



Lairg Community Plan

In Association with Lairg Learning Centre

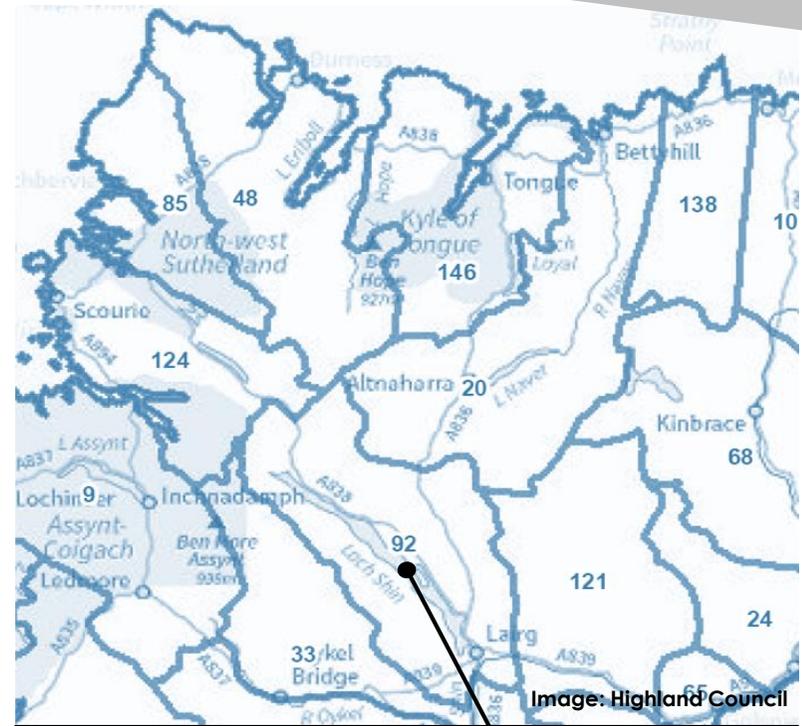


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Photo: Michelle Mackay



Lairg Community Council Area

The National Standards for Community Engagement state that measures must be taken to involve groups with "protected characteristics" in any community engagement process.

Protected Characteristics

It is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of one of the protected characteristics, which are as follows:

Age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation.

Measures to involve people during this engagement included offering transport to people who would otherwise not be able to attend workshops, offering to hire certified child-minders so that people could attend workshop regardless of childcare obligations, and inviting anyone who would be uncomfortable voicing their views at a workshop to get in touch to arrange another method of engagement.

It is recognised that not all protected characteristics are addressed directly through these measures.

Summary



Questionnaire responses were received from 16.4% of the population in Lairg Community Council Area. Responses identified *Transport, Work and Local Economy, Housing, and Local Services* as areas of most concern.



Transport was an issue throughout the engagement in Lairg at the open workshop, drop-in surgery, protected characteristics and youth workshops. Some of the negatives were that the train station was too far from the village – with no footpath to access it. Another issue was hospital transport/access and that there is not enough public transport in general.



Work and Local Economy had a mixed response. It was mentioned that there is employment available, but most opportunities are seasonal and non-progressive. It was highlighted that there were no big employers in Lairg, and that previous employers had been centralised.



Housing was not seen as much as an issue in Lairg. However, a few of the respondents stated that there was a lack of affordable homes and it's impossible for young people to get mortgages in the area. In terms of solutions, it was difficult to think of community led solutions. A popular idea was to build sustainable housing in Lairg.

Local Services was an issue in Lairg. There has been a decline in services over the years such as the bank and the post office, which are now closed. It was highlighted that residents must travel to access most services. It was also mentioned frequently that reducing business rent rates would be an ideal solution to these issues.



Young People from Lairg stressed that there were not enough activities for younger people. There was also an issue of public transport for those who live outside of Lairg, who have to rely on family to get into their town. Young people in Lairg stressed the need for a youth club for them to utilise.



Community Care was highlighted throughout all engagement in Lairg. There is no care home in Lairg and it was mentioned that there is a severe lack of carers in the community. One of the most frequently stated issues was hospital transport, with solutions such as increased use of local hospitals and a patient car transport scheme.



Community Group Dynamics seemed to be an underlying issue throughout engagement in Lairg. It was mentioned that the different groups have problems with not working together and village politics was also a frequent phrase used throughout.



The **Lairg Community Plan** is a summary of a community engagement process that included different methods of data gathering - mainly through questionnaires and workshops.

For the complete collection of data analysis, workshop summaries, 2011 Census data, and references please see the **Lairg Community Plan Appendices** published alongside this document.

Introduction

The Sutherland Community Partnership (SCP) has created Locality Plans for the five “most deprived” areas in Sutherland. These were identified, based on a range of data sources, as being Golspie, Brora, Helmsdale, Creich, and Kinlochbervie. In order to gather the views of people living in these areas and make sure that they are reflected in the Locality Plans, the SCP commissioned the Community Engagement Team at Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust to carry out community engagement. However, the SCP recognises that other areas in the county may benefit from a similar consultation, and the Community Engagement Team is therefore also carrying out work in the remaining areas of Sutherland. Thus, this is a consultation paper that outlines the main priorities of people living in the Lairg Community Council area.

The identified priorities were developed through a multi-stage community engagement process including the application of the Place Standard Tool as well as a community surgery and a youth workshop, which in total have gathered the views of at least 16.4% of Lairg population.

Who is the Lairg Community Plan for?

