

community
enterprise

Penpont Local Place Plan

Interim Report

October 2024



Contents

1. Introduction	3
1.1 Introduction	3
1.2 Methodology.....	3
2. Desk Based Research	5
2.1 Demographics and Statistics	5
2.2 Asset Mapping.....	8
2.3 Policy Analysis	17
3. Community Consultation	23
3.1 Community Survey	23
3.2 Focus Groups	35
3.3 Feedback Event.....	37
3. Findings	44
3.1 Thinking about our Place	44
3.2 Assets	44
3.3 Challenges and Needs.....	45
3.4 Projects	47

1. Introduction

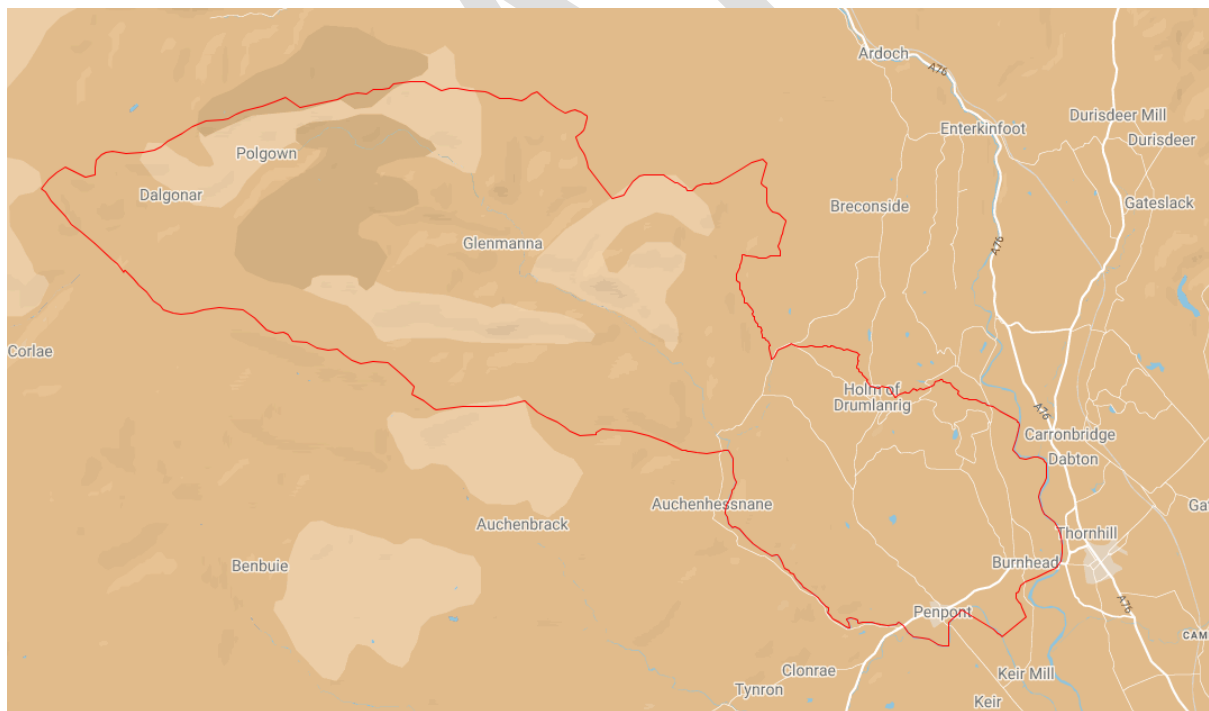
1.1 Introduction

This Local Place Plan (LPP) will set out the aspirations of the community of Penpont, the strategic objectives required to deliver those aspirations and the associated actions we wish to take forward over the next ten years. We would expect the plan to be reviewed and refreshed for 2034 onwards.

The LPP will be used by Dumfries & Galloway Council’s planners to help them understand the wishes and aspirations of the people of Penpont, informing the Council planners as they start work on the new Local Development Plan (LDP). The LDP will set out the opportunities for development in the area and the types of development which will and will not be permitted and in which locations.

The scope of our plan will include the ways in which our community want to see land developed and used and a spatial vision for our area. However, it will go beyond this to include broader social and economic objectives. The Local Place Plan offers a way of identifying and helping to deliver community projects and provides information for other organisations to adapt their activities or proposals to support delivery of the Penpont community aspirations. It will be a tool for collaborative working, within the community and with Dumfries & Galloway Council.

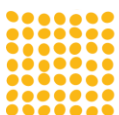
The Local Place Plan area is defined by the red boundary line of the Penpont Community Council area shown in the map below.



1.2 Methodology

A workplan to develop the LPP was developed with responsibilities for KPT, Penpont Community Council and the consultants. A thorough and robust programme of research and engagement took place which involved several strands and activities including:

Site Orientation Visit



In initial visits hosted by KPT, Community Enterprise had a full drive around and walk about which helpfully gave a detailed indication of all the assets, issues and spaces in the community.

Engagement Framework

An engagement framework was developed to show KPT and Community Enterprise target groups and activities as part of the LPP research and consultation.

Communication

The process of developing a LPP and the associated engagement was promoted in several ways including posters, social media posts, word of mouth, KPT Bulletin, presentations at meetings, press releases and public notices.

Asset Mapping

Site orientation led to a detailed asset map being pulled together that informed discussion about assets and opportunities during the research.

Analysis of Existing data

The team read and analysed various documents including a combination of local, regional and national documents to understand area context. This has fed into some of the thinking about thematic areas.

Demographics and Statistics

An analysis of the demographics of the area using a bespoke piece of data analysis software combining over 30 different datasets including the census and SIMD and stats was undertaken.

