



Young People's Just Transition Plans for Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City

A collaboration between Aberdeen for a Fairer World (AFW), A Place in Childhood (APiC), Aberdeenshire Council, Paths for All, and 12 schools across North East Scotland.



Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL



About Aberdeen for a Fairer World (AFW)

AFW works with the communities of North East Scotland (Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Moray, Orkney and Shetland), including schools/young people, to be global citizens who embrace social justice, fair trade, sustainable lifestyles and who promote sustainable international development that is environmentally and economically fair to all.

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About A Place in Childhood (APiC)

We facilitate projects which enable the rights of young citizens to participate meaningfully in societal improvement, while building lifelong skills for a prosperous and equitable future. Children's lived experience combines with our research, policy and action expertise to help their communities adapt to the unprecedented challenges and uncertainty we all face. Through this we promote superior environments for children and young people which align with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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Acknowledgements

We are incredibly grateful for the partnerships on this project. The work would not be possible without the support of NESCAN Hub, Aberdeenshire Council, the 12 schools involved, and the children and teenagers who gave their time to be involved throughout. Many local organisations in Inverurie, Huntly, Banff & Macduff have also given their time to this work, to maximise its reach and impact. We look forward to continuing these conversations and working together in future .

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1. The Project

BACKGROUND:

This report describes the outcomes of the second phase of a project we, AFW and APiC, conducted in collaboration with the children and young people of Aberdeen (St Machar Academy, Woodside Primary, and Lochside Academy), Inverurie (Inverurie Academy, St Andrews School, Kellands School and Port Elphinstone School), Huntly (Gordon Primary and The Gordon Schools), and Banff & Macduff (Macduff Primary, Banff Primary, and Banff Academy) in winter 2023/24. In Inverurie, this work was also supported through the Children and Teenagers' Neighbourhood project facilitated by APiC, and jointly funded by Aberdeenshire Council and Paths for All.

The first phase of this project, reported on in the original report in early 2023, covered the three schools in Aberdeen city only. The purpose of this second phase was thus to create further local Just Transition Plans and share the outcomes of the work with adult stakeholders in and beyond Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, and The North East Scotland Climate Action Network (NESCAN).

Summary of Approach

Around 200 children and young people between the ages of 7 and 16 were involved directly with the project, with all pupils across the schools given opportunities to submit feedback on their peers' ideas. Through this, we were able to gather consent for the plans to be taken forward and noted broader interest in taking part in related activities at each school. The eventual ambition is that these projects develop into on-the-ground action, whereby children and young people are enabled to make the changes that matter most to them in their communities. This power sharing approach and coordination on local change has both education and wellbeing effects, while being a necessary step to ensuring a Just Transition for the region.

This report begins with why we engaged with children and young people, and how we went about the process of creating and building upon participant's plans at each stage. It ends with reflections on next steps and notes the importance of taking real tangible action based on children and young people's ambitions and will to be involved in addressing the causes and impacts of climate change.

Children's Rights and Meaningful Participation

A wide range of research describes the strong relationship children and young people develop with their environment. These benefits are summarised in Figure 1. Consequently, involving children and young people is an invaluable part of any climate action approach. Traditional views of childhood in society has often meant they do not get asked their views, and they have decisions made for rather than with them. This treatment (while usually coming from a will to protect and provide for children) can also limit their potential and ability to develop decision-making capacities. In addition, children and young people are increasingly reporting a sense of climate grief. For example, a girl from Woodside Primary expressed to us during this project that she felt personal responsibility for the loss of habitat resulting from climate change. While they know more and more about climate change, they see limited action being taken and often feel they have no power to bring about the future they want to have.

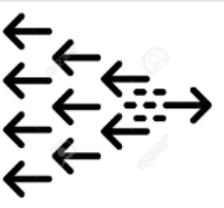
Children and Young People		Adults		Both	
<p>Significant Individual Value</p> 	<p>Having their views taken into account they can develop confidence, self-esteem, a greater appreciation of democracy, and how systems and services around them operate</p>	<p>Children and young people can bring insights to decision-making processes that an adult may never gauge alone</p> 	<p>Being smaller in stature means children can sometimes access places adults cannot, and see things that never catch the attention of adults. For example, dog poo, cigarette butts and street bins are often closer to the noses of young children, who can experience urban areas as especially smelly. They can also be very observant about the social dynamics within a space, and often have a visceral understanding of where is and is not safe.</p>	<p>Effective dialogue can benefit intergenerational relationships</p> 	<p>Which can also help tackle loneliness – something experienced most by younger and older people.</p>
<p>Learning How Change Can Happen</p>  	<p>Being involved in decisions and local change gives children and young people valuable skills for their current and future trajectories. These include creative thinking, teamwork, and sensemaking. Many of these are skills we know we need as a society.</p>	<p>Children and young people tend to not have their own independent incomes, nor means of motorised transport</p> 	<p>This means that engaging them gives key insights into how and whether a place serves the needs of people on low incomes, and who need to travel through active and public means.</p>	<p>The creation of more child-friendly environments also confers benefits for inclusive environments</p> 	<p>Where the needs of more vulnerable populations are considered at the outset</p>
		<p>Children and young people's participation can act as a catalyst for engaging adults more constructively in the decision-making process</p> 	<p>Especially in considering more imaginative opportunities for improvement, and moving conversations beyond immediate barriers to opportunity.</p>		

Figure 1 The benefits of meaningful engagement with children and young people for them as individuals, for professionals, and for both.

In addition to the practical and ethical reasons for children and young people's involvement, it is also important to note that children and young people have a UN sanctioned right - Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) - to be heard in the matters that affect them. They also have further rights such as:

- To freedom of expression (Article 13);
- To gather and organise their own activities (Article 15);
- To a healthy environment (Article 24); and
- To a broad education that teaches them about society and the environment around them (Article 29).

These rights were ratified by the UK government in 1991, and incorporated into Scots Law in February 2024. They are to be fully implemented from July 2024 onwards.

Incorporation in Scotland places a legal duty on public bodies to uphold and protect Children's Rights in their work. Implementing rights-based practice is thus essential in public life and enables us to see children and young people's participation in its holistic context, as well as making participatory projects an opportunity to inform children and young people about human rights through lived experience. The examples in this report and the accompanying '[How to guide](#)' illustrate how the meaningful participation of children and young people can be achieved in practice.

Linking with the Curriculum for Excellence

Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence is a holistic approach to education, focusing more on project-based learning and skills development than previous iterations of the school curriculum. It sets a vision for bringing about the Four Capacities (Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Responsible Citizens, and Effective Contributors) that the Scottish Government seeks to develop in children and young people. Participatory projects link with all of these outcomes and connect with children's human rights. For example:

- **Successful Learners:** Through engaging in activities grounded in their local communities, pupils are more likely to be intrinsically motivated to learn and have opportunities to develop skills that are useful in later life.
- **Confident Individuals:** Social Determination Theory demonstrates that our confidence grows through tasks which support our autonomy, enable personally meaningful activity, and help us feel connected to others. Engagement in local change gives key opportunities for teamwork, and to develop confidence in our understanding, priorities, and place within a community.
- **Responsible Citizens:** Working alongside others on ideas and proposals for local change encourages perspective-taking, empathy, and understanding of social/cultural rules. It helps us understand our own and other people's responsibilities.
- **Effective Contributors:** Through meaningful engagement, children learn to collaborate and cooperate with one another. It works best when participation involves pupils with adults and wider communities as part of the process.

In addition, engaging children and young people in local change-making projects is consistent with the Scottish Government's 'Learning for Sustainability (LfS)' agenda. [Scotland's Learning for Sustainability Action Plan 2023-2030](#) sets aspirations for:

"every child and young person, adult learner, educator, parent, leader and decision-maker to be active agents of change within their own communities and contexts"
P.4.

This project created a concrete opportunity to integrate Learning for Sustainability goals with broader Curriculum for Excellence aspirations. Partnerships with our schools also enabled us to discuss the

current barriers to successful implementation of LfS projects in the region, and how they may be overcome.

Links with A Just Transition

Communities across Scotland, and more widely, are experiencing huge changes and challenges. These relate both to our changing climate, and a mixture of social and economic challenges such as a decline in the mental health of children and young people, and the cost of living crisis. Plans to respond to these changes and challenges in a way which is fair and sustainable is often referred to as a “Just Transition”. To the participating children and young people, this was referred to as thinking about how we can make sure everyone gets their rights and their needs met, at the same time that we adapt to climate change.

Scottish Government identify 8 outcomes of a “Just Transition” these are:

- **Citizens, communities and place:** empowering and invigorating communities and strengthening local economies;
- **Jobs, skills and education:** equipping people with the skills, education and retraining required; providing access to green, fair and high-value work;
- **Fair distribution of costs and benefits:** address existing economic and social inequality by sharing the benefits of climate action widely;
- **Business and economy:** supporting a strong, dynamic and productive economy, making Scotland a great place to do business;
- **Adaptation and resilience:** identifying risks and planning for long-term resilience against climate risks;
- **Environmental protection and restoration:** commit to act within our planetary boundaries while protecting and restoring our natural environment;
- **Decarbonisation and efficiencies:** contribute to resource efficient and sustainable economic approaches; and
- **Further equality and human rights implementation and preventing new inequalities from arising:** for example, addressing fuel poverty and child poverty; furthering wider equality and human rights across protected characteristics.

All 12 schools featured in this report speak strongly to; **Citizens, community and Place** and **Environmental protection and restoration**, while the full collection of proposed projects speak to all others. Further information on the NESCAN Just Transition Communities Project can be found at [Just Transition Communities \(nescan.org\)](https://nescan.org)

PROCESS

We worked with 12 schools across this project, including primary, secondary, and special schools. Children and young people were from P3 to S6 (ages 7-17). The localities were a mixture of urban, coastal towns, and rural inland towns. Figure 2 below shows the spread. A full rundown of the methodology is available as part of APiC’s [‘Co-creating Local Neighbourhood Plans with Children and Young People A ‘How To’ Guide’](#). An insight into the process and outcomes from the perspective of young people at Inverurie Academy is also [available here](#) in the form of a short video presentation.



Figure 2 A map showing the communities and schools involved in this project.

The project entailed two phases:

Phase one: Revisit and update plans and ideas for the three Aberdeen City Schools (November-December 2023)

Phase two: Create new Just Transition Plans in each Aberdeenshire School taking part (November 2023 – March 2024).

Phase one consisted of a visit of approximately 90 minutes to each Aberdeen City school. In this session, participants and facilitators reflected on whether anything had changed since creating their original plans in early 2023, and what they would like to take forward most. The discussions were then written up into the original plans and poster for each school. These are shown in the Aberdeen City chapter of this report.

Phase two involved a full day session in each school, followed by a half-day, and finalised with a collaborative Showcase Event for each school cluster (Inverurie, Huntly, and Banff & Macduff). The exception was The Gordon Schools, where a previous project in January 2022 – [Teenagers and Public Space](#) - resulted in there already being an existing plan. Instead of starting from scratch, a hybrid workshop with original participants was therefore setup to update the plan in December 2023. A follow-up session with the pupil council then enabled more participants to come on board and the existing plan to be fleshed out further in February 2024.

For all other schools, in the first sessions pupils designed and took us on a tour of their catchment, showing us the places that are good/important and any areas where improvements are needed. The children took photos on the tour, while the adults took notes, after which these insights and our other relevant experiences of the area were put together on a shared experiential map. Figure 3 shows an example of an initial experiential map in development at Banff Academy.



Figure 3 A first draft Experiential Map created collaboratively with the pupils of Banff Academy.

In the second half of the session, we built upon these ideas by imagining what we would need to do to survive and thrive if the local area was suddenly cut off from the rest of Scotland due to a natural disaster. We collated ideas on another map called “Our Island” (see Figure 4). While the experiential mapping exercise had already surfaced immediate priorities, the island expanded these and the themes from the island were discussed and debated as a class to determine if any provided additional priorities for the plan. We closed off this part of the session by agreeing our top priorities for local climate action, considering the need for our places to become more self-sufficient. These formed the basis of project-specific planning in the second session at each school (see Figure 5).

On day two of the engagements, pupils got into groups based around the proposed projects that motivated them most. These were voted on from the groups' priority list already produced. We then worked collaboratively in groups to delve deeper into the 'What,' 'How' and 'Why' of each project. At the end of day two, each school had produced 3-5 initial project plans based on themes determined by them and actions that can be carried out locally. Figure 6 shows a selection of these works-in-progress. Finally, APiC pulled together each set of plans into a school-specific poster output to provide a visual summary of what each group proposed. Each school then shared this with the rest of their school for comments and further ideas. For some this was via a survey (mostly secondary schools), while for others it was sharing in class assemblies or visiting other classes to present their ideas and find out further views.

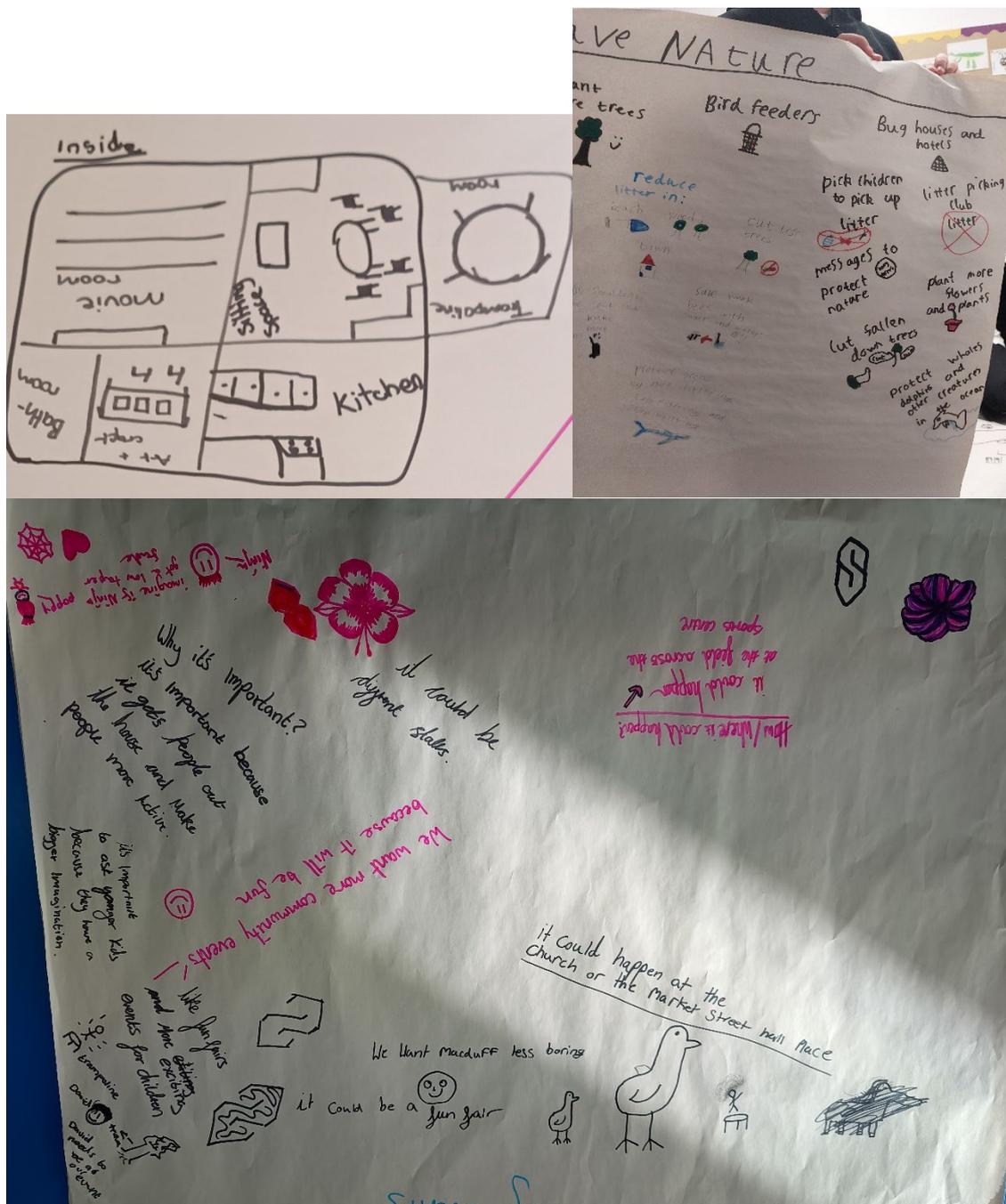


Figure 6 An array of project-based notes and outputs from day two engagements.

The Showcase Event, taking place at the end of all second day engagements, was then about displaying and discussing the pupil's ideas. Held at a local venue in each place, schools had a table with their map and poster displayed, and 4-8 representatives from each school attended to put forward their plans. Initially, the pupils shared their plans with each other without adults present. Once

the adults arrived, they were introduced to the session format, and then adult participants took part in a world café event, visiting each table in turn along with an 'overall reflections' table. Each table was facilitated by someone from APiC, AFW or NESCAN to support the pupils to make their case. Figure 7 below shows a photo from the Banff & Macduff Showcase event, during the warming up part of the morning. [You can watch a video about the event here.](#)



Figure 7 Warm up session with primary children from Banff and Macduff

Following the showcase, AFW and APiC convened a 90 minute online reflection workshop with adult stakeholders in each place. This had already taken place in Inverurie under the banner of the Children and Teenager's Neighbourhood Project. This enabled clearer routes forward from the work, and appropriate links to be made to other activities in each area. In particular, the local citizens climate assemblies in Huntly and Banff & Macduff.

The remainder of this report details the outputs of the work and how it evolved in each of the schools involved. It takes each place in turn, to provide the three key outputs. It ends with the next steps we see as necessary to bring the projects forward, and support young people to be part of the action required to make Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire more sustainable and self-sufficient.

2. Aberdeen City Updated Plans

Lochside Academy Local Climate Action Plan

What we think of the local area

Key What's Important / Good? What's Missing / Could be Better? Things to Change Things that have Changed / Further Reflections (Nov 2023)



Figure 8 Updates Lochside Academy Map, November 2023. The base map contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

Lochside Academy Local Climate Action Plan

Our Four Proposed Projects (updated Nov 2023)

Key

Project Kincorth
Cruyff Court

Protecting and enhancing
Torry biodiversity and
greenspace

A joined-up, easy-to-use
transportation system
connecting communities

Renewing (retrofitting), and
reusing derelict and underused
spaces to meet local needs

Kincorth Cruyff Court Project

'Build it once, and build it well' (and that includes every local young person!)

What we want to achieve:

- Create personally fulfilling opportunities and work experiences for the young people of Kincorth.
- Reduce crime and antisocial behaviour in the local area by providing motivating and affordable things for young people to do.
- Turn a large unused bit of greenspace in the centre of our community into a place which enables a wide range of free social and leisure activities, and helps bring the community together.
- To design and construct a facility which has sustainability at its core e.g. using renewable electricity for smart lighting, building from reused or long-lasting materials, and providing a model of how to do it for other communities around the world.
- When this has worked look at how to extend it as a broader strategy of improvement, using other underused greenspace in the area.
- Working with the school to see whether or not projects and work experience on projects like this could inform part of the S1 and S2 curriculum, as this would help us decide our careers.

