From concept to operation:
creating 20-minute neighbourhoods in rural Aberdeenshire

Aberdeenshire COUNCIL

From mountain to sea

Hello!

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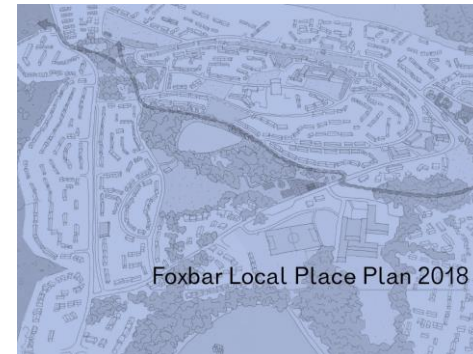Project Officer, Planning Information & Delivery Team

Introduction

Structure

- 20 minutes neighbourhoods
- Local living in an Aberdeenshire context
- Research findings
- Data gathering
- Case Study Peterhead

"**..work with local government** to take forward ambitions for 20 minute neighbourhoods **where people can live, work and learn in communities close to home**"

The Government's Programme for Scotland 2020-2021

20 Minute Neighbourhoods

What is a 20 Minute Neighbourhood?

Concept /Proponent	Description
Patrick Geddes	A mode of planning that sought to consider primary human needs in every intervention. The identification of synergy between 'place, work and folk' and engaging in constructive and 'conservative surgery' of places (Patrick Geddes, 2021, Geddes In Edinburgh's Old Town | Patrick Geddes Centre, 2018).
Clarence Perry	The Neighbourhood Unit, an idealized walkable neighbourhood. Ideal population of 5,000 (Talen and Koschinsky, 2013).
Garden City Movement	Creating communities that accommodate a wide range of community members through a mix in housing types and uses. An example being Letchworth with a population of 10,000. (Talen and Koschinsky, 2013).
Jane Jacobs	Strong urban blocks that promote activity, sense of place local economies and provide almost everything you need *"an intricate and close grained diversity of uses that give each other constant and mutual support, both economically and socially"* (Jacobs, 2020)
Complete Communities	Where people can live, work and play, and where walking and public transport is favoured ahead of the car. This is supported by a diverse housing mix. With each community applying the term in its own way (Complete Communities: An Integrated Approach | Planning for Complete Communities in Delaware, n.d.)
New Urbanism	'Pedestrian Cities.' "*Being able to walk to a mix of shops, restaurants, newsstands, coffeehouses and open-air markets within car-free neighborhoods and work centers delivers the highest quality of life and adds great variety and vitality to an area.*" Suggested population 5,000 – 10,000 (What is New Urbanism?, n.d.)
Walkable Neighbourhoods	'Walkable Neighborhoods' *"a safe, well-serviced neighborhood, imbued with qualities that make walking a positive experience. A "positive" walking experience means that streets, sidewalks and paths (pedestrian routes) are comfortable and interesting."* (Talen and Koschinsky, 2013)
Ecovillages	Although all differing ecovillages share key attributes, including sustaining healthy community life, ongoing reduction of carbon, carbon and eco literacy, local provision of services such as food production and energy systems (East, 2021)
The Compact City	The Compact City is a many centred city of mixed uses which favours active travel – with development grouped around public transport walking and cycling. (Urban Task Force, 1999)
City of Short Distances (Freiburg)	*"a city concept consisting of independently functioning unites, in which the aspects of everyday life can be laid out and accessed within walking distances by all members of society."* (The Academy of Urbanism, 2013)
David Sim	Soft City *"the colocation of different activities in the same place make it possible to live well without having to travel much"."* (Sim and Gehl, 2019, p13)