Policy Fit

Local Place Plan compliant policy plus national and regional policy fit as well as crucial national strategy from community wealth building to net zero was considered. What was important was to see how the LPP in this area fitted with the National Planning Framework 4 and how it related to the previous Local Development Plan.

Community Survey

154 individual responses were secured. When asked if these represented other family members and friends were around 545 in total saying they have had some input to those surveys.

Joint Steering Group and Community Council Meetings

The consultants continue to attend joint Steering Group and Community Council Meetings to cooperatively appraise the approach and make timely presentations on progress.

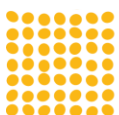
Community Engagement Meetings and Discussion

A comprehensive range of engagement events took place in the Penpont community, in the form of focus groups from June to September 2024 engaging with 52 people.

A community drop in meeting was held in September 2024 to discuss themes and project ideas emerging from the research, 55 people attended this event. Information from this event was displayed at the KPT office for the next two weeks and an additional 20 people dropped in to provide their feedback.

To capture community members who were unable to attend in person, we also offered the opportunity to feedback on the research online. 26 people took part in the online feedback.

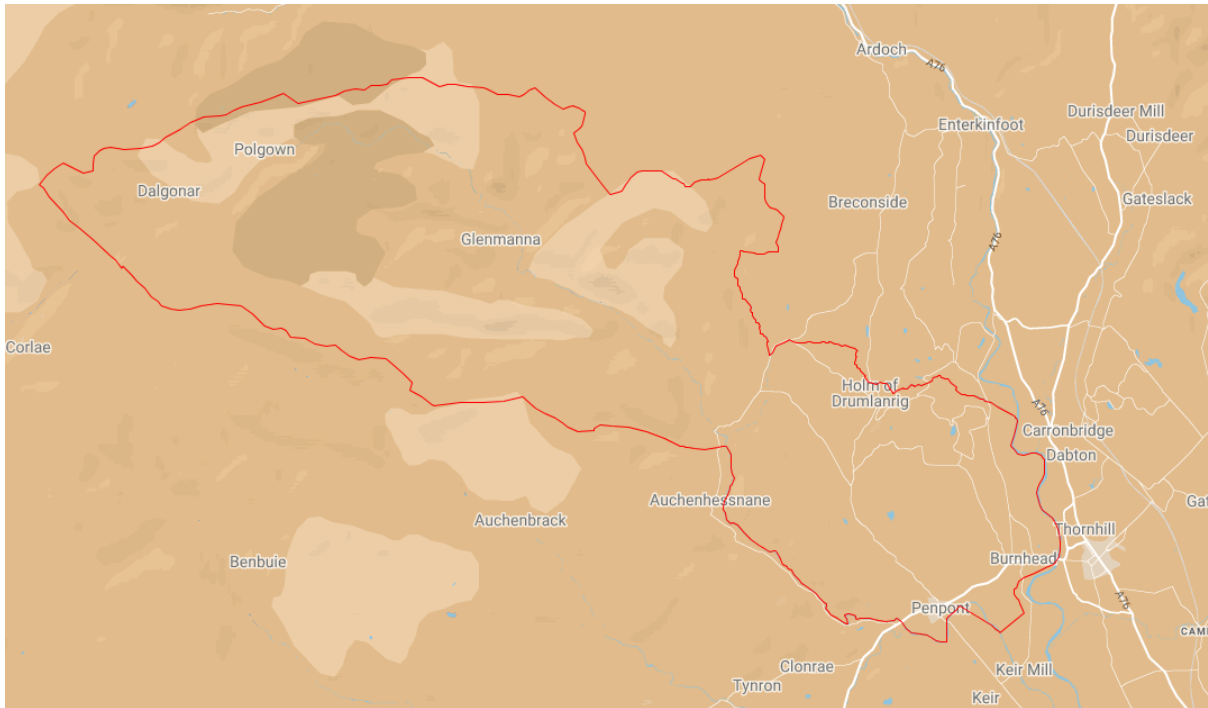
In total 153 people took part in community engagement meetings and discussion.



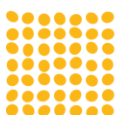
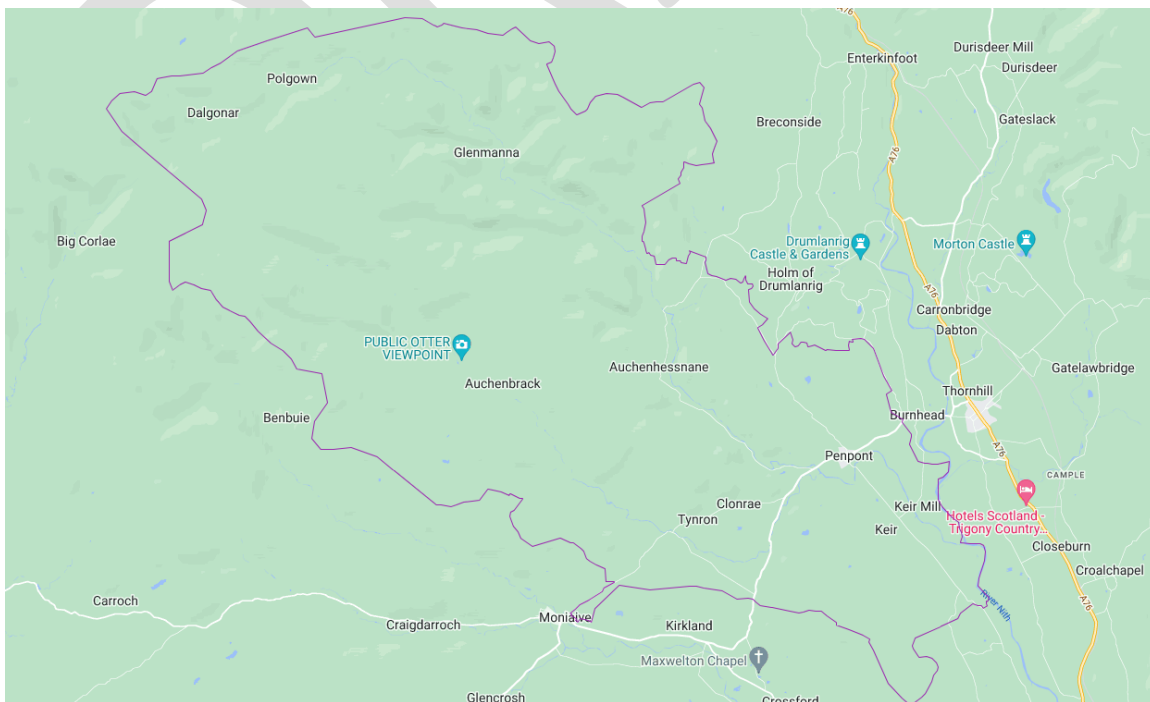
2. Desk Based Research