How to achieve it:

- Streetsport has now come to Kincorth, and we have begun costing and exploring materials and creative ideas for the building of a permanent Cruyff Court.
- To fund the building of Cruyff Court, we want to partner with Streetsport and local businesses to raise funds for the project. We also want to have community fun days on the project site (we don't currently have any fairs or fun days here) to raise money, awareness and support.
- We want to work with Lochside Academy to explore how the S1 and S2 project-based learning could work, and how we could share our own local knowledge to help teachers understand what opportunities there are in our communities at the moment, and that we might want to be part of in the future.

Why this is important:

- Young people taking part in more sports activities makes them healthier, happier, and the volunteering and work experience opportunities are good for finding jobs later.
- The activities we propose will bring the community together, and help people help one another. Learning about our area and its history will improve pride in the community.
- The project will make Kincorth a better place to live, and improve everyone's wellbeing.
- Improving our opportunities to learn through projects at school and find our purpose will improve our education and motivation to learn. This will help us find jobs and have fulfilling lives in the future.
- We have designed Cruyff Court to be low impact on the environment, and lead the way in creating opportunities for young people that also meet sustainability aims.

A joined-up, easy-to-use transportation system connecting communities

"Never give up, never stop trying, till you succeed"

What we want to achieve:

- Stop the loss of 3 important bus routes in Torry.
- Introduce bus routes which connect the (Lochside Academy) communities of Torry, Kincorth and Cove.
- Get authorities and bus providers thinking smarter about routes, and linking this better with active travel, as we think we may be able to achieve a more efficient system even if we have to lose some routes.
- Making processes around young people's bus passes easier to use, particularly for situations where we don't have them with us or we need replacements. At the moment, some people lose out and have to pay to get around.
- Improve the way young people are treated on board the public buses that take us to and from school now our school buses have been taken away.
- Reduce anti-social behaviour on our buses, so that more people feel comfortable using them.

How to achieve it:

- Find out the changes we might need to make to keep our bus routes, and better connect our local communities.
- Look at the journeys people take and the amount of money we have for buses and seeing how we might make changes to the system which means we make it work better and more efficiently for less. An important part of this is thinking about bus routes and active travel routes as an interconnected system, and providing maps which show how they link up.
- Work with bus operators and the council to work out ways we can solve the difficulties we have around our bus passes and improve training of bus drivers in supporting young people.
- Work with Lochside Academy staff to get everyone's views on the current school transport system heard, and see what we can do about it. One idea is that school may be able to give free bus tickets to pupils who have lost their cards while they wait for a replacement.
- Fiona Saunders, Education Officer at Aberdeen City Council has a remit for education transport. She heard our concerns about the vandalised buses and problem of getting to school. She said since she works in Education transport specifically, she would take this issue on and look into it further and would work with someone at the school to get this issue resolved.

Why this is important:

- Some people don't have access to any other transport other than public transport, so what will they do without the buses? It will be very hard for them to get to places, and this isn't fair.
- Young people can't afford to pay or wait a long time for replacement bus passes, and they shouldn't have to pay to get to school.
- If parents/carers have to drive their children to school that is worse for the climate than a bus.
- Linking with walking and cycling routes and opportunities could improve health and fitness, and reduce pollution.

Renewing (retrofitting), and reusing derelict and underused spaces to meet local needs

What we want to achieve:

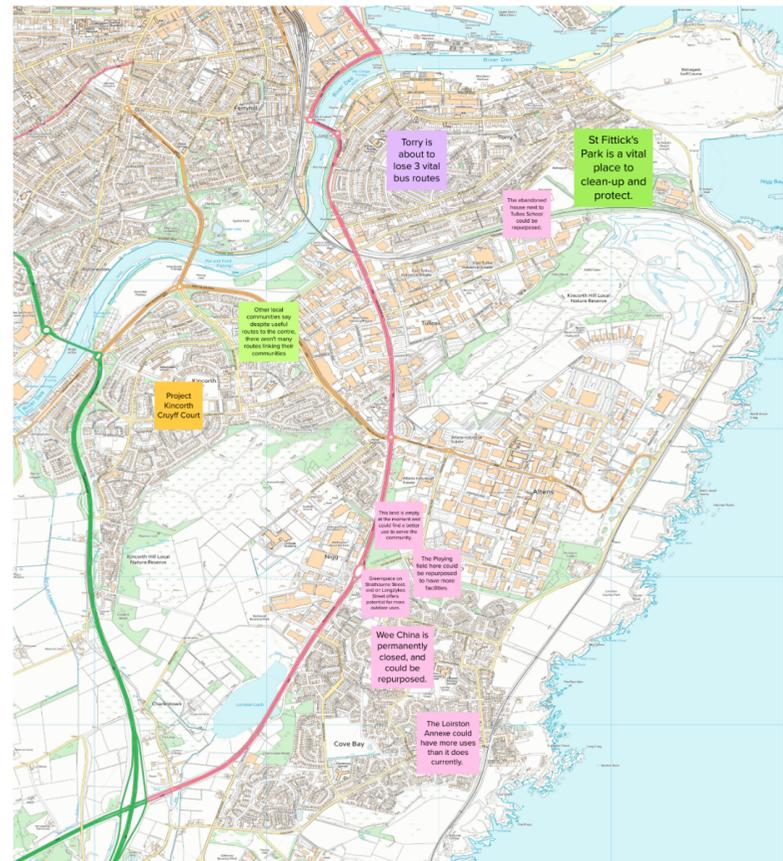
- Making this a better place to grow up by using buildings that could be renewed into something more useful.
- Improving local facilities so they meet local needs, and particularly of young people.
- Really finding out what young people need and seeing if we can renew, retrofit, reuse existing buildings (or demolish them!) and spaces to provide this.

How to achieve it:

- We need to look at examples of other places that have transformed their city to make it more child-friendly. We have started researching examples such as Rotterdam, Ghent, Tirana, Boulder, and Odense.
- We have identified some spaces we already know of for improvements on the map. In future, we could identify more by speaking with more members of the community.
- Some examples include: (1) lots of football pitches which need to be renewed because there's no nets in the goals; (2) The Loirston annexe has multiple rooms but it's only used for an afterschool club. There is a big sports hall where clubs could practice. This way it would be more useful; (3) A derelict pavilion near Tullos School could be demolished or renovated to meet local needs.
- At the same time, we need to find out from local young people what facilities they want and need, and then we can use the information we have gathered and the opportunities available to make solid plans for specific improvements.

Why this is important:

- It's essential to hear different points of view from young people because we want to know what they want to experience growing up.
- To have a nice environment to live in.
- Building for the future, so that the next generation live a fulfilled life. Grown-ups want their children to have a healthy lifestyle, and to be successful.
- We need better shops and facilities so we think it's a good idea to have a variety of options to enable a variety of experiences.
- A mix of resources so kids can have more opportunities growing up.
- Encourages adults and young people to it's a good place to grow up in, making it a better place to live for us and people moving here.



Protecting and enhancing Torry biodiversity and greenspace

What we want to achieve:

- Protect the nature and amenity of St Fittick Park for ourselves and for future generations.
- Make Torry more attractive (and well known) for, and proud of, it's nice environment to attract people and attention to the area.
- Build on the success of biodiversity improvements achieved already.

How to achieve it:

- Maintain and take care of it better, particularly the pond area, and encourage more wildlife
- Protect it against development, especially St Fittick's Park.
- Involve young people more in decisions about what happens there
- Talk to local industries about what they could do to reduce impacts on air quality or other pollutants, so the place is better for wildlife and more enjoyable to use.
- Look at improvement to the play equipment, e.g. a skatepark or other features for older young people
- Free dog poo bags, so people have no excuse to not pick up their dog's mess.
- Speak directly to the Energy Transition Zone staff to understand more about the plans and have our say.
- Chris Boddington from North East Scotland Climate Action Network (NESCAN) invited us to join the Torry People's Assembly with other members of the local community, because of what is going on at St Fittick's Park.

Why this is important:

- St Fittick's Park is our last public greenspace, and is the place everyone walks their dogs.
- It adds to the experience of living in Torry, and to lose it is to lose that experience. It is the only nice and safe area for children. Young people's voice needs to be heard on decisions related to it for these reasons.
- A lot of successful effort has gone into improving the biodiversity and wildlife in the area, which is an important aim for the community and Government in combatting climate change. All Torry wildlife is in St Fittick's Park.
- Having a nice environment is important to feel welcoming and for attracting people to the area
- We are unhappy about how some people treat the area, and agree that more effort to take care of it would mean more people would use it (this applies to everywhere in Torry).
- Rainbow Park is an important play area, and could be improved to provide more affordable opportunities for local young people.
- We want Torry to be a safe healthy place to live. We already have our fair share of polluting industries, and we need to reduce pollution near people and animals, and keep greenspace which helps to protect against this.

Actions to Support All Projects

- Jade Leyden, Community Planning Manager for Aberdeen South said it is perfect timing for all these issues to be raised, and she took the A4 sheet with our projects on with her to show and speak to relevant people in the council. We said we would like to keep in touch to see what next steps have been taken.
- Michael, who is Audrey Nicoll's (our MSP) admin manager and assistant is going to pass on our concerns to her. In particular, he will raise our views around the upkeep of St Fittick's Park; the need for more to happen at the Loirston Annexe in Cove Bay; that many of our football pitches are tired and need an upgrade; and that we passionately believe in bringing Streetsport to Kincorth.
- Paul Dargie from Aberdeen University told us about his research so far into climate assemblies (where local citizens are involved in deciding how to respond to climate change, much like this work!), and how there is definitely more work he and the team can do to look at how young people's views form an important part of this. We also asked if he could help us with some further data or research to use his skills and to point us in the right direction if we needed any data in the future and Paul said he would be happy to help and signpost us to data if he could.

St Machar Academy Local Climate Action Plan

What we think of the local area



Figure 10 St Machar Academy updated Map November 2023. The base map contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

St Machar Academy Local Climate Action Plan

Our Four Proposed Projects (updated November 2023)

Food & Farming

What we want to achieve:

- More plants and flowers across our area, so that we can have local and free food available for people. We also want to think about local business opportunities, where young people may create their own enterprises or be involved with them.
- Reduced Anti-Social Behaviour, so that we have more available space for planning and it's protected from vandalism and littering. Parks like Sunnybank Park and Stewart Park could be good if we can solve this.

How to achieve it:

- We need to clean up some areas where there is a lot of empty and open green space we could plant on. We've put notes on our map where some of these places are.
- We will purchase greenhouses and cheap seeds so get started. Some of us already know how to plant things, and they will help other people to get started.
- We also had the idea of helping people with gardens to plant easy-to-grow food themselves to save money, with free seeds and lessons.
- Our school allotment project has now started and this is a really great place to focus our efforts at first.
- Jack Newton from Grassroots to Global told us about permaculture, which is something we could explore further for our own proposed gardens. He also told us about a food growing project he is running at Edinburgh Steiner School. We may find some inspiration by hearing how they went about this.
- Katherine Mathieson from Aberdeen City Council told us she can help us understand places in the local community where land could be used for food growing.
- Paul Dargie from Aberdeen University told us about efforts at the university campus to increase biodiversity. This is something we could find out more about, and potentially visit to get ideas and inspiration for our own project.
- We might link our work in Stewart Park with Woodside Primary School's Stewart Park project, where they are looking to clean it up, understand and improve the amount of wildlife there, and look at planting food.

Why this is important:

- To help the community get more active and connected by planting together.
- Cleaner and nicer looking places make people happier.
- Food is important for our survival, and we all benefit if it's cheaper.
- Young people will build skills for the future.

Recycling & Reuse

What we want to achieve:

- Cleaner, nicer and safer communities, focusing at first on Kittybrewster and Stewart Park.
- Better use of the resources we have.

How to achieve it:

- We need to develop an advertising campaign to educate people in communities about not littering and reusing and recycling all the materials they can.
- An important messages are if your environment is cleaner and healthier you will feel better as a person and better about yourself.
- We need to encourage and go out on litter picks to get our communities looking better.
- Katherine Mathieson from Aberdeen City Council let us know that she can explore options for better lighting in the communities we've identified in our first mapping exercise.
- We might link our work in Stewart Park with Woodside Primary School's Stewart Park project, where they are looking to clean it up, understand and improve the amount of wildlife there, and look at planting food.
- We will also work closely with the Food and Farming project, as food growing will be more possible in our cleaned up communities.

Why this is important:

- We don't have unlimited materials, and the litter is affecting animals and making us all feel less safe and less happy.
- Clean communities improve everyone's wellbeing.
- Once we have cleaner places, we have more opportunities for things like community food growing.

Schools and Education

What we want to achieve:

- Expand the curriculum with subjects that really motivate young people (e.g. we think there could be more languages on offer).
- Better resource our school, and develop a culture which better respects what we have.
- Get discounts for young people at school for technology and equipment.

How to achieve it:

- We propose sending out a survey to everyone at the school to get ideas on what motivates them at school.
- Work with the school, the community and others to raise money to better resource our school, reach out to businesses for discounts of equipment such as laptops, and develop more respect for our resources (e.g. many of our teachers buy pencils for school out of their own money, but lots of them get broken by young people messing around)
- Encourage young people to bring in their own pencils so they respect them more, and if they can't or forget they can get them from school but they don't get an unlimited amount and are expected to keep hold of them (and not get a new one in each class).
- Promote the discounts across school and online that do exist for young people our age e.g. Young Scot card and Apple discounts already exist. We also want to think about routes to getting a school discount card that could be scanned at checkouts for proof we're at the school.
- Jack Newton from Grassroots to Global told us about how we might learn more about how to improve school by looking at other styles of education and how schools run in other parts of the world. He told us he works with pupils at Edinburgh Steiner School, and has been inspired by the idea of Forest Schools. We could explore these more to understand how our school might learn from these other approaches to education.
- Our school is part of the Excelebrate programme and looking at new models of project based learning. We now have something called Crew which gives us new opportunities to work together on projects.

Why this is important:

- So people can try something new and also have something to look forward to.
- Young people want to be heard and listened to.
- We should have greater respect and pride for our school and the resources.
- We should get discounts for the school and for young people so that it's easier to get the resources we need.

Key



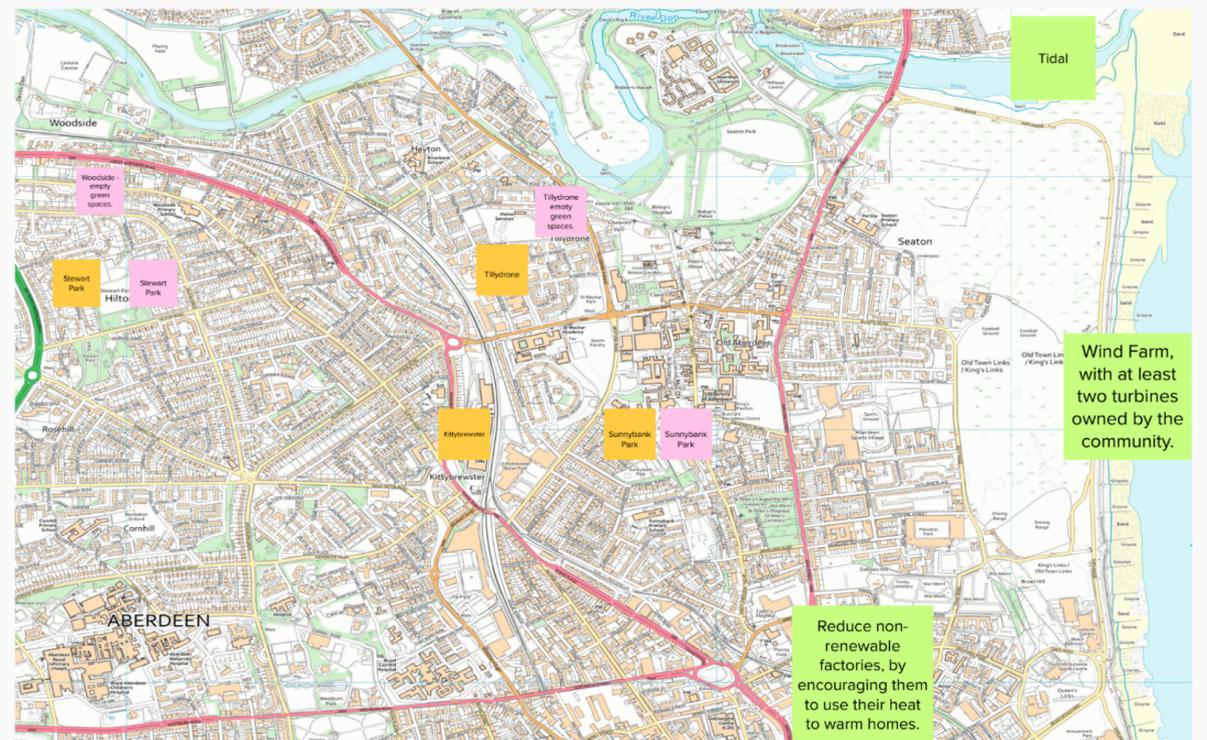
Renewable Energy Opportunities



Food & Farming Opportunities



Recycling & Reuse Opportunities



Actions to Support All Projects

Speaking Our Truth

- Kate Dyer from Grassroots to Global advised us to keep voicing our concerns and ideas exactly as we see it. She told us it's important that we don't edit our views to make other people happy, or to tell people what we think they want to hear. Our anger, vulnerability and project ideas are really powerful for speaking truth to power and helping to make the changes we need and want to see where we live.

Applying for Funding

- Chris Bodington from North East Scotland Climate Action Network (NESCAN) told us there is a small grants scheme we could apply to to get help with all our project ideas. This is Scottish Government funding and would be really helpful for our work. She also told us that NESCANS could help us find experts to come and speak to us on the issues that matter to us and help inform more people at the school. They could also come and speak to us about 'The Bigger Picture' of what we need to do and what's already happening.

Holding our Elected Members to Account

- Michael, a representative for one of Aberdeen's MSPs, told us he would help raise our ideas and views to local and national changemakers.
- Several adult stakeholders told us how important it is to keep people at the council and in government accountable to their promises around the Just Transition, and in helping us make our projects come to life. They suggested we write to our elected representatives - councillors, MSPs, and MPs to tell them what we want to do and also ask for their help and support. If we don't get anything from them, we should always reach out again to find out why and remind them of their commitment to us. They also suggested we might hold an evening event at our school and invite elected members along to see and discuss our project ideas directly.

What Else is Happening

- Paul Dargie from Aberdeen University told us about his research so far into climate assemblies (where local citizens are involved in deciding how to respond to climate change, much like this work), and how there is definitely more work he and the team can do to look at how young people's views form an important part of this and raise the profile of work like this so others across the world listen more to young people.

Renewable Energy and Retrofitting Buildings

What we want to achieve:

- Encourage our communities to install renewable energy technologies and make communities feel nicer. This includes solar, tidal, and wind.
- Learn more about and increase action on retrofitting local homes to improve energy efficiency.
- We want this to be owned by communities so it generates money for local people and community improvements.

