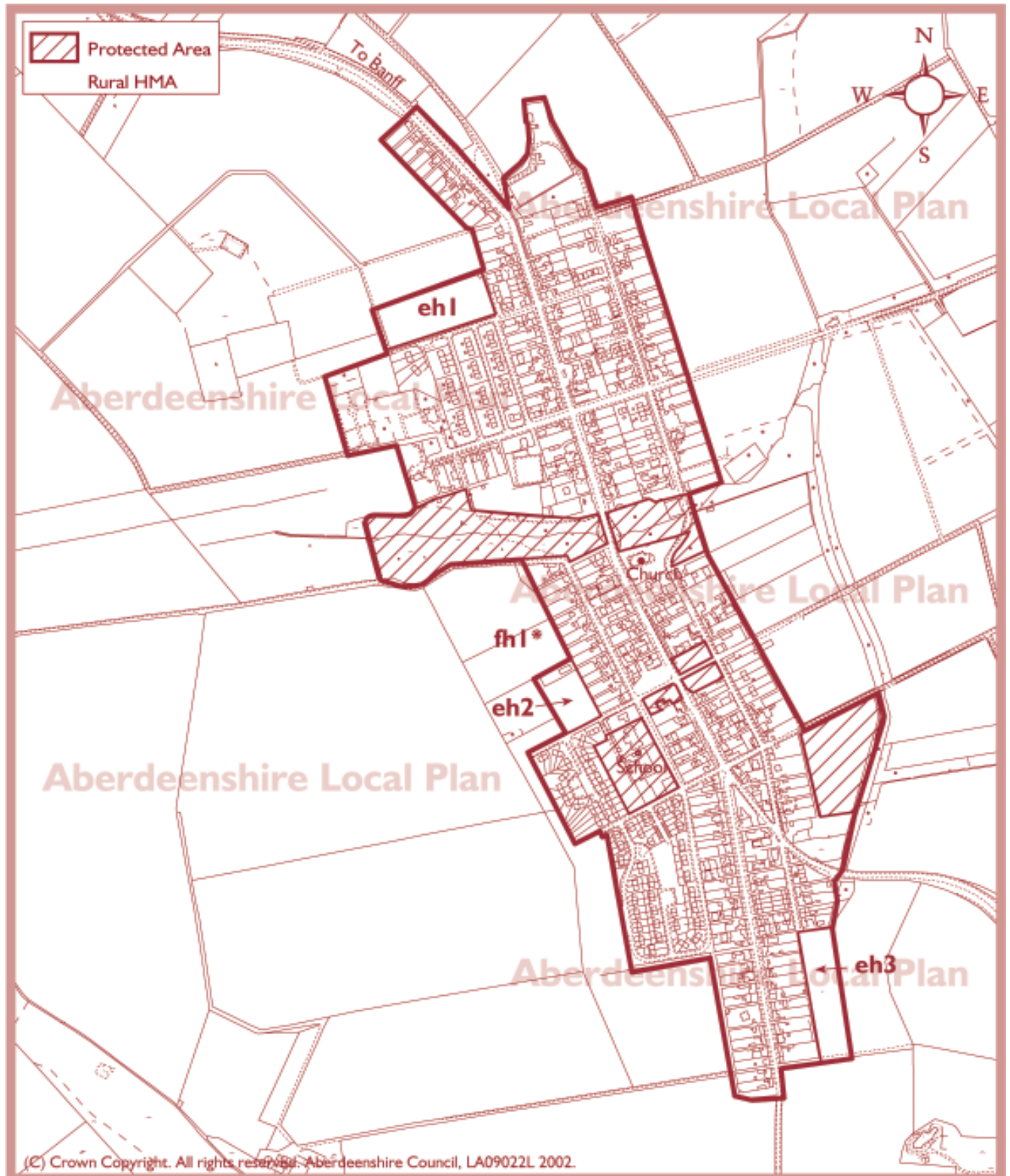




New Pitsligo

Community
Action Plan



In New Pitsligo there are three main opportunities for new development.