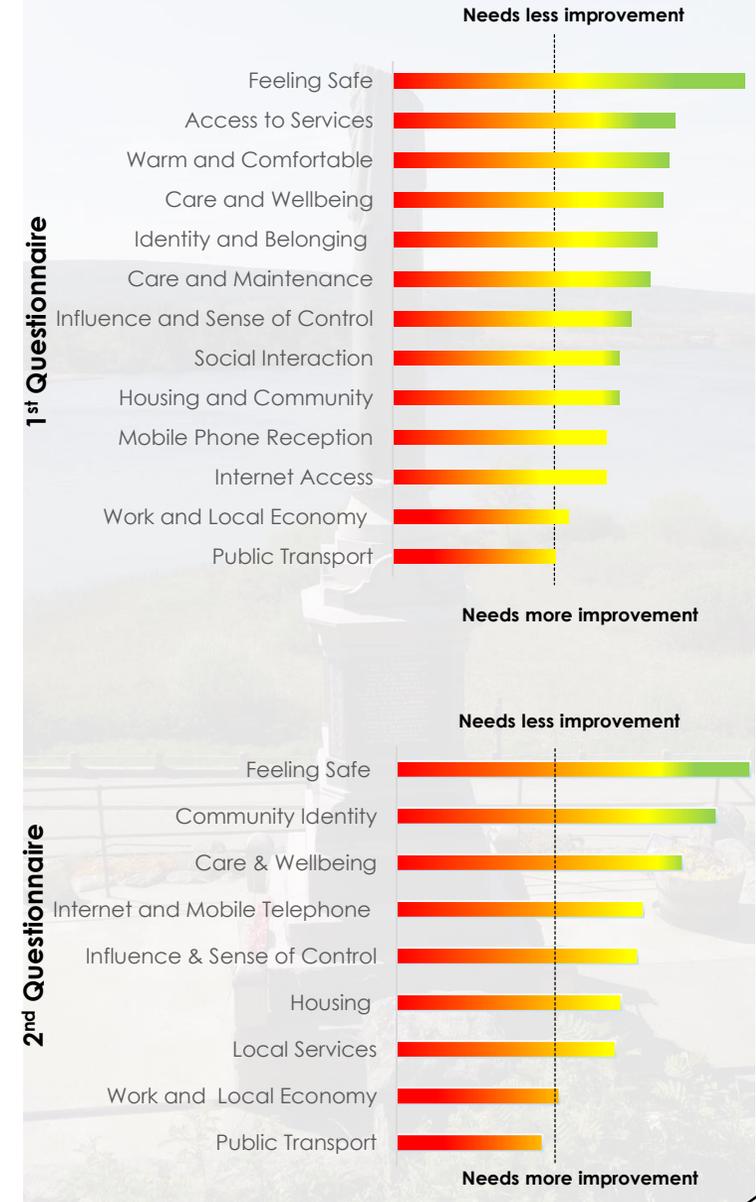
The **Lairg Community Plan** is, first and foremost, for people living within the Lairg Community Council area. Anyone, whether they are an individual or a representative of an organisation, can use this document to evidence a “need” in the community and is free to utilise it in relation to project planning, funding proposals and the like.

At the same time, both private and public service providers are encouraged to use this document to ensure that decision-making and service provision in the future are informed by the people living in the Lairg Area.

The Lairg Community Plan will also help to inform the Sutherland-wide initiatives and work of the Sutherland Community Partnership, which include an Adult’s Plan (led by NHS Highland), a Children’s Plan (led by Highland Council), a Transport Sub-Group (chaired by Police Scotland), an Employment Sub-Group (chaired by Highland Council), and a Fuel Poverty Sub-Group (chaired by Highland Council).

The Sutherland Community Partnership was created in late 2016 as a response to the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. The Partnership brings together statutory bodies such as Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, NHS Highland, Highland Council, and Highlands and Islands Enterprise as well as groups such as Voluntary Groups East Sutherland and CVS North.

Lairg rates the following things as:



Methods

The findings outlined in this plan were generated through a bottom-up community engagement approach where issues as well as solutions have been identified by the community.

Data was gathered through two questionnaires based on the Place Standard tool and workshops. Averages of ratings to different questionnaire categories were calculated, and respondents' answers were analysed and sorted into themes. This gave an early insight into the priority areas in Lairg and provided the basis for the topics explored at the workshops.

Analysis of the questionnaire responses informed the topics that were explored at a workshop in the community, where participants were working in a group on a variety of exercises. A drop-in surgery style consultation was also carried out in the community which followed a semi-structured interview format.

An additional workshop was held at the Church of Scotland in Lairg at a Dementia Friendly Café.

Participants from all workshops were invited to provide feedback once workshop results had been communicated back to them.

People were encouraged to fill out the questionnaire and attend workshops in a number of ways. Promotional posters were displayed at community halls, shops and services in Lairg and leaflets were distributed at community events. However, the most effective way of promoting the project was through the use of social media.

Social media

Facebook was used as the main means of advertising for promoting the questionnaire and the workshops. Once a post was created, it would be shared into relevant Lairg community Facebook-groups. This meant that a large proportion of the community were targeted in a short period of time. In the months before social media was used, 72 people completed the questionnaire. In the months after social media promotion was implemented, 82 people completed the questionnaire. This shows the importance of social media to any community engagement project. Twitter was also used to promote the workshops and the questionnaire. This Twitter account was managed by the Sutherland Community Partnership.

Engagement Process

1. Questionnaire

2. Data analysis

3. Workshops

4. Feedback from community

5. Lairg Community Plan



59% of online UK adults use Facebook daily



45% of online UK adults use Twitter daily.



Questionnaire Responses

Two questionnaires have been used during the engagement in Lairg. From January 2017 to February 2018 the 1st Questionnaire was available. During February 2018 the 1st Questionnaire underwent some minor changes, mainly to make it more proactive, encouraging respondents to suggest solutions to the identified issues. In addition, some categories were merged. Results from the amended questionnaire are displayed as "2nd Questionnaire".

The following pages present the findings of the questionnaires and show the ratings that the categories were given, the themes within the comments that respondents provided and their suggested solutions to the issues they identified. "(+)" indicates that a theme was viewed positively. **Respondents rated each category from 1-7 where 1 equals "a lot of room for improvement" and 7 equals "a little room for improvement"**.

Most Important Area to Address

1st Questionnaire

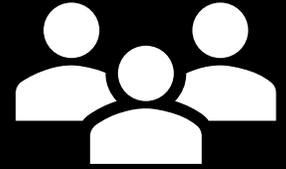
Public transport
Communications
Local economy

2nd Questionnaire

Local economy
Provision for young people
Infrastructure

Suggested improvements/solutions

Spend local money on local projects
Local support
Community to take over Highland Council services



16.4% of Lairg residents completed the questionnaires

21.4% of respondents were over the age of 65.



39.6% of respondents described themselves as employed.



Questionnaire Responses *(continued)*

Public Transport

Access to an affordable, reliable and well-connected public transport service is important for all communities. Good public transport encourages people to get around in ways that are better for the environment.

1st Questionnaire

Frequency
Drive
Train access

Average Rating **2.6**

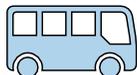
2nd Questionnaire

Frequency
Train location
Adequate (+)

Average Rating **2.6**

Suggested improvements/solutions

Link Lairg bus to the Mound
Dial-a-bus
Better access to information



*(+)

Work and Local Economy

Good-quality work offers important benefits through income, activity, social contact, sense of identity and job satisfaction. A thriving local economy can provide work opportunities and help create lively places where people want to spend time.