How to achieve it:

- We need to educate people about renewable energy and why it's important.
- We also need communities to understand how to maintain technologies they install, so they stay useful across the lifespan and we're not reliant on other people and companies.
- We propose (more) solar panels on the roofs of our school, across rooves in Tillydrone, and Big Offshore Wind Turbines, and Mini-Hydro on the Don, making and saving money for the community.
- We want to bring renewable energy and retrofitting specialists to our communities to help educate everyone directly so when they leave we know how to maintain and fix things ourselves.
- Katherine Mathieson from Aberdeen City Council told us that all council new build housing is being fitted so that it doesn't use gas central heating, but ground source water heating. This is something we want to find out more about, as finding out more about this will be useful to our project.
- We heard from Gillian Needham at NESCAN that there is funding for community projects from Vattenfall, who own the offshore windfarm at the beach. This isn't a lot of money, but it could be something useful to apply to for our project.

Why this is important:

- We need to help people move from oil and gas dependence in their lives and their jobs.
- This is vital for all of our futures, and young people are going to feel the biggest consequences if we don't make the transition.
- Fossil fuel energy is running out and getting more expensive, and if we don't develop alternatives then people will not have or be able to afford an energy supply.
- There will be more and more jobs and skills needed in renewable energy and retrofitting in the future. If young people can learn more now then we will all be more prepared.

Woodside Primary Local Climate Action Plan

What we think of the local area

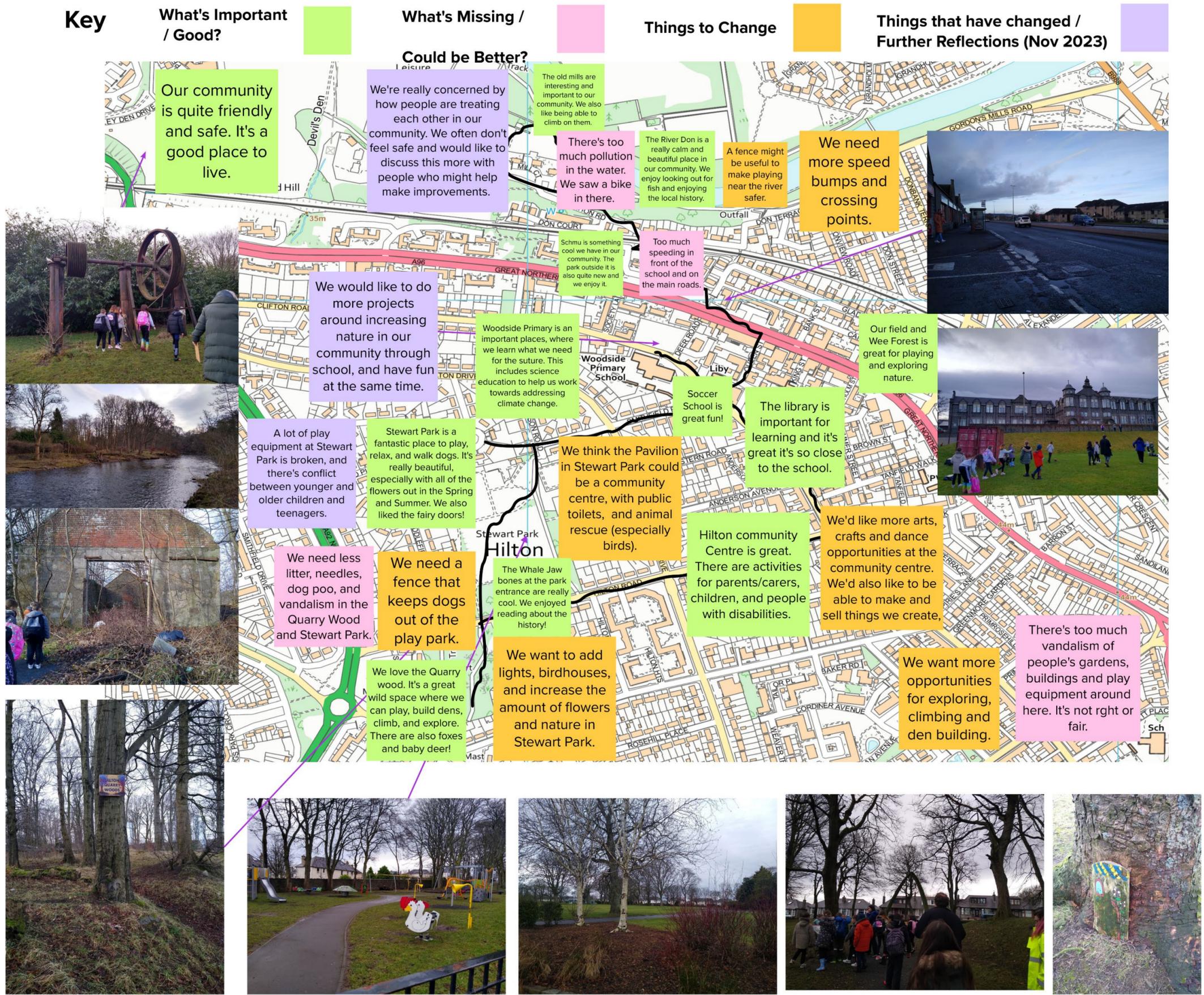
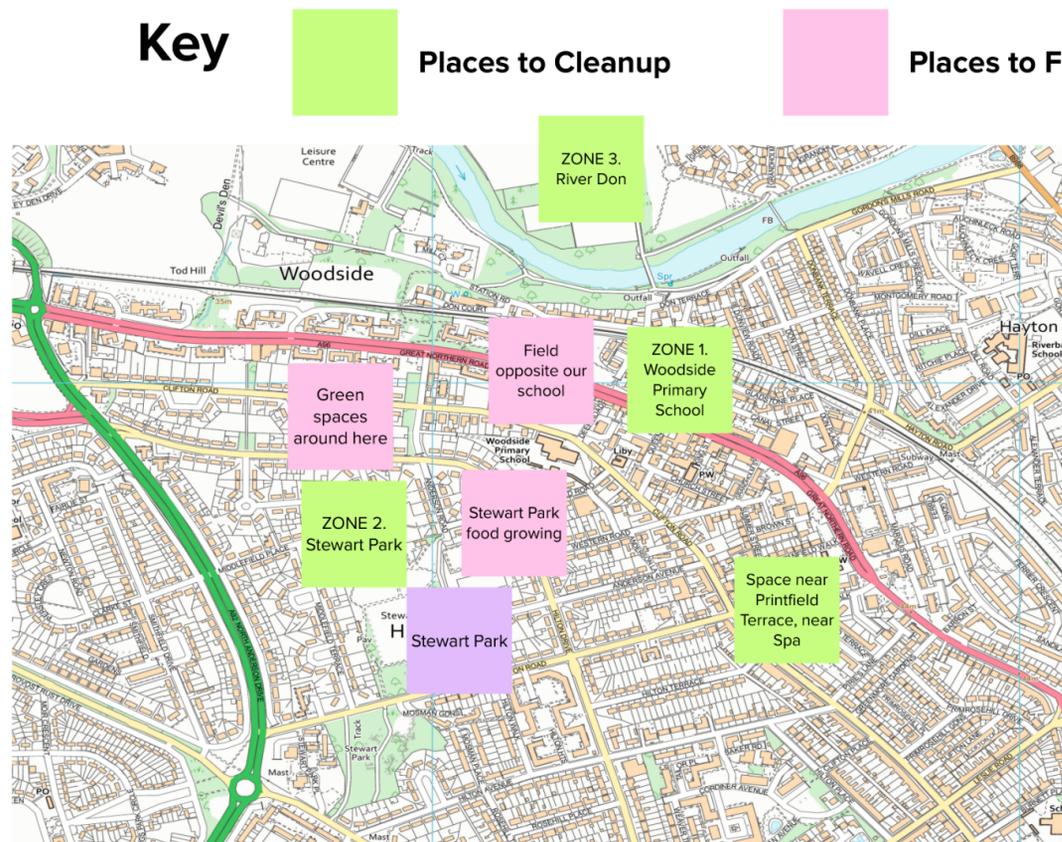


Figure 12 Woodside Primary updated Map November 2023. The base map contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

Woodside Primary Local Climate Action Plan

Our Three Proposed Projects (updated Nov 2023)



Key



Places to Cleanup



Places to Food & Farm



Stewart Park

Litter Pick and Nature Project

What we want to clean up our community, to make it feel nicer and safer for everyone. We want our friends to understand why this is important, and encourage people to clean up their dog's mess and behave better.

This will:

- Help us see more of the nature around us, and learn about it.
- Make our community friendlier, and feel better about where we live.
- Give young people more fresh air and exercise.
- Get people wasting less food and other materials.



How to achieve it:

- We want to organise litter picks, let everyone know about it with posters and advertising. We will also set up a way for people that want to clean the community to talk to each other about it. We might setup a group Snapchat, Whatsapp, or Roblox chat.
- We'd like a Base ("Litter Pick Central") where we can meet to discuss or start our picks, and give instructions for volunteers. We thought the disused Pavillion in Stewart Park might provide a good location. Katherine Mathieson from the Council said she might be able to help us explore what we are or aren't able to do.
- We need to get litter picking equipment, which we calculate will cost £223.65 for 7 of us, and include gloves, litter-picking stick, bin bags, fish nets for getting rubbish out of the River Don, hand sanitiser, a first aid kit, phone for emergencies, and litter pick hoops. We might also ask people to bring along some of their own equipment they already have to save money. We have learned that we might be able to get free equipment and waste pick-ups from the Waste Management department of Aberdeen City Council.
- While we do the litter pick, we also plan to study and record the nature in the local area, so we know about "what's there" and "what's changing and why" and may discover new species. We might also plant trees. Chris from NESCAN told us she may be able to help us find funding, and put us in touch with someone who can help us learn about nature in our local area, and how to look for it and record it ourselves.
- Working alongside other projects with similar values or aims -e.g. the Council's dog poo map (?). Another idea is that we might approach local supermarkets to see if they might pay for recyclable food packaging that we collect ("you're in our community, we're in our community, let's work together").
- Learn more about creative things we could do with the waste we collect. One idea was making planter or litter bins for Stewart Park out of it.
- Fill in a funding application for what our project needs for advertising and to get going.

We have organised 3 main zones to focus our litter picking. In order, these are:

1. Woodside School
2. Stewart Park
3. River Don
4. Other roads and streets in our local area

Why this is important:

- We feel sad and worried about climate change and doing something about it will make us feel better.
- Many of the adults who looked at our project thought our idea of combining a nature survey with litter picking was a very good and original idea, which might inspire others.
- We want to learn about our local natural environment.
- We need to make the future better.
- Dog poo passes on bacteria to people. It's no good for our health.
- By addressing pollution and improving nature, we can see more of the animal species we have. Some are undiscovered!
- Cleaning rivers and oceans keeps fish alive. We also lose good food if they're dead or unwell.
- If we clear up, more wildlife will come back to our community.
- Littler kids can learn about litter and its impact on the environment.
- Litter gets smelly, which is horrible to be around and unhealthy.



Stewart Park Project

What we want to improve Stewart Park to make it, a better place for everyone. We want to:

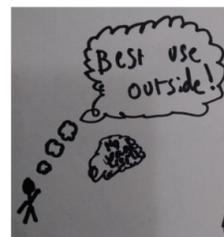
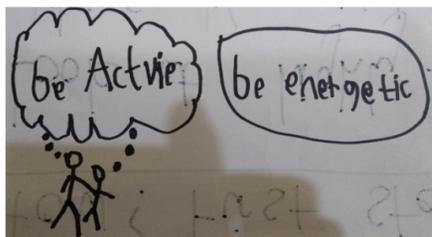
- Plant more trees to replace those which have blown down in recent years.
- Save the birds, plants and animals that already live there.
- Get more animals, plants and birds in the park than there are right now. Creating hedgehog houses, bird houses, and bug hotels could help and might be fun.
- Do something with the disused pavilion, particularly public toilets. We also thought it could provide a Base for our Litter Pick and Nature Project. An affordable café, or animal care or community centre were other ideas we had.
- Make it more fun, by putting in some new play equipment, such as tyre swings, merry go-round, monkey bars, and more swings. It's also important to fix the broken equipment.
- Plant food in the park (see our Food & Farming plan), including apple trees and maybe planters on the old tennis courts.
- Upgrade the football pitch, so it has goal nets and we don't have to chase balls.
- Increase lighting, by adding in lanterns that might be powered by solar power.
- Put in more bins, including recycling bins.
- Improve people's behaviour.

How to achieve it:

- We propose looking at lots of others parks in Aberdeen that have high ratings on Google, especially 5 star parks. We want to understand what they have done already to get more ideas, and then use these to make an even better plan for Stewart Park. We also want to use these ideas to help improve our school grounds.
- Things we might already do are plant trees, or build hedgehog houses and bug hotels to improve nature.
- Working with the other projects who can focus on some of the things we want to achieve in their projects, such as food growing, litter picking, and nature studies.
- Someone from the Council told us the idea of "Asset Transfer" which means our community might take over control of the park and what happens there (instead of the Council), which is something we might explore further.
- Jack Newton from Grassroots to Global told us about "Permaculture" as a way of growing food and improving nature at the same time, in way that doesn't require much work. We were very interested in finding out more. He said there was a person called Alan Grant in Aberdeen who has a permaculture community garden, and perhaps we could ask him if he'd show it to us.
- Katherine Mathieson from the Council said she would speak to people she knows to find out if and how we might take our project forward.

Why this is important:

- More fun is good for everyone's wellbeing.
- Stewart Park is a place where everyone feels included in the community. It's an important place to make better.
- When people have a good time in a park, they sleep better and they're healthier.
- It's a place we can make all of our projects happen!



"Helping Others with Food" Project

Our project is called Helping Others with Food. We want to help people get food that don't have enough, like people who are homeless and people without jobs

How to achieve it:

- We want to start by planting quick and easy food we know will grow well in Aberdeen and that people use a lot.
- These are onions, carrots, beetroot, potatoes, purple sprouting broccoli, kale, chard, lettuce, radish, rhubarb, strawberries, apples, and gooseberries.
- We can also grow other popular foods in greenhouses, such as cucumbers, aubergines, peppers, chilis and tomatoes.
- We identified some good places to start, including the school grounds, Stewart Park and a park near our local Coop.
- Learn more about "Permaculture": see Stewart Park Project.

Why this is important:

- People need food to grow big and strong, and many people don't have enough food.
- So people can eat well in our community.
- We have a Global goal of zero hunger, and we don't want anyone to go hungry.
- Food is getting very expensive, and we need to support people with that.
- Food makes us happy.
- If we waste food, there won't be enough for everyone.

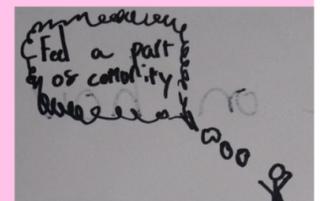


Figure 13 Woodside Primary updated Project Plans November 2023. The base map contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

3. Huntly Children and Teenagers Just Transition Plan

Gordon Primary School

Led by a steering group of P5, and shared across the school for feedback.

Overall we feel that Huntly is a good place to live and go to school in. There are important tourist sites, and the area is really beautiful. However, taking everything we looked at on our walk and from talking about how Huntly could be a better place to live, we feel that there are a few things which could be done to improve the area. We then decided which we thought were the most important, and these became our priorities.

OUR PRIORITIES:

1. **A New Café to Replace the Castle Café** – We LOVED this café and really miss it. We want something like it back, and think there could be space for this either in the old building, the old blind shop in the square, or at the Cooper Park Pavilion. We have many ideas for this, which you can see on our project poster.
2. **Improve Traffic Safety in Huntly** – A lot of our roads in the town centre are very narrow, and the cars go really fast down them. Near Tesco and Asda, the roads are really wide and unsafe. We know of so many accidents that happen just outside Huntly and think something needs to happen to improve the safety for everyone.

We're very concerned about the new Starbucks and McDonalds being built across the road from Asda. There needs to be a good and safe way to crossover to the new developments, like a bridge, or they should go somewhere in the town instead.

3. **Reduce Litter and Dog Poo in Huntly** – It makes us feel sad and angry to see litter and dog poo on our streets and in our parks. Sometimes other people have to clear it up, and that's not fair. We want more regular bins, dog poo bins (especially in the parks), and recycling bins to help deal with these issues and make it easier for people to do the right thing. We also want to think about things that could improve people's behaviour, as this would also help us feel safer in Huntly.
4. **More Opportunities for Fun in our Community** – There are parks where the equipment has been taken away or needs to be fixed, such as Deveron Park, Cooper Park and Scott Drive Park. There are also sports facilities such as the tennis and basketball courts in Cooper Park that are missing nets, and have so many cracks that they're dangerous to play on. The Pavilion in Cooper Park has also been closed for ages, and we would love to be able to buy snacks, drinks, and go to the toilet while we're out playing. Other opportunities like ice skating and hockey would be fun!
5. **Improve our Access to Healthcare** – our local hospital doesn't offer that many services, and the closest large ones are either Elgin or Aberdeen. These can take a really long time to get to, and hard if you don't have a car. Because of the distance, we're also really concerned about how long it takes for ambulances to get to Huntly, when people need really urgent help.

Some of us also have to travel quite far, like to Banff, to see GPs and we can't see them quickly. Having better access to healthcare is important for everyone in our community.

6. **More Community Events and Markets** – We love the fair, market, Halloween, and Christmas events. We'd love to have these more often.

7. **More Nature in Huntly** – we love all the trees, plants, flowers and wild animals in and around our town. But we know nature needs our help and we could have more. For example, the Depot Park could be all natural, instead of having broken equipment in it. We also want to make sure the flooding of the Deveron River gets managed properly and that we can still cross it even when the water is very high. Some small bridges need fixing and a high bridge near Deveron Park would be great!

8. **Improve Walking and Cycling Opportunities** – There are potholes that make it difficult to cycle down many roads and streets in Huntly. We also think there could be more places to park bikes. We want to think about how Huntly can be better for everyone to walk and cycle around, so people can get what they need more easily. This could include putting new shops in the town centre, rather than over the main road from Asda. Restoring the Huntly Hotel would also give us somewhere nice to go in town.

9. **More Affordable Housing, with Good Space** – Not everyone can get the housing they need in Huntly because there aren't enough options at prices people can afford. We also worry that some houses don't have enough space near them for children to run around and stay healthy. We think this is really important so that everyone gets what they need, and we know we could live in Huntly when we're older if we want to.

10. **Improved Wi-fi in our Town and in our Homes** – we think a town centre Wi-Fi would be good for Huntly, especially for young people who are out and about. We also think improvements to home Wi-Fi in the local area are needed, and many of us have really slow connections or we lose connection in some rooms of our homes.

11. **More Local Food Growing** – we think Huntly could grow more vegetables and fruit locally, and this would help us if it becomes difficult to get things from other places sometimes. It could also help people who don't have enough money to buy food, as it can be

Huntly Children: Our Proposed Just Transition Projects

More Fun in Huntly

What we want to achieve:

- More fun places to spend time, near beautiful places like the River Deveron.

How We Might Achieve it:

- Put more adventurous equipment in our parks, like climbing frames and zip lines.
- Fix the broken equipment.



Why this is Important:

- We want to have more fun where we live, and enjoy playing in nice places.

Better Healthcare in Huntly

What we want to achieve:

- Better access to services like GPs, dentists and opticians.
- Quicker ambulances to hospitals in Elgin and Aberdeen.
- Making sure everyone can get to the hospital easily.

How We Might Achieve it:

- Have more doctors surgeries and services in Huntly
- More buses to the bigger hospital.