- Site eh 1 is suitable for around 12 houses
- Site eh2 is suitable for around 10 houses
- Site eh3 is suitable for around 10 houses
- Future housing land shown as Site fh1

The village of New Pitsligo (or Cyaak as it is called locally) has a population of just over 1,000 and is situated just off on the A950 Peterhead to Banff road in the Buchan area of Aberdeenshire. It was founded in the mid 18th century becoming famous as a thriving centre of lace making, being at one time the largest village in Scotland.

New Pitsligo today

New Pitsligo is still a thriving community with local goods and services, including a well-known bakery and one of Buchan's most successful social enterprises, The 4 Cs café. The Public Hall and St John's Centre host many activities from the usual leisure and activity groups to bigger events such as the popular annual Visual Arts Exhibition which attracts visitors from all over the north-east and beyond. The traditional industry of lace-making is still practised with classes held to pass the skills on to young people. The initiative of local people in raising funds

and successfully implementing projects has resulted in a number of good projects including a new Play Area in the centre of the village and an All-weather sports facility next to the school. There is a very active, productive Community Council and many other groups which create a vibrancy in the community.

As with many communities there are also problems of socio-economic deprivation with resulting health and housing problems. With this in mind the active Community Council, together with Buchan Development Partnership, facilitated a community consultation using the Planning for Real® process in 2005. The outcomes from this, together with the results of an inter-agency workshop looking at service needs in the area, were used by the community to create a prioritised Action Plan to help the community to focus on and develop their future goals.



Lace makers.



View of New Pitsligo.



Parish Church



Planning for Real® model.

Things we like about our community (as given by various members of the community of different ages):	Things we don't like :
<p>“Good educational facilities eg school, library”</p> <p>“Good local facilities at competitive rates”</p> <p>“It is a close, friendly community”</p> <p>“Hard working, traditional community”</p> <p>“The Four Cs and St John's Day Care are great for community spirit”</p>	<p>“Speeding traffic through our village”</p> <p>“Dog mess on the pavements”</p> <p>“Not enough buses”</p> <p>“We're too isolated”</p>



Countryside new New Pitsligo.



Primary School.



The Library.



The Square.

New Pitsligo: Buchan Area Plan 2006-2009

The Area Plan for the Buchan Area shows the Council's intentions for developments and projects with the Area for the forthcoming three years. The Plan is laid out under five headings: Jobs and Economy, Learning, Community Wellbeing, Sustainable Environment and Developing our Partnership.

It is drawn up by the Area Committee and officers of the Council, based on consultation

with the local communities, local community groups, and the community planning partners - Grampian Fire and Rescue, NHS Grampian, Grampian Police, Scottish Water, Scottish Enterprise Grampian, Communities Scotland, BRIDGE (CVS), Buchan Development Partnership and the Buchan Community Councils

Although the latest version does not include actions specifically for New Pitsligo, many of the identified priorities within the plan may affect New Pitsligo

General Intentions

Heading/Lead Service Action/Project	
Jobs & The Economy	Central Buchan Industrial Potential
Learning	Halls and Recreational Use Play Areas
Community Wellbeing	Rural Housing Needs Residents/Tenants Groups Central Buchan Project Meeting the needs of Older People Substance Misuse Youth Shelters Community Safety Plan Addressing Anti-Social Behaviour
Sustainable Environment	Local Transport Strategy Rural Buchan Regeneration Strategy Environmental Improvements

The top four priorities to emerge from the consultation are outlined below

Traffic calming in residential streets/near school (Theme: Traffic and Transport)

Traffic speed along the mile-long High Street was identified as a major problem, creating a significant danger to pedestrians. The community would like to work with the Council to explore measures to reduce traffic speed particularly in the High Street and to improve safety for pedestrians crossing this road and that near the school.