2.1 Demographics and Statistics

The Penpont Local Place Plan is being developed for the benefit of those living within the Penpont Community Council boundary. As Census data is not published for community council areas, we have gathered data for the Penpont parish area (red) which has a close-fitting geographic boundary.



Some data is not published at parish level. Where parish data is not available, we have provided data for the larger Thornhill – 04 data zone (below), within which Penpont sits.

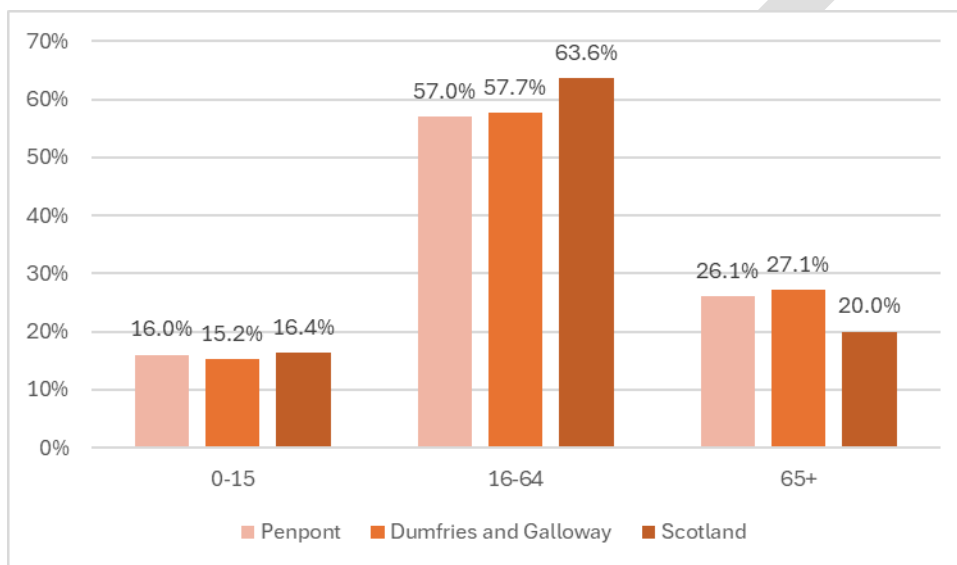


Penpont Parish Data (from 2022 census)

Population and age

According to the 2022 Census, there are 570 people living in the Penpont area. The population is 53% female and 47% male.

36% of those living in the local area are aged over 65, this is significantly higher than the national average which is 20%. 57% are of working age, this is lower than the national average which is 64%. Finally, 16% are aged 0-15, which is roughly the same as across Scotland.

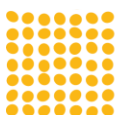


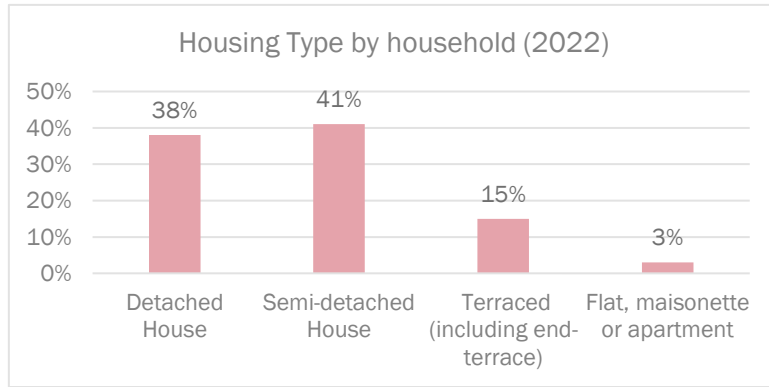
Population change

The population of Penpont has decreased in the past decade or so. At the 2011 census, there were 734 people living in the area. As of the 2022 census there are 570 people living in the area. Therefore, there has been a 22% decrease in the local population since 2011.