Climate change - 20 minute neighbourhoods in a Scottish context

Features of a 20 Minute Neighbourhood

20 Minute Neighbourhoods
Global examples

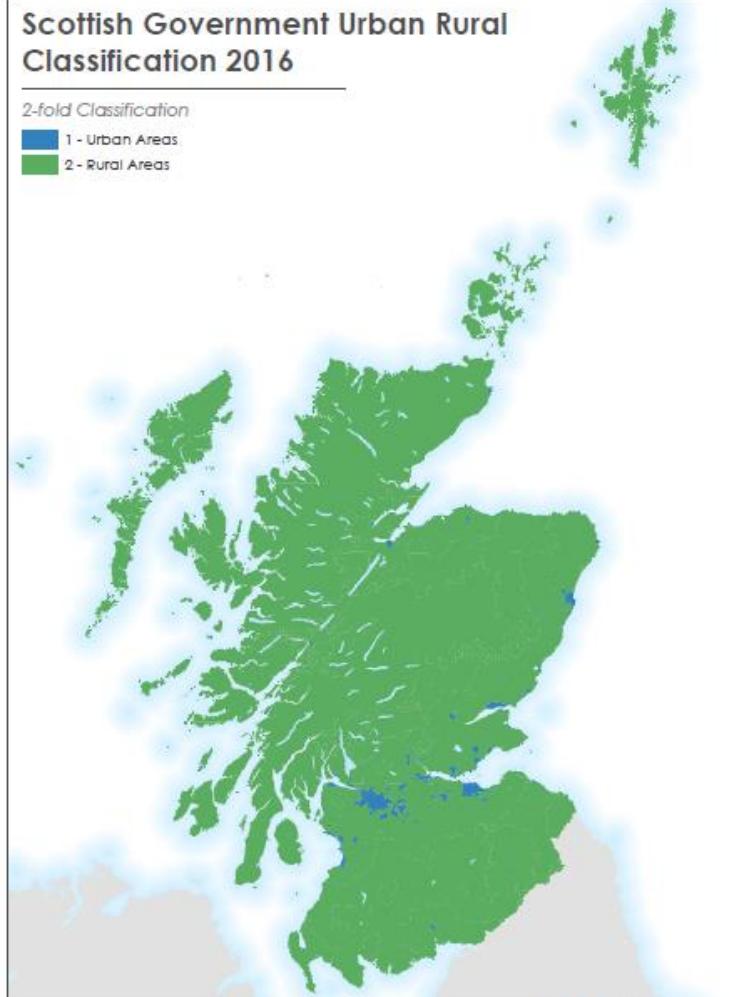| Place	Definition
Freiberg	Termed the 'compact city', 'city of neighbourhoods' or 'city of short distances'. This is a city concept consisting of independently functioning unites, in which the aspects of everyday life can be laid out and accessed within walking distances by all members of society. (The Academy of Urbanism, 2013)
Portland	*"vibrant neighbourhoods in which 90% of Portland residents can easily walk or bicycle to meet all basic daily, non-work needs."* (20-Minute Neighborhoods, 2021)
Melbourne	*"living locally the ability to meet most of their daily needs within a 20-minute walk from home, with safe cycling and local transport options."* (20-minute neighbourhoods, 2021)
Barcelona	Superblocks aim to recover some of the space that is taken by private cars for the use of the residents. The objective is to achieve a healthy public space, greener, fairer, and safer, which favours social relations and the local economy. (O'Gorman and Dillon-Robinson, 2021, p49)
Paris	*"Within the distance of a 15 min walk or bike ride, people should be able to live the essence of what constitutes the urban experience; to access work, housing, good, health, education, culture, and leisure"* (TED, 2020)

Countrywide Policy
Urban/Rural Scotland

Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016

2-fold Classification
- 1 - Urban Areas
- 2 - Rural Areas

Aberdeenshire
How will it work ?
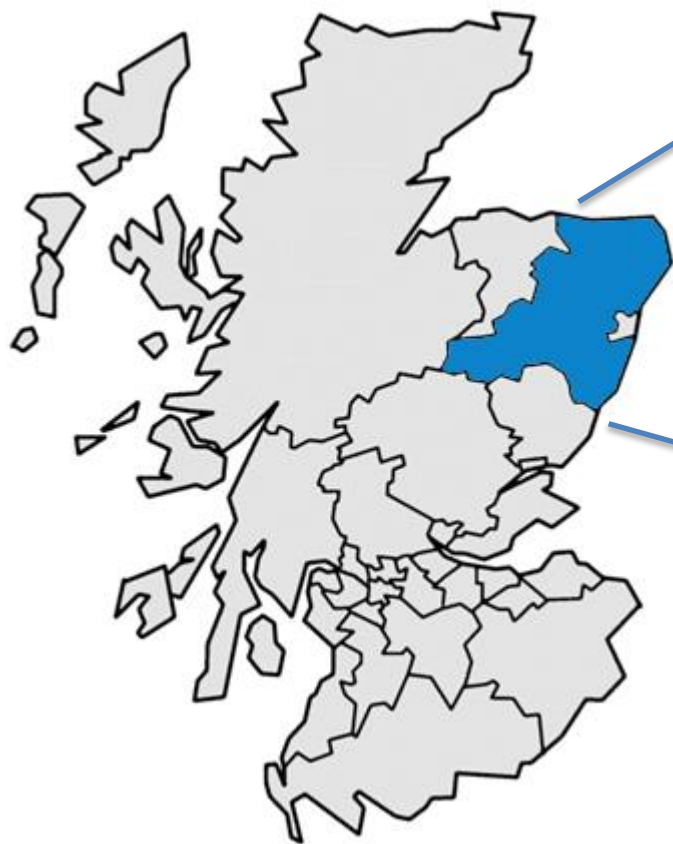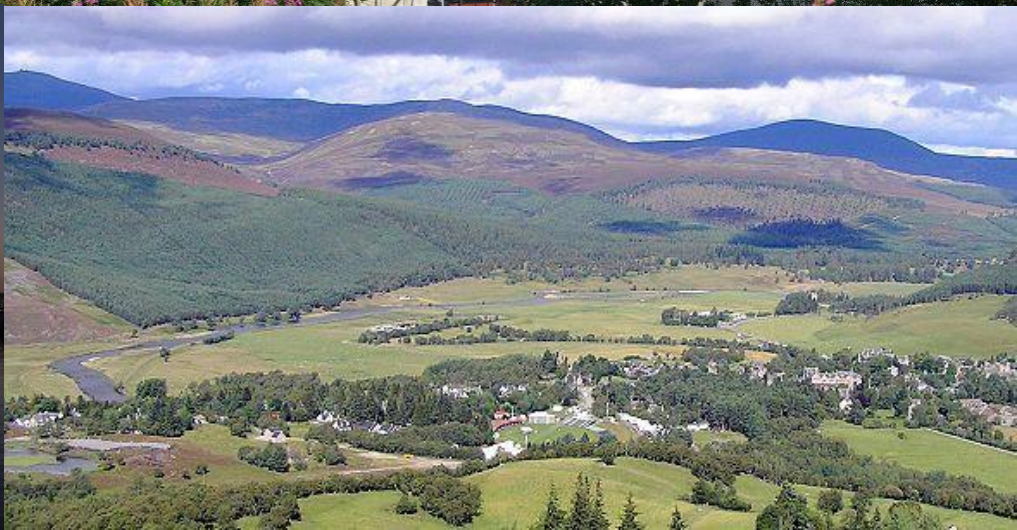
*"there will be some places that have an **urban feel but are actually quite small**, and others that have a more **rural feel or be more remote and will have rural issues**, but they are considered an urban centre because they have a population of 10,000."*

