

Your Town Audit: Busby

September 2016

SITIP | SCOTLAND'S
TOWNS
PARTNERSHIP

ekos
Economic and Social Development

Contents

1.	Understanding Scottish Places Summary	1
2.	Accessible Town Centre	2
3.	Active Town Centre	4
4.	Attractive Town Centre	7
5.	YTA Summary and Key Points	Error! Bookmark not defined.

Report produced by:



Audit Date: 05/07/2016

Draft report: 30/08/2016

For: East Renfrewshire Council

Direct enquiries regarding this report should be submitted to:

Liam Turbett, EKOS, 0141 353 8327 liam.turbett@ekos.co.uk

Rosie Jenkins, EKOS, 0141 353 8322 rosie.jenkins@ekos.co.uk



1. Understanding Scottish Places Summary

This report presents a summary of the Your Town Audit (YTA) for Busby, conducted by Scotland's Towns Partnership and EKOS. The detailed YTA Framework and Data Workbook are provided under separate cover.

The YTA was developed to provide a framework to measure and monitor the performance of Scotland's towns and town centres using a series of Key Performance Indicators. It provides a comprehensive audit of Busby with data on up to 180 KPIs across seven themes – Locality, Accessibility, Local Services, Activities + Events, Development Capacity, Tourism, and Place + Quality Impressions.

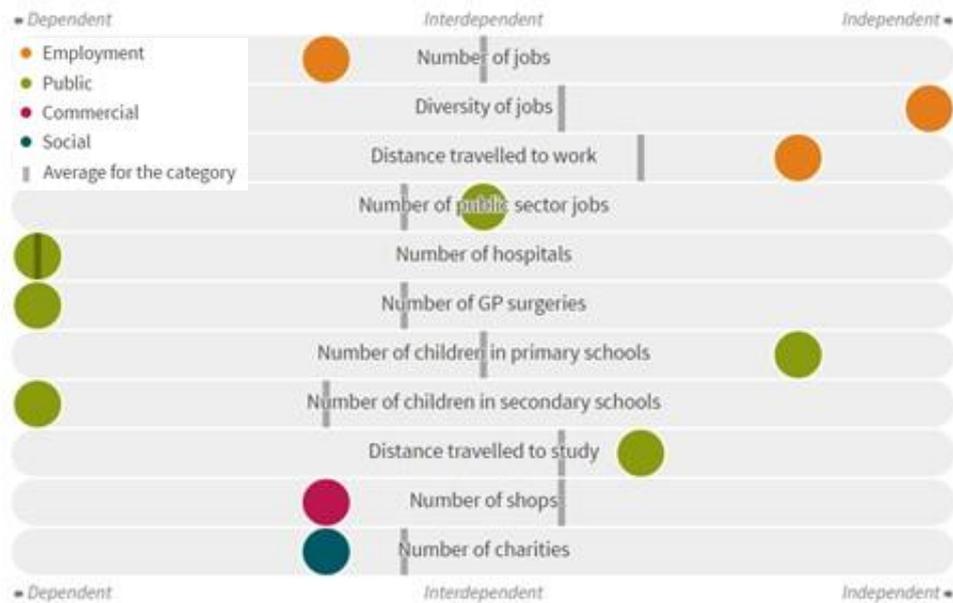
The [Understanding Scottish Places](#) (USP) data platform provides a summary analysis for Busby and identifies 14 comparator towns that have similar characteristics, with the most similar being Lossiemouth, Culloden, Aviemore and Dyce¹. The USP platform – www.usp.scot – describes Busby in the following general terms:

Busby's Interrelationships: Busby is an *'interdependent town'*, which means it has a medium number of assets in relation to its population. Towns of this kind have some diversity of jobs; and residents largely travel a mix of long and short distances to work and study, although some travel longer distances. These towns attract people from neighbouring towns to access some of their assets and jobs, but they are also reliant on neighbouring towns for other assets and jobs.