1st Questionnaire

Lack of job opportunities
Nothing in Lairg
Training opportunities (+)

Average Rating **2.8**

2nd Questionnaire

Lairg Learning Centre (+)
Lack of job opportunities
Not thriving

Average Rating **2.9**

Suggested improvements/solutions

Encourage business start-ups
Community buy out of building beside the Spar to turn into a Sailing Club



Questionnaire Responses *(continued)*

Housing and Heating

The homes that are available locally will affect who lives in an area and how a place looks and feels. Good places have a mix of quality homes for families and people of different ages and incomes.

Housing and Community 1st Questionnaire

Insufficient availability of housing
Unsure
Expensive

Average Rating **3.6**

Warm and Comfortable 1st Questionnaire

Too expensive
Cut own wood
Draughty

Average Rating **4.4**

Housing 2nd Questionnaire

Heating expensive
Insufficient availability of housing
Sufficient (+)

Average Rating **4.0**

Suggested improvements/solutions

Care home
Educational access
Economic housing

*(+) indicates that a theme was viewed positively by respondents



Questionnaire Responses *(continued)*

Community Identity and Spirit

How a place looks, its history and what other people think of the place can affect how we feel. A strong local identity can help us feel pride in our place, our community and in ourselves as a result. Feeling isolated can be damaging to our health and wellbeing. Good places provide a variety of spaces to meet and spend time with others.

Identity and Belonging 1st Questionnaire

Not part of community
Ferrycroft (+)
Positive identity (+)

Average Rating **4.2**

Social Interaction 1st Questionnaire

Community centre (+)
Library (+)
Plenty (+)

Average Rating **3.6**

Care and Maintenance 1st Questionnaire

Dog fouling
Litter
Well looked after (+)

Average Rating **4.1**

Community Identity & Spirit 2nd Questionnaire

Love where I live (+)
Good community spirit (+)
Lots happening (+)

Average Rating **5.7**

Suggested improvements/solutions

Increased police presence
More bins
Neighbour care

*(+) indicates that a theme was viewed positively by respondents



Questionnaire Responses *(continued)*

Local Services

Facilities and amenities are the things that we need to live and enjoy life. This can include shops, schools, nurseries, libraries, GP surgeries and places to eat, drink and meet friends. Access to facilities and amenities is important to support healthy, fulfilling lives.

1st Questionnaire

Public transport
Travel to access
GP (+)

Average Rating **4.5**

2nd Questionnaire

Adequate (+)
Travel to access
Bank closure

Average Rating **3.9**

Suggested improvements/solutions

Provide affordable business space
Mobile Service Point
Make units available for new businesses

*(+) indicates that a theme was viewed positively by respondents



Feeling Safe

How safe a place feels can affect people's wellbeing and how they spend their time in the place. Well-designed places can help make places feel safer and reduce crime and antisocial behaviour.

1st Questionnaire

Safe (+)
No crime (+)
Negative incomers

Average Rating **5.6**

2nd Questionnaire

Safe (+)
Police presence
No crime (+)

Average Rating **6.3**

Suggested improvements/solutions

Community police
Speed limits
Increased police presence



Questionnaire Responses *(continued)*

Care and Wellbeing

Having access to GP surgeries, hospitals and other facilities and services that help meet people's mental and physical needs is important so that people can enjoy healthy, fulfilling lives.

Influence and Sense of Control

People's views about their local area should be heard. Having a voice in decision making and feeling able to make changes can help to build stronger communities and better places. Having a sense of control can make people feel positive about their lives.

1st Questionnaire

Overnight care
N/A
Excellent (+)

Average Rating **4.3**

2nd Questionnaire

Adequate (+)
Hospital transport
Decline in services

Average Rating **5.1**

1st Questionnaire

Organisations listen (+)
Issues not addressed
Decentralisation

Average Rating **3.8**

2nd Questionnaire

Not listened to
Active community (+)
Don't know who to contact

Average Rating **4.3**

Suggested improvements/solutions

Mental health information
Well-being Centre
Increased use of local hospitals

Suggested improvements/solutions

More consultation
Central location for meetings
Community control

*(+) indicates that a theme was viewed positively by respondents



Questionnaire Responses *(continued)*

Internet and Mobile Telephone

Access to reliable and affordable communication networks can help people in all walks of life and the communities that they live in. From businesses to individuals, being able to communicate with others is essential in the modern world.

Internet Access 1st Questionnaire

Poor
Connection too slow
Consistency

Average Rating **3.4**

Mobile Signal 1st Questionnaire

Poor signal
Sufficient (+)
No 3G/4G

Average Rating **3.4**

Internet and Mobile Phone Connection 2nd Questionnaire

Sufficient (+)
Poor
Paying too much

Average Rating **4.4**

Suggested improvements/solutions

No comments entered.

*(+) indicates that a theme was viewed positively by respondents



Workshop Activity

An open workshop for the community was carried out in the Lairg Community Centre, where participants took part in group activities.

Three different workshop exercises were carried out aimed at drawing out what people in the community saw as current assets and ideas for potential future developments. Findings are summarised on the following pages.

