

The following is a brief summary, in order of priority, of Knockbain Community Council’s ‘Place Standard Survey’ carried out in March 2021’ as part of their Community Action Plan (CAP). The survey was launched online through a link on KCC’s website and widely promoted in the area through social media, local press and emails as well as leaflets through the doors of North Kessock. Relevant parts of the survey will also be part of the Community Council’s response to the Highland Council’s consultation on the Main Issues Report for a revised Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan (IMF LDP), which ran from mid-February to 30th April. KCC will schedule further consultation on CAP throughout the area later in the year.

The full ‘Place Standard Report’ with diagrams etc will be issued in due course.

**North Kessock**

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT** – Unreliable, Times not suitable for workers, Poor links to Black Isle, Limited at weekends, Paths to A9 bus stop not suitable for less mobile, some bus stops have no shelter or timetable.

SOLUTIONS – Use hoppers for village, more frequent and intergrated service, bus shelters at exposed stops, safer footpaths & signage to A9 bus stops

**INFLUENCE AND CONTROL** – Generally good and many do good works for the village. However, people not online are not up to date, decisions made by small cliques, recycling issue has caused acrimnony and distrust, personal conflicts stop voices being heard, opinions are polarised, people are reluctant or lack confidence to get involved or to contribute.

SOLUTIONS – Highland council to listen more and communicate better with the community, Community Council to improve profile and leadership, to hold regular community/village meetings and have a central information point, notice board etc, resolve the bottle bank issue, local groups to co-operate and co-ordinate projects, fundraise as one for improvements and to improve community involvement.

**ACTIVE TRAVEL** – Local walking routes are good and footpaths well used. However, walking paths are overgrown, roads are a disgrace, potholes are dangerous to cyclists and walkers, a need for more safe routes for cycling and a barrier to walk otuwith the village on the A9. Charleston to Redcastle needs some form of traffic calming measurers for walkers and cyclists, lack of signage for walkers and cyclists throughout the village, pavements in older part of the village lacks dropped kerbs for prams, wheelchairs etc

SOLUTIONS - Urgent attention to the roads and pavements needed in the older part of the village, 20 mph speed sign in village, calming measurers at entrance to village, make redcastle and Drumsmittal area roads safer for walkers and cyclists,make a safer pedestrian crossing on the A9 to Ord Hill, which is extremely well used by walkers and runners. Improve all existing paths and introduce new cycling routes.

**WORK & LOCAL ECONOMY** – Easy commute to Inverness, however, opportunities are limited in the village/parish, especially for youngsters. No incentive to live in the village unless your drive as public transport is poor for shift workers and college students, No space for further commercial properties and childcare locally is very limited.

SOLUTIONS - More facilities relative to size of village would create a better micro-economy. Make more use of local skills.

**STREETS & SPACES** – Good green spaces and well used, however, many are overgrown including pavements and verges. Paths in Gordon’s park not accessible for wheelchair use. Dog fouling & poo bags causing a major problem throughout the village.

SOLUTIONS – Tidy up the village entrance and verges. Introduce more communal planting and improve the village frontage, including repairs to the road. Protect remaining green space for mental wellbeing and for wildlife.

**CARE & MAINTENANCE** - Generally locals take pride in keeping the area nice and improving existing areas however, pot holes, roads, pavements, overgrown paths and entrance, blocked drains and dog fouling are an eyesore and a safety risk. Recycling is not ealily accessible.

SOLUTIONS – Huge investment needed to repair road and footpath surfaces, educating dog owners, adding more dog bins, encoraging beach and litter clean-ups and more accesible recycling bins. To be mindful of the compromise needed between ‘tidiness’ and the spaces needed by wildlife. All needs more co-ordination and collaboration between groups.

**TRAFFIC & PARKING** – Visitor parking quite good. However, parked cars on Point road causes mayhem for buses and parking on the verges and pavements obstructs buggies and wheelchairs, especially during village events. The speed of traffice through the village, especially buses, is a problem and a safety issue. Car volume will not be managable if it increases. A need for elecric chargin points, vehicles too fast coming into village from A9.

SOLUTIONS – Special restrictions on the A9 to Munlochy Junction, traffic calming measures and a 20mph hour speed limit throughout the village. 50 mph limit on rural roads. Electric charging points installed in the main car park. Pavement needed between the Bellfield estate and walkers car park.