Housing

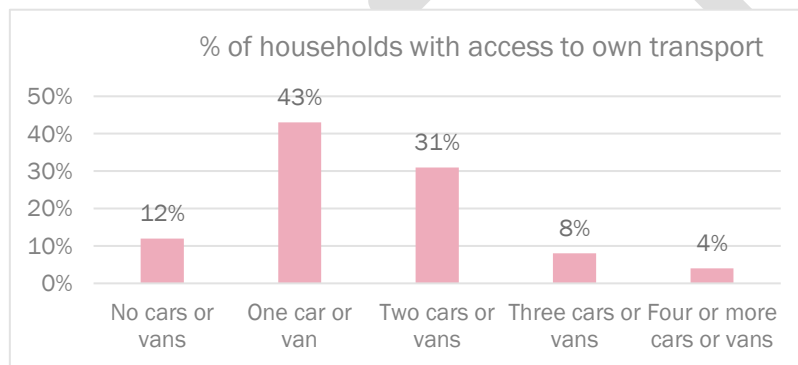
At the 2022 census, there were 269 households in the Penpont Civil Parish area. Of these households, 94% of households in Penpont live in whole houses or bungalows. 38% are living in detached houses, 41% in semi detached and 15% in terraced houses. Only 3% of households in Penpont live in flats or apartments.





Transport

12% of households in Penpont do not have their own car, which is statistically significant given the rural nature of the place and limited public transport options. 86% of households have access to one car or more.



Thornhill Data Zone Statistics

Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) measures the level of deprivation across 6,976 data zones in Scotland. The SIMD combines data across seven domains: income, employment, education, health, geographic access to services, housing and crime.¹

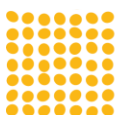
Penpont is located within the Thornhill – 04 datazone, which also encompasses the neighboring areas of Keir and Tynron. This datazone is within the most deprived 10% of areas in Scotland in terms of geographic access to services. This covers travel times by car and public transport to basic services such as GPs, post offices, schools, retail and fuel stations.

Universal Credit

Universal Credit has replaced six previous benefits (including housing benefit, child tax credit and working tax credit). Universal Credit can be received by people in work on low pay and those who are unemployed.

12% of people living in the Thornhill - 04 data zone claim Universal Credit, which is slightly below the averages of 14% in Dumfries and Galloway and 13% in Scotland (DWP, March 2022).

¹ <https://simd.scot/#/simd2020/BTTTT/13.270617063768448/-3.8215/55.2284/>



Local Jobs

Data on local jobs is provided by the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) at data zone level.² According to BRES figures from 2022, the largest industry groups for workforce jobs based in the Thornhill – 04 data zone are:

- Information and communication (20%)
- Professional, scientific and technical (13%)
- Education (13%)
- Manufacturing (13%)
- Motor trades (13%)

In this data zone, just 9% of jobs are in the public sector. This is lower than the national average (23%).

Older People

Pension Credit provides financial help for people aged 60 or over whose income is below a certain level (so is an indicator for pensioners living in poverty). Fewer pensioners in the Thornhill – 04 data zone are considered to be living in poverty as 9% claim Pension credit, compared to 12% of pensioners across Scotland as a whole.

Attendance Allowance is payable to people over the age of 65 who are so severely disabled, physically or mentally, that they need a great deal of help with personal care or supervision. According to figures from the Department of Work and Pensions (Feb, 2022), 9% of people in the Thornhill – 04 data zone claim Attendance Allowance, which is lower than in Dumfries and Galloway (12%) and Scotland (11%).

Education

Information on school performance is from the Scottish Government's dashboard and from the year 2022/23³:

Penpont Primary School: 54 pupils. Percentage of pupils (at P1, P4, and P7 levels) achieving the Curriculum for Excellence level relevant to their stage is: Reading: 80-90%; Writing: 70-80%; Listening and Talking: 90+%; and Numeracy: 80-90%.

2.2 Asset Mapping

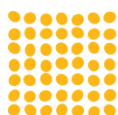
Asset Mapping represents the process of identifying, connecting and mobilising the strengths, resources and physical assets that exist within a community, to build upon and enhance positive outcomes. The Penpont area offers a range of assets, services, and amenities. This section is a snapshot of some of the key assets across the area. The maps highlight a selection of the things in the area which can be preserved and built on over the period of this Local Place Plan.

The following categories of asset are shown:

- Buildings and Amenities
- Green Space and Play
- Heritage Assets

² The data includes figures for both employees and employment. Hence, includes the self-employed.

³ https://scotland.shinyapps.io/sg-primary_school_information_dashboard/



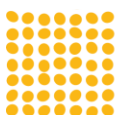
- Local Business

Buildings and Amenities



1) Gladstone Hall:

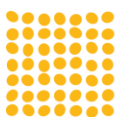
The hall was built in 1861 and is situated in the midst of a row of residential houses, on Princes Street. It was transferred from Sir Hugh Gladstone to Penpont Rural Council in 1949. It is used regularly for meetings of the Friendship Club and as changing facilities for Scaur football team. The Community Council use it for meetings, films for children and as a base during Penpont Gala week, yoga and chair yoga classes. It can be hired for events, parties and classes. The Hall has a kitchen used to facilitate events, functions and meetings, as well as storage and toilets. The Hall has capacity for approximately 40-50 seated. It is run and maintained by Penpont Community Council.





2) Three Villages Community Café:

Three Villages Cafe is a community enterprise cafe serving the communities of Keir, Penpont and Tynron. This social enterprise was set up by KPT Development Trust and is managed and run by staff & volunteers. The cafe is situated on Main Street, Penpont and is open 5 days a week including weekends, Friday night Tea Club and additional themed evening dinners on a Saturday evening once a month.



