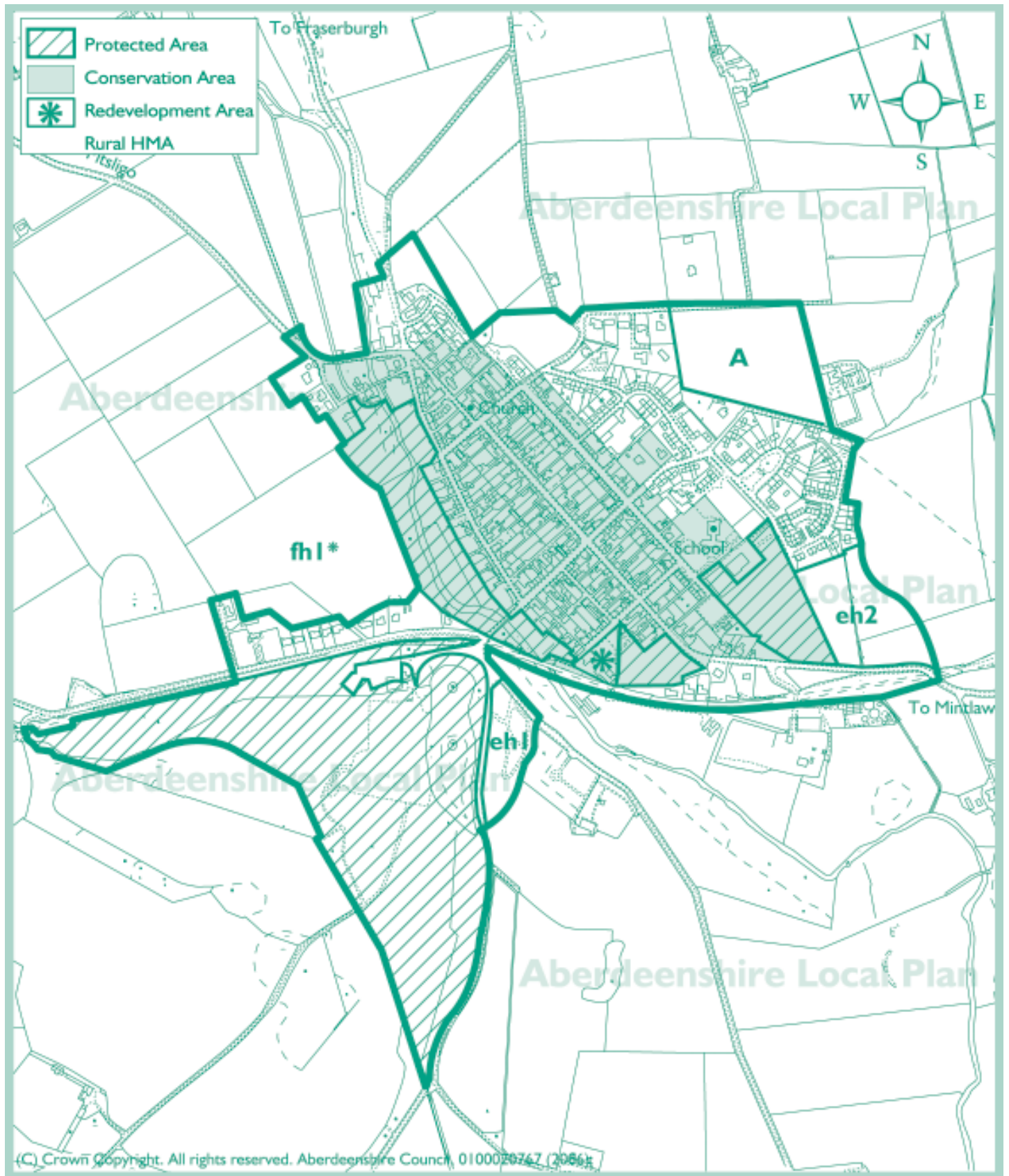




Strichen
Community
Action Plan



This is from the 2002 Aberdeenshire Local Plan which is under review. Information on the new plan which has yet to be approved can be found at www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ldp