A more detailed summary is available from the Lairg Community Plan Appendices

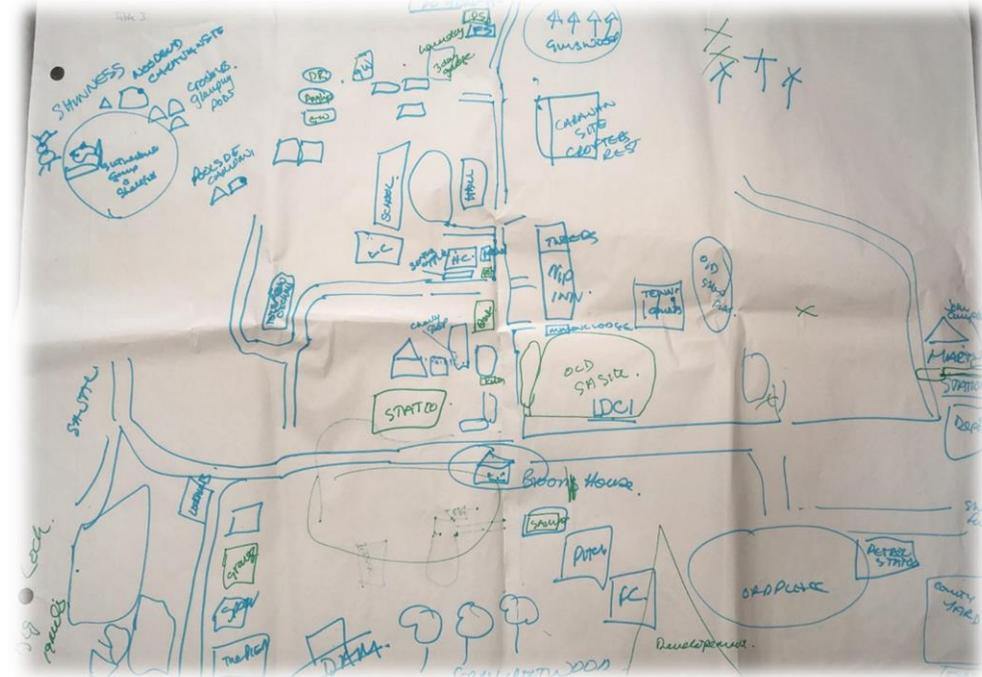
Activity 1

Understanding the Lairg of Now

Participants were formed into a group and asked to 'draw their community' as they see it using the pens and paper provided. If they liked something, they were asked to use a Blue pen, if they disliked something, they were asked to use a Green pen.



Group One



Likes

- Caravans
- Hotel
- FS (Fire station)
- School/Learning Centre
- Hall
- Pet shop
- Doctors
- Pharmacy
- Pier
- Spar
- Lockhart
- 'Broons'
- Recycling

Dislikes

- Mobile bank
- Crofters rest
- Grange
- Post office
- Bank
- Path and access at Ord Hill
- Sutherland hotel

Group Two



Likes

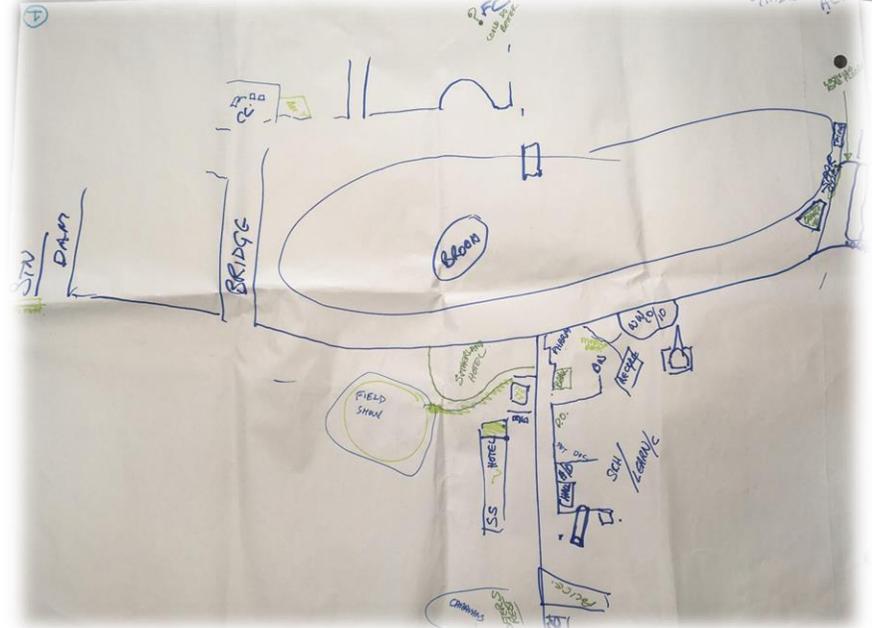
Lairg Learning Centre
 Tourist Centre
 Care and Wellbeing project
 Church

Pier Cafe
 Spar

Dislikes

Parks
 Bird Walks
 Car Park at train station
 No disabled access at train station
 Lairg Auction Mart
 Ord Place Carving
 Main Street
 Loch Shin – need something here

Group Three



Likes

Dam
 Ferry Croft Woods
 Football Club
 Learning Centre
 LDCI (Lairg and District Community Initiative)
 Nip Inn
 Tweeds
 County yard
 Caravan site/Crofters Rest
 Health Centre
 School
 Shin falls
 Petrol Station
 Glamping Pods
 Masonic Lodge

Dislikes

Bank
 Old SA site
 Post Office
 Development site
 Train station access
 Police station

Activity 2 - Developing the Lairg of the Future

Participants were asked to individually write down 2-3 ideas for development. They took turns presenting the ideas to the other participants in the group. They were then asked to select the two best ideas and consider potential negative impacts or consequences as a result of implementing the project idea. They were also asked to consider how those negative impacts may be mitigated.

Loch Shin Watersports		Group One
Potential Negative Impact	→	Solutions
Purchase the garage		Take advice
Noise		Reduced hours of activity
Pollution issues		Take advice
Health and safety		Learning Centre
Infrastructure review		Review
Cost		Community buy out
Maintenance		Volunteers/LC training
Skill shortage		Learning Centre
Equipment		Use recycled equipment boats and bikes

Care Home		Group Two
Potential Negative Impact	→	Solutions
Architectural design		Involve community at stages
The uptake, as people can already be cared for at home (in their own home) by their carers.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Their homes may not be fit for purpose and costly to adapt. Will offer purpose built facilities to facilitate all levels of care and accessibility to provide the best living conditions. Work with housing association or other community trusts to see if their area have the need.
The cost of rental		Costs on par with other housing association
No central hub		Residents have use of other nearby facilities – Bradbury, the Hub, the Gatehouse

Observatory/Distillery		Group One
Potential Negative Impact	→	Solutions
Finding a site		Look into Sallachy, Achany estate etc.
Money		Crowd fund
Local objections		Community consultation
Infrastructure		Take advice
Well known name support		Action group invites

Tourism Improvements		Group Two
Potential Negative Impact	→	Solutions
Land ownership issues.		Compulsory purchase
Lack of funding provision/monies		Sell adverts to sustain, improve and maintain
Sustainability/Seasonality (Watersports)/Costs/Manpower/Ownership		Subcontract to someone already in the industry i.e. Loch Inch Watersports, Go Wild
Permanent rescue boat/wages		Subcontract as above.
Playparks – Running costs, insurance, maintenance.		