Busby's Typology: This type of medium-sized town is extremely mixed in terms of demographics. There is a particularly wide range of people, housing and activities. The number of older couples with no children are higher than average. There is a mix of professional and non-professional jobs, and part-time and self-employment are both important for a significant proportion of residents. Socioeconomic status is higher than in other kinds of town and there is a mix of professionals and nonprofessionals, those with higher and lower educational attainment.

¹ The other comparator towns are identified as Macduff, Loanhead, Bonnybridge, Galston, Alva, Lesmahagow, Beith, Bannockburn, Burntisland and Holytown.

Inter-relationships



Comparing Busby to towns with similar USP typology and interrelationships shows it has a similar number of hospitals, and the distance resident's travel to study. It differs in its diversity of jobs and number of children in primary school (both greater).

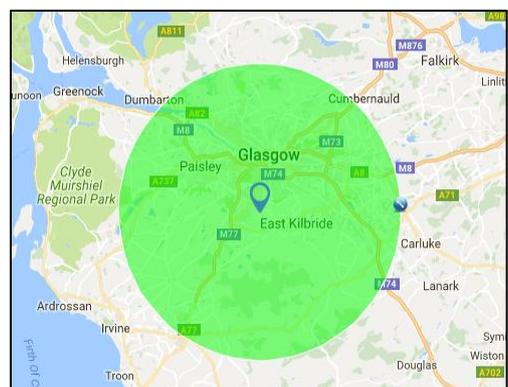
Building on the USP, this report presents the results of our detailed analysis of Busby based around the Scottish Government's [Town Centre Toolkit](#) – an online resource available via the USP website which provides advice, guidance and case studies across three thematic areas: accessible, active and attractive.

2. Accessible Town Centre

Busby is a suburban town located in East Renfrewshire, south of Glasgow, with a population of around 3,600. The core retail area of Busby is focused on Main Street, a busy A-class road leading to East Kilbride in the south and Glasgow to the north.

The town centre offers a good range of services and retail, in what is otherwise a heavily residential area.

15 mile radius around Busby



Busby railway station is located centrally in the town, with regular services to Glasgow (20 minutes away) and East Kilbride (10 minutes away) throughout the day. This also connects the town with the other East Renfrewshire settlements such as Thornliebank, Clarkston and Giffnock.

There are two bus stops located on Busby on Main Street. There are direct bus connections from Busby to Glasgow, and East Kilbride with journey times of around 40 minutes and 30 minutes respectively. There are, however, no direct bus journeys from Busby to other Settlements in East Renfrewshire, as residents travelling to settlements such as Barrhead and Neilston must change services, resulting in a travel time of approximately 50 minutes.

The M77 motorway is around five miles west of the town and is easily accessible by road, providing fast access to Ayrshire and an alternative route into the centre of Glasgow.

A limited number of on-street parking spaces are found in the town centre, on Main Street. However cars are able to park in the surrounding residential streets, and there is an off-street car park located on Mary Young Place which has around 20 spaces and is free of charge.

The town centre provides access to local services which, alongside a mix of retailers and business services, includes the library, community hall, the local primary school, two churches (Busby Parish Church and Cartsbridge Evangelical Church), and the nearby railway station. There is also 3G and 4G throughout the town, and although there is no town-wide free WiFi, superfast broadband is available.

There is no registered bank in Busby town centre, however there is an ATM located inside of the U-Save convenience store which is free of charge.

One possible issue within the town centre area could be that there are a lack of safe pedestrian crossing areas, this could cause problems for the elderly and/or infirm. Another issue which could be reviewed would be that towards the end of Main Street leading onto East Kilbride Road there is partially blind corner, around which traffic travels rather quickly. This can cause issues for both pedestrians choosing to cross here and other cars entering the car park at Mary Young Place.