Why this is Important:

- People have to travel quite far to get a lot of healthcare, which is really hard if you're in pain or don't have a car.
- We have lots of stories of people, including us, not getting the healthcare we need.
- Some people in Huntly have had to wait a really long time for ambulances, and we worry that this can lead to people who need help urgently getting worse.

More Nature in Huntly

What we want to achieve and where:

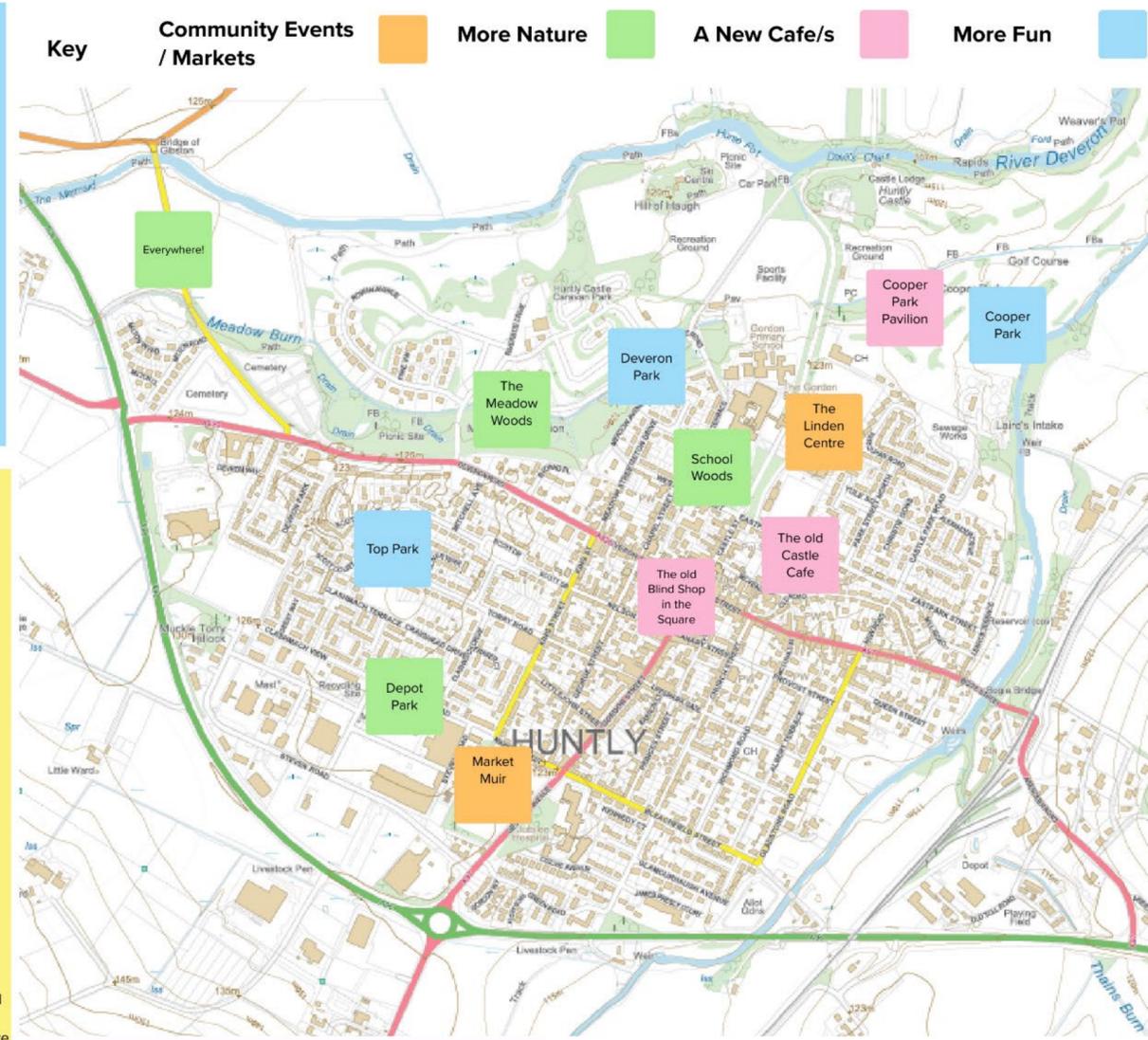
- Cut fewer trees down and protect the nature we have, particularly the school woods, Meadows Woods, and where kids live.
- Fewer cars in the town centre
- Wild flower greens

How We Might Achieve it:

- Fence off trees and grassland so they can grow.
- Walking only areas on the town, so people can't drive everywhere.
- Signs to tell drivers not to come through the town when they don't have to

Why this is Important:

- Nature makes people feel happy and calm.
- Huntly is quite natural, but there is more pollution than there needs to be.
- Children do better when they have natural places to go and play.



A New Café to Replace Castle Cafe

What we want to achieve:

- A place to buy delicious, affordable food and spend time with friends and family.
- a place in the town centre and/or at Cooper Park Pavilion, so we don't need to leave the area so much to have fun.
- A place to relax and for children to play indoors.

How We Might Achieve it:

- Refurbish the Castle Café building, Blind shop on the square, and/or Cooper Park Pavilion. We think more than one café could even be good.
- Ask local children and families what they would like to see,
- Incorporate food people enjoy and fun and silly activities. You can see some of our ideas to the side

Why this is Important:

- We REALLY miss Castle Café, and also wish we could get drinks, snacks, and go to the toilet when we play in Cooper Park.
- The new Starbucks and McDonalds will be over a very busy road, and we think it's best to have a café in the town centre.
- There are several disused buildings that could be brought back into use.
- We think a new café would be a popular use.

More Community Events and Markets

What we want to achieve and where:

- A longer and cheaper Fun Fair in the Summer
- A free Easter event at the Square for children of all ages, and an Easter egg hunt at the Linden Centre.
- A free Halloween crafts dance and more at the Linden Centre.
- A Bonfire night glow stick party at the Linden Centre.
- Tractor Lights.
- Spring Hairst.
- Cooking classes at the Linden Centre.
- 3 Farmer's Markets a month in the square.
- 1 car boot sale a month at Market Muir.
- Charity events
- Comicon.



Why this is Important:

- We love the community events we already have in Huntly, because they bring everyone together and are really fun.
- If we had more events, there would be more things for young people to do and feel involved.
- Everyone loves fun events.

Reduce Litter and Dog Poo in Huntly

What we want to achieve:

- People putting their litter in the bin.

How We Might Achieve it:

- More regular bins, and more dog poo bins in the parks, square, woods by the school, and near the allotments.
- More signs, including ones that are fun.

Where to put the bins and signs in Huntly

lots of Parks, Square More of them at cooper park. In the Woods by the School Pavements. The allotments.

by Holly, Zoe and Megan

Why this is Important:

- There is no point littering. It's not good for other people if you don't pick up your dog poo.
- If you litter, then an animal might eat it!
- If you don't pick up dog poo, it's very unhygienic.

The Gordon Schools

Led by a steering group of S1-6, and incorporating 169 consultation responses from across the school.

OUR PRIORITIES:

1. Introducing More Social spaces, in Huntly (and Insch, Clatt and Banff):

- a. There needs to be **a lot more things to do for older children and young people** that aren't just playgrounds (where play equipment is inappropriate to us, or has been taken away).
- b. There needs to be social areas such as a **youth café, and affordable places to eat and hangout** (which also benefits everyone). This includes things that can help calm people's behaviour and reduce anti-social activities. Places for young people would need some youth worker support to make them feel safe and welcoming.
- c. There could also be something that might be a **social/safe/study space** with technology for children and young people to use outwith school.

These new spaces could be **within existing vacant/derelict buildings**, such as the Castle Cafe, and may also be provided in part by **No.30** when it opens.

2. Improved work opportunities for young people aged 12+ - many of us want to work, but there's very few opportunities. When there are opportunities, there are tonnes of applications so only a few people benefit.

We would like to increase awareness that young people would like work opportunities, and one suggestion is to **create a youth team that can support with the reuse/refurbishment of vacant buildings in and around the town**. Through this, **young people could learn vital skills while serving the community**. It may help bring these buildings back into use because it will also save money.

3. Improving our Access to Sports and Gym Facilities – Our local gym isn't available to young people under the age of 16, so to go we have to travel all the way to Keith. We think this is unnecessary and unfair, and would **like the policy to be changed so** people over the age of 13 could access local gyms.

The sports facilities at **Cooper Park** are also in major need of repair, as the **tennis court is missing a net, and both nets at the basketball court are broken**. At both, the quality of the surface is really cracked and unsafe to play on. We also find that **the Rugby pitch gets pretty waterlogged and unusable**.

4. Ensuring Young People are Heard at the Community Level - We have many ideas, and the energy to bring them about with support. **Our action plan can hopefully help bring this about!**

5. Dealing with our Local Vaping Issue – too many young people vape across the country, including in and around Huntly. **They're too easy to buy underage at Nickel & Dime**. We would like more action on this issue.

6. Improving our Public Transport Options – free bus passes give many of us more freedom, but **there are a lot of places we cannot reach by bus at all or only on weekdays**. Insch, Clatt, and Aberchirder are examples. It can also be tricky to get the Young Scot card.

We find the train to be the best option for us, but they are really unreliable, often get cancelled at the last minute, and are very expensive. We feel there needs to be consideration for bigger train

discounts for young people in rural areas, so that we can get good connections to Aberdeen and beyond. This would also increase our opportunities, even if Huntly can't offer everything we need.

7. Improving our Environment – there needs to be **more effort put in and encouragement to take care of the environment**. Litter picks would help, and one idea is also to **make this more fun**. For example, we could place hoops over bins so it becomes a game to dispose of rubbish. We're especially concerned by the amount of vapes littered around Huntly.

Some of us would also like to see more trees planted.

8. Pushing for School Renovation/Improvement (though recognising limitations of funding and permissions) - We know that the council has limited funding for improving the school, some parts are listed buildings (so they're harder to change), and that we're not considered a high priority. However, **we have areas of the school that can't be used at all, and toilets that we actively avoid because they're broken**. Even some painting would improve our school experience.

We also look at other schools in nearby towns that are much newer than ours, and think that it's important to have consistent standards so we're all learning in a high quality environment.

9. Increasing Curricular and Extra-curricular Opportunities in and beyond our School – We think that **there could be more support for young people to learn social skills**, as it's not always easy for some people to understand facial expressions (for example). **We also know that reading and writing skills have been affected for some young people** due to the pandemic, so more support could be useful.

Another thing that could support young people is to understand more about the **impact of screentime on neurological development and health**, and ways we might manage it.

In general, learning **more practical skills** around taxes, budgets etc would support us when we leave school, as well as **rural opportunities and farming**. We also think that there could be more trips to support our learning.

10. Increasing Support for Disabled People – It can be difficult for some people to get around the school in a wheelchair (e.g. just one lift), while the community doesn't always have good facilities for play, hanging out, and travelling when you're disabled. We think **there could be more consideration to these needs**.

11. Engaging with the history and culture of the town – there is a **need to make history interesting and engage more people with it**. Huntly doesn't feel all that appealing and looks quite sad at the moment, though there is loads to celebrate such as The Inventor of the Iron Lung (from Clatt); the Young Folk Singer of the Year being from Huntly; our local dart player who's in the top 20-30 in the world; the writer George MacDonald (who influenced Charles Dickens and Lewis Carroll); and lots of historic buildings.

This is something that **would work well with the new No.30 Development** when it's finished. They will be looking for a youth steering group, which is a useful opportunity.

12. Ensuring there are adequate services and facilities for everyone – it should never be difficult for a community to **access a bank and financial advice**. We also have **few electric car charging points** in and beyond Huntly. **Mobile signal also needs to be improved** around the local area, including at school

Our Action Plan for Further Youth Involvement in the Community

- 1. Establish a regular space and time within The Gordon Schools (suggestion of Friday afternoons) for community participation.**
- 2. Connect young people, through the school sessions, to speak directly with the Huntly Development Trust, The Towns Team and the Huntly Learning Partnership:**
- 3. Develop capacities amongst local young people to facilitate activities, groups, and feel confident engaging in broader community activities.**

The starting point for this could be a set of workshops with interested teenagers that cover:

- core facilitation techniques
- understanding and reflecting upon how change happens
- supporting themselves and one another in the challenges of making change happen.

The new CLD team at the school could really help with this.

The Views and Ideas of Local Teenagers in 2022 and 2023

Key



What's Important



Places we avoid or find dangerous



What's Good



What Could be Better



What's Missing



What's changed in the last couple of years / further reflections December 2023.

Some storm damage in the Meadow Plantation has been cleaned up, and people causing trouble have moved on from here. There used to be a care home here, but the Care Inspectorate has shut it down so it's much quieter.



A Dodgers hangout - lots of litter. We would avoid this area during lunchtimes and at weekends.



Beautiful views in the Meadow Plantation, but traffic come left by The Dodgers. Poor signs, and nothing that tells people to take care of the place and not litter.



Good football pitches when the weather's OK.



Good Rugby pitch.



Good to see the astro getting re-surfaced.

More clubs have started back up after COVID, but there aren't as many community lets at the school in the evening as there used to be. Running after school clubs is a big challenge because about 60% of pupils bus in, and bus timetables don't support after school schedules.

Public libraries and swimming pools have had their hours cut back now. No one's happy, but not one's listening. The gym shut to under 16s when it switched to being run by Live Life Aberdeenshire. School can barely offer swimming lessons for PE now.

The old care home is likely to become housing. It would be better used as an opportunity for young people. It's got huge potential if you target and advertise it right.

The Meadow Plantation partly has way too much litter because it's our route from school to Tesco, and there are no bins or recycling points. People leave rubbish everywhere. It used to upset us, now we're used to it.

The Meadow Plantation - 'Dodgers' hanging around and way too much litter. Makes us feel uncomfortable, but they will mostly leave us alone if we leave them alone.

We want more care and maintenance in the Meadows, so that we can enjoy the natural surroundings and people don't get used to rubbish and glass everywhere.

Local rivers and scenery are good. Great for picnics and walking. Especially new cycle lane through Meadow Plantation. Though can be prone to flooding around here.

Sports Facilities - lots of good outdoor ones.

The Castle is an important monument, but it costs money to visit and doesn't provide much for young people.



Huntly has good parks in general.

Deveron Skatepark is too small and crowded. We can find it difficult to use as younger kids want to scoot on it, and people are of different skill levels.

More facilities to serve young people like better skatepark or bikepark, indoor options etc.

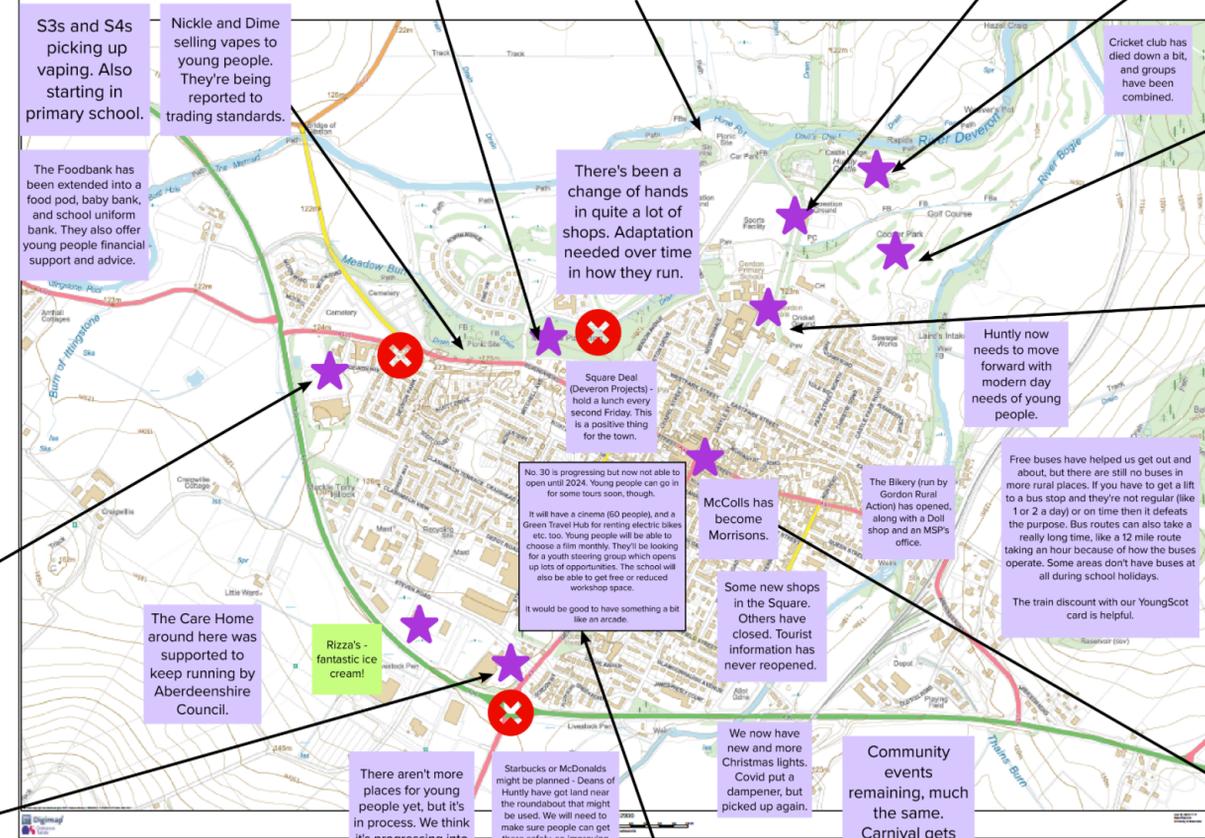
More drop-in sports activities.



Fallen trees from storms that don't get cleared quickly. They can cause hazards and make places out of bounds for a long time.



Plastic containers lodged in fence as no rubbish or recycling bin.



New developments will bring more opportunities for work experience. We think it would be great to build local partnerships with new cafes - especially linked with the Barista training at TGS.

Huntly feels tidier, and the school is now getting fewer litter complaints from locals. However, recycling is still an issue as stuff is going in the wrong bins at school. We've had assemblies to help address the issue, now though, as there are so many types of bins that people were getting confused / not wanting to make the effort.

The behaviour of young people around us has improved over time (due to age). There's less shoplifting and shopkeepers are nicer now. We can understand why they didn't like the way younger teens were acting.

We need safe cycling paths on key routes like this. A boy we know was hit by a bus while cycling.

A bridge over the dangerous road could help.

Tesco and Costcutter are good for lunch while at school. They are affordable and accessible.

The road is dangerous to cross near Tesco, and the safety needs to be improved.

Children and young people put themselves at risk navigating local roads.

Some housing is poor quality - gas leaks, mould.

Most of us are only comfortable cycling on the pavements around Huntly - which we're not meant to do, but the roads are too dangerous.

Zebra Crossings.

More Shelters and Benches around Huntly.

Poor driver behaviour - not using indicators. Driving too fast.

It's dangerous to cross around this roundabout.

Lots of pot holes across the town.

Better signposting around the town - for tourists and to encourage better behaviour.

Because some young people hang around and drink or take drugs, we find that members of the community can treat all of us with distrust and a lack of respect. For instance, we have been insulted in the streets by adults, and adults always expect us to move into the road on narrow pavements.