Drop-in Centre		Group Three
Potential Negative Impact	→	Solutions
Confidentiality		Outsider run
Drug association		Onward referral
Reputation		Medical support

Community Transport		Group Three
Potential Negative Impact	→	Solutions
Taxi revenue		Taxi takes part in scheme
Driver vetting		
Financial need		Medical support
Volunteers		
Abused		Referral
Car equipped		



Lairg Community Workshop *(continued)*

Activity 3 Project Prioritisation

Following on from Activities 1 and 2, there was a need to get an overview of the priorities among the many ideas proposed throughout the workshop. Each participant was given a "briefcase full of money", which was an envelope with Monopoly money. Each participant was given £550,000 made up by:

1x £200,000 note
2x £100,000 notes
2x £50,000 notes
5x £10,000 notes



A label with each of the four selected project ideas from the previous Activity 2 was applied to a bucket and participants were asked to "spend their money" on the ideas they liked the best by putting money into the designated bucket. They could spend all their money on one idea, or they could spread their money out between several ideas - it was completely up to them.

After all the participants had voted in this manner, the total amount of money in each bucket was totalled up as detailed in the table below:

Development Idea	Funding from Participants
Care and Wellbeing Hub	£1,260,000
Loch Shin Water sports	£1,240,000
Distillery and Viewing Platform	£1,230,000
Drop-In Centre	£950,000
Tourism Improvement	£780,000
Community Base/Car Transport	£590,000

From the votes of the participants as shown above, there is a strong desire to build a 'Community Hub' which would include a youth room, leisure facilities and a gym.

Lairg Drop-In Surgery

At the outset of the planning of engagement activities in the Lairg Community Council area it was recognised that despite the steps taken to make the 'main' public workshop accessible to as many people as possible, there might be some who for various reasons might not be able to attend but would still like to share their thoughts on their community. For this reason, it was decided to provide a 'drop-in surgery' to enable those who could not attend the main workshop to contribute.

Following the identification of the priority areas in Lairg from the questionnaire data, semi-structured interview sheets were drawn up so that individuals attending the drop-in sessions would have the opportunity to discuss their thoughts on these topics as well as allowing time for them to raise other issues, concerns and thoughts about their community. Participants were first asked what they thought were the biggest issues concerning transport, work and the local economy and housing in Lairg, before having the opportunity to discuss any ideas or solutions they might have which could address these, preferably in a community-driven fashion. Following this, they were then asked if there were any other issues or concerns they would like to raise, and again if they had any ideas or solutions for these.

The main themes highlighted by the participants can be seen in the box below. A more detailed summary is available from the Lairg Community Plan Appendices.

Transport – Generally, the respondents did not react positively about the transport issues in Lairg. Some of the negatives were that the train station was too far from the village – with no footpath to access it. Another issue was hospital transport/access and that there is not enough public transport in general.

Work, the Local Economy and Local Services – There were mixed feelings about the availability of work in Lairg. Some of the respondents stated that there is employment available, but most opportunities are seasonal and don't have opportunities for career progression. It is also worth mentioning that a few of the respondents highlighted that there were no big employers in Lairg, and that previous employers had been centralised.

Housing – Housing was not seen as much of an issue to the respondents. However, a few of the respondents stated that there was a lack of affordable homes, with one person stating it's impossible for young people to get mortgages in the area. In terms of solutions, the respondents struggled to think of community led solutions. One idea was to build sustainable housing in Lairg.

Community Group Dynamics - seemed to be an underlying issue throughout engagement in Lairg. It was mentioned that the different groups have problems with not working together and village politics was also a frequent phrase used throughout.

Any Other Issues – other issues were mentioned such as lack provision for young people, lack of mental health services, general upkeep and maintenance, digital connectivity and the decline in Highland Council services.

Young Voices

There was a need to specifically draw out the voices of young people in the engagement process. This is not only a priority in the National Standards for Community Engagement, but it also became evident very early during the analysis of questionnaire responses. All age groups highlighted a need for retaining young people in the area and expressed worries over a potential socioeconomic backlash if steps were not taken to address this. It was therefore decided to carry out more focused work with young people in order to draw out their opinions, thoughts and ideas for the community. These measures included specific analysis of young people's responses to the questionnaire and a workshop specifically for the young people from Lairg.



13%(20) of
Lairg
responses
were from
people
under 18

Winter Youth Conference

The Winter Youth Conference took place on February 14th 2018. Young people across Sutherland came together for a day of activities and discussions about their communities at the Lairg Learning Centre. Participants were sorted into groups according to which community council area they lived in.

Participants were asked to write down their 'likes' and 'dislikes' about their community on post it notes – with a positive symbol (+) on the likes and negative symbol (-) on the dislikes. These were placed on a map of their community.

Participants from Lairg stressed that there were activities for elderly and younger people but nothing for their age (teens). There is an issue for people who live outside of Lairg who have to rely on family to get into their town.

Suggestions for improvement:

- Youth club – can generate money
- More advertising of events/clubs
- Somewhere to chill (youth club)
- Better parks
- Swimming pool



Most Important to Address
1st Questionnaire

Nothing to do
Lairg itself
Public transport

Under 18s

Young Voices



Photo: Bill Fernie

Golspie High School Workshop

The Golspie High School Workshop took place on March 6th 2018, following analysis of the questionnaire responses and the activity at the Winter Youth Conference which identified a clear concern among young people that there is nothing for them to do in their community.

Pupils in S1, S2 and S3 were invited to take part in a practical activity that would capture suggestions of what they would like to see developed in their community. They were given a 'construction zone' which represented the vacant Police Station in Lairg and were supplied with arts and craft materials so they could build and illustrate their ideas.

The **first model** consisted of a swimming pool complete with reception and changing rooms on the ground floor while the first floor had a gym, youth club, seating area, a place to get food and drinks and the swimming pool's waterslide. Also mentioned but not represented was that the building must be accessible for disabled people and that an Astroturf pitch should be built in the village.



The **second model** has a gym and a café which would feature 'loads of coffee tables'. Also mentioned was that even if something was implemented in Lairg, there would still be the issue of access for young people from Rosehall. There was also a desire for the creation of a smoothie bar.



The **third model** represented a café with Wi-Fi, a pool table, table tennis, chillout space, a place to play board games, watch movies. This could be sited at the Community Centre. They expressed satisfaction with the Pier Café but were unhappy with its seasonal opening hours.



While some of the proposals and ideas from the students could be considered impractical or aspirational, the clear common theme that emerged from each of the sessions is that the young people of Lairg want spaces and facilities where they can meet and socialise.