Transport (Theme: Traffic and Transport)

The provision of public transport is very poor despite the low percentage of car ownership compared with Aberdeenshire as a whole (17.9% compared with 29%). This was identified in both the Traffic and Jobs and the Economy section. There is a need for an improved bus service for the area together with addition and relocation of existing bus stops.

Security Cameras and Police Foot patrols (Theme: Crime)

Together with traffic issues this issue provoked the largest number of comments. The Buchan area has the second highest proportion of reported crime of all Aberdeenshire's six areas. The need for a much more visible police presence "on the

beat" was highlighted by the community although current operational priorities for the police would seem to make this unlikely. The community would like to work with the Police around all the issues identified in this category and highlighted later in this plan.

Improvement of Public Hall (Theme: Community Facilities)

The Public Hall is extremely well-used and is home to a number of local groups including the Boys' Football Club as well as the venue for various fundraising events including coffee mornings, dances and the Annual Visual Arts Exhibition. However after many years of constant use it is now in some need of refurbishment to provide a modern, sustainable facility accessible to all.

The community aims to work with funding providers to improve this facility for the benefit of the community.



Traffic in High Street.



High Street.



Police Station.



Public Hall.



St John's Centre.



Play Park.



Children enjoying Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA).



Community Newsletter group receiving funding award.

Other Issues

Many other suggestions received support, and these are listed on pages 6-9. A summarised Action Plan can be found on pages 10-11.

Community Facilities and activities

General: This category provoked the greatest response in the consultation with a total of 345 suggestions for improvements. The theme produced one top priority (see page 5).

The consultation revealed that people felt excluded from certain social and recreational activities because they did not have access to cars and public transport was expensive and irregular.

- The **St John's Centre** is the base for the numerous village activities including Playgroups, Daycare, evening classes and other support groups. There was a strong feeling that this building could be used more and access should be available throughout the whole year with more classes available.
- A new **Multi-Use Games Area** was opened in 2005 which will provide an invaluable facility for sports and health initiatives in the future. The consultation indicated that the community want to ensure that this is

used to its full capacity to bring maximum benefit to the residents and that it was adequately protected from vandalism

- A gap in activities and meeting places for teenage children exists and boys especially appear to be less catered for. 15% of those responding were keen to see some form of **skateboarding/rollerblading park** within the community.
- A **community newsletter and community noticeboard** were suggested as being a good way of disseminating information.
- The **Play Area** in the centre of the village, created through funding raised by a community group, is popular and the community see this as a valuable facility which needs to be maintained.

Other responses under this category include:

- provision of a Cash Point
- Internet café
- youth theatre
- 9 hole golf course.

Jobs & the Economy

General: Monthly NOMIS figures show that unemployment in the area is low but this does not mean incomes are necessarily high as Central Buchan is ranked 13th worst in terms of income in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. New Pitsligo has a good mix of community services with a variety of shops, including a very successful social enterprise, the 4Cs cafe, a primary school and GP surgery although the bank has recently closed and the consultation showed a demand for a non-charging Cash Point in the village. There is no land zoned for industry and attracting businesses to the area may be difficult in the current climate.

- **Lack of availability of childcare** in the immediate area was highlighted as a problem and one that might prevent people from working.
- **Lack of public transport** to get people to work early enough although the new A2B bus service might improve this.

Local Environment

General: The comments in this category focussed mainly on the need for a general tidy-up and clean-up of the area, although the provision of a village orderly made a big difference in the summer months. Specifically:

- **Dog Bins** - dog dirt is seen as a major problem. There is a need to advertise where dog bins are and provide more bins in suitable places. Offenders need to be reported to Dog warden, with more notices detailing location of bins
- The **Millennium Garden** in the centre of the village is an attractive feature but needs to be tidied
- The **Denburn** in the centre of the village was a feature in times past but has now an unkempt appearance, with the pathways requiring maintenance. The community would like provision made for seating and picnic areas to encourage walkers and recreational users. However the land is privately owned and there seems no prospect of this taking place in the near future.
- **Cemetery** - general appearance needs to be improved.
- **Recycling facilities** in the village need to be improved and expanded with possible relocation of the skips.
- **Walks** in/around the village need to be identified and mapped out.