Even though we bring money to shops like Costcutter and the bakery, we feel we get treated like we're causing trouble.

The lack of things for young people to do can lead to poor behaviour.

We love the yearly events such as the circus coming to town, or 'Room to Run' We want more opportunities like this.



The Christmas tree is the same every year and looks tired and boring. It could be changed up and be more decorated - we want something uplifting to see everyday during the Christmas period, which can otherwise be very cold and depressing.

The annual Christmas Tree in the town square is disappointing. It's the same every year and it's only got a few lights on it.

We want more of a celebration of Christmas, such as an event where we turn on the lights. We also want a tree that is more uplifting.

The Farmers Market offers very little for young people.

We could make better use of the empty buildings in Huntly.

We're missing youth friendly cafes and cheap places to hang out - bring back The Castle Cafe!



The old buildings give the town a nice feel.



Another coffee shop has gone from the town square, and we think the empty units could be put to more uses that suit our needs.



Looking forward to Cullshanks becoming a cinema.



This building is now for sale. Someone may buy and redevelop.

Huntly – Post Showcase Reflection Workshop

Main Themes

Impressions and Support from Key Stakeholders:

- High praise for the showcase, especially for the youth's representation and contributions.
- Strong commitment from various organisations to support young people and connect them with local partners.
- Emphasis on the importance of quick wins and broader involvement to maintain trust and excitement.

Opportunities for Youth Involvement and Community Development:

- Potential to develop a youth café with an arts focus, aligning with young people's interests.
- Significant projects like the Development Trust's Mini Holland Project need further advancement, with possible youth involvement.
- Opportunities for youth involvement in local retrofitting projects through NESFIT.

Infrastructure and Community Space Utilisation:

- Imminent opening of No.30, a multifunctional space with opportunities for community engagement and diverse activities.
- Appointment of a new Travel Hub Manager to contribute to sustainable travel initiatives.

Community Engagement and Future Planning:

- Emphasis on quick actions to build trust and maintain enthusiasm among young people.
- Importance of inclusive involvement in community projects and youth-led initiatives.
- Ambitions to further the Youth Involvement Action Plan, more community events, improvements to walking and cycling experiences, and a youth-friendly café.
- Linking youth projects with heritage and culture, utilising community funding opportunities.
- Formation of a Youth Steering Group at The Gordon Schools to prioritise and manage projects, ensuring inclusivity and broad engagement.
- Involving primary pupils to create a comprehensive and collaborative effort.
- Agreement on hosting a community event during the school day to increase inclusivity and engagement.
- Aim to create an inclusive community assembly involving young people in decision-making processes.
- Support for young people in overcoming bureaucratic hurdles.
- Consideration of establishing sustainable links between the Huntly Town Team and young people.
- Opportunities for youth volunteering in local projects and linking with the Marr Food Plan.

Addressing Safety and Navigation Concerns:

- Need to address safety and navigation challenges for young people, especially around schools.
- Concerns over Aberdeenshire Council cutting school crossing patrol officers, increasing safety risks.

Long-Term Vision and Action:

- Recognition of recurring themes and the need to deliver on promises to avoid past frustrations.
- Emphasis on nature, food, and community spaces in building a regenerative and youth-led future.
- Importance of coordinated efforts through supportive networks to enhance community development.

By addressing these reflections and potential next steps, the community aims to work towards a more inclusive, engaged, and sustainable future, driven by the enthusiasm and leadership of young people. There is significant interest and agreement on moving at the pace set by the young people to ensure sustainable development of priorities and actions. Jumping ahead without taking young people on the journey could do more harm than good to future collaboration.

4. The Banff and Macduff Children and Teenagers Just Transition Plan

Banff Primary: What we think of the local area

Key What's Important / Good? What's Missing/ Could be Better? Things to Change

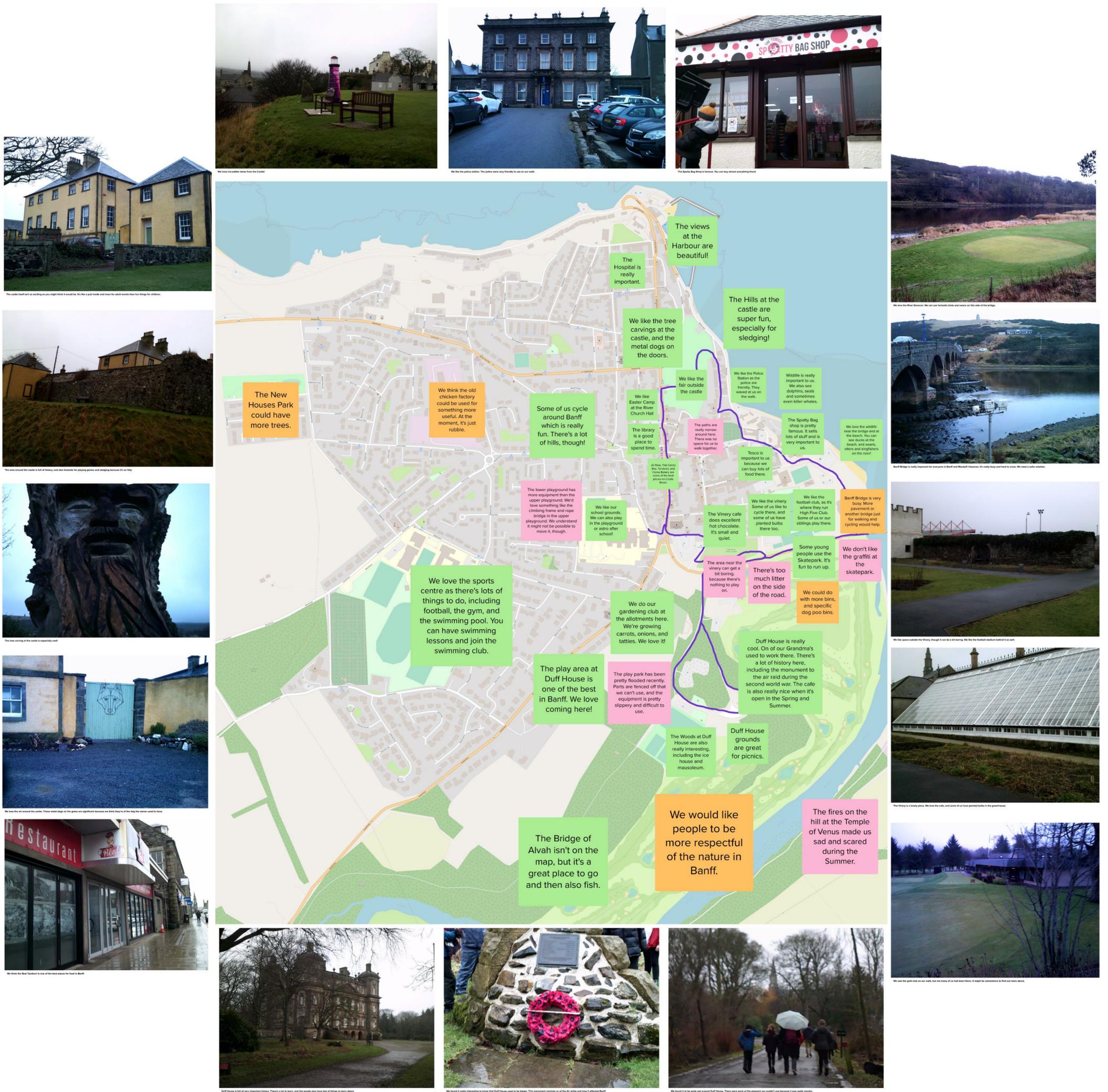


Figure 17 Banff Primary Map. The base map source is Open Street Map.

Banff Primary: Our Proposed Just Transition Projects

Key **Protect Nature** ■ **Reduce Litter and Dog Poo** ■ **Improve Safety** ■

Reduce Litter and Dog Poo in Banff



What we want to achieve:

- Clean up the litter, broken glass and dog poo already in our town.
- Stop people from leaving more litter and dog poo lying around.
- Show people that we need to protect our environment more.

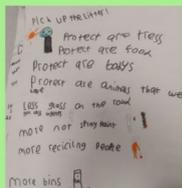
How We Might Achieve it:

- Add more recycling bins, litter bins and dog poo bins on our main roads, near the bridge, and in the woods on dog walking routes.
- Get people litter picking around Banff.

Why this is Important:

- People and animals are getting hurt by the litter and broken glass.
- Our planet is rotting and it makes us sad.
- Litter causes pollution in our sea and spreads across the world.

Protect Nature in Banff



What we want to achieve:

- Protect our oceans, flowers, insects, and plants.
- Replace the trees that keep falling down in the storms.

How We Might Achieve it:

- Introduce more bug hotels, plant more trees, put birdfeeders and bird boxes around, and reduce litter.
- Clean up the fallen trees and make space for new ones.
- We could have a Litter Pick and Help Animals and Nature club after school.
- Plant more flowers around Duff House.

Why this is Important:

- The world is not a very good place for nature right now. We can make it better.
- People feel better when there's nature around.
- Nature is one of the most important things about Banff in our view.



Improve Safety in Banff

What we want to achieve:

- Make it easier to get around by walking.
- Make crossing the roads easier.
- Reduce litter.
- Give people more things to do, to help them behave more kindly.

How We Might Achieve it:

- Widen the pavements near the bridge and on the main roads.
- More lollipop people so it's easier to cross the roads.
- Add more recycling and litter bins.
- Introduce a drawing club for people, so they might not graffiti in the town.
- Find more quiet places for reading that aren't the library, so there's more places to hangout.
- Add more play parks with things for different people.

Why this is Important:

- People feel unsafe, but many people also have nothing to do.
- We need to be able to get to places like school and clubs without worrying about safety.

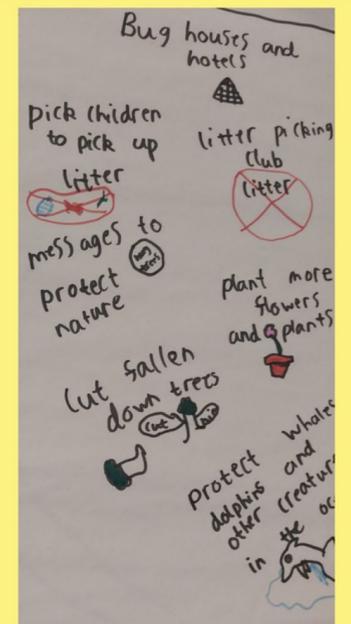
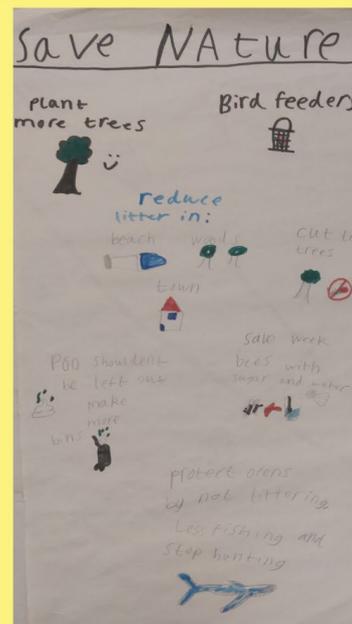
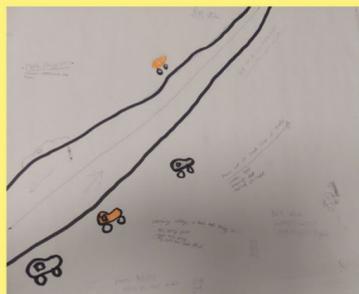


Figure 18 Banff Primary Project Plans. The base map source is Open Street Map.

Macduff Primary School

Led by a steering group of the Eco Committee, and shared across the school for feedback.

Overall we feel that Macduff is a good place to live and go to school in. The area is really beautiful and peaceful, and that's something we want to stay the same. However, taking everything we looked at on our walk and from talking about how Macduff could be a better place to live, we feel that there are a few things which could be done to improve the area.

OUR PRIORITIES:

1. **Making sure everyone behaves respectfully towards each other - We want to reduce scary behaviour towards us** (something we also experience in Banff) because it makes us feel unsafe and less happy about getting out and about with our friends and family. **Some of this behaviour is also on the buses**, which makes us want to use them less. A way to do this is to **make sure that everyone has spaces or places to hangout** that suit their needs.
2. **Clean up the Dog Poo and Litter across the Town** - We need to **clean the streets and spaces across the town** so they feel better taken care of. We also need to take action to encourage everyone to feel responsible for keeping the place clean and pleasant.
3. **More Shops and Services to Meet Everyone's Needs** - We would like to increase the range of things we can get hold of without having to travel far from home. This includes, **food, clothes, hairdressers and cosmetics, as well as cafes, restaurants and places for entertainment for all ages and prices** (for example, bowling, swimming, and soft play).

More clubs in Macduff would also reduce our travel to Banff. For example, we lost quite a lot of clubs like boxing and brownies since the COVID-19 pandemic. Some clubs might also be on, but people don't know about it. **Making sure there are things to do will especially help a lot of teenagers who are bored and might get up to no good to pass the time!** Making sure there's enough holiday accommodation for tourists could also attract more people to visit and enjoy our town.

4. **Reuse and Renovate Old Buildings to Provide what we Need** - We don't necessarily want Macduff to become a much bigger place, and **we think most of what we're looking for could happen in places we already have that aren't used at the moment.** Macduff Town Hall, for example, could be great for clubs and events. We also think there could be a small museum at Walford Bodie's old house to celebrate our local history.
5. **More Council Leadership, to Unlock Macduff's Potential** - The council could support the town more by **helping bring abandoned buildings into reuse.** They could also help the

community do more of the things we want to do, as some things need their support before they can happen. **Small businesses especially need support to setup and do well**, so we don't just end up with chain shops.

6. **Improve our Access to Healthcare** - A GP Surgery and another dentist would reduce people's waiting times for help. At the moment, these are too long.

7. **Improve the Quality of People's Homes** - Many homes in Macduff are old and cold. They are **expensive to heat** and could do with more modernisation. **Some homes are also quite small**, and some people (especially children) would benefit from more space.

8. **Introduce more Community Events** - These are fun and bring everyone together. **We think there could be at least one big event, as Banff has more than we do and we have the space.**

9. **Improve the Safety of Macduff Harbour** - It's really dangerous to walk, fish, and especially to play near the harbour. It's too easy to fall in. **We think better railings could solve the problem.**

10. **Increase our Eco-friendly Transport Options** - We would like there to be **more opportunities to get trains, or at least get more easily to our local train station (Huntly)**, as well as other ways to travel without so much pollution. This could be through more buses (and we'd like to see electric buses), and better walking and cycling opportunities. **More places to charge electric cars would also decrease local pollution.**

11. **Plant more Trees** - We have fantastic nature around Macduff, but **a lot of trees blow over in the storms. We would like to be involved in planting more.** The field around the school could be a good place to start

Macduff Primary: What we think of the local area

Key What's Important / Good? ■ What's Missing/ Could be Better? ■ Things to Change ■



Figure 19 Macduff Primary Map. The base map source is Open Street Map.

Macduff Primary: Our Proposed Just Transition Projects

Key Safer Macduff Harbour Improved Shops and Services More Community Events

More Community Events

What we want to achieve:

- We want more community events, to celebrate the things we care about together.
- We like fun fairs and exciting events for children.

How/Where We Might Achieve it:

- The field across from the sports centre is a great place for a Summer Fair.
- The Church or the Market Street Hall are great for events, especially markets.
- We could ask more children across the primary school to get more ideas of what people would like to see.

Why this is Important:

- We want Macduff to be less boring.
- We think children would be good at helping design these events, especially younger kids as they have big imaginations.
- It's important because it gets people out the house and makes them more active.



Improved Shops and Services

What we want to achieve:

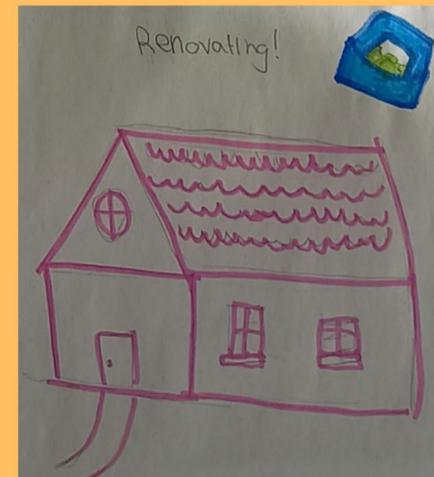
- We want to get more clothes shops.
- We also need more food shops like Lidl and Asda.
- We need an upgraded bakery, and a nice ice cream shop.

How We Might Achieve it:

- The ice cream stall would be great at Tarlair.
- The clothes shop and other services and cafes would be good on Duff Street.
- A Boots would also be good.

Why this is Important:

- This is important because we want to make Macduff better and bigger.
- We also want to be more recognised and known more as a place to come.
- It's important to get more places in Macduff so we don't have to use so much petrol to get everywhere.
- It's important because we want to show a good reputation to others.



A Safer Harbour

What we want to achieve:

- Reduce the chance of accidents at the harbour.
- Get more people to come to the harbour.

How We Might Achieve it:

- We want to get a railing put up around the harbour to improve safety when people are fishing, hanging out, or just enjoying the views.
- More seating would then also encourage people to spend more time there.
- The railing would be especially good at the lighthouse.

Why this is Important:

- It is important to stop people getting hurt.
- It will help people who go fishing. We have, or know people who have, had accidents while fishing.

Banff Academy

Led by a steering group of S1-6, and incorporating feedback from 65 consultation responses.

Overall we feel that Banff and Macduff are good places to live and go to school in. There are lots of great tourist sites and calm vistas. However, taking everything we looked at on our walk and from talking about how Banff and Macduff could be a better place to live, we feel that there are a few things which could be done to improve the area.

OUR PRIORITIES:

1. **More opportunities for young people in Macduff** - There isn't enough for teenagers to do and many parks are aimed at young children. More activities in general, including sports, would help. For example, the gyms in both towns could be available to people age 13+ (rather than 16). The boredom contributes to antisocial behaviour that makes some of us feel unsafe at night.
2. **More walking, cycling and bus routes to connect Macduff, Banff and beyond** - We can't easily get to all the important places to us on buses and walking and cycling doesn't always feel safe. A footbridge between the towns will help, and more buses to Huntly and Fraserburgh would connect us with our closest train station and places of education. There is also some work to be done on communicating which routes we have and where they go. For instance, one of our key buses doesn't stop in Banff Town Centre, but people don't realise this.
3. **Improve Traffic Safety** - People drive fast around both towns, especially over the Banff Bridge. It makes it difficult or unpleasant to get around sometimes, and we could do with more traffic lights on Sandyhills Road and Castle Street in Banff, as well as the A98 in both towns.
4. **An indoor, youth friendly space with café** - We need an affordable and a welcome place to hangout in the winter. Both communities need this, and it's especially important to target ages 10-13 as there's really very little for them at the moment.
5. **Cleaning up the impact of, and reducing, anti-social behaviour** - Some areas, such as the tunnel by Banff Bridge and Banff skatepark have loads of rubbish, glass and people hanging out that make us feel unsafe. The streetlights aren't as bright as they used to be, which doesn't help.