Dementia Friendly Café Workshop

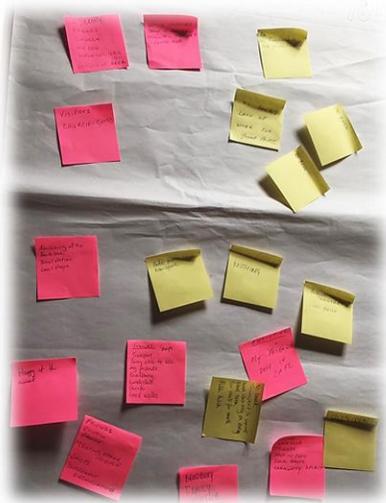
A three-part activity was designed for the workshop.

'What is important to you in your community?', **'What do you dislike/would like to improve in your community?'** and **'How could healthcare and support in the area be improved?'**

The participants were invited to write their thoughts and answers on post-it notes and affix them to the prompt sheets. This was repeated for all three questions.



Photo: Lairg and Rogart Parish

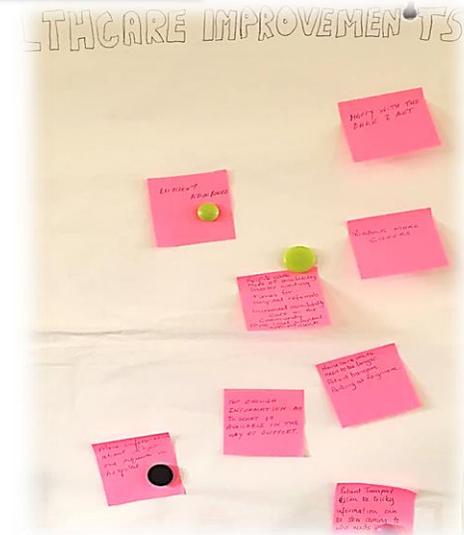


Likes and Dislikes

The participants expressed throughout the activity that they felt very positive towards Lairg overall. The most 'liked' aspects of Lairg that were mentioned were friends, 'Lunch Club', shops, 'Drop-in Café and going to church. This highlights that the participants very much enjoyed social activities and spending time with others.

The participants requested that they have the opportunity to voice what they disliked about Lairg. The most frequent comments were no bank, public transport and lack of work for young people.

Bradbury Lunch Club
Organisations
Family
Drop-in Café
Community spirit
Friends
Shops
Library
Beautiful area
Visitors
Walking
Church



Health Care

In terms of health care, the general feeling was that the Lairg Doctors Surgery was a fantastic place, and that you could be seen the same day without needing an appointment. However, there are a limited number of carers present in Lairg and the wider area. Participants had mixed feelings on patient transport, with some of the group never experiencing any difficulties, and some of the group mentioning that the journey times are too long and sometimes the drivers can be difficult.

Lairg Fact File

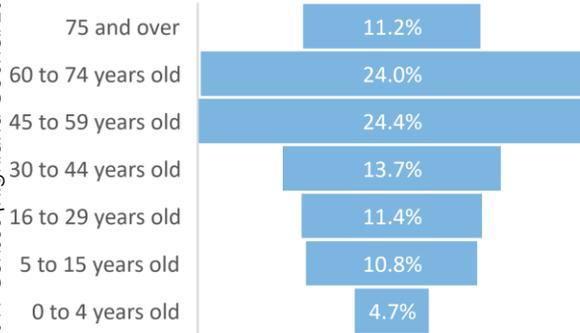
The following pages contain a selection of statistics that provide information on the people and area of Lairg, supplementing the information presented throughout this document. The majority is from Highland Council's 2011 Census profile of Lairg Community Council area, which was compiled in 2014. It is therefore dated but, when appropriate, is supported by newer data from other data sources.

People

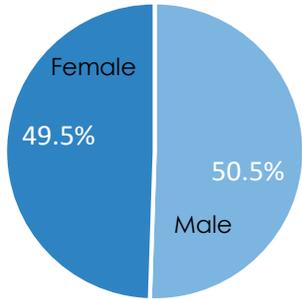
Age structure of population

2011 Census (Highland Council 2014)

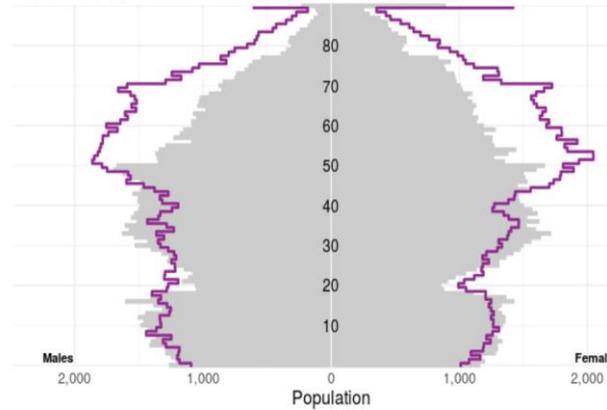
Lairg
Population by age



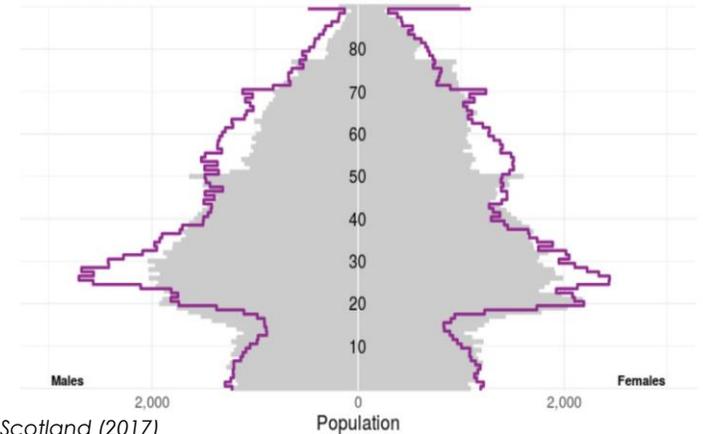
Population by sex



Highland
Population by age and sex, 1997 (area) to 2017 (line)



Aberdeen City
Population by age and sex, 1997 (area) to 2017 (line)



National Records of Scotland (2017)

Although the population of Lairg is based on data from 2011, current population data on the whole of the Highland region reveals a similar pattern and therefore could suggest that figures for Lairg have remained much the same since 2011.