Interviewee quote, *Aberdeenshire's rural and suburban towns: an investigation into the retrofitability of the 20 minute neighbourhoods into existing places.*

Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan

Chapelton of Elsick, Masterplan

*"Every place is a different blend of **physical, social and economic characteristics and needs** that interact and influence each other. Action by those responsible for providing services and looking after assets to address a need based in one characteristic will all too frequently **have unintended consequences in another area: be that positive or negative in its impact**."*
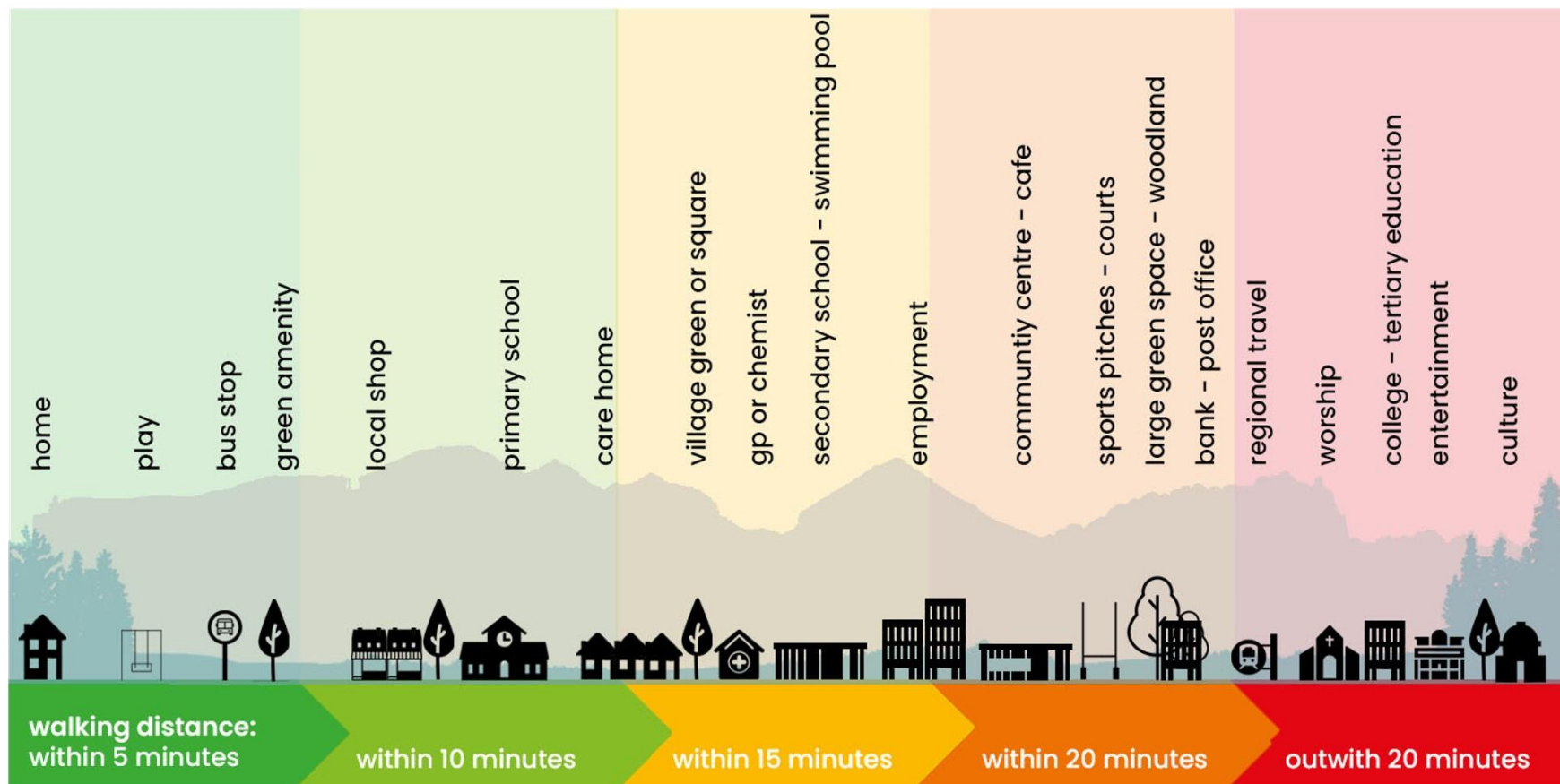
The Improvement Service, *Planning For Place*