**FACILITIES & AMENITIES** – Pretty adequate for a small village, however, the shop is small for the number of houses and the building in poor condition as is the village hall, which is also not covid-19 friendly. Places to eat in the evening and for tourists are expensive. Severe lack of suitable childcare. No electric charging points.

SOLUTIONS – A larger shop to cater for increased size of village population to reduce trips to Inverness. A concentrated effort to help the hall committee to make improvements and continual development of activities and groups within the village. Make more use of the community school facilites. Investment needed in playpark and for the recycling banks to return to a more central point. Perhaps a ‘village pub’, more sessions at the surgery and easier walking to Ord Hill from the west end.

**IDENTITY & BELONGING** – Positive community spirit, however, different schemes feel segregated, bit of ‘insider/outsider’ status feeling. Divisions between groups, especially since the bottle bank issue, local social media is off-putting . A need to celebrate the local history.

SOLUTIONS – To stregthen the community spirit with regular meetings and events. Groups need to work together better. More local history interpretation, guided walks etc

**SOCIAL INTERACTION** – Generally very good with attractive areas to sit and view and a good range of building to provide accommodation – hall, church, school, bowling club, ticket office. However, ticket office is too small for most groups, and most activities in the village not suitable for working folks and teenagers. The groups managing facitlities needs new blood and enthusiasm.

SOLUTIONS – More organised outdoor activities when restrictions allow. Another pub, improvements to the hall , involve younger people on the committees, encourage more sociable events and have more facilities for young people such as a cafe or skateboard area.

**PLAY & RECREATION** - In general very good but equipment in the playpark is limited to younger children and is outdated. Gardens at the new houses too small for outdoor recreation.

SOLUTIONS – Upgrade the playpark and equipment and give more thought to disabled children. Create a wild play area (tires, logs, tunnelsm mounds etc. Increase activities for teenagers Provide an allotment site and more Orchards plus an adult exercise area .

**HOUSING & COMMUNITY** - Plenty of housing a a good mix however, the inrastructure can’t cope. There is a need to amalgamate areas before building more and also a need for more affordable housing to improve the village community spirit. Feels like a dormitory village rather than a community. Too much emphasis on expensive houses for sale and very little on houses to rent. Many houses now being used as holiday lets.

SOLUTION – Need more social housing/affordable homes for younger people and smaller homes for older people. Housing for local people needs to be addresed. More rigorous use of the planning system and to encourage use of area based energy efficiency schemes.

**NATURAL SPACES** – Lots of natural spaces and excellent community maintained spaces. However, access to open space and maintenance need improving. It is getting less with more houses. A park and ride on the roundabout would cause noise and encroach on natural space. Eerywhere is overgrown and looks unloved. A lot of neglect – litter, dog poos, roads, weeds etc. Wildlife has declined with village expansion (red kites, shore birds etc)

SOLUTIONS - More trees could be planted and ones in open spaces that could be used for climbing. A community woodland by the farm pond. More effort with blooms and maintenance. Manage public spaces to include wildlife. Benches along the shore up to Redcastle at regular intervals 50 mph speed limit. Outdoor early learning area.

**FEELING SAFE** – Generally a very safe and welcoming area with very little crime or anti-social behavious. However, some social housing needs to be addressed as the village expands. Cars speeding after dark puts children and cyclists at risk as do boy racers. Potholes and grit on the road are hazardous and a problem as is the vindictive and hateful speech on social media.

SOLUTION - Improvement to street lighting (underpass, playpark, steps from A9 bus stops past Harry Gow’s and to Craigton) More opportunities for the community to interact in person.

**MUNLOCHY**

**ACTIVE TRAVEL** - Speed on the B9161 and through the village a cause for concern and very dangerous for pedestrians. Very little safe space on verges for children alighting from school buses on the rural roads. Lack of pavements. Walking about is difficult if not fully fit and mobile. Many paths do not meet. Lack of picnic tables and benches throughout the area.