Strichen - A Planned Village

In the late 1700s all the Lairds were vying with each other to see who could plan the best, most successful village. In 1764 Captain Fraser, the Laird, planned his village with broad streets and interconnecting lanes all leading to the common ground and water beside the River Ugie. At that time it was called Mormond Village because of course, it nestles at the foot of Mormond Hill the famous Buchan landmark. To encourage people to come and build a house he offered a prize for the “first reekin lum” and this was won by two people – Taylor and Deacon. The house still stands near the Mormond bridge. Captain Fraser encouraged craftsmen to come to the village hence the fact that eventually there were three mills – woollen, meal and linen – wheelwright, carpenters, blacksmiths and masons to name but a few.

When young Captain Fraser returned from the war in Gilzen in the 1770s he told his father of the bravery of Sergeant Hutcheon who had given him his horse in order to escape. Unfortunately, Sergeant Hutcheon was subsequently killed so the Laird had the estate workers build a house of white quartz stone on Mormond Hill in his memory. He also had a local stone mason build Hunter’s Lodge on top of Mormond Hill. It was a two storey building with the gamekeeper’s quarters on the top floor and the ground floor was one room where the Laird entertained his guests after a day’s hunting.

Strichen House was built in 1821 for Thomas Fraser of Strichen. In 1954 a fire destroyed the house and it is now just a shell. Beside the house, on a little ridge is the Stone Circle. (Dr Samuel Johnson and James Boswell visited the Circle on their travels in 1773). The former hospital and the old school were demolished and the sites designated for housing. The Town Hall in the centre of the village, now a listed building, dates from 1816 and the public library in the Anderson and Woodman Institute was opened in 1923. In 1985 part of the village was designated as a conservation area

Strichen was once a bustling village with dozens of shops and services, today there are two churches (the Parish and the Episcopalian), a convenience store with Post Office, Chemist, Butcher, Doctor’s Surgery, Veterinary Surgery, one Hotel, two pubs, British Legion Club, a hairdresser and a library. The Town Hall is the meeting place for the Pensioners’ Club and the Community Council, The Ritchie Hall is home to a wide variety of activities including, Mums and Toddlers, WRI, Young Farmers, Indoor Bowling, Badminton, Highland Dancing, Wine Club, Zumba Dancing, the Gala/Hall Committee and all sections of Mormond Thistle Football Club, The Primary School which currently has six classes and a Nursery is the meeting place for Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Boys’ Brigade. The Playgroup meets in the All Saints Church Hall and the Guild is held in the Parish Church Hall. The outdoor bowling green is situated beside the Ritchie Hall. The Templer

Hall is home to the famous Strichen “roups” which are held once a month, selling furniture, household items and antiques. The Buchan Countryside Group – who were instrumental in the creation of the F&B Way are based in the village.

One remaining feature of the grounds of Strichen House is the beautiful Community Park and Lake which is owned and maintained by the community. It has been extensively landscaped and the group have recently been awarded funding to refurbish the derelict lodge house and create a community cafe. The area has become a very popular place for recreation – there are several beautiful walks around the Lake and surrounding woods and it is located close to the Formartine and Buchan Way.

In 2010, the Ritchie Hall and Gala Committee organised a meeting of all the groups in the village and it was decided to carry out a community consultation exercise over the summer. The outcomes from this have been used to create this prioritised Action Plan to help the community to focus and develop their future goals.

Things we like about Strichen (as given by various members of the community of different ages)
“Countrified, and homely and sociable – everybody says hello”
“Good school”
“The Lake”

What could be better
“clear notices of events in the village where people can see them”
“more housing”



Entrance to Strichen.



Gala Day.



Strawberry Teas in the Ritchie Hall.



