related to the whole Bennachie area. The development/maintenance of paths emerged as a recurrent theme across the area.

There are various projects within the area looking to promote Asset Transfers.

## Action Plan

There are a number of actions that can be taken forward from these themes. The timescale will vary: some may be short-term; some may take up to 5 years or longer to bring to fruition. However, support from the community of Insch and the Bennachie Area will be vital. The community will need to play its part in making these points work for the people and taking them forward in ways that perhaps cannot currently be foreseen.



This CAP document records and highlights the main themes and SMART Actions which emerged during the period of consultation. The survey attracted a great response from the community with many valid thoughts, concerns and suggestions which may inform other future activities, plans or projects.



The survey results in detail are available via the link below or on request by contacting BCC at [BennachieCC@outlook.com](mailto:BennachieCC@outlook.com)

<https://www.bennachiecc.co.uk/>

## Glossary of Acronyms

**AC** – *Aberdeenshire Council*

**AHSCP** – *Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership*

**BCC** – *Bennachie Community Council*

**BLC** – *Bennachie Leisure Centre*

**CAP** – *Community Action Plan*

**CC** – *Community Council*

**CLD** – *Community Learning & Development*

**DTAS** – *Development Trust Association Scotland*

**EV Chargers** – *Electric Vehicle Chargers*

**FOIH** – *Friends of Insch Hospital*

**FORK** – *Friends of Rayne Kirk*

**GP** – *General Practitioner (Doctor, Physician)*

**IJB** – *Integrated Joint Board*

**LLA** – *Live Life Aberdeenshire*

**LPP** – *Local Place Plan*

**NESCAN** – *The North East Scotland Climate Action Network*

**Nestrans** – *The Regional Transport Partnership for Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire.*

**NHS(G)** – *National Health Service (Grampian)*

**OCDT** – *Oyne Community Development Trust*

**SMART Actions** – *Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timebound*

**THiNC** – *Transport to Healthcare Information Centre*

Action	Independent	Partnership & External Agency	Progress Update	By When
<p><b>Green Spaces:</b></p> <p><b>Paths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Path sub-group being set up through BCC to focus on paths and green spaces (<i>Green Space Group</i>)</li> <li>• Path Group to connect with AC Outdoor Access Officer for support on appropriate and effective community-led action on paths in the area</li> </ul> <p><b>Allotments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible discussions with Project Officer around support and Funding</li> <li>• Support in general around allotments. Green space advice, community, garden food production in each settlement</li> <li>• Look at any funding opportunities supporting community food growing initiatives, circular economies and nature and biodiversity</li> <li>• Feasibility support such as peer conversations, needs analysis and community voluntary initiatives</li> </ul> <p><b>Green Spaces</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look at Green spaces within area to optimise use or diversify habitats</li> </ul>	<p>BCC</p> <p>BCC</p> <p>Shevock Burn Allotments, Green Space Group</p> <p>Green Space Group, LPP</p>	<p>AC Outdoor Access Team</p> <p>AC Garioch Area Team</p> <p>AC Landscape Services</p> <p>NESCAN</p> <p>NESCAN</p> <p>AC Environmental Planners, Rangers, Outdoor Access</p>	<p>First meeting to be held where objectives will be agreed</p> <p>Contact with AC Outdoor Access Team to come to February Meeting</p>	<p>March 2025</p> <p>February 2025</p> <p>February 2025</p> <p>March 2025</p> <p>March 2025</p> <p>March 2025</p> <p>June 2025</p>
<p><b>Getting About</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote better use of NHS patient transfer services THINC <a href="#">THInC – Travel advice for Health and Social Care appointments</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Community Transport</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share best practice and peer support of existing initiatives in Garioch (Westhill and Kemnay)</li> <li>• Connect with Huntly Community bus who are looking to expand existing network</li> <li>• Community advisement on the rollout of 20 mph zones prior to June 2025</li> </ul> <p><b>Road Safety</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Round table discussion between partners to look at specific issues and potential solutions including education initiatives</li> <li>• Develop/identify a mechanism to feedback near misses and other concerns to AC Road Safety Team</li> </ul> <p><b>Disabled Access at Railway Station</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to lobby Network Rail about Access and explore other possible options through LPP.</li> </ul>	<p>BLC, BCC, FOIH</p> <p>BCC</p> <p>BCC, FOIH, BLC</p> <p>BCC</p> <p>Parent Council, BCC</p> <p>BCC</p> <p>BCC</p>	<p>AHSCP</p> <p>AC Garioch Area Office</p> <p>AC Roads Department</p> <p>AC Roads Department, School, Road Safety Team, AC Garioch Area Team</p>	<p>Contact made with AHSCP and ThinC and Silver Circle Hospital Voluntary Driver Scheme to get promotional material regarding Transfer patient services.</p>	<p>February 2025</p> <p>July 2025</p> <p>July 2025</p> <p>May 2025</p> <p>April 2025</p> <p>April 2025</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