3) Parish Church of Keir, Penpont and Tynron

Penpont's Church of Scotland parish church is a Gothic Revival building completed in 1867 which is now Category B listed. It became the parish church for Penpont, Keir and Tynron on the closure of Keir and Tynron Churches. It is linked with Thornhill and Durisdeer Churches. The Church of Scotland Presbytery plan is for further unions for the area and will see one building being used for worship between Penpont, Morton (Thornhill), Closeburn and Durisdeer. It is the intention to sell the other three.



The Minister is Christopher Watt who served his probationary period at Penpont/Thornhill and graduated in summer 2024. He will stay on as minister until the union of the churches is completed and the united charge is allowed to call a full time minister.

Penpont Church holds weekly Sunday services, fortnightly community coffee mornings in the church hall and also fortnightly Bible Studies. Board Buddies and Messy Church are monthly in Thornhill. There is a weekly holiday club for children during the school summer and Christopher has close links with Penpont Primary, Wallace Hall Primary and Academy. The church holds regular Songs of Praise events and concerts in the church and has a very successful Church Fete in the Gladstone Park in the summer.

4) Penpont Church Hall

Penpont Church Hall is a small hall used for the coffee mornings, Bible study, church meetings and social events. It has capacity for approximately 20-30 seated, a kitchen and toilets.



5) Penpont Primary School and Preschool:

Penpont, Keir and Tynron Pre-School is a voluntary organisation operated by a parent-led management committee who oversee the funding and finances of the organisation. The pre-school adjoins Penpont Primary School employs three Early Years Practitioners, one of whom is a full time manager. It works in partnership with D&G Council, taking up to twenty children aged 2 ½ to 5 years during school term-time, Monday to Friday 9am to 3pm. It offers flexible opportunities for younger children to support working parents. The Preschool has a strong relationship with Penpont Primary School, especially for children approaching the age of five.

Penpont Primary School currently has 54 pupils in composite classes p1-3, p4-5 and p6-7. It attracts a number of pupils from out-with the catchment area and has an excellent relationship with the local community. There is a strong Parent Council and the school acts as a vibrant social hub for families with young children.



6) Penpont Heritage Centre (The Joseph Thomson Local Heritage Centre)

The Centre was developed by the Joseph Thomson Group (Charity No SC029176) with help from the community to commemorate the life of Joseph Thomson, a Victorian explorer of Africa, who was born in the cottage in 1858. One room is dedicated to Joseph Thomson and the rest of the Centre contains items associated with the culture and history of the local communities represented. There are also other points of interest such as a stone cantilever staircase, a unique architectural feature, in such a small cottage and a building used as an Armoury for the Penpont Rifle Volunteers in the 1800's. The Centre, which is run by volunteers, is open on Saturdays in July and at other times by appointment.

After a visit by a Maasai elder, organised by the Centre, the descendants of Joseph Thomson set up the Joseph Thomson Maasai Trust in 2016 which raises funds for the education of girls in Africa; while the Joseph Thomson Group runs the Centre.

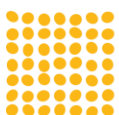
The Centre is also used by the Outreach Post Office on Wednesdays between 2-3pm.