Strichen Town House.

Strichen: Buchan Community Plan 2012-2014

The Buchan Local Community Plan brings together the key actions and projects of a number of public agencies under five themes – Community Wellbeing, Developing Our Partnership, Sustainable Environment, Jobs and the Economy and Lifelong Learning. It also includes actions based on consultation

with the local communities and local community groups. The plan can be accessed on www.ouraberdeenshire.gov.uk/buchan

The latest version includes actions specifically for Strichen and there are several general intentions in all categories within the plan which might affect Strichen.

Specific Actions

Heading/Lead Service	Action/Project (with reference in LCP)
Community Wellbeing	
A1 – Affordable Housing	To work in partnership with the Scottish Government, Private Developers and Registered Social Landlords to assist in the delivery of affordable housing on both Brownfield and Greenfield sites throughout Buchan. Strichen is named as a top priority area.
A13 – Community Service by Offenders	To identify and develop innovative projects which are constructive, are to the benefit of residents in the Buchan area. Work in Strichen Community Park is mentioned as a best practice example.
Jobs and the Economy	
B11 - Social Economy	Sustainability of social enterprises – Strichen Community Park Cafe project is named as a priority
B12 – Community Assets	To work with active community groups to investigate funding and develop a schedule of works for the upgrading of community halls – The Ritchie Hall in Strichen is named as a priority.
Sustainable Environment	
D3 – Conservation Area	– to develop a restoration project for Strichen Town House – an A listed property at the heart of the conservation area in conjunction with Education Learning and Leisure and the community.

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

Ritchie Hall (Theme - Community Facilities and Activities)

Refurbishing of Hall and Car Park. The Ritchie Hall was identified as a central hub for community activities and events. It was suggested that improvements could be made to make it into a more attractive venue to hold other functions and activities eg weddings. The resurfacing of the car park outside the Hall was also a key priority for many people.

Tennis Courts (Theme - Environment)

The tennis courts behind the Ritchie Hall are no longer in use and are in need of repair. It was suggested that some sort of all weather surface would be a better option so that the area could be used for a variety of sports. Since conducting this consultation, Community Learning and Development workers have started working with a group of young people in Strichen. The young people have been using the old tennis pavilion as a meeting place.

Play Area (Theme - Environment)

The play area is in need of improving to include more equipment for older children (eg zip line/obstacle course), more accessible equipment for less able children and also some seating for adults accompanying children to the park.

Traffic Issues (Theme - Traffic and Transport)

There was concern about access along Water Street – when cars are parked on both sides of the street it is difficult to drive along the street. There was also concern that the access through Mormond Place to future housing land behind it would be a problem as the road is congested at the moment.

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 and 11.



The Ritchie Hall.



Tennis Courts and Pavilion.



Playing Fields.



Water Street.



Play Area.



The Bowling Club.



The Library.



Strichen Primary School.

Community Facilities & Activity

This theme produced one of the top four priorities (see page 5). The comments in this category were wide and varied.

Other key issues which arose in the consultation were:-

- Play Area should be fenced off and the area adjacent to the play area tidied up and a picnic area created.
- Strichen Town House - Aberdeenshire Council are working with the community to explore how best to use this building in the future. It is a listed building and is in a poor state of repair.
- Classes in the Hall – there were suggestions for classes to be held in the Hall – eg IT. The community could approach the colleges (Banff and Buchan and Aberdeen) to see if they could help progress this initiative.
- Issues concerning access – it was suggested that a handrail was needed in the Ritchie Hall between the Main Hall and the Redwood Lounge. There was also a need for disabled access to the Bowling Club.
- There was a call for the village to have designated space for advertising events preferably somewhere that is easily accessed at all times.

Local Environment

This theme provoked the greatest response in the consultation and produced two top priorities priority (see page 5.