3. Active Town Centre

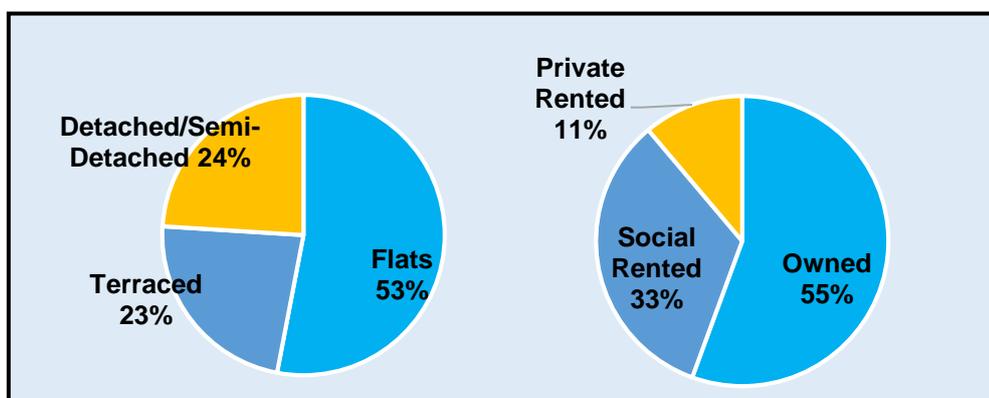
3.1 Population and Housing

Just over 100 people live within the town centre area in Busby², around 3% of the total settlement population. While the population of the town centre was static in the decade to 2011, the population of the whole settlement increased by around 5% over this time. This compares with increases of 1% for East Renfrewshire and 5% in Scotland over this ten year period. Most of the YTA audited towns have seen a marked increase in town centre living, averaging 7%; this is less pronounced in Busby.

Housing in the town centre³ is a mix of flats (53%) and semi-detached/detached properties (24%), typically with four bedrooms (59%). Over two-thirds of properties (74%) are in council tax bands A, B and C. The streets surrounding the Main Street are almost solely residential – a mix of detached/semi-detached properties as well as some flats – these provide a reasonable catchment population for the retail units on the street.

Housing prices in Busby reflect its standing as an attractive settlement within commuting distance of Glasgow. The average purchase price of a town centre dwelling in Busby (£103,743) is lower than that of the town as a whole (£160,263)⁴. Prices in the town centre increased 37% in the decade to 2013, and by 52% in wider Busby. The housing stock in the town is largely privately owned (55% in the town centre; 74% in the wider town), or socially rented (33% in the town centre; 19% in the wider town).

Busby Town Centre Housing Mix



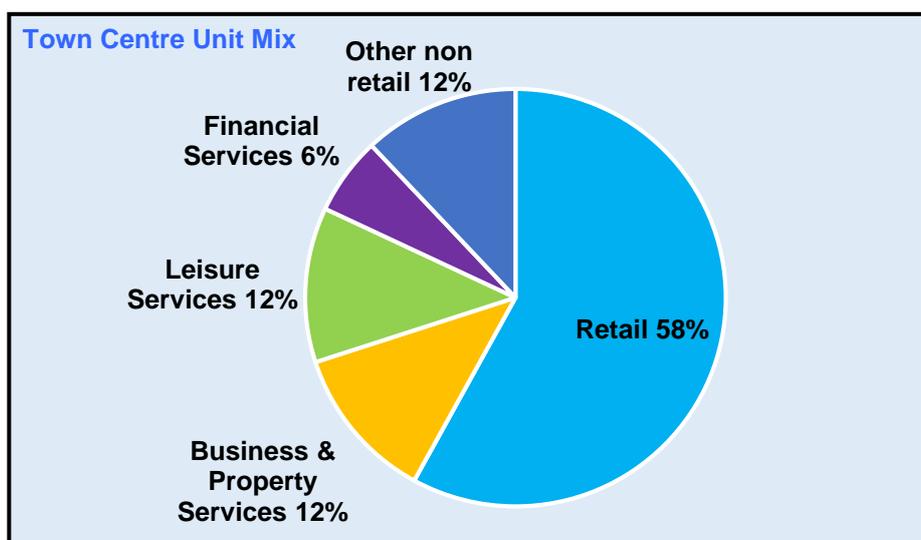
² Scotland Census 2011 output zone S00103226.