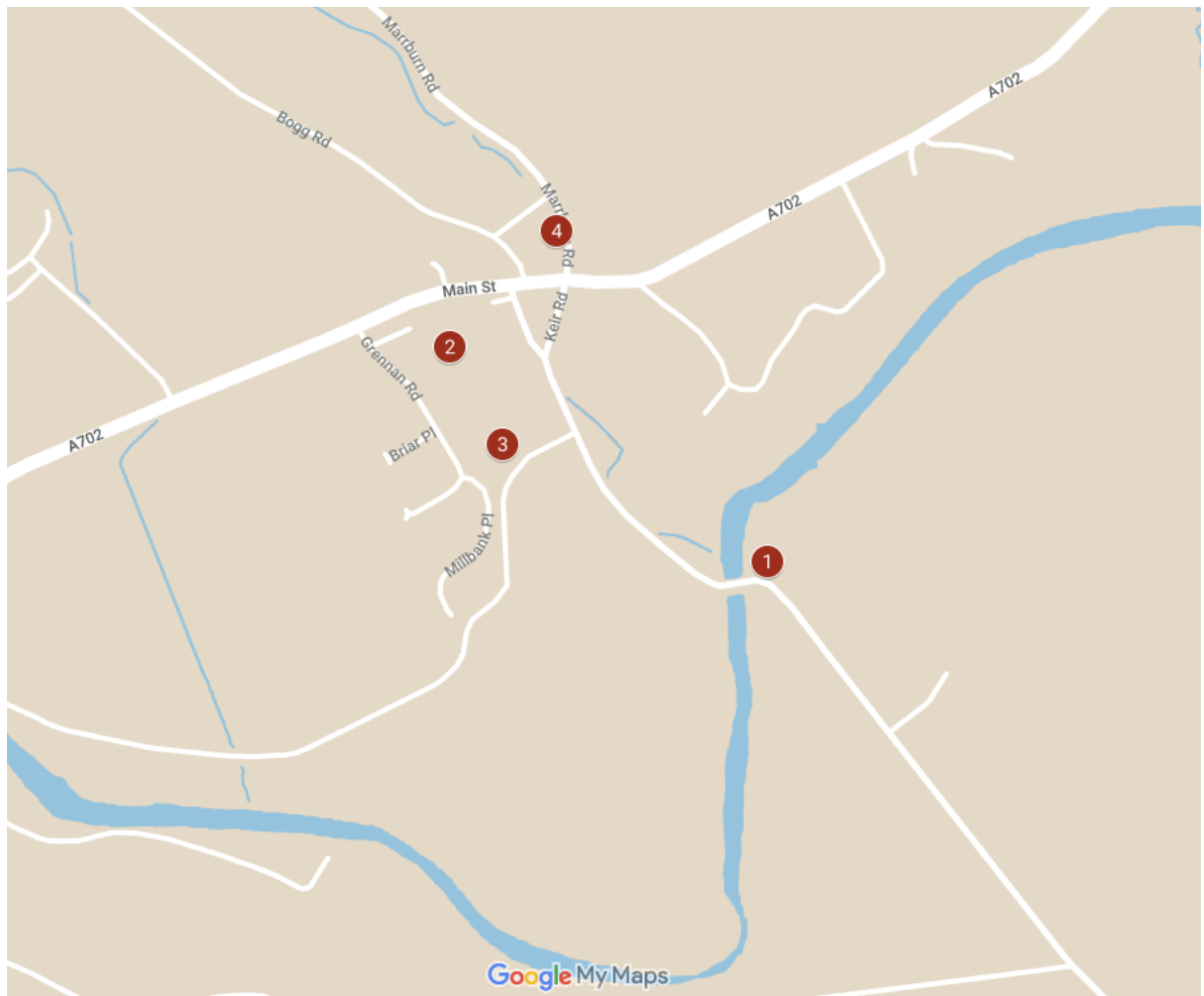


7) The Hydro

The micro community hydro sits just to the north of the village, on Marrburn Road. Its construction was funded through the Green Energy fund from Scottish Power Energy Networks and it started producing electricity, for supply to the grid, in October 2021. In June 2022 a separate company – KPT CEEL (Community Energy and Efficiency Ltd) was set up to run the hydro and the annual profits it makes are transferred to a community benefit fund to which residents can apply for worthwhile projects.



Green Space and Play Areas



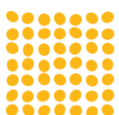
1) Bridgend Community Garden:

Provides fresh fruit and vegetable and an outdoor space for community activities. The Community Garden is developed and maintained by a part time gardener and a team of volunteers. The garden's produce is used in the Community Café, where surplus is available to local people. The garden is also a popular venue for children's and family activities, with a varied programme of activities provided by KPT Development Trust.

2) Gladstone Park

The local park has a large open green space which is marked for a full-sized football pitch. It is regularly used for adult football training and matches.

There is a small play area for young children. The play equipment was replaced by Penpont Community Council in 2018. The Gladstone Park is maintained by Dumfries and Galloway Council.





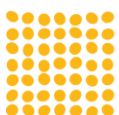
3) Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) in Gladstone Park

The MUGA is situated within Gladstone Park. It was installed by Penpont Community Council using a Sports Scotland grant in 2009. The fence and lighting are in good condition but PCC have recently been awarded a grant to replace the surface which has deteriorated over the years.



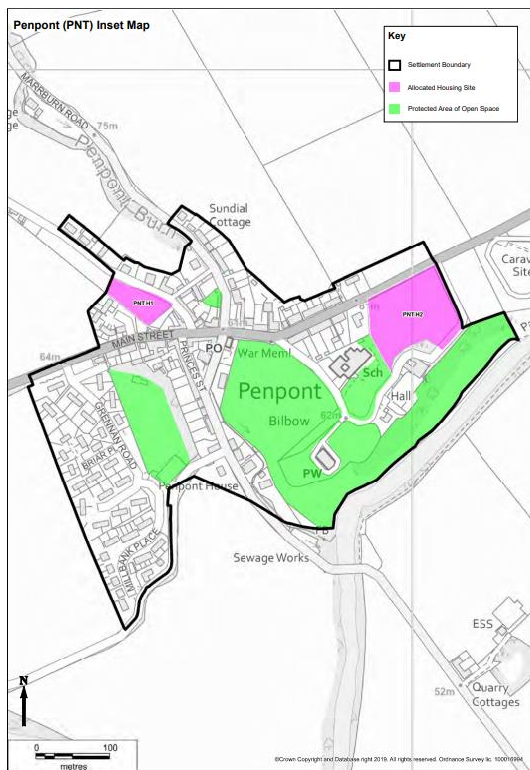
4) Cameronian Gardens

A small green space in the centre of the village that was once the site of the Cameronian Church. When it ceased to be a place of worship, conditions required it to be demolished and no other building put on the site. The small park has been preserved as such and is maintained by the council.





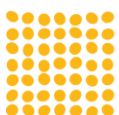
Protected Land



There are also some areas of protected land (shaded on the map in green) around the church and church hall, and school playground as per the current Dumfries and Galloway Local Development Plan. The church fields form a separate area along the riverside, they are rented out to a local farmer for grazing sheep but are well used by locals for dog walking. Penpont Primary School playground is well-used by pupils during school hours.

Local Business

- E Wilson Local Newsagents and General Store
- BM Software Solutions
- Penpont Garage (vehicle repair shop)



- Rabbie’s Cabs; taxis and private hire vehicles
- Penpont Holiday Park is open all year round, offering 29 holiday homes in total.

Other:

- **Active travel path between Penpont and Thornhill:** The new Active Travel Path is a very popular walking, running, cycling and wheeling route for locals and visitors to the area. Phase 1a was officially opened in March 2024 and the Development Trust are in planning stages for the rest of the path to link as a safe, off-road route to Thornhill. The path passes The Millenium Cairn by internationally renowned artist, Andy Goldsworthy.
- There are beautiful walks in the castle grounds near Drumlanrig Castle. As an upland farming community, the majority of Penpont parish is green, open space for more energetic walkers to explore and the Southern Upland Way runs through the north of Penpont Community area.