Other issues include:

- increasing the hours of the village orderly,
- community composting
- pruning of shrubs at junctions



Four C's Cafe.



Millennium Garden.



The Den in times gone by.



A nearby country walk.

Health & Wellbeing

General: There are a number of health issues in New Pitsligo which mainly arise through the socio-economic deprivation of the area. Hospital admissions for emergencies, alcohol and drug misuse are higher in New Pitsligo than for Aberdeenshire as a whole.

- In common with other areas of the north east there is a great concern at the lack of **NHS dental provision** in the area. It was also felt that there was a lack of space at the doctor's surgery and better provision needs to be made for chiropody and other clinics.
- The need for **better interagency communication** between service providers in the health was identified. A Joint Assessment Team(JAT) initiative would be another way of bringing key services together, especially when dealing with specific cases.
- **Awareness of existing services:** It is important to utilise existing services such as Sure Start and explore liaising with other non-statutory services eg SACRO and more people need to be aware of the services available.
- **More youth events** need to be organised at the new MUGA (Multi use games area) building on this success

of events that have already taken place

- **Parenting and life-style classes** have proved successful and are helpful in addressing some of the problem issues in this category. These needed to be continued and built upon.

Housing

General: The majority of dwellings in New Pitsligo fall within the Band A grouping with house prices much cheaper than the average figure across Aberdeenshire.

Although numbers commenting on housing matters within the consultation were not as large as other categories, there were several issues which had a high percentage of comment.

The community would like to work with Tenancy Support Workers and Housing Officers from Aberdeenshire Council to look at these issues.

- 27% of those responding indicated a lack of provision for **flats for young people**. At present they are being housed in old people's units which is causing problems for both parties.
- 16% felt that there was a lack of **affordable housing** in the area for first-time buyers. The community would like steps to be taken to encourage provision of affordable

housing in any future developments, through planning decisions and collaboration with developers and agencies.

- 16% also felt that there was a lack of provision of **Sheltered Housing**. However, in terms of priority need and demand New Pitsligo is ranked well down the priority list (10th in Buchan). The community would like to explore this further.
- The consultation also highlighted that there was concern over the number of **"problem families"** being housed in the village. There is a high turnover rate of 24% within the Council Housing in New Pitsligo. The Council is bound by Government legislation and the Council's own procedures to provide accommodation to families in need, including those with perceived "social" problems, and the surplus housing in New Pitsligo is often used to fill this need, resulting in some problems within the community.

Other issues included:

- a concern that gardens and outside areas within the Council House areas were not being maintained to a reasonable standard and that there was at present no Tenants and Residents Association in New Pitsligo.

Traffic & Transport

This theme produced a two priorities (see page 5) in addition to the proposals below. In most cases the actions can only be put into effect through partnership working mainly with Aberdeenshire Council.

General: Despite its rural location there is a much higher proportion of people with no cars as compared with Aberdeenshire as a whole (29% as compared to 17.9%). but the provision of public transport service is poor with a bus service only every 2 hours to link in to services to Aberdeen .

- **Pavements** need to be lowered around the bakery and leading to Highfield and Clinton to provide wheelchair access.
- There are problems with **bicycles** being ridden on pavements causing a danger to the public and trailers parked on streets
- **Resurfacing** required in some streets including High St to Low St on Alexander Bell Place. Lanes are also in bad condition.