³ For accessing the most up to date data, this is datazone (2001) S01001707.

⁴ Scottish Statistics, 2013

3.2 Employment and Business

Just over one quarter (28%) of the 561 jobs in Busby are located in the town centre datazones. National statistics record 95 businesses in the town. The YTA street audit located 17 units in use within Busby town centre – this was in line with the UPRN data provided by East Renfrewshire Council prior to the audit. Of these, 10 are retail businesses.



3.3 Retail

Retail units in Busby are clustered along Main Street. For a small town centre, it has a good range of shops and retail services.

No vacant units were recorded during the audit – in this respect, Busby stands alongside other towns such as Eaglesham and Giffnock, but as a very small centre it would only take one vacant unit to create a retail vacancy rate of 8%. In comparison, the vacancy rate in Barrhead was 6%, in Clarkston 10%, and in Newton Mearns 3%.

Audited towns outside of East Renfrewshire have had much higher vacancy rates with an average of 10% across 18 YTA towns, including Alloa (10%), Dumbarton (15%), Kilmarnock (15%), Ayr (16%) and Kirkcaldy (17%).

362 residents per town centre retail outlet

10 town centre retail units in use

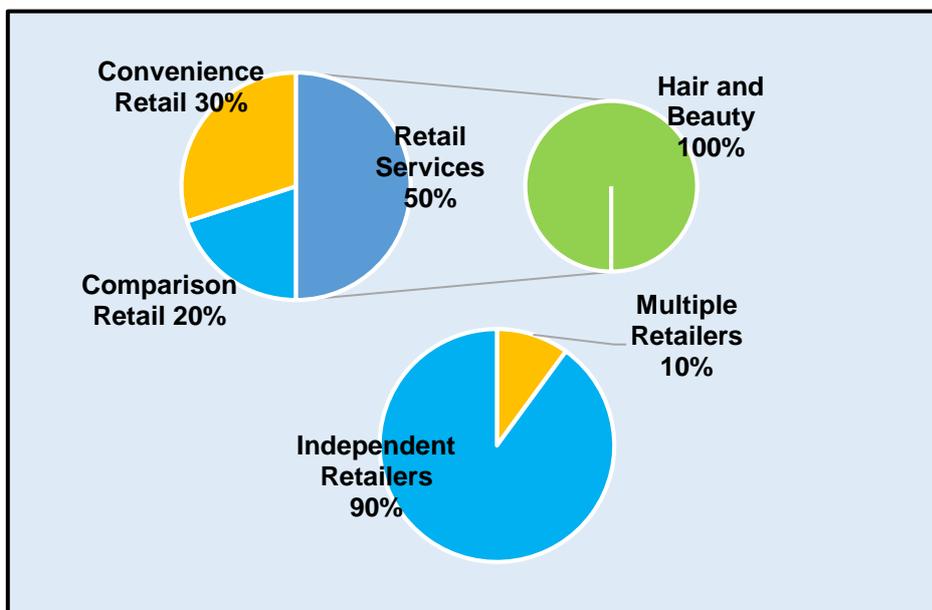
0 vacant town centre units

Most shops in Busby town centre operate standard opening hours of around 9am to 5.30pm. However, the Cartvale Bar on Main Street opens and closes later – 11am to midnight during the week, and at 1am at the weekend.