Research & Putting it into Practice
Proximity & accessibility

Levels of service & expectation

| Size of Place	Examples of services & amenities		
Medium – Large	Key transport node (e.g. rail / bus into city)	Open space of different types, pitches (3G), sport facilities and specialist sport facilities such as courts, pool, skiing etc.	Minor injuries unit or cottage hospital.
Small – Medium	EV infrastructure and local car and ebike share scheme	Open space, pitches, MUGA/ courts, play area.	GP practice / maybe with visiting or embedded allied health professionals
Small	Creation of low level paths and links. Peer to peer carsharing, car clubs and ebike hub	Open space, pitches, play area.	Visiting GP 2 days a week in a community space. Or transport access to the GP practice elsewhere

Connection

Connection (generally)	Public Transport	Infrastructure	Behaviour
Mobile services that come to you e.g. pop up surgery in a local hall.	Public transport that it is affordable, frequent, appealing, good quality of experience	Car taming in town and village centres, hierarchy of movement principles	Challenge the aspiration for car ownership, car clubs & car sharing
Broadband and digital connectivity	Flexible and agile – move away from large (empty) coaches	'Park and walk' facilities at the edge towns and village centres.	Embracing the weather and hills.
Integrated transport connections e.g. train and bus timings	New fuels, hydrogen, and automation	Move to electric vehicles and necessary infrastructure to support this	Sharing economy
Low level links, key paths to join places and between different parts places	Free bus travel schemes	Bike and ebike infrastructure (toilets. repairs, storage)	

Levels of service & expectation & forms of application

clachan

linked places

hub

Scale	Form of Application
Medium – Large	'Hub & Spoke' 'Fields of centres' 'Strategic Settlement'
Small – Medium	'Network of linked complimentary centres' 'A Network of Small Distance Places'
Very Small	'Smart Clachan'
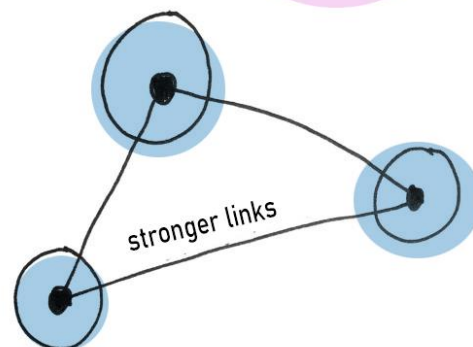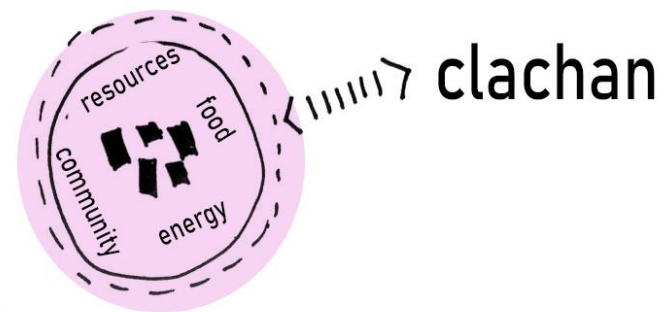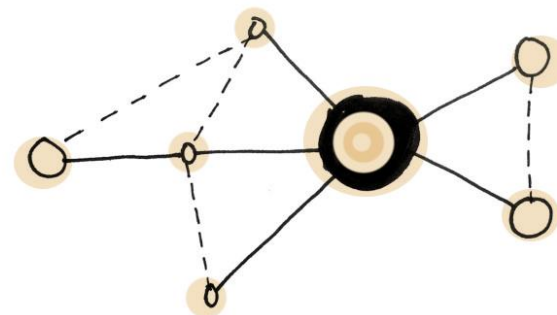
Table 1 — Settlements by population band

Population	Number of Settlements	Percentage of population of Scotland	Persons per hectare
1,000,000+	1	21.3	38.1
100,000-999,990	4	18.4	33.8
10,000-99,990	51	29.4	28.8
1,000-9,990	311	19.6	20.0
500-990	147	2.1	8.7
Rural remainder	-	9.2	0.1

Large urban areas (with a population of 125,000 or more)