More street lighting (particularly Low Street in Banff) and traffic lights on Banff High Street would be good. Coastal paths are pitch black, and there may be an option for responsive lighting, but we also need to balance this with light pollution and impacts on boats.

6. **Improve Communication and Understanding around Local Decision-making** - We often don't know what decisions are being made, by who, and where. We would like to be more clued up and involved, so that we can help make our towns the best they can be.

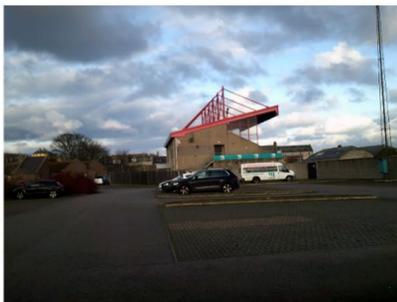
7. **Adapt Banff and Macduff to our Winter Climate** - We have a lot of wintry weather in our two towns that happens every year, but it's still difficult to get around when it's icy or when areas flood. We also note that we're getting more storms than we used to. This means we need to be better prepared and adapted for our Winters, so everyone (including vulnerable people) gets what they need no matter the weather.

8. **Increase Outdoor Opportunities in the Summer** - Banff and Macduff are beautiful and exciting places in the Summer, but we don't all make best use of the opportunities. We could have a surfing club, more outdoor sports, and a community nature photography competition for instance.

9. **Enhance Current Sport Facilities for Young People** – Banff Skatepark could be upgraded, while the swimming pool in Banff could have slides. This would offer more excitement for people.

Banff and Macduff: What we think of the local area

Key What's Important / Good? What's Missing/ Could be Better? Things to Change



What's Important / Good? (Green)

- There is a lot of history at both Banff Castle and Duff House. For example, the Monkey Puzzle Tree at The Castle has connections to Argentina. Banff also has a connection with the slave trade which is important to reflect on. There is lots of art in both places and interesting things to look at and learn about. Both grounds have places to sit and spend time in, which we appreciate.
- Banff Primary is a great school to attend. It's big and very grand with plenty of outdoor space and an astro.
- Banff is better for teenagers to hang out in than Macduff.
- There are quite good options for exercise in both Banff and Macduff. You can join the Deveron at any age, but have to be 14+ to join the other gym.
- The Aquarium has been voted one of the best attractions in Scotland. It's really good and has plans to expand. It holds a club for young people to learn more about marine life.
- Our harbour is important, and we have incredible views and beaches at the sea front.
- Macduff has a stronger sense of community than Banff.
- There needs to be more things for young people to do in Macduff.
- Lots of young people have jobs in the community which is good, and it's easy to get work. Small businesses trust young people more than big ones.
- The High Street is good but it is busy.
- The Cherry Tree Cafe is a good spot to have lunch and hang out.
- Low Street does have quite a few empty shop units. We think there could be more food options in these. It is also quite dark and makes some of us feel intimidated. Better street lighting would help.
- Deveron Vale FC play a really important role in the community. They provide food and other items to people who need them and we have a lot of respect for their work.
- The Ship Yard is really important for the town and gives local employment opportunities. It's also owned locally and is a really important part of our history.
- The Local Men's Shed is fantastic for many older men in our community who want to socialise.
- The Town Hall isn't used for much.
- Tarlair was a fantastic swimming pool, but it's now disused and not in a good state. They used to hold big events out here but now it's a bit forgotten and could be revived!
- We like going to Home Bakery, Scotmid and J.G. Ross for food and snacks.
- The Smiddy is a centre of excellence for silversmithing and jewellery!
- Some of us hang out by the skate park which is good for bikes too.
- The Tesco is medium sized, quite pricey and it can be hard to do a proper food shop there. We need a proper supermarket in Banff and Macduff.
- The Spotty Bag Shop has an amazing selection of things to buy!
- Some of us feel that there is some Anti-social Behaviour at the skate park, alongside a lot of vaping and underage drinking. It's a no go for some of us but ok for others. It's been around for about 10 years and could do with some maintenance.
- A separate pedestrian bridge to cross the River Deveron would be helpful.
- Macduff has a Scotmid, bakery, and a pharmacy, which is useful.
- The Home of Walford Bodie - Electric Wizard of the North is in Macduff!
- Macduff Primary School is good, but could do with more facilities.
- The MacB factory is an important local landmark and employer. We don't know a huge amount about it, though.
- The local museum is really great but not a lot of people know about it. This is the first year that local history walks have been running too.
- The park at Duff House is good and has lots of things for young people including swings, monkey bars etc. They have recently reopened it after being closed for summer and added more to the park. The tea rooms at Duff House are also nice and there is a lot of history associated with the building.
- Aberdeen Foyer has the Vinery which provide young people with employment opportunities. It is a good use of the building as it was dilapidated a year ago.
- The Vinery is a nice spot, and young people are welcome there but it's definitely more of a place for older people. It's not really a place to hang out.
- Macduff has playgrounds, but they're aimed only at really small children. We feel a bit forgotten.
- The fair comes to town twice a year. Some of us feel unsafe as there can be fights and other issues.
- Some of us really enjoy the rides and atmosphere of the fair when it arrives.
- For the fair - a system of wristbands would be good as it can be expensive even if you don't go on rides or you want to go on different days or at different times.
- The Deveron Sports Centre is really good and has swimming, football and squash, a sports hall, dance shows, meeting spaces, tennis, climbing wall, play groups and much more.
- The park at Duff House is good and has lots of things for young people including swings, monkey bars etc. They have recently reopened it after being closed for summer and added more to the park. The tea rooms at Duff House are also nice and there is a lot of history associated with the building.
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What's Missing/ Could be Better? (Pink)

- There is only one set of traffic lights and many of us probably wouldn't cycle around the town centre.
- There is a Morrisons Daily shop but it is more expensive than Tesco.
- It's possible to walk and cycle between Banff and Macduff but it isn't easy. Crossing the bridge doesn't feel that safe!
- There used to be more community events in the area like the fireworks display at Duff House, but there isn't the money there for them any more.
- We have a bus service between our two towns and also to Elgin and Aberdeen. However, we're still quite cut off from other places and buses to our nearest train station in Huntly are really infrequent. Many people don't have cars and rely on these services!

Things to Change (Orange)

- Macduff Library is used regularly and has events on but it isn't somewhere older children and teenagers would hang out.



Figure 21 Banff Academy Map. The base map source is Open Street Map.

Banff & Macduff – Post Showcase Reflection Workshop Main Themes

Youth as Important Consultees:

- Recognition of the significance of youth input in community matters, highlighting the alignment between pupil ideas and those of (expensive) consultants!
- The need for a café or youth hub as a common theme across different age groups.

Quality of Youth Participation:

- Praise for young people's presentations and acknowledgment of the schools' efforts.
- Concerns about youth voices not always being heard, emphasising the importance of managing expectations and timely communication.
- Support for creating meeting places for young people.
- Active support from various organisations and individuals to assist schools and youth in implementing ideas.
- The importance of youth pride in their town and contributions to community projects.
- Funding applications in place to support initiatives like a youth hub.
- Recognition of the need to improve communication and collaboration, especially linking to existing partnerships.
- Discussions on managing expectations, feasibility, and timelines for projects.

Future Initiatives:

- Focus on better communication and collaboration with young people.
- Plans for Macduff town centre/harbour regeneration, a youth hub, and a community nature photography competition.
- Suggestions for creating forums for young people, led by their input and being truly inclusive of diverse needs and interests.
- Strengthening connections with community councils and encouraging youth voices in these forums.
- Issues of vandalism and the importance of youth ownership of spaces - need for non-sport alternatives to address boredom and behavioural issues.
- Creating spaces like a café or hub to provide social and recreational opportunities.
- Consideration of economic diversity and opportunities to motivate youth to stay or return to Banff/Macduff.
- The impact of the cost of living on youth participation, suggesting making activities free to demonstrate commitment.

Leveraging Local Opportunities and Identity:

- Integrating the sea and local ecology into community projects.
- Involvement of the artistic community to inspire and attract diverse individuals.
- Practical initiatives like an ice cream stall to engage youth.

Career and Regeneration Opportunities:

- Consensus on the need to consider jobs, careers, and regeneration in future community plans.
- Importance of integrating these elements into broader community development goals.

Overall, the reflections and future steps focus on improving youth engagement, creating inclusive and supportive spaces, enhancing communication and collaboration, and leveraging local identity and

opportunities to foster community pride and development. Multiple parties are interested in advancing these initiatives, both in direct youth engagement and in integrating youth ideas into broader community actions.

5. The Inverurie and Port Elphinstone Children and Teenagers Just Transition Plan

Inverurie Academy

Led by a steering group of S1-6, and incorporating feedback from 456 consultation responses and a focus group with St Andrew's School

Overall we feel that Inverurie is a good place to live and go to school in. There's important local heritage, and lots of natural spaces we can get to easily. However, it's not really a place for people between the ages of 12 and 29! Therefore, there are some changes that would improve our experience of living here, especially ones that could reduce the amount of trips we have to make to Aberdeen for entertainment, and which make us feel more included in our own community.

From our walk about and thinking about how Inverurie could be better, we came up with some ideas for improvement. We then decided which we thought were the most important, and these became our priorities. You can read these below in the rough order of importance. We might need to talk about and vote on these a little bit more to make sure they're in the right order!

OUR PRIORITIES:

- **Improve and Increase the Number of Activities and Services Available to our Growing Population** - Inverurie is growing fast, but our services are not. We have some great sports facilities, but they're often quite busy and not always affordable to young people. For instance, it can be very hard to book a swimming spot on the day you want to go. We think swimming should be free or more affordable, for instance, especially given how basic a skill it is and how much our town floods. A small local cinema and / or outdoor cinema at Thainstone would also decrease trips to Aberdeen, while our schools and health centres need expansion or for more to be built!
- **Improve Advertisement of Opportunities to Young People** - We don't always know what's available to us and when, so a youth-friendly way to tell us (such as through school announcements online) would help connect people up to what's on offer. We have a strong feeling that young people are being kicked off of the Inverurie Residents Facebook page, which isn't fair and makes us feel excluded.
- **Free up Road Space for More Walking and Cycling** - Traffic is really bad in Inverurie, and the roads are narrow. There's not enough space at the moment for bike lanes due to this and all the pavement parking. It's also very difficult for people in wheelchairs to get around, which especially limits the independence of some young people with disabilities.

We therefore think that parking needs to be reorganised so that bike lanes are possible and access is improved. We think one way to do this is to create a new car park, potentially at the abandoned building next to Tesco, and introduce more buses / a Park & Ride Scheme. One way streets near Inverurie Academy could also help ease gridlock straight after school hours, especially Victoria Street.

- **Increase Affordable Local Food Options and Combat Food Waste** - Younger people and people on low incomes often struggle to eat out in Inverurie, or even to have enough food at home. We need options to combat this so our town can be more inclusive. At the same time, there is huge food waste from our supermarkets that just gets thrown away. Schemes like

Too Good to Go are popular and help a bit, but we could do more as a community to tackle this!

- **Create Youth Social Space/s** - We don't have an indoor place in Inverurie that feels truly welcoming to young people. However, there are several empty units in the town centre. We have several ideas for what a social space could look like, that we detail more in our projects poster.
- **Improve Overall Safety in Inverurie** - We need more street lighting, especially in our parks, and underpass improvements. More gritting when icy and filling in of potholes would help everyone. Many of us don't feel safe when out and about after dark, and we think there needs to be more community engagement from the police to increase trust.
- **Increase the Number of Community Events** - We have some community events during the Summer, but not so many in Winter. We know that Kellands School sometimes hosts these events, and we think the Inverurie Academy community could potentially do so as well. One idea is a community BBQ.
- **Create an Intergenerational Diner** - We recognise that the people least served in our community are older and younger people. We think there is an opportunity to bring generations together into one space (the site of the new Farm Foods would be ideal), and also create spaces for memories and reminiscing. We have some ideas for this which you can see in our Projects.
- **Reducing Litter** - Some areas, especially near parks, supermarkets, and Greens have too much litter around. We would like to see more litter picks, more bins in the hot spots, and for more encouragement to do the right thing.
- **Increasing our Access to Nature** - We have a fair bit in Inverurie, but some of us have noticed less and less as we get older. We would like there to be more of a focus on improving the biodiversity of our place. We have more ideas on this in our Projects.
- **More Support for Local Businesses** - More and more of our shops and businesses are big brands, and it can be hard for the local ones to survive. However, it's the small businesses that make Inverurie feel alive. We have more ideas on this in our Projects

Inverurie Teenagers: What we think of the local area

Key

What's Important / Good?

What's Missing / Could be Better?

Things to Change



Most of us like the school building, although the toilet situation isn't the best in many of our views. There is sometimes a conflict between some pupils and the community around the use of the school grounds with people encouraged not to use it during the day. This can be difficult in bad weather as we no longer have your group areas which means there isn't a designated space to hang out in.



We are too old to use the play park but if there were more equipment it could be great. Some of the equipment could be updated and more paths for older children and young people like running and things to do.



The retail park at the back of the town station is the closest shops people in Uryds live.



There are lots of supermarkets in Inverurie including the large Tesco. A new Farmfoods is being constructed nearby.



The park is a nice field and good for environmental management. It is often flooded in winter, which can freeze over and create spaces for skating. However, it can be an access problem for people using it during the winter.



The War Memorial Statue is important to us, as it commemorates our history.



Many of us see Uryds Park as a good place for dog walking. It is a quite good but can be dark at night as the lights are in the ground and green over in some places.



The bus is preferable to the bus, even though it's free, as it only takes 20 mins and goes directly to Union Square. The bus takes an hour and it's not always very reliable.



Strachans is a long-standing shop which has been here for generations.



Inverurie has lots of local shops which are nice and we can get to during lunch. We had generally positive about them even though they can be expensive and not aimed at our age group.



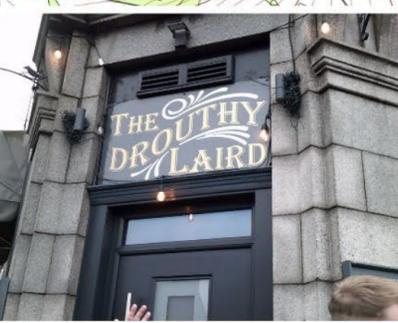
These are some of the more useful shops to us.



The Town Hall is good for events and an impressive building. The buses also stop outside it, which is handy.



We go to the The Gordons when we are in our 20s but sometimes they let us order beer when we are younger without checking ID but then have to wait for our beer. Also we already ordered our beer but didn't get it when it was only 10 minutes before we had to go home.



The Droghda Laird is a good pub and restaurant.



Many of us go to the garden centre for lunch. It is also a bit better as we don't have to wait with people for food or coffee.



There are council buildings. The council employs a lot of people locally, but we're not too clear on how local decisions are made.

Figure 23 Inverurie Academy Map. The base map contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

Inverurie Academy: Our Proposed Just Transition Projects

Key Affordable Places to eat More local businesses Intergenerational Diner Increase Nature locally Creating a Youth Space

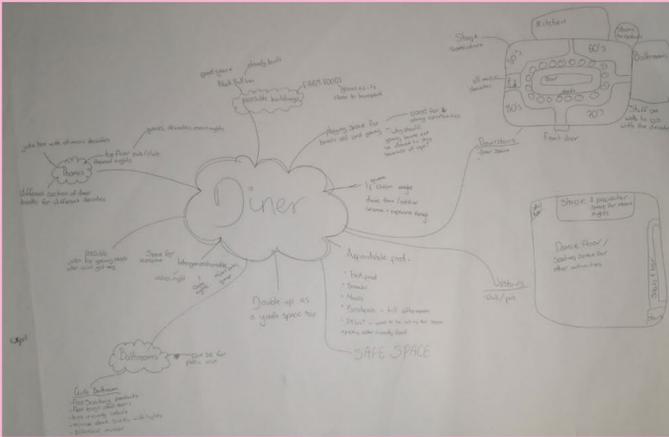
Intergenerational Diner

What we want to achieve:

- A place for people of different ages to spend time both together but also with friends and family to enjoy music, dancing and affordable food.
- 24hour café which could be a safe space but also a place for shift workers to enjoy.
- It could also act as a youth space/café too.
- Affordable food - snacks, meals, affordances for people with different needs from food. It could link with the affordable food project.
- A space for lots of different groups to meet each other.

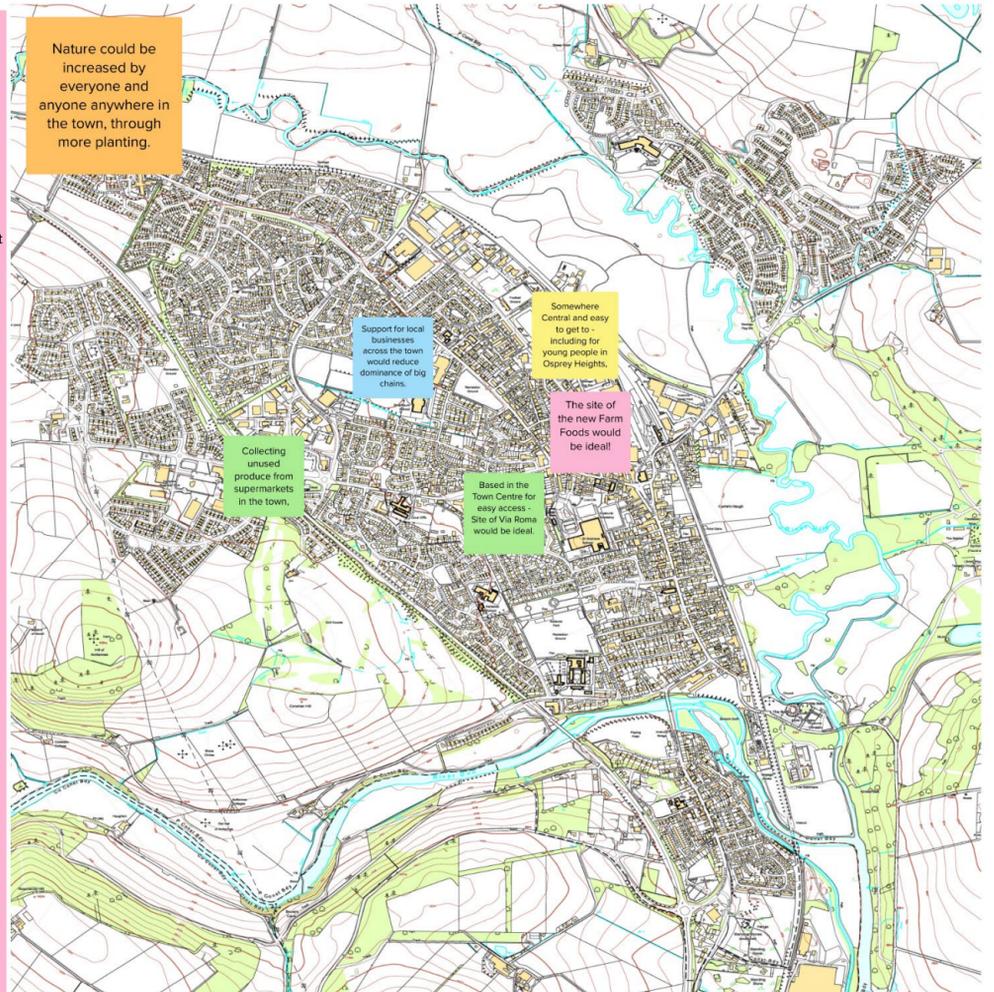
How We Might Achieve it:

- Black Bull Inn building for sale and could be renovated, or the new Farm Foods site would have been good as it is near good transport links (and we don't think we need another Farm Foods).
- Music and the interior design would be from different decades to allow people of different ages to find something they enjoy and can relate to.
- There would be a dance and bands space, to encourage local bands to play.
- Bathrooms should be for public use and Girls Bathrooms should have free sanitary products and floor length stalls, bins in all cubicles, and light up mirrors.
- It could also be a place for young people to work and gain experience.
- Below are some draft ideas and designs:



Why this is Important:

- We need more spaces in Inverurie which cater for multiple needs, but are also fun and exciting to be at.
- Its important that people of all ages feel welcome and included. This is especially important to tackle isolation, and it's the youngest and oldest in our community that feel most left out.