Crime & Community Safety

General: The Buchan area has the second highest proportion of reported crime of all Aberdeenshire's 6 areas and the consultation highlighted a number of problems of low

level crime and anti-social behaviour. The need for a greater police presence came out as one of the top priorities (see page 5) Other issues raised included:

- **Drug-use** is a concern and **under-age drinking** in public places such as the Den and the play park area. There is a belief that the Police should have a greater presence and take more action against antisocial behaviour. This also links with issues raised in the Housing section of the plan. These related issues provide an opportunity for joint action by various Community Planning partners.
- There is a **fear of reporting crime**, a feeling that the system in place to report crime to the headquarters at Bucksburn is too onerous and also that police response is too slow making it "not worth reporting".
- **Neighbourhood Watch** Scheme was suggested as a possible means by which the community could help the police to maintain law and order by providing information.
- **Vandalism** of buildings and cars particularly around the school area was identified as a problem. This may be helped by the Scheme outlined above.



View to Den Bridge.



Forbes Court Sheltered Housing.



Residents at Planning for Real®.



Bowling Green.

	Independent	Partnership	Outside Agency
1. Community Facilities & Activity	Community newsletter and community noticeboard Internet cafe	Improvement of fabric of hall More use of St John's Centre Provide more activities at MUGA Maintenance of play area in centre Examine possible provision of skateboarding facilities	Provision of Cashpoint at bank
2. Jobs & The Economy		Childcare provision to enable people to return to work.	Improved public transport
3. Local Environment		Improve appearance of Millennium Gardens Develop a network of walks in and around village Better provision of Dog Bins and improved signing of existing bins Research possibility of community composting	Pruning shrubs at junctions Improve appearance and upkeep of Cemetery Improve Recycling facilities Improve appearance of Denburn
4. Health		Increase awareness of existing services. Continuing parenting and life-style classes	Better interagency communication to bring key services together to deal with problems.

<p>5. Housing</p>		<p>Examine possibility of establishing a Tenants and Residents Association in New Pitsligo</p>	<p>Flats for young people</p> <p>Affordable housing for first-time buyers</p> <p>Better Sheltered Housing provision</p> <p>Concern over the housing of “problem families” in the village.</p>
<p>6. Traffic & Transportation</p>		<p>Problem with bicycles being ridden on the pavement</p>	<p>Traffic calming in High Street and residential streets particularly around the school.</p> <p>Provision of better Public Transport</p> <p>Pavements lowered at certain junctions</p> <p>Resurfacing required in some areas.</p>
<p>7. Crime & Community Safety</p>		<p>Tackle drug-dealing, under-age drinking and vandalism</p> <p>Neighbourhood Watch Scheme</p>	<p>More police foot patrol/greater police presence in the village</p>

Partners who may help to deliver the above

Items in bold reflect the four top priorities

Aberdeenshire Council services:
 Education & Recreation
 Housing & Social Work
 Law & Administration
 Planning & Environmental Services
 Transportation & Infrastructure

Other agencies:
 Community Safety Partnership
 Grampian Police
 Grampian Fire & Rescue Service
 NHS Grampian
 Scottish Enterprise Grampian

This booklet is one of a series produced by Local Rural Partnerships together with the community under the banner Making It Real.

The initiative is sponsored by Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership and Shell, and run by Aberdeenshire Community Economic Development Co-ordinators Forum. The aim is to provide community actions plans in an attractive, easy to read, professionally printed format.

For most communities the content of each community plan

is based on the results of Planning for Real® exercises carried out by the communities themselves together with any other available reports. This process ensures that the plans are truly community-led.

This information can now guide the community and Community Planning Partners in drawing up detailed actions plans to implement the top priorities as well as addressing the other issues which have been identified. For each priority or issue this will involve agreeing who should be involved, what resources will be needed and

target dates for completion. It is hoped that this process will be driven by representatives of the community with support – moral, technical and financial – from the relevant Partners.

It is important that this booklet is seen by all concerned as an account of the community's views at the time of the latest consultation, and that it will have to be regularly reviewed and updated. As some projects are completed, other issues will arise and take their place in future versions of the community plan.

Thanks are due to New Pitsligo Community Council and other local helpers for organising the Planning for Real® and subsequent meetings, and providing a wealth of background information on the community.

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