Action	Independent	Partnership & External Agency	Progress Update	By When
<p><b>Facilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore the viability of a Development Trust for the Bennachie area, also look at existing SCIOs</li> <li>• Community mapping event to look at what activities/resources there are already in the area to see where the gaps are</li> <li>• All weather pitches – possible partnership working around linking up to use existing facilities.</li> <li>• Explore potential of late-night opening of café</li> <li>• Connect with Health Care partners to explore potential wellbeing initiatives/support could be delivered via BLC</li> <li>• Form a group to promote Christmas lights and Christmas Events in the area</li> <li>• Extend opening hours of library to allow working parents to access the facility</li> </ul>	<p>BCC FOIH, BCC</p> <p>BLC, Local Groups/ Clubs BLC BLC</p> <p>BCC BCC</p>	<p>DTAS</p> <p>AHSCP</p> <p>LLA</p>	<p>Email to local groups sent out. Meeting in January 2025</p> <p>Start at Group meeting in January to record active groups in area</p>	<p>June 2025</p> <p>""</p> <p>""</p> <p>""</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>May 2025</p> <p>July 2025</p>
<p><b>Future Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LPP for Inshch and surrounding areas – looking to start development in early 2025</li> </ul>	<p>BCC</p>	<p>AC Planning Department</p>	<p>Grant applied for to start in Feb 2025</p>	<p>LPP by Sept 2025</p>
<p><b>Resilience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a local Community Resilience Plan Phase 1</li> <li>• Develop a local Community Resilience Plan Phase 2</li> <li>• Share details of the Snow warden Scheme with Community Council</li> <li>• Consultation Event around digital connectivity</li> </ul>	<p>BCC, Community Associations, Halls, BLC</p> <p>BCC</p> <p>BCC</p>	<p>AC Project Office, Risk &amp; Resilience</p> <p>AC Garioch Area Office</p> <p>AC Digital Stakeholder Lead Officer</p>	<p>Looking at resource centres, Chapel of Garioch Hall operational, BLC and Premnay assessing this.</p>	<p>Oct 2025</p> <p>Oct 2026</p> <p>Apr 2025</p> <p>Oct 2025</p>
<p><b>Young Voices</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth Clubs/recreation areas for young people</li> <li>• Reach out to young people to encourage participation in the Paths Group</li> <li>• Update BCC on potential Government Funding for Playpark equipment for 2025/2026</li> </ul>	<p>BLC, Local Groups/ Clubs</p> <p>Green Space Group BCC, BLC</p> <p>Green Space Group</p>	<p>NESCAN, AC CLD</p> <p>AC Landscape Services</p>		<p>Dec 2026</p> <p>Mar 2025</p> <p>Feb 2025</p>
<p><b>Health and Wellbeing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Health Service to work with interested local bodies to restore and improve the healthcare in the area</li> <li>• Consider existing provision at the BLC facility and how to link in.</li> </ul>	<p>FOIH, BCC</p> <p>BLC</p>	<p>NHS(G), AHSCP</p> <p>AHSCP</p>		<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Jun 2025</p>

This information can now guide the community and Community Planning Partners in drawing up detailed action plans to implement the top priorities as well as addressing the other issues which have been identified. For each priority or issue this will involve agreeing who should be involved, what resources will be needed and target dates for completion. It is hoped that this process will be driven by representatives of the community with support – moral, technical and financial – from the relevant Partners.

It is important that this booklet is seen by all concerned as an account of the community's views at the time of the latest consultation, and that it will have to be regularly updated. As some projects are completed, other issues will arise and take their place in future versions of the community plan.

It is recommended that this plan has a maximum life of five years

Thanks are due to

Jacky Niven for steering us through the process and words of wisdom.

Members of the Community Action Group including Allison Grant, Jenny Robertson, Lynda Bain, Fiona Heinonen, Gordon Hood, Brian Thomson, Andy Miller and Janette Taylor

Aberdeenshire Council Garioch Area Team

Bruce & Janette Taylor and Jacky Niven for photographs

Thanks to everyone who filled in our survey

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