Contrasting the population in Lairg and the wider Highland-region with that of an urban centre (Aberdeen is shown here, but the picture is roughly the same for all of Scotland's urban centres) reveals two worrying trends: Firstly, people are leaving the rural areas of the Highlands once they reach working age to take up employment in urban areas. Secondly, people are leaving urban areas when they reach retirement to move to rural places like the Highlands.

This means that fewer working people are sustaining a larger older population in the Highlands than is the case in an urban area like Aberdeen.

Life expectancy	Sutherland South	Highland	Scotland
Male	78.8	78.3	77.1
Female	83.9	82.5	81.1

Public Health Observatory (n.d.)



80.9% of people in Lairg are in 'good' or 'very good' general health.

2011 Census



82.2% of people in Scotland are in 'good' or 'very good' general health.

2011 Census

Housing

Affordable Housing in Lairg

Highland Council (2018)

Social housing supply/demand in Lairg

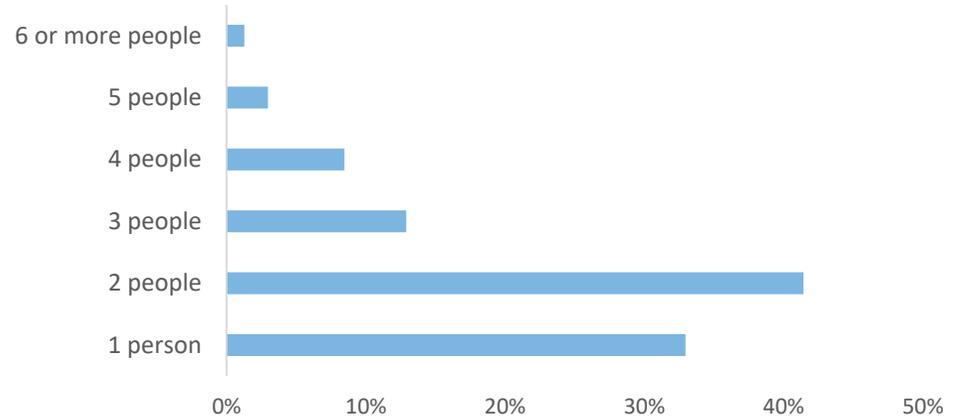
Property size	Supply	Demand people on waiting list
Bedsit/1 bed	16	21
2 bed	7	33
3 bed	4	27
4 bed	3	0
Total	30	81

*Based on "Demand using all choices" as per the Highland Council Housing Register April 2018.

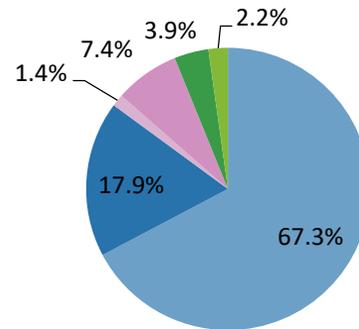
Current Housing in Lairg

2011 Census (Highland Council 2014)

Household Size



Tenure Type



- Owned
- Rented from Council
- Other social rented
- Private rented
- Living rent free
- Rented - other

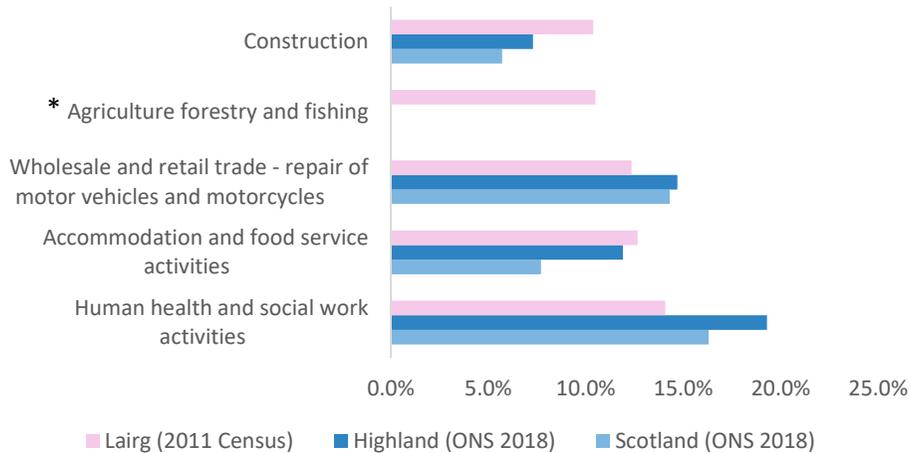


Lairg had 439 households with residents in 2011.

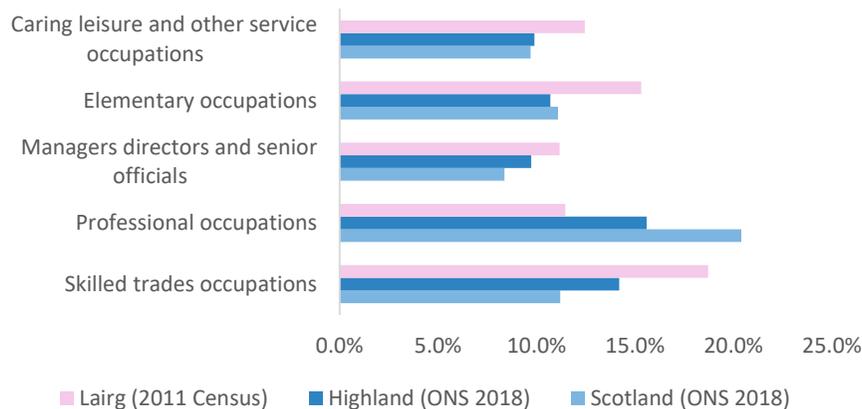
2011 Census

Employment and Education

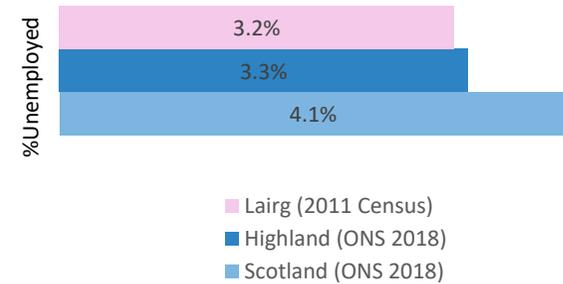
Employment by Industry (Lairg top 5)



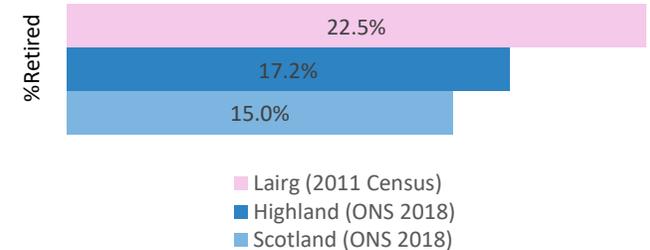
Employment by Occupation (Lairg top 5)



Proportion of the population who are unemployed



Proportion of the population who are retired



13.8% of people in Lairg were self-employed in 2011.