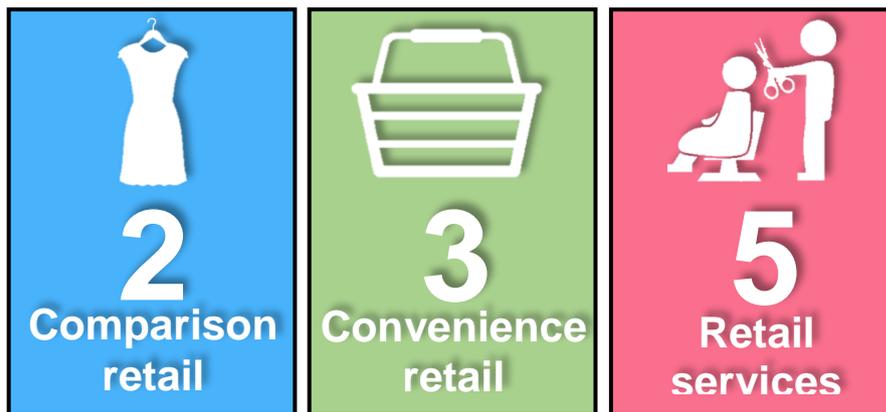
Retail forms the largest single town centre unit use and, at 58%, is higher than Clarkston (40%) and Barrhead (46%). In line with other audited town centres, retail forms the largest single unit use, at an average of 47% across 20 YTAs.

The YTA analysis is based on the following retail definitions:

- **Convenience Retail:** primarily low cost goods that are typically bought out of habit or on impulse i.e. food, drink (alcohol and non-alcohol), news, tobacco, etc. – 3 convenience retailers identified in Busby town centre;
- **Comparison Retail:** all other retail purchases comprising goods bought at infrequent intervals where consumers will compare and contrast products and prices – 2 comparison retailers identified in Busby town centre; and
- **Retail Services:** services that consumers would expect to find in a town centre including hairdresser, beauty salon, repair of goods, hire of specialist clothing, health clinics, post office, travel agent, etc. – 5 retail service operators identified in Busby town centre.



The majority of traders within Busby town centre are independent (90%) – this is above the 70% average for other YTA audited towns (20) and is the third highest rate we have identified behind Eaglesham and Eyemouth (both 94%). Other towns with high levels of independent businesses are Moffat and Stornoway, with 82% and 83% respectively. There is only one multiple retailer in Busby: the U-Save convenience store on Main Street.



4. Attractive Town Centre

4.1 Leisure Mix

There are only two leisure businesses operating in Busby town centre, both of which are part of the evening economy, the Cartvale Bar and the Wings hot food takeaway.

There are, however, a number of other leisure businesses that are easily accessible to the town's residents.

On the edge of the town centre area is the Busby Hotel, part of the Manorview group, which acquired the hotel in 2013 and undertook refurbishment. The hotel has a number of facilities including event and conference facilities, and the Carters bar and restaurant. There are also a number of other restaurants which can be found along Busby Road leading from the town towards Clarkston.



4.2 Leisure Facilities and Attractions

Inside the town centre area, is the Duff Memorial Hall, which is a community hall used for a variety of community functions and events and can be hired for social functions. Busby Library is also found within the town centre catchment area, connects to Duff Memorial Hall, and is open every day from 10am to 5pm apart from Thursdays and Sundays. On Saturdays it is only open from 9:30am to 1pm.

There are also a range of other leisure facilities located outside of the town centre, including three nearby Golf clubs: Williamwood Golf Club (1.3 miles away), Whitecraigs Golf Club (2.7 miles away), and Cathcart Castle golf course (1.5 miles away). All clubs have 18-hole courses as well as a number of other facilities including: a clubhouse, putting green, and a bar and or restaurant.

The Eastwood Park Leisure Centre is located two miles away in Eastwood Park and includes: a 25 metre swimming pool, two smaller pools, two gyms and a programme of fitness classes which take place in the adjoining Carmichael Hall.

Busby offers a number of nearby tourist attractions. A popular nearby attraction is Greenbank House and the Greenbank Gardens, which are less than two miles from the town centre of Busby. The house and garden were given to the National Trust of Scotland by William Blyth in 1976. Visitors can walk through the gardens and inside Greenbank House there is an educational garden where they can learn how to grow a variety of different plants. Other facilities include a tearoom and shop. The gardens are open from 9:30am to sunset daily, and entry for adults is £6.50, and free for members.