Community Activity (Groups)

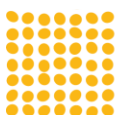
- Penpont Community Council
- Keir, Penpont and Tynron Development Trust
- Penpont Primary School PTA
- Scaur Football Club
- Scottish Dancing Club (for children)
- Photography Club
- Penpont Friendship Club
- Community Yoga Classes

2.3 Policy Analysis

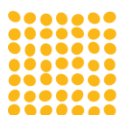
As well as being founded on research and local community consultation, this plan references key national and regional strategies and policy documents.

Core Strategic Fit

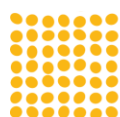
Key strategies	How we Have Considered these Plans and Strategies	
Dumfries and Galloway Local Development Plan October 2019	Regional Vision “Dumfries and Galloway...will be a thriving region with a sustainable economy built on sustainable principles, which recognises the importance of its landscape, natural and historic environments and the need to maintain and enhance its distinctive landscape character while facilitating positive change, promoting growth, maximising the use of existing infrastructure and	The Penpont Local Place Plan fits well with this broad vision for the region. The key thematic areas will ensure that there is a focus on creating a sustainable economy that builds on the area’s existing assets, the skills of its people and its natural environment.



	<p>enhancing connectivity. It will have maximised its location to attract investment to create employment and investment opportunities which will in turn attract people of working age to the region. There will be opportunities in the rural area for economic development, housing and recreation. There will also be more opportunities for people to access affordable housing.”</p>	<p>We believe that the vision and key thematic areas of the LPP should help to attract both visitors and new residents to the area. The LPP will ensure the Penpont area is a vibrant, resilient and living community where people can work, bring up their children and grow old in a place that is caring and has the services people need, either available locally or with easy transport solutions.</p> <p>Housing is key to this and there is an aspiration to develop housing in or near the village centre.</p>
<p>National Planning Framework 4</p> <p>There are six overarching spatial principles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Just transition. We will empower people to shape their places and ensure the transition to net zero is fair and inclusive. 2. Conserving and recycling assets. We will make productive use of existing buildings, places, infrastructure and services, locking in carbon, minimising waste, and building a circular economy. 3. Local living. We will support local liveability and improve community health and wellbeing by ensuring people can easily access services, greenspace, learning, work and leisure locally. 4. Compact urban growth. We will limit urban expansion so we can optimise the use of land to provide services and resources, including carbon storage, flood risk management, blue and green infrastructure and biodiversity. 5. Rebalanced development. We will target development to create opportunities for communities and investment in areas of past decline, and manage development sustainably in areas of high demand. 6. Rural revitalisation. We will encourage sustainable development in rural areas, recognising the need to grow and support urban and rural communities together. 	<p>One of the key themes emerging from the community consultation is the use of existing assets to provide a vibrant and well-used hub for the community. This aligns with the NFP4 focus on conserving and making productive use of existing buildings.</p> <p>The range of projects put forward by the community will enhance the ‘liveability’ of the Penpont area by enhancing access to services, improving the quality of local greenspaces and ensuring there are leisure opportunities for all ages locally.</p> <p>The thematic areas of focus and mix of different projects all make a positive contribution to the sustainable development of Penpont and the surrounding rural area.</p>	
<p>Dumfries and Galloway Council Plan 2023–2028</p> <p>The Council Plan sets out the vision for 2028 which is “to be a successful region with a growing economy, based on</p>	<p>The proposed projects and thematic areas fit well with the vision set out in this document and will help to ensure our</p>	



<p>fairness, opportunity and quality public services, where all citizens prosper. Working in partnership, with connected, healthy and sustainable communities.”</p> <p>The plan has four main themes, each with strategic outcomes which set out what the council aims to achieve between 2023 and 2028:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Economy: a diversified and growing local economy that benefits all, a growing workforce and skills base, <u>vibrant and thriving rural communities</u>, supporting businesses to start and grow and ensuring that natural capital and investment in the region benefit local communities. 2. Travel, connectivity and infrastructure: improving road, path and cycling networks in the region, protecting communities from the impact of flooding, promotion of sustainable travel, improving access to modern and efficient services, and digital connectivity to support thriving rural communities. 3. Education and learning: inclusive and sustainable places of learning that meet the needs of local communities, successful transition of children, young people and adults through all stages of life, providing opportunities for people to build their skills and confidence. 4. Health and wellbeing: prevention and early intervention to allow people to live independent lives, access to support and personal care, people are active healthy and resilient, providing support to tackle the causes and effects of poverty, inequality and the rising cost of living, people have access to high quality and affordable housing. 	<p>community is healthy, connected and sustainable.</p>
<p>Dumfries and Galloway Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2023-2033</p> <p>(D&G Community Planning Partnership)</p> <p>Connecting across three high level themes of “Health and Wellbeing”; “Work”; and “Where We Live” the LOIP identifies 12 Outcome areas and a set of four underpinning principles set within the context of the plan’s vision:</p> <p><i>“Working in partnership to ensure a confident, ambitious, healthy and fairer Dumfries and Galloway for everyone who lives and works here.”</i></p> <p>Our Priorities</p> <p>Health and Wellbeing Community Planning Partners will target their resources on tackling poverty and improving the health and wellbeing of our communities by:</p>	<p>The thematic areas and projects proposed in this report align with the LOIP focus on improving health and wellbeing. They will ensure that high quality community facilities, both indoor and outdoor, are provided and utilised to promote social connection and overall health and wellbeing.</p> <p>The completion of the cycle path will improve our connectivity, linking residents up to local assets, services and public transport links.</p> <p>We also strive to improve the availability of housing in our</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mitigating the impact of rising cost of living - Reducing health inequalities - Improve health through targeted approaches - Working with partners to eliminate child poverty <p>Work Community Planning Partners will help to build a sustainable and skilled workforce to deliver a wellbeing economy and promote Dumfries and Galloway as an attractive visitor destination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve employability by maximising the potential of the working age population - Address skills gaps and recruitment shortages - Increase volunteering opportunities - Work with local communities to develop an inclusive and thriving economy with a focus on fair work. <p>Where We Live Community Planning Partners will focus on place; listen to our local communities; improve connectivity; and help tackle key local issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase digital collaboration and reduce digital exclusion - Improve transport connectivity - Reduce carbon emissions and positively impact climate change through education, behavioural change and supporting initiatives which will make a positive difference - Develop high quality, affordable homes to meet demand. 	<p>community to meet growing demand for a range of different housing types within the village itself.</p>
<p>South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy</p> <p>The Regional Economic Strategy sets out an ambition that by 2031, the South of Scotland region will be</p> <p><i>“...a region of opportunity and innovation – where natural capital drives green growth, ambition and quality of life rivals the best in the UK, communities are empowered and cultural identity is cherished, enabling those already here to thrive</i></p>		<p>Throughout the process of developing this LPP, with the community shaping its key themes and projects based on local knowledge, we have empowered the people who live in our area.</p>