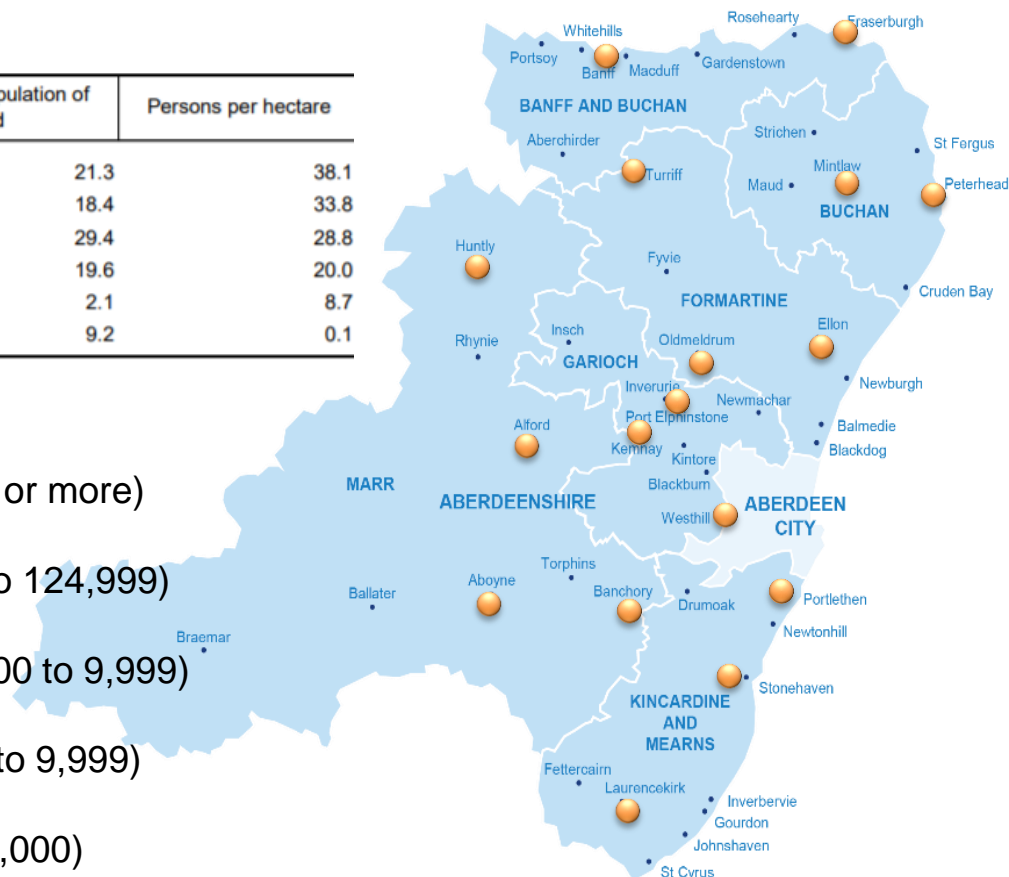Other urban areas (with a population of 10,000 to 124,999)

Accessible small towns (with a population of 3,000 to 9,999)

Remote small towns (with a population of 3,000 to 9,999)

Accessible rural (with a population of less than 3,000)

Remote rural (with a population of less than 3,000)

(National Records of Scotland)

Care and Repair or Stabilisation

Community

Collaborative Working

Conditions for operationalisation

- Alignment of policy, plans, levers & conditions for delivery
- Policy
- Planning and Planners, resource, skills, confidence
- Delivery focused
- Operational framework

Layer 3	Long-term vision, underpinned by commitment, action & investment
Layer 2	Quick wins / space for testing / space for failure and learning
Layer 1	Creation of a baseline / mapping continuing and ongoing community dialogue

Data
To understand & deliver

Data

To understand & deliver

Table 1: Aberdeenshire changes in all facilities 2000-2016

Facility	2000	2013	2015	2016	% change 2000/ 2016	% change 2013/ 2016	% change 2015/ 2016
Key Facilities							
Shop	450	410	413	416	-8%	1%	1%
Post Office	93	70	55	43	-54%	-39%	-22%
Petrol Station	60	30	25	23	-62%	-23%	-8%
Primary School	121	115	114	114	-6%	-1%	0%
Doctors Surgery	36	34	33	32	-11%	-6%	-3%
Key Facilities Total	**760**	**659**	**640**	**628**	**-17%**	**-5%**	**-2%**
Other Facilities							
Banks	30	13	13	10	-67%	-23%	-23%
Chemist	23	21	21	21	-9%	0%	0%
Police Station	13	10	9	8	-38%	-20%	-11%
Fire Station	12	12	12	12	0%	0%	0%
Library	20	20	20	20	0%	0%	0%
Mot Garage	59	61	58	57	-3%	-7%	-2%
Secondary School	4	4	4	4	0%	0%	0%
Hall	125	125	125	125	0%	0%	0%
Church	149	127	128	128	-14%	1%	0%
Hotels and Pubs	192	157	126	121	-37%	-23%	-4%
All Facilities Total	**1387**	**1209**	**1156**	**1134**	**-18%**	**-6%**	**-2%**

Service provision in each settlement varies annually and is dependent on local as well as national factors. Closures may be temporary or permanent; for example

3

Data

To understand & deliver

Phase 1: **Quantitative data**

- Agreement on 'needs' **daily basis** in an Aberdeenshire context.
- 'Place Data Hub' containing information pertinent to 'Local Living Themes' baseline for the existing provision of services within settlements.
- Creation of an interactive StoryMap allowing visual representation of data ready for publication on the Council's website.
- Production of settlement 'data sheets' providing an overview of each settlement including maps.