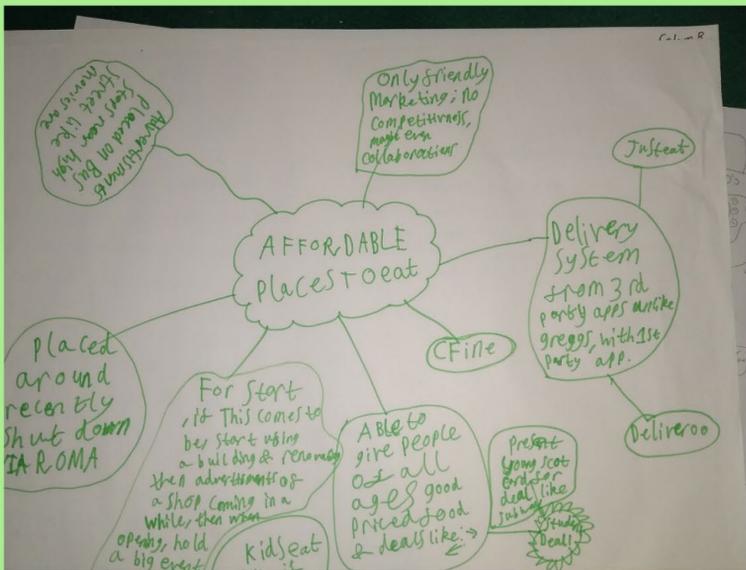
Affordable Places to Eat

What we want to achieve:

- Give people of all ages good, affordable food and deals on food like student discounts, kids eat free etc.

How We Might Achieve it:

- Reuse of existing buildings as an additional place to sell food.
- Picking up food that supermarkets might otherwise throw away and turning it into affordable and tasty meals for local people, so also cutting down our food waste problem.
- It could also link with local food growing opportunities.
- Advertise the launch of the shop/café so people know it is coming.
- Hold a big welcome event when it opens to encourage people to use it.
- It could be at the old Via Roma site, or another vacant unit in town.
- Advertisements can be placed on buses and at stops to let people know what's on offer.
- There would only be friendly marketing and collaborations with other local businesses. No competition between them, as this is meant to support the local food offer for people on lower incomes.
- Could also offer a delivery app system to get people who can't get to the cafe, linking in with existing providers like JustEat and Deliveroo.



Why this is Important:

- Not everyone has enough money to get what they need, like food.
- Food in Inverurie is quite expensive and not aimed at young people (except for a few chains).
- We have too much waste from our supermarkets that could be put to better use.

Supporting and increasing Local Business

What we want to achieve:

- Fewer big chains settling the town e.g. The new Farm Foods site could have been used to set up one or two local businesses, especially as Farm Foods failed the first time!
- A shop is needed in Osprey as some people have to walk or drive to access basic necessities.
- A café would also be good in Osprey to allow people to stop for a coffee and a chat.

How We Might Achieve it:

- The government or council could give more start up funding to assist businesses.
- There could be more public advertisement of new local businesses rather than just on Facebook as not everyone uses it, especially young people.
- There could be specific support for young people to setup local businesses

Why this is Important:

- Some people (like the elderly and those with disabilities) can't travel very far, so it is better to have lots of smaller businesses located nearby to make it easier for them to get what they need.
- Small businesses give life to our town, but big businesses don't care about local needs as much.
- Lots of small businesses gives lots of different work opportunities.

Creating a Youth Space

What we want to achieve:

- We want to create an inclusive youth space for young people across Inverurie to use.
- We want it to be fun and also informative - providing a wide range of opportunities.
- It would also be a community space and be able to be used for lots of different things

How We Might Achieve it:

- We could use an existing building to save costs/explore community asset transfer options for space?
- It will require funding from external sources so could work closely with Council to identify this. Ideally, after it started out it could be run as a social enterprise so it generates at least some of its own income.
- Space could be rented out for different events to bring in revenue.
- It could be furnished with donations like sofas, beanbags, pool table etc.
- It could provide job opportunities for young people.
- It would be important to have support workers attending so that it can be a safe and respectful place.
- Support workers would help ensure that, to the extent possible, young people design the programme of activities.

Why this is Important:

- Young people need a place to hang out in Inverurie through the week and the weekend that is fun and welcoming. This will also encourage them to participate in the community rather than just staying at home or going to Aberdeen.
- It will be a place that provides opportunities to help young people improve their lives and options no matter what their background or situation is.
- Too many young people feel that Inverurie is not for them, and don't have anywhere safe to go after dark.

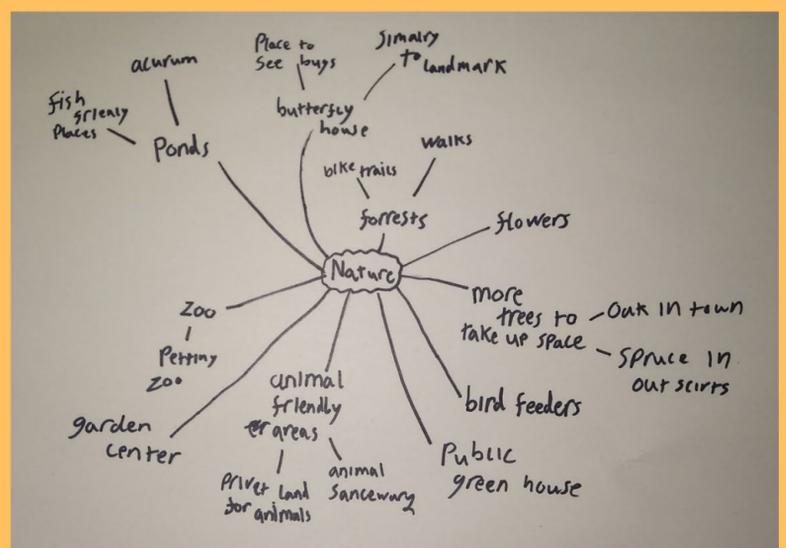
Increasing Nature Locally

What we want to achieve:

- Increase the amount of nature and natural environments for people to enjoy in the town, while also increasing biodiversity.

How We Might Achieve it:

- Planting more trees in different places in the town to increase greenery, attract back animals, and help with local issues like flooding.
- Create more animal friendly spaces to support local biodiversity such as providing bird feeders, bug hotels and creating ponds.
- An animal sanctuary in the town would be positive.
- Other attractions would be beneficial for education and learning about nature in the area, like a butterfly park (similar to Landmark).
- A public greenhouse could also be a good attraction and provide local opportunities for growing plants
- We already have a garden centre but this could be expanded.
- Everyone can be encouraged to take part through campaigns, and through activities in schools.



Why this is Important:

- Increasing nature is important for managing climate change and supporting people's wellbeing. It also makes the town look nicer and more welcoming.
- We've noticed the number of birds we see decrease, even in our lifetimes.
- Inverurie is quite busy and polluted along the main roads, but we can all do something to increase nature.

Kellands School

Led by a steering group of P4--6, incorporating the UNCRC group and the Kellands Kindness Committee

Overall we feel that Inverurie is a nice place to live and grow up in. There are lots of parks to play at and the town centre has lots of shops and places to eat that we like. However, there are some changes that could be made to making growing up in Inverurie even better.

From our walk about and thinking about what Inverurie would need if it were an island cut off from the rest of Scotland, we came up with some ideas for improvement. We then decided which we thought were the most important, and these became our priorities. You can read these below in the rough order of importance. We might need to talk about and vote on these a little bit more to make sure they're in the right order!

OUR PRIORITIES:

- **Increase the amount of nature in Inverurie** - We love our parks, woods, rivers, burns and local countryside. It makes our lives better to see nature and we would love to have even more. It is good for biodiversity and we love to be around and care for animals.
- **Increase the entertainment opportunities in Inverurie** - We would love more places to hangout in town. A youth friendly cafe, youth club, arcade, cinema and more ramps of different sizes at the Kellands skatepark would be great. Activity centres (like Landmark), or more things to climb on at our parks and cycle trails would also be good for young people.
- **Creating more places specifically for teenagers** - We think it might help calm their behaviour and make Inverurie feel safer. For example, a graffiti wall could help reduce graffiti in other places. Specific teen times at Carnival would also encourage more younger children to go.
- **Improve general safety in Inverurie** - More lights that work in our parks, traffic lights in the places we need to cross - High St, Blackhall Road and roundabouts especially - and stopping vapes and alcohol being sold to people underage would help. We're also concerned about the safety of some of the rides at the carnival.
- **Add bus stops to Osprey Heights** - We don't have any and not everyone has a car!
- **Improve love, care and community spirit in our town** - We would love more community events in our parks and town hall, like a BBQ. We would also like Inverurie to be easier to get around for people with disabilities. We like to do kind things to care for people who don't have enough money, are unwell or elderly. Growing food or gardening is another good way to do this, which also helps us all to care more for our natural environment.

Kellands Primary: Our Proposed Just Transition Projects

Key Teenage Spaces ■ More Entertainment in Inverurie ■ More Nature throughout the town ■ Love, Care and Community Spirit ■

Love, Care and Community Spirit

What we want to achieve:

- To help children and people who may not have enough money to afford things they need.
- To help people who are homeless and others who need specific types of housing.
- To help people who are elderly or disabled who might find day to day life difficult.
- To make our community feel safer and cleaner.

How We Might Achieve it:

- Install more traffic lights in the right places to help people cross the road more easily.
- Hold more events that bring the community together, like cooking, baking, eating and games days.
- Grow more trees to make the town feel nicer to be in and help us breath better air.
- Litter picks and encouraging people not to litter.

Why this is Important:

- Lots of people are isolated and don't have enough money to get what they need each day.
- Not everyone gets to eat enough.
- There are lots of people in Kellands who care about the community and want to help fix some of the problems we have in the town. .

Entertainment for everyone in Inverurie

What we want to achieve:

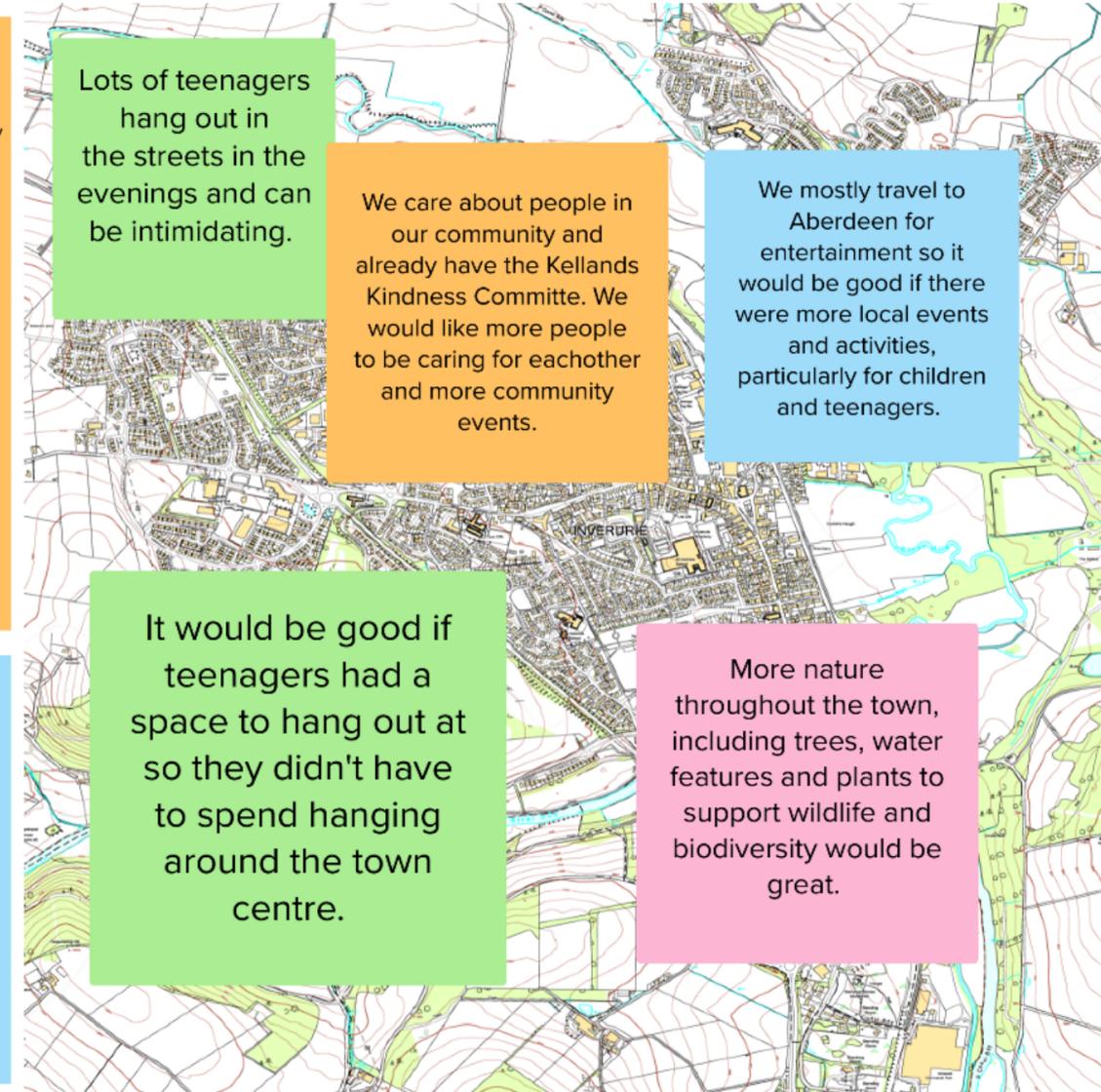
- We want there to be more entertainment options for people of all ages in Inverurie so that people don't have to go to Aberdeen for fun as often.
- More options for activities includes improving the parks, the gym, installing a climbing wall and a bigger pool.

How We Might Achieve it:

- Improving peoples access to books would be positive. This could be in the library
- Installing graffiti walls around Inverurie would be good as it would provide a creative space for young people.
- We would also like more shops selling things for kids in Inverurie like games shops.
- An attraction would be exciting like a zoo or aquarium so more people would visit here.

Why this is Important:

- At the moment we mainly have to travel to Aberdeen for entertainment which can be inconvenient and expensive for large families.
- If we can do more stuff here we can all have more fun and pollute less.



Places for Teenagers

What we want to achieve:

- We want a place for teenagers to hang out so that they don't have to hang around the town or use the places meant for younger children like the play parks.
- Some teenagers can be intimidating to younger kids so if they had their own space, we wouldn't be in conflict with each other as much.

How We Might Achieve it

- Create more teen-friendly spaces with food they like and activities they like doing. This could include more things like basketball courts, skate parks, climbing walls and graffitti walls,
- This could be like a youth club or a hang out space.
- More shelters for when it rains for teenagers and kids to hangout in (like The Apple in Kellands Park).
- Covered places for public art could allow young people to be creative and show off their work. It might also make the town feel more colourful.

Why this is Important:

- Teenagers need good spaces to hang out so that they don't need to be on the streets. Sometimes there isn't much for them to do so they hang around on the streets.

Increase the amount of nature in Inverurie

What we want to achieve:

- To increase the amount of nature in the town

How We Might Achieve it:

- People should stop cutting down trees in the area as they are important for cleaning the air and helping us breath.
- Don't kill the deer, they have an important role in the forest.
- Create more huts in parks for shelter.
- Create more burns and waterways to support wildlife and biodiversity.
- Create environments for insects, bugs and bees.
- No more wasting paper or plastic.

Why this is Important:

- The nature and animals are really important to Inverurie and to make sure they stay we have to look after them as much as possible.

Port Elphinstone School

Led by a steering group of P6 and P7

Overall we feel that Port Elphinstone is a good place to live and go to school in. There are important historic sites, and lots of natural spaces where we can play and explore. However, there are some changes that would improve our experience of living here, especially ones that could reduce the amount of trips we have to make to Inverurie to get what we need and have fun.

From our walk about and thinking about what Port would need if it were an island cut off from the rest of Scotland, we came up with some ideas for improvement. We then decided which we thought were the most important, and these became our priorities. You can read these below in the rough order of importance. We might need to talk about and vote on these a little bit more to make sure they're in the right order!