and attracting a new generation to live, work, visit, learn and invest in the South of Scotland.”

The vision is underpinned by four key themes:

- Sharing prosperity and ensuring that the benefits of growth are shared fairly, and that no one is left behind.
- Making the most of the region’s potential by supporting the area to enhance and promote its reputation.
- Thinking differently by promoting creativity, innovation and challenge.
- Pioneering environmental responsibility and using natural capital to transform the visitor experience.

Dumfries and Galloway Active Travel Strategy 2022-2032

This strategy was developed to provide a combined approach to active travel infrastructure and culture within Dumfries and Galloway, and better respond to sustainability challenges as part of Dumfries and Galloway Council’s Climate Emergency Declaration, carbon reduction targets and wider priorities.

The long-term vision for active travel in the region is:

“Dumfries and Galloway will be an active region with accessible, reliable, and safe routes that connect communities, and will embrace a culture that promotes active and sustainable travel for both urban and rural areas.”

KPT have already taken significant steps to improving the active travel infrastructure in the area, and one of the key projects emerging from the community led research is to complete the existing active travel path to Thornhill. The Active Travel Path provides an accessible and safe route which connects communities in a rural area.

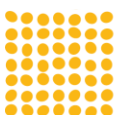
Crosscutting Strategic Fit

Fit with Sustainable Development

Sustainable development can be defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. For example, the UN sustainable development goals are to promote prosperity while protecting the planet. They recognise that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic growth and address a range of social needs including education, health, social protection, and job opportunities, while tackling climate change and environmental protection.

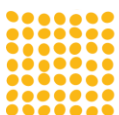
The Penpont Local Place Plan will be developed in the context of net zero and sustainability.

Delivering outcomes such as sustainable population growth and increasing visitor numbers will be developed in a sustainable way, considering financial viability, net zero and service development which will be able to meet the needs of the population as it changes.



<p>Fit with Inclusive Growth</p> <p>The Scottish Government defines inclusive growth as “growth that combines increased prosperity with greater equality, creates opportunities for all, and distributes the benefits of increased prosperity fairly”. The inclusive growth approach places less emphasis on the supply side of the economy—for example the reduction of trade barriers and making labour markets more flexible are the key to sustaining growth - in favour of a more interventionist approach which recognises and values the role of education, training and welfare as positive contributors to a healthy society.</p>	<p>We will develop the Local Place Plan based on the Wellbeing economy approach to ensure that developments to make our place more prosperous go hand in hand with equality of opportunity for all, including those on a low income and young people who are often left behind.</p>
<p>Just Transition to Net Zero</p> <p>Environmentally sustainable growth means fostering economic growth and development, while ensuring that natural assets continue to provide the resources and environmental services on which our well-being relies. It meets human development goals while simultaneously sustaining the ability of natural systems to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services on which the economy and society depend.</p>	<p>The drive to net zero is also a cross-cutting theme across all thematic areas and projects. Net Zero will be closely considered when planning each project.</p>

DRAFT



3. Community Consultation

The consultation aimed to gain wide representation from the village and community by using a variety of approaches including:

- Community survey,
- Focus groups and drop-in sessions with community groups,
- Feedback and a further consultation public event, including an online option.

A range of communication channels were used to inform and engage including:

- Press release,
- Social media,
- Posters and leaflets,
- Word of mouth.

The results of the Community Consultation are detailed in the following section.

3.1 Community Survey

The community survey formed part of a menu of opportunities offered to the people of the Penpont area to inform the Local Place Plan.

The survey was available to local residents and people who work in or visit the area from early June to late August 2024. The survey was advertised through posters, social media, word of mouth, email, digital newsletter, leaflet drops and drop-in sessions. People were given the option to complete it on line or by paper copy. Thank you to everyone who helped to facilitate this process which saw such a positive response in the number of completed returns.

The survey generated 154 responses completed either online or paper copies. These survey responses represent a total of 545 people.

Analysis showed that 84% of respondents (128 people) live in within the Penpont Parish area, 6% of respondents (9 people) work in the area and 8% (12 people) have an interest in the area. The remaining 3% (4 people) are visitors to the area.

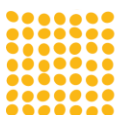