Data
To understand & deliver

Phase 2: analysis

•Assessment to identify where existing 20-minute neighbourhoods are and where networks of settlements exist.

•Assessment to identify those settlements capable of becoming 20-minute neighbourhood

•Capturing community aspirations

•Preparation of a 'Living Locally in Aberdeenshire' Report presenting the results from the project, including a full suite of completed settlement 'data sheets'

Data
Broad themes

From mountain to sea

Buchan	Banff & Buchan	Formartine	Garioch	Kincardine & Mearns	Marr
Aberchirder	Ardallie	Balmedie	Auchleven	Arbuthnott	Aboyne
Banff	Auchnagatt	Barthol Chapel	Blackburn	Auchenblae	Alford
Boyndie	Boddam	Belhelvie	Chapel of Garioch	Blairs	Ballater
Cairnbulg & Inverallochy	Crimond	Berefold	Colpy	Catterline	Ballogie
Cornhill	Cruden Bay	Blackdog	Dunecht	Chapelton	Banchory
Crovie	Fetterangus	Collieston	Durno	Cookney	Braemar
Crudie	Hatton	Cultercullen	Echt	Downies	Bridge of Alford
Fordyce	Longhaven	Cuminestown	Garlogie	Drumlithie	Cairnie
Fraserburgh	Longside	Daviot	Hatton of Fintray	Drumoak	Clatt
Gardenstown	Maud	Ellon	Insch	Edzell Woods & New Esk	Crathes
Inverboyndie	Mintlaw	Fintry	Inverurie & Port Elphinstone	Fettercairn	Crathie
King Edward	New Deer	Foveran	Keithhall	Findon	Dinnet
Ladysbridge	New Leeds	Fyvie	Kemnay	Fordoun	Drumblade
Macduff	New Pitsligo	Garmond	Kingseat	Gourdon	Finzean
Memsie	Old Deer	Hattoncrook	Kinmuck	Inverbervie	Forgue
New Aberdour	Peterhead	Kirkton of Auchterless	Kintore	Johnshaven	Gartly
New Byth	Rora	Methlick	Kirkton of Skene	Kirkton of Durris	Glass
Pennan	St Combs	Newburgh	Leslie	Kirkton of Maryculter	Glenkindie

Buchan	Banff & Buchan	Formartine	Garioch	Kincardine & Mearns	Marr
Pennan	St Combs	Newburgh	Leslie	Kirkton of Maryculter	Glenkindie
Portsoy	St Fergus	Oldmeldrum	Lyne of Skene	Laurencekirk	Huntly
Rathen	Strichen	Pitmedden	Meikle Wartle	Luthermuir	Inchmarlo
Rosehearty	Stuartfield	Potterton	Midmar	Marykirk	Keig
Sandend		Rashierieve Foveran	Millbank	Marywell	Kennethmont
Sandhaven		Rothienorman	Newmachar	Muchalls	Kincardine O'Neil
Tyrie		St Katherines	Old Rayne	Newtonhill	Kirkton of Tough
Whitehills		Tarves	Oyne	Park	Largue
		Tipperty	Pitcaple	Portlethen	Logie Coldstone
		Turriff	Cluny & Sauchen	Portlethen Village	Lumphanan
		Udny Green	Westhill	Roadside of Kinneff	Lumsden
		Udny Station	Whiteford/ Logie Durno	St Cyrus	Montgarrie
		West Pitmillan	Whiterashes	Stonehaven	Monymusk
		Woodhead		West Cairnbeg	Muir of Fowlis
		Ythanbank		Woodland of Durris	Rhynie
					Ruthven
					Strachan
					Strathdon
					Tarland
					Torphins
					Towie
					Whitehouse

Case Study
Peterhead
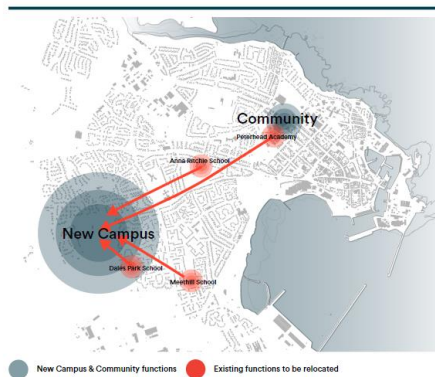
Case Study
Peterhead

Greenspaces, outdoor spaces and biodiversity (10)
- LDS 2017
- Community Impact Assessment 1
- Community Impact Assessment 2
- Choose Peterhead
- Sport Culture Community Facilities Survey 2017
- Sustaining Choices
- Town Centre Health Check 2017
- Longate Mini-public
- The Plan is in your Hands
- Peterhead Decides

Feeling Safe (8)
- LDP PS Peterhead 2017
- Community Impact Assessment 1 (Survey)
- Community Impact Assessment 2
- Choose Peterhead
- Sustaining Choices
- Town Centre Health Check 2017
- Longate Mini-public
- Peterhead Town Centre Regeneration Strategic Report, Past, Present and Future – The Heart of Peterhead