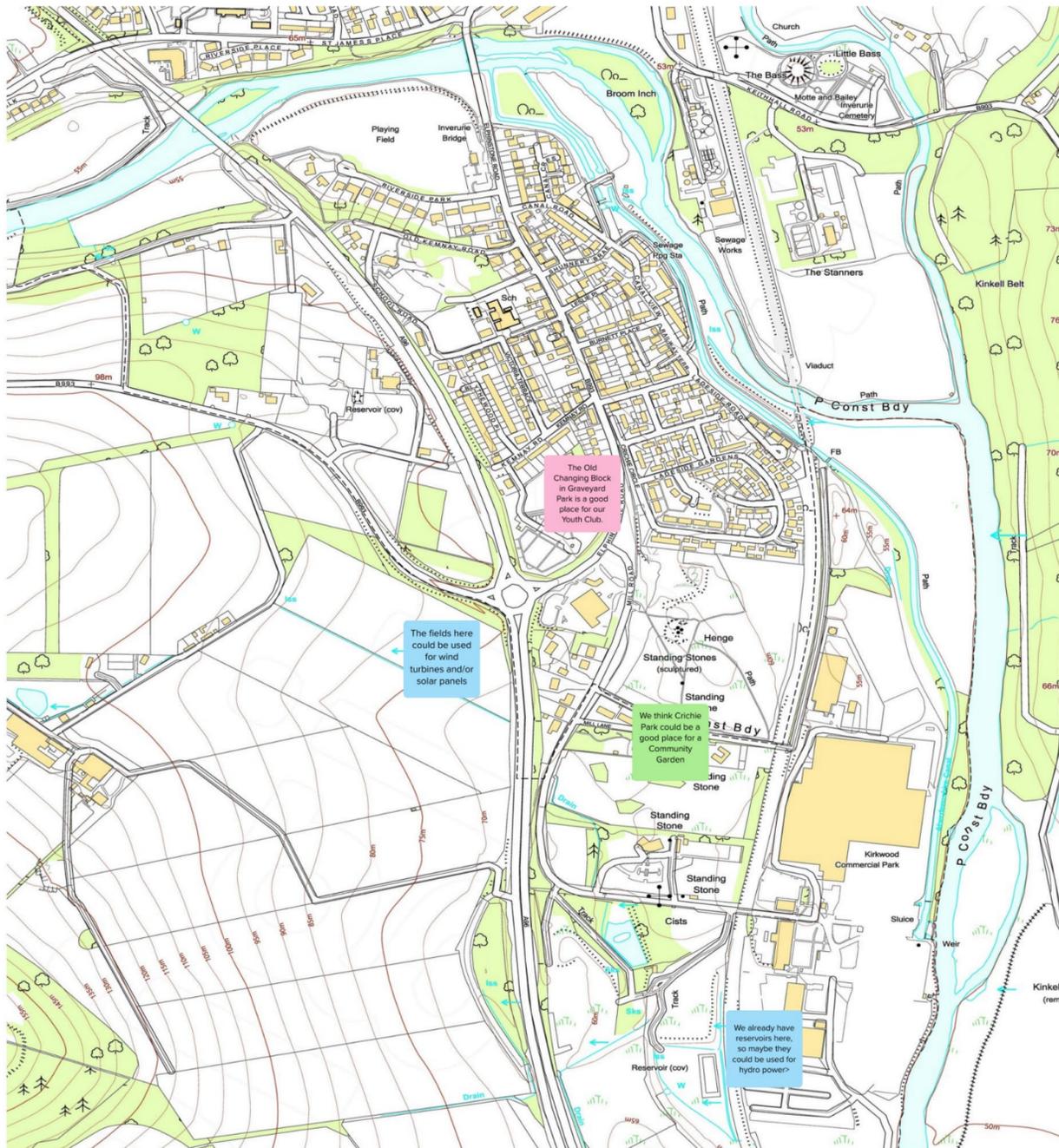
OUR PRIORITIES:

- **Enhance and Maintain our Public Spaces** - We love our parks and playgrounds and the amazing natural places we have for play too. However, **we would like to see the fence at Graveyard Park fixed, more benches, and nets and pitch lines put in both here and at Crichton Park as well.** We would also generally like **improved play equipment for older children** in our parks (Crichton Park has most space for this), and for **litter and graffiti to be cleared up** and reduced. **A railing on the muddy steps from our school to Davidson Park** would improve everyone's safety, and the sink hole at the bottom needs filling in. There are also too many rabbit holes on Crichton Park pitch for it to be safe for us to play properly, and a railing by the canal could also improve local safety.
- **Convert and Expand the Abandoned Changing Room Block at Graveyard Park** - This has been empty for ages and it gets vandalised at night. **We generally find Graveyard Park to be an unwelcoming place after dark, but it's a really good space we'd like to make more use of.** We think **the changing room block has good potential to be fixed up, converted and expanded into a local youth centre** where we could run a youth club. We have further ideas for this as part of one of our projects.
- **Improve our Walking and Cycling Routes** - Elphinstone Road is very busy, and so it's not very nice to walk or cycle down. Other local paths near the River Don are too gravelly or unsafe for other reasons. These could be improved by **improving the behaviour of drivers**, holding them to account with speed cameras, introducing **more traffic lights**, and **Crossing Attendants**. This would encourage us to get out and about by ourselves more. **Cycle paths** would also be really useful, especially as we get older and can no longer cycle on the pavement.
- **Improve our Bus Routes** - The loop bus in Inverurie has been cut back, and we don't have as many buses as we used to in Aberdeen. **More buses would make it easier for us to get out and about** and encourage us to be more independent as we get older.
- **Bring Back Our Public Toilets and keep them Maintained** - We miss our **public toilets at Davidson Park** as it's quite a long distance to any others. This is especially bad for really young and older people. However, we need them to be **well looked after**, as they used to be vandalised a lot and didn't feel welcoming or safe to us!
- **Increase the Shops and Services in Port** - We have to travel to Inverurie to get much of what we need. It would be much easier for us and our families if more was available here.
- **Increase our Entertainment and Sports Options** - Many of us like to play sports, music and go to clubs but **there aren't many at all in Port.** The ones in Inverurie are also often full, particularly football, so a lot of people are on waiting lists. **Some of us travel quite far to play in football clubs and not everyone can manage it.** More opportunities for entertainment and sports are needed in Port and Inverurie, as the population keeps growing but we're not getting more facilities. We think we have enough football pitches for more football clubs, and the opportunity for a youth club.

- **Start a Community Renewable Energy Project** - Many of us think that there could be wind, solar, or hydro power opportunities in Port Elphinstone, especially with both the River Don and River Urie. If this was run by the community, we could make money to create more of our own local opportunities.
- **More Local Support and Care for Everyone** - More people need help in our community than they used to, such as through foodbanks because of the cost of living crisis. We know that there are schemes to help elderly people in their homes, and a Mens Shed for Adults. However, **we don't think there's enough to support people locally so they don't have to travel to Inverurie**, nor anything to help young people and others have a safe space to talk about what's going on for them and to get some informal support. We would like to think about how we could introduce something like this as one of our Projects.
- **More Food Growing Opportunities** - Many of us would like to learn more about food growing, and do it together. This could support quite a few of our priorities around caring for each other and having more to do. This is one of our proposed Projects.

Port Elphinstone Children: Our Proposed Just Transition Projects

Key Proposed Food Growing Site  Renewable Energy Project Site  Our Proposed Youth Club Site 



Growing Food Together

What we want to achieve:

- Spaces to grow food and learn about food.
- Provide more free food to the community.
- Reduce the amount of food that we need to buy from far away.

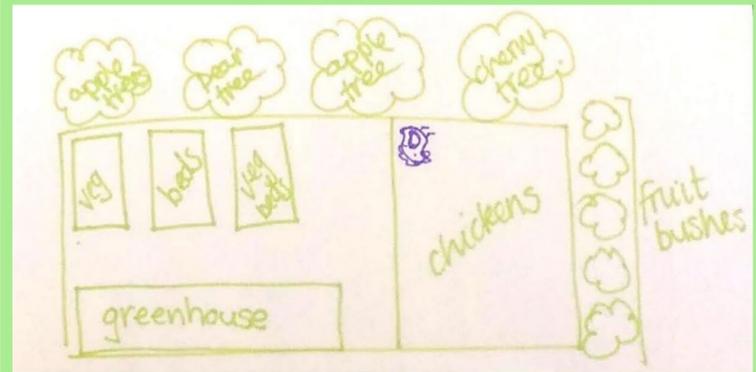
How We Might Achieve it:

We have thought about things we would like to grow and raise, and also created some draft designs:

- Fruit trees for community use
- Well looked after chickens, for eggs and meat
- Strawberries, corn and more veggies

We also thought about where and how we might do it:

- The area next to Crichtie Park would be a good spot for a community garden.
- We could have greenhouses for growing in the winter
- We'd have a community compost bin so we can make our own local compost from waste



Why this is Important:

- Not everyone has enough money to get what they need, like food.
- This would be a way to learn about food and spend time together - it could be fun!
- A lot of the meat in Tesco is processed, and we would like more healthy options.
- It could help meet some of our other aims around opportunities and care for people.

A Port Elphinstone Community Energy Project

What we want to achieve:

- The ability to make some of our own renewable electricity.
- To maybe reduce people's fuel bills.
- Make some money for community projects.
- Maybe address our flooding issue at the same time?

How We Might Achieve it:

- We have put some places on the map where we could have wind turbines or reservoirs for hydropower.
- People and organisations could put solar panels on their roofs.
- We would need some help from an expert to know what's possible.

Why this is Important:

- People's energy bills are going up.
- The River Don floods a lot, and it seems to be flooding a bit more recently
- We have ideas of things we want on our community, and we'd like to raise local money to make them happen.
- We know this has worked in other local communities, so it makes sense we try it here too.
- More renewable energy means less pollution, which is better for everyone.

A Port Elphinstone Youth Club, Designed by Local Children and Young People

What we want to achieve:

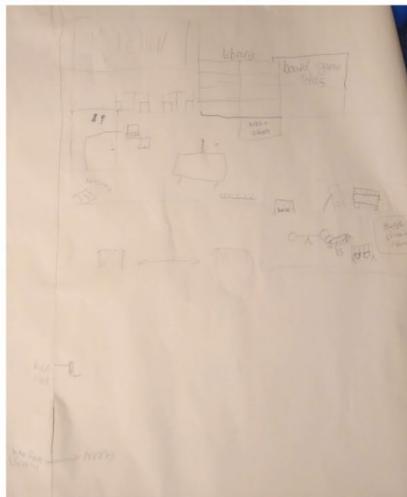
- A place for local young people, from upper primary and into secondary school to hangout outwith school time.
- A place specifically in Port, but where people from Inverurie and elsewhere are also welcome to come.
- Reuse the old changing block in Graveyard Park.

How We Might Achieve it:

- Refurbish and extend the old changing block, as there's quite a bit of space in Graveyard Park, and the block is just empty and vandalised at the moment.
- Speak with other local young people, including at Inverurie Academy, to find out what would make it a place they want to go to.
- We have drafted some initial ideas around areas for gaming, outdoor play, a kitchen etc.

Why this is Important:

- We have never had an indoor space of our own in Port, and we think it would help give children and young people somewhere to go and things to do.
- We have to travel to Inverurie a lot, and it would be nice to have something really local.
- The old changing block has lots of potential, but at the moment it attracts a lot of vandalism and makes Graveyard Park feel unsafe.



Support Opportunities for Everyone in Port

What we want to achieve:

- Safe spaces and places for people to talk about and / or feel better about their problems.
- Reducing the need to travel to Inverurie for support

How We Might Achieve it:

We have thought about things that help people feel better that we could find more ways to have at school and in our community:

- Sharing and giving food.
- Being around animals (Therapets).
- Going out into natural environments, and we have lots of these locally.
- Finding people with shared interests and socialising (maybe linking with the youth club idea!)
- Travelling and fun trips
- Talking to each other and listening to problems in nice environments with a good view.

Why this is Important:

- Not everyone feels heard by other people and they don't know how to say what's bothering them.
- Not everyone has enough money to get what they need, like food.
- We have lots of people in and beyond our school that care about the community, so we can do something about it.

6. What Needs to Happen Next?

The ideas and issues put forward by the children and young people in each participating school, with the broader consensus of the school population, are well thought out. While some will be easier to achieve than others, all are grounded in real world possibilities. Yet, they will require the ability for schools to find the time and resource to support pupil's ambitions, and for stakeholders beyond school to be galvanised to take action. It is for adults, as duty bearers to take this forward in a way that respects children's rights, and keeps young people updated on what actions can be taken. When actions cannot be taken, it is also for adults to close the feedback loop and explain why.

All too often, and for a variety of reasons (rigid curricular expectations; staff shortages; competing priorities; time/resource constraints) it can be difficult to sustain the initial enthusiasm and good intentions of both children and adults involved in these processes. With UNCRC incorporation placing a requirement on public bodies to ensure rights are being realised, the place-based plans by the young people offer a focal point around which any number of meaningful, impactful rights based approaches can be taken forward and sustained. For this to happen, and not fizzle out, there needs to be a continued commitment from both the adults and young people alongside on-going links, engagement and support at a local level.

Adult stakeholders attending the showcase events have communicated that some things within the plans are already being taken forward or can be taken forward at the more strategic level. There is therefore a need on one hand to hold them accountable to communicating these to young people in an appropriate way, and determining with them what more can be done now they know the young people's priorities and how that can be communicated. At the same time, there is scope for NESCAN/JTCP, AFW, APiC and other partners to 'keep the ball in the air' by focusing efforts on specific elements of young people's projects within each plan that have the most immediate ability to find traction. Below we lay out what we see to be the most fruitful areas for AFW and APiC to continue focused efforts:

Place	Overarching Project	Specific Project	Intended Just Transition Outcomes
Inverurie and Port Elphinstone	Better Communication and Collaboration with Young People More Community Events and Community Spirit	An Intergenerational Diner A Youth Space in Port Elphinstone	There is improved intergenerational communications at the strategic and community level. Young people therefore feel a greater sense of community integration. Local schools are recognised as hubs of the community, with strategic importance in a Just Transition. There is a space for young people to organise their own activities and learn skills that set them up for future coordination and organising around community need.

			Inverurie and Port Elphinstone are places where young people feel more hopeful about the future, and willing to stay when they get older / return later in life.
Huntly	The Youth Involvement Action Plan	<p>The Castle Café Project / Pay it Forward Café in Huntly</p> <p>Cocreated Community Events, with secondary pupils supporting primary pupils.</p>	<p>There is improved intergenerational communications at the strategic and community level, including between different ages of children and young people. Young people therefore feel a greater sense of community integration.</p> <p>Local schools are recognised as hubs of the community, with strategic importance in a Just Transition.</p> <p>There is a space for young people to organise their own activities and learn skills that set them up for future coordination and organising around community need.</p> <p>Huntly is a place where young people feel more hopeful about the future, and willing to stay when they get older / return later in life.</p>
Banff & Macduff	Better Communication and Collaboration with Young People	<p>The Safer Macduff Harbour Project</p> <p>A Youth Hub</p> <p>A Community Nature Photography Competition</p>	<p>There is improved intergenerational communications at the strategic and community level. Young people therefore feel a greater sense of community integration.</p> <p>Local schools are recognised as hubs of the community, with strategic importance in a Just Transition.</p> <p>There is a space for young people to organise their own activities and learn skills that set them up for future coordination and organising around community need.</p> <p>Banff and Macduff are places where young people feel more hopeful about the future, and willing to stay when they get older / return later in life.</p>

Aberdeen City	Better Communication and Collaboration with Young People	<p>Direct engagement with young people on local issues of Anti-social Behaviour, including on buses.</p> <p>Engage Streetsport to understand the possibilities for a permanent Cruyff Court in Kincorth</p> <p>Deepen the conversation with ETZ in Lochside, to support young people in determining how/whether they may benefit from the development.</p> <p>Deepen the conversation on abandoned buildings and how they may be reused to support youth-initiated projects.</p> <p>Support the fulfilment of the Stewart Park project, including the Litter Pick and Nature Survey; environmental enhancements; and food growing. This may be a collaboration with both Woodside and St Machar.</p> <p>Support/Encourage St Machar pupils/ the school to reach out to local businesses to discuss pupil discounts for equipment. This may be something for all schools that could cover an Aberdeen-wide initiative.</p> <p>Bring experts on retrofitting and other career tracks for a Just Transition to schools to discuss opportunities with local young people.</p>	<p>There is improved intergenerational communications at the strategic and community level. Young people therefore feel a greater sense of community integration.</p> <p>Local schools are recognised as hubs of the community, with strategic importance in a Just Transition.</p> <p>There are more spaces and activities for young people to organise their own activities and learn skills that set them up for future coordination and organising around community need.</p> <p>Young people are supported by more trusted adults who will support their personal development.</p> <p>Nature is enhanced at Stewart Park, and there are a wider range of enjoyable and nourishing activities for local children and young people. They can feel greater pride in their place and feel a greater sense of self-efficacy to tackle future Just Transition challenges.</p> <p>Young people access more of what they need and are not held back in their education due to low income or inadequate school and community resourcing.</p> <p>Young people are introduced to Just Transition career options and supported to develop these skills.</p>
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To fully capitalise on the initial work undertaken in each area, and recognising the significance of this work in the context of realising children's rights, consideration should also be given to:

- providing on-going dedicated support to the schools we have already worked with;
- training of further staff and partners in the methodology used to work with children and young people to co-create their Just Transition Plans;
- bringing young people from the 12 areas together to collaborate and discuss their ideas further;
- taking the approach to other communities in order to bring the priorities of young people to existing and new community deliberations; and
- maximize opportunities to link current and future plans from young people to other place-based work taking place within communities and Local Authorities, both within and beyond North East Scotland.

7. Conclusion

This project has shown that many children and young people hold strong views about their communities, and a strong desire to be involved in making things better. Our participants had a keen sense of what concepts such as justice, fairness, sustainability and transition looked and felt like. They were also keen to be part of making things better, and could clearly articulate why projects such as a youth space will have significant knock-on benefits for enabling a Just Transition. Indeed, they highlighted in clear terms that skills development and community integration are two of the most important things that will set them up for a future of success in tackling societies' biggest issues. This needs to begin while they are in school; tackling present challenges such as the cost-of-living crisis and an increasing withdrawal of public funding for the assets that contribute most to community wellbeing.

The work has shown us that there are three important conclusions we can draw from the process and outcomes, and consider in further developments:

1. **This work had significant value - to the participating pupils, teachers, adult stakeholders attending the final events, and to AFW and APiC.**

It developed ideas collaboratively, gave children and young people an outlet for their views, and they were able to speak about things which mattered to them with people listening closely. They were treated with respect, valued throughout the process, and there was genuine hope that their ideas might lead to something happening in their communities. In two of the areas, it also provides ripe opportunity for young people to contribute strategically and confidently in local climate assemblies. However, without action or feedback there is every chance young people will become disillusioned, and the narrative of people not listening and change being done to them will become ingrained. If children and young people become cynical of future deliberative processes, then the wider ambitions of Curriculum for Excellence as described by the 4 capacities will not be realized, and nor will a Just Transition.

2. **Children and young people's views need to be embedded in the systems that support community change and improvement. At the same time, children and young people need to be integrated fully into the wider community, so that intergenerational connections and actions are possible.**

Their plans need to both intersect with any other community deliberative processes, and with the formal structures which sit around community planning processes. AFW and APiC are of a view that this project has begun to show what is possible. We believe that with more time, the commitments and strategic alignments can be supported to develop in ways which will enable adults to hear and respond robustly to the views of our Children and Young People on their terms. Moreover, they can be supported to take forward some of their proposed projects, and in doing so learn vital community-building and facilitation skills.

It is up to those in positions to influence such processes to ensure young people are included as valued and active members of their communities. This involves meeting young people where they are at, and not expecting them to feel confident and able to take part in forums designed with adults in mind. It also means ensuring that, wherever possible, the next steps are led by project participants so that skills-development and sustainability are ingrained.

Spaces for young people to meet and organise also need to be re-established in communities, so that these conversations can continue beyond the school gates. The process of opening up such opportunities will also enable real-world skills-development, and offer opportunity to deepen the conversations had thus far.

3. Project Based Learning and active approaches to Learning for Sustainability (LfS) provide ripe opportunity for achieving Just Transition outcomes.

In working towards a “Just Transition” we need to find ways to hear the views from across communities and we need to come up with responses which meet the needs of all. This is a significant challenge to the ‘treatment as usual’ approach, but children and young people are not only a group who need to be involved fully in the Just Transition; they are also the group who will be impacted most by changes over time. It is therefore imperative that they are actively involved in finding things out about children’s human rights, climate change, inequality, sustainability, and have opportunities to explore pathways to future jobs and participate in local democratic processes.

Project Based Learning and active approaches to LfS allow young people to fully explore and express what they think (head), how they feel (heart) and what they can do (hands) to create a hopeful future for themselves and for the places they live. Indeed, taking part as active contributors and leaders in this change supports all three meta-skills of [Skills Development Scotland’s Skills 4.0](#): Self Management; Social Intelligence; and Innovation.

APiC and AFW have supported children and young people in 12 places to express their views and to start a process of bringing these views to their wider communities. We have also sought to ensure not only that the conversations and links which have started locally will be sustained, but also that some of the ideas will result in improvements being made on the ground. AFW and NESCAN will further provide a limited level of support and acknowledge any actions which are taken forward locally.