SOLUTION - Commuters should use the A832. Reclassify the Drumderfit road for residents and bike / walking. Pelican light needs fixed. Improvements are needed to Station Brae footpath. Some verges could be made safer to walk on. Urgent need for a walking / cycling path around the village and especially between the two junctions and to the garage. Also required along the A832 to the Clootie Well, and the B9161 to connect the village to Munlochy Bay / Drumderfit. The woodland walk needs the bridge fixed. Room for picnic areas at Littleburn and Clootie Well parking areas. Work with local folk to build paths.

**TRAFFIC & PARKING** - Village struggling to cope with the volume of pre covid commuter traffic. Volume and speed of traffic on the B9161, which is not fit for current volumes of traffic and very large vehicles on such a narrow road. Frequent accidents. Dangerous speed, especially for primary children walking to hall for sports activities. Very little parking, full at start of day. Farming community village does not have the infrastructure for further growth.

SOLUTION - 20mph limit through the village. Direct commuter traffic via Tore. Need to limit parking on the main street. Make Station Brae one way with a green path on one side. Marked parking bays outside shop. Oppose the wildlife park hotel development.

**PLAY & RECREATION** - No good space to play sports other than the school grounds. Play park and old tennis courts need improvement. Really poor facilities for young people. No cycling or walking access to play and recreation for children from Bogallan.

SOLUTION - **–** Improve the existing playpark facilities for all ages. More football space etc. Repurpose the tennis court. Create a wild play area. Walking and cycling access from Bogallan to the play area.

**FACILITIES & AMENITIES** - Hotel has been improved and GP practice good. The shop and the pub are great. The school do a very good job however, no bank, no post office, school needs updating and a nursery needs to be at the school, not at the hall. Nowhere to meet friends.

SOLUTION - Encourage more facilities such as a café for social meetings. Improve facilities at the village hall. Bring back the post office. A mobile post office service like the banks. Some village classes in the hall.

**INFLUENCE AND CONTROL -** Community Council is easily contacted, most councillors try to help. Plenty of community consultation, however, trolling on social media when issues raised, not aware of any community meetings.

SOLUTION – Improved communication

**SOCIAL INTERACTION** -**–** Friendly community. Have a hall, pub and outdoor places, however, very few social events. Not much mixing.

SOLUTION - Need for a local café to act as a meeting place. Sports /club nights at the hall. A youth Café.

**WORK & LOCAL ECONOMY** - **Key Positives –** Inverness and Dingwall are close by with more opportunities but very few job opportunities in this area.

SOLUTION - Possibly develop a community complex at top of Station Brae – sports, café, shops, & a green space. Possible start-ups but locations for them limited.

**STREETS & SPACES** - Lovely flower tubs provided by some residents. The village is attractive and pleasant. Littleburn makes a lovely loop around the village. However, the A832 takes away from natural beauty. Litter in and around the village. Play parks need to be improved.

SOLUTION - Reinstate the Mill Pond. Improve paths to Littleburn and Clootie Well. Improve the play park. An all-ability park, a wild paly area. A tidier frontage to buildings on the Main Street. Nature sanctuary is a missed opportunity. Maintain Clootie Well & additional paths. A wildflower garden.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT** - Half hourly services, seem OKhowever, infrequent public services that does not connect to North Kessock. No direct bus route to Dingwall for shopping. Timetable doesn’t allow for shift workers, e.g. Avoch.

SOLUTION - A Black Isle loop bus that also carries bikes. Improved timetable for workers

**HOUSING & COMMUNITY** - There is a reasonable variety but types of housing near the well should not be repeated. Prices are high, affordable housing is limited.

SOLUTION - More social housing for people needed smaller or larger homes. More affordable housing.

**CARE & MAINTENANCE** - It’s not too bad. Some care & maintenance wouldn’t go amiss, however, roads are appalling after several years of neglect. There are no recycling bins since removed from Roskill.

SOLUTION - Bridge at Littleburn needs fixed. Litter and dog mess bins would be a big improvement. Recycling bins should be available.

**IDENTITY & BELONGING** - Good village atmosphere. People care.Support for the food larder, however there are few community events.

SOLUTION - Summer food festival. More community groups / spaces. More historical information. Gaelic signage to remind people of heritage.

**NATURAL SPACES** - the woods are a beautiful attraction. However, litter still impacts us. Natural space would be challenging for people with little mobility. Room for improvement regarding access.

SOLUTION - More seating installed for people needing to take a break.

**FEELING SAFE** – a safe area.