Employment, skills and local economy (6)
- Community Impact Assessment 1 (Survey)
- Community Impact Assessment 2
- Peterhead Vision and Action Plan
- Longate Mini-public
- Peterhead Town Centre Regeneration Strategic Report, Past, Present and Future – The Heart of Peterhead
- Peterhead Arts and Culture Network Engagement Event

Interaction/ connection/ integration (5)
- Community Impact Assessment 1 (Survey)
- Community Impact Assessment 2
- Peterhead Vision and Action Plan
- Longate Mini-public
- Peterhead Town Centre Regeneration Strategic Report, Past, Present and Future – The Heart of Peterhead

Culture & Art, Heritage (5)
- Muckle Kirk Feasibility
- Choose Peterhead
- Sport Culture Community Facilitities Survey 2017
- Peterhead Town Centre Regeneration Strategic Report, Past, Present and Future – The Heart of Peterhead
- Peterhead Arts and Culture Network Engagement Event

Community Facilities & Public spaces (5)
- 2017 LDP PS Peterhead
- Muckle Kirk Feasibility
- Choose Peterhead
- Peterhead Vision and Action Plan
- Education Campus Engagement (s)

Local Environment and public realm (5)
- Community Impact Assessment 1 (Survey)
- Community Impact Assessment 2
- Sustaining Choices
- Your Voice, Your Choice
- Peterhead Decides

Case Study
Peterhead

Review of plans & strategies

Strategic Assessment

Peterhead Area Statistical Assessment 2021
Asset Drivers
Place Standards – the Plan is in your hands
Engagements

Strategies and Plans

SDP

Local Development Plan	FIRS	Council's Capital Plan
Service Strategies/ Plans	Children's Services Plan	Community Planning - LOIP
H&SC Locality Plans	Buchan Community Plan	Council's Buchan Area Plan
Peterhead Vision and Action Plan (to 2021)	Sustaining Choices Action Plan	Peterhead Locality Plan

Peterhead Masterplan

- Region (Aberdeenshire+)
- Aberdeenshire Council area
- x6 Council's administrative areas
- Local area / town

Case Study
Peterhead

Review of plans & strategies
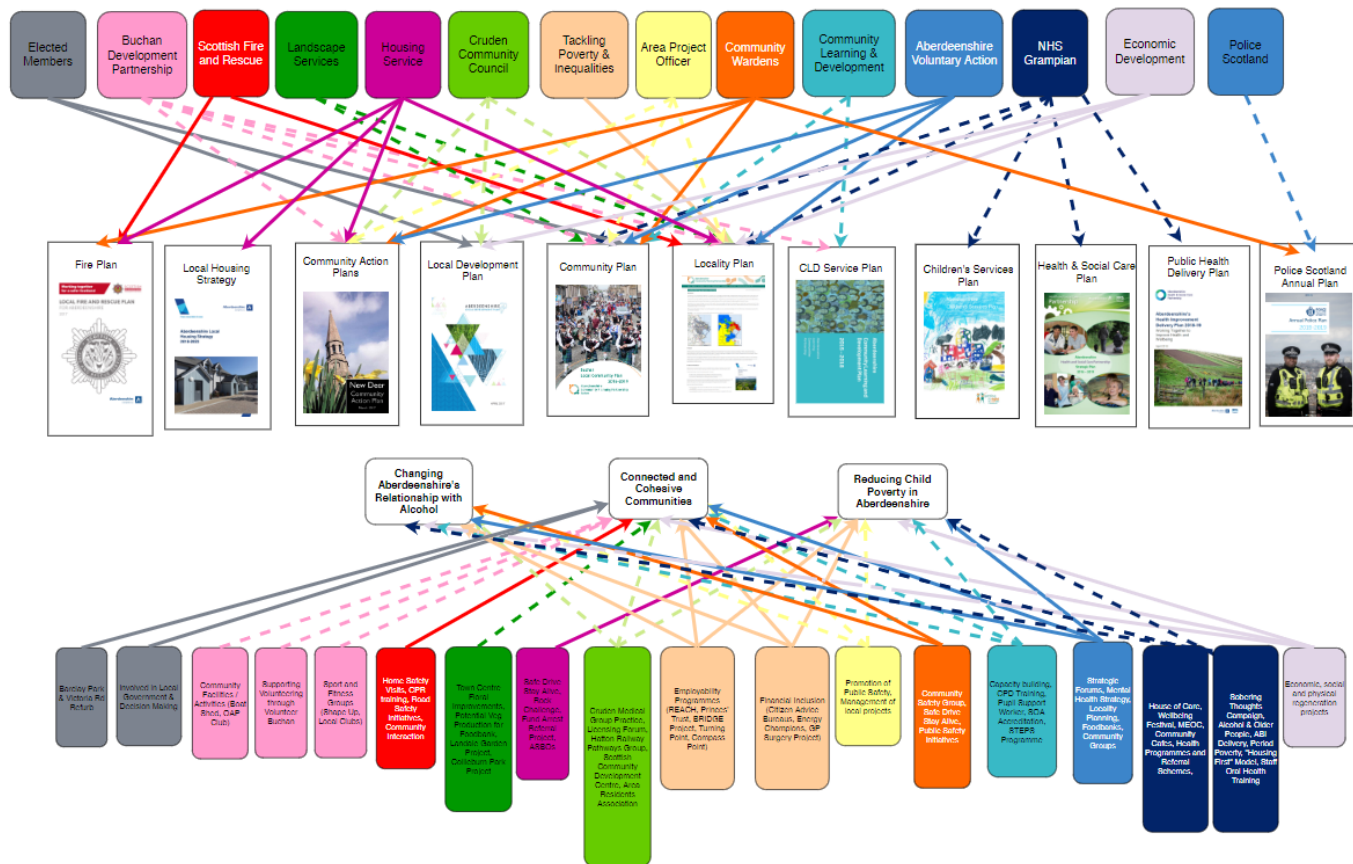
Case Study
Peterhead