Another popular attraction which can be found near Busby is the National Museum of Rural Life. The museum is located on Wester Kittochside Farm near East Kilbride, 2.3 miles from the town centre of Busby. The museum gives visitors the opportunity to learn what life was like on a rural and partially mechanized Scottish farm in the 1950s. Visitors can watch as daily farming tasks are carried out such as ploughing and haymaking, and visit the farms herd of cattle and sheep. On site there is also a shop, and café. The museum is open daily from 10am to 5pm and admission costs range from £4 for children to £7 for adults.

4.3 Community Events

We did not identify any community events or festivals being run in Busby. This is unlike most other towns, including those within city conurbations.

The development and delivery of community activities and events is a primary focus for most towns to celebrate local culture, build community spirit and support local businesses. Events are typically reliant on either a small group of local volunteers and activists and/or a BID type structure.

4.4 Busby Community Council

Busby Community Council meets in the Duff Memorial Hall, on the 3rd Monday of each month at 7.30pm, and there are approximately fifteen members. Meetings are open to the public and involve discussions about issues and topics regarding the local area.

4.5 Attractiveness Review

The YTA includes an independent review of place and quality impressions, with Busby scoring above average in comparison with other towns.

Individual unit fronts and shop window displays were graded out of ten during the on-street audit, with a town centre average score of 7.6 for the condition of unit fronts and 7.5 for quality of window display. This is above the average across other audited town centres, of 7.0 in each instance.



Business confidence in the town centre was gauged from a small sample of interviews undertaken with two independent traders. While representing only two businesses, both were very confident about the future and reported that there has been no decline in trade in the recent past.

At the time of the audit it was noted that the streets were relatively clear with little litter to be found, and not many weeds present. The streets were in good condition, with only a few pot holes being found in the off-street carpark on Mary Young Place.



Throughout the town centre area there are hanging baskets and flower boxes with colourful flowers in them, this helps to brighten up the area. There are also plenty of bins along Main Street for litter and a number of sodium street lighting with traditional columns.

One issue which generally lowers the overall attractiveness of the town centre is large vacant site adjacent to the Cartvale Bar. This site seems to be up for sale on the Local Development Plan, this site is zoned for residential use, with an expectation of sixteen flats.

5. YTA Summary and Key Points

The following are offered as final comments on the Your Town Audit of Busby within the framework of the Scottish Government's Town Centre Toolkit.

5.1 Accessible Town Centre

- Busby is reasonably well connected with transport links and a range of services. Although car ownership in the area is high, public transport links are good with regular bus services taking about 40 minutes into the centre of Glasgow;
- the local train station in Busby connects the town to neighbouring settlements of Clarkston, Thornliebank and East Kilbride;
- although there is no registered bank in the town centre area of Busby, there is an ATM inside the U-Save convenience store which is free of charge; and
- parking in Busby town centre on the street is limited, however, the off-street car park on Mary Young Place provides capacity;
- Busby has good 3G/4G mobile coverage and access to superfast broadband; and
- there could be some issues to address in the town centre area such as the lack of pedestrian crossing points and the fast traffic coming around the bend at the bottom of Main Street.

5.2 Active Town Centre

- Busby has a high level of independent retail businesses – this helps to maintain the town's uniqueness; and
- no vacant units were recorded during the audit of Busby town centre, which is encouraging for its long-term survival.

5.3 Attractive Town Centre

- Busby is an attractive, small town that manages to retain a village feel due to the majority of retail units being small and independent; and
- we did not identify any community-focused activities or events – there may be an opportunity for the Community Council (or other local groups) to deliver an annual event to bring the community together; and
- more pedestrian crossing areas could be suggested and the semi-blind corner at the bottom of Main Street leading on to East Kilbride Road could be reviewed.