Lairg had 22 students aged over 16 in 2011.



Scotland had 259,394 full-time students in 2011.

2011 Census

* Data on employment in agriculture, forestry and fishing not available in the Annual Population Survey (ONS 2018)

Data on Deprivation - SIMD

The **Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)** shows where Scotland's most deprived areas are. It is a relative measure of deprivation across small areas in Scotland that looks at multiple deprivation. 'Deprived' does not just mean 'poor' or 'low income'. It can also mean people have fewer resources and opportunities, for example in health and education.

SIMD works by splitting Scotland into 6,976 small areas, called 'data zones', with roughly equal population. These data zones are assessed with indicators that measure the different sides of deprivation in each data zone. There are 38 of these indicators of deprivation which are grouped into seven types, called 'domains'. These are then combined into one SIMD, ranking each data zone in Scotland from 1 (most deprived) to 6,976 (least deprived).

Lairg Community Council Area is covered by the data zone *Lairg*, which also includes small proportions of Creich and Ardgay & District Community Council Areas. The population of the *Lairg* data zone is:

1023 people

Domain ranks and indicators for the data zone are displayed in the table on the right. SIMD indicators are based on a number of different statistics, often presented in different units. For a full overview over indicators and how they compare to indicators in data zones outside Lairg, it is advised to consult with the full SIMD-Index referenced in the Lairg Community Plan Appendices.



Lairg SIMD indicators			3,157
Income indicators	3,273	School leavers aged 16-19 not in education, employment or training	3%
All benefit claimants, count	110	Housing indicators	4,000
All benefit claimants, rate	11%	Persons in households which are overcrowded, count	56
Employment indicators	3,135	Persons in households which are overcrowded, rate	6%
Working age Incapacity Benefit; Employment Support Allowance; and Severe Disablement Allowance recipients, count	55	Persons in households without central heating, count	37
Working age Incapacity Benefit; Employment Support Allowance; and Severe Disablement Allowance recipients, rate	10%	Persons in households without central heating, rate	4%
Health indicators	5,092	Access indicators	571
Standardised Mortality Ratio	82	Drive time to GP	3.8
Hospital stays related to alcohol misuse	81	Drive time to retail centre	4
Hospital stays related to drug misuse	0	Drive time to petrol station	3.9
Comparative illness factor	70	Drive time to primary school	4.5
Emergency stays in hospital	70	Drive time to secondary school	29.6
Proportion of population being prescribed drugs for anxiety, depression or psychosis	12%	Drive time to post office	14
Proportion of live singleton births of low weight	0%	Public transport time to GP	12.1
Education indicators	3,396	Public transport time to retail centre	12.7
School pupil attendance	79%	Public transport time to post office	25
School pupil performance	5.6	Crime indicators	5,509
Working age people with no qualifications	104	Domestic housing breaking; Drug offences; Common assault; Crimes of violence; Vandalism; Sexual offences, count	9
17-21 year olds enrolling into full time higher education	8%	Domestic housing breaking; Drug offences; Common assault; Crimes of violence; Vandalism; Sexual offences, rate	89

Data on Deprivation - SEP

The **Socio-Economic Performance Index (SEP)** allows for a comparison of socio-economic performance across the rural data zones in Scotland. These are the same data zones as the ones used in SIMD. To calculate the SEP Index, indicators in each of the Wealthier/Fairer, Healthier, Safer/Stronger and Smarter domains are allocated a score between 1 and 10, with a higher score being indicative of better or stronger performance. These scores are then averaged to create the scores for each domain which are then averaged to create the overall SEP index score. As mentioned on the previous page the population for the *Lairg* data zone covering Lairg Community Council Area is:

1,023 people

Domain ranks and indicators for the data zone are displayed in the table on the right. For a full overview over indicators and how they compare to indicators in data zones outside Lairg Community Council area, it is advised to consult with the full SEP-Index referenced in the Lairg Community Plan Appendices.

Community engagement's relation to SIMD/SEP

Access is the worst performing domain in SIMD and among the worst performing indicators in SEP. This has a clear relation to findings from the questionnaire in which Transport received the lowest rating.

Indicators such as *Percentage of population dependent on benefits* (3), *All people aged 16 and over: no qualifications* (2) and *Percentage of 16-19 year olds not in education or training* (1) also mirror the questionnaire data in which Work and Local Economy was the second lowest rated category. Prevalent themes under this category included a lack of job and training opportunities which also resemble the poor SEP indicators. The indicator *Old age dependency ratio* (2) should also be a cause of concern in terms of the local economy and the future economic foundation of the community. This is further corroborated by the age structure of the population as evidenced on page 22.

SIMD's Crime domain and SEP's Safer/Stronger domain reflect the favourable rating given to the Feeling Safe category by questionnaire respondents.

It is also worth noting that the worst performing domain in SEP, *Healthier*, shows less correlation to findings from the questionnaire in which respondents gave Health and Wellbeing a favourable score.

Lairg SEP indicators	3.94
Wealthier/Fairer indicators	3.50
Household income after housing costs per week	4
Families on low income and materially deprived	5
Percentage of population dependent on benefits	3
Unemployed as proportion of all people aged 16 to 74	5
Access to services mean drivetime by car	2
Access to services mean travel by public transport	2
Healthier indicators	2.50
Proportion of all people with one or more long term health conditions	2
Proportion of all people assessing their general health as " (very) good"	4
Proportion of all people whose day-to-day activities are limited by a long-term health problem or disability	2
Comparative illness factor	2
Safer/Stronger indicators	7.00
Population change	9
Old age dependency ratio	2
Change in the economically active population	9
Percentage change in the number of business sites	9
Crimes per 10,000 total population	8
Rate of emergency admissions to hospital per person	5
Smarter indicators	2.75
All people aged 16 and over: no qualifications	2
Percentage of 16-19 year olds not in education or training	1
Percentage of population 16-74 who have level 4 qualifications or higher	4
Percentage of population 16-74 who are in occupation groups 1-3 (see Appendices, pp. 58-59)	4



Development Trust

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