Mapping all projects
gaps & opportunities
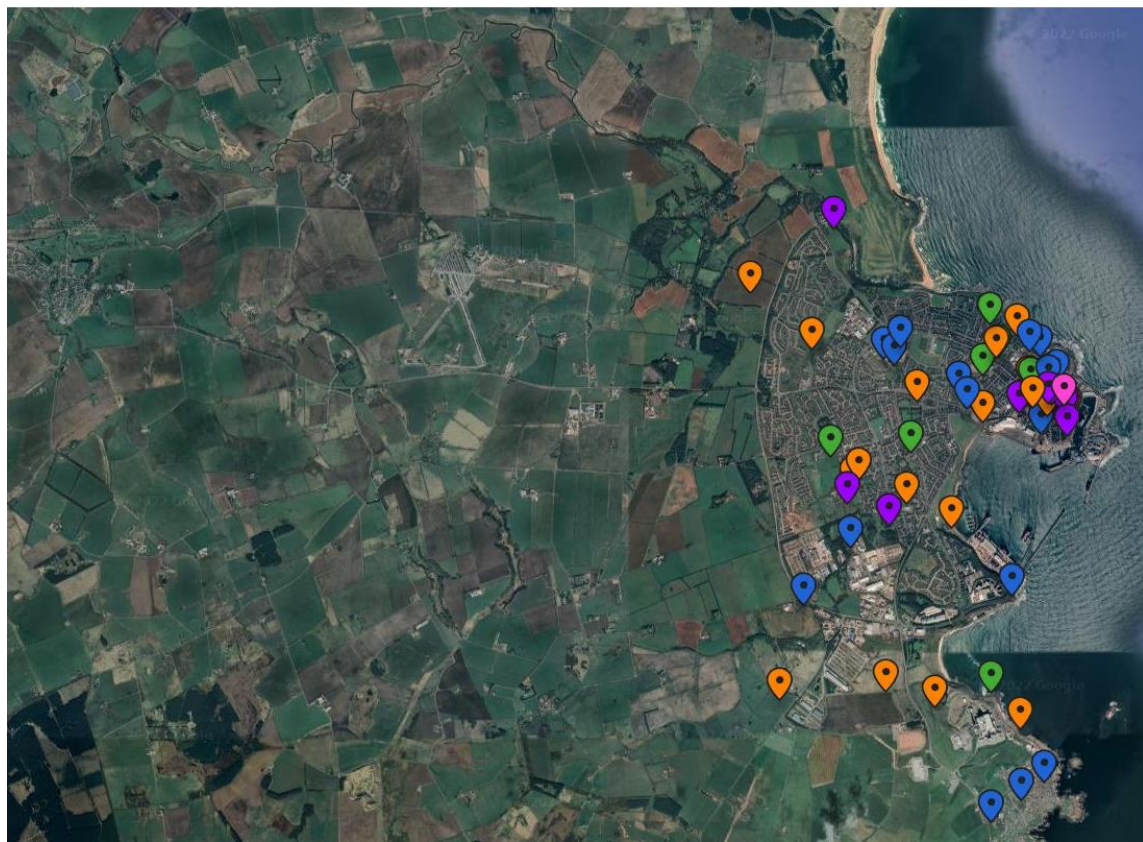
Aberdeenshire
Next Steps

- Continue building the baseline
  - Establish a Storymap and place database
  - Embrace local place plans
  - Increase confidence and dialogue
- Alignment
  - Policy, plans and levers
  - Service delivery
  - Embedding the place principal
- Testing & Delivery
  - Willingness to experiment and try things out
  - Commitment to medium and long term goals

Thank you

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References:

- [Putting Towns on the Policy Map: Understanding Scottish Places](#)
- *[Aberdeenshire's rural and suburban towns: an investigation into the retrofitability of the 20 minute neighbourhoods into existing places](#)*
- [Paths for all](#)
- [Room to Thrive – Huntly](#)
- [Understanding Scottish Places (usp.scot)](#)
- [Our Place | Our Place](#)
- [5f0d9630bd952_20200714 SLC Savills Rural Housing Report FINAL.pdf (landcommission.gov.scot)](#)