- Dog Mess – this is seen as a major problem in the village especially around the Pleasure Park and Lake area. It was also felt that the problem was not with the dogs themselves but dog owners who do not clean up after their pets. They should be made aware that they could be fined.
- Litter - there were comments that more bins were required in the village and this is to be looked at along with the provision of dog bins.
- Village Orderly – there was a query if the Village Orderly duties covered Brewery Road and the Lake.
- Recycling – there were people who felt more recycling facilities were needed in the village eg a skip similar to the one in New Pitsligo. It was also felt that the area could be kept tidier.

- Paths – there were several issues around paths and walks in Strichen and the surrounding area
 - Formartine and Buchan Way – the stretch between Strichen and Maud needs improving and the link completed at Brucklay
 - On the Strichen to Fraserburgh stretch of the Formartine and Buchan Way the bushes need to be cut back and cleared
 - There is a footpath sign at Hillfoot Bridge but there is no clear footpath here to Hillfoot Farm Road



The Formartine and Buchan Way.



Recycling.



Strichen Community Park - The Lake.



The Lodge at the Lake.



The Shop.



The Surgery.



The Butcher's Shop.



The White Horse Hotel.

Traffic and Transport

This theme produced one top priority (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.

- There was a problem identified with cars parking on double yellow lines outside the shop.
- There was a call for better access for wheelchairs on the pavements in the village.

Health and wellbeing

General: This is a category that attracted very few comments, though people valued their local surgery and chemist

For those outside the village transport for GP appointments was a problem.

Jobs and the Economy

General: This was a category that attracted little comment. Unemployment in the area is low.

There was general consensus that the village had a reasonable range of services but there was concern that the local filling station/convenience store was about to close.

Housing

- There was concern about a property on Bridge Street which was derelict. People felt it should be demolished or rebuilt as it was not only an eyesore but a safety issue as well.
- There was a call for more housing but that vehicular access to the areas being developed should not be through already congested residential streets.

Since this consultation was carried out, the filling station has closed and has been demolished for houses to be built on the site.

Crime and Community Safety

Issues were:

- Police Foot Patrols – there was a call for more Police foot patrols in the village. Police have introduced their Police on bikes initiative which is allowing better coverage within rural villages such as Hatton.



House on Bridge Street.



Episcopalian Church.



The Stone Circle.



Church from High Street.

Many of the key actions fall in to more than one category. For the purposes of this summary each action will only be mentioned under one category to avoid confusion.

	Independent	Partnership	Outside Agency
1. Community Facilities & Activities	<p>Disabled access at the Bowling Club</p> <p>Advertising of Community Events</p>	<p>Ritchie Hall and Car Park improvements</p> <p>Tennis Courts and Pavilion area</p> <p>Play area improvements</p> <p>Classes in Ritchie Hall</p>	
2. Health		Transport to GP appointments	
3. Local Environment		<p>Dog fouling</p> <p>Litter</p> <p>Improved recycling facilities</p> <p>Paths – condition of and access to</p>	
4. Housing		Problem with derelict house on Bridge Street	

5. Traffic & Transportation			<p>Parked cars on Water Street causing congestion</p> <p>Road access to proposed new housing through Mormond Place</p>
6. Crime and Community Safety			<p>Police foot and bike patrols</p>

Partners who may help to deliver the above

Aberdeenshire Council services:
 Education Learning and Leisure
 Housing and Social Work
 Law and Administration
 Planning and Environmental Services
 Transportation and Infrastructure

Private Investors

Other agencies:
 Buchan Community Safety Group
 Grampian Police
 Grampian Fire and Rescue Service
 NHS 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 action 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 action 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

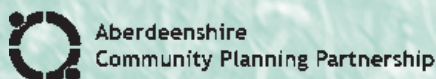
target dates for completion. It is hoped that this process will be driven by representatives of the community with support – moral, technical and financial – from the relevant partners.

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 the Ritchie Hall Committee and other local helpers for their help and input with the community consultation and follow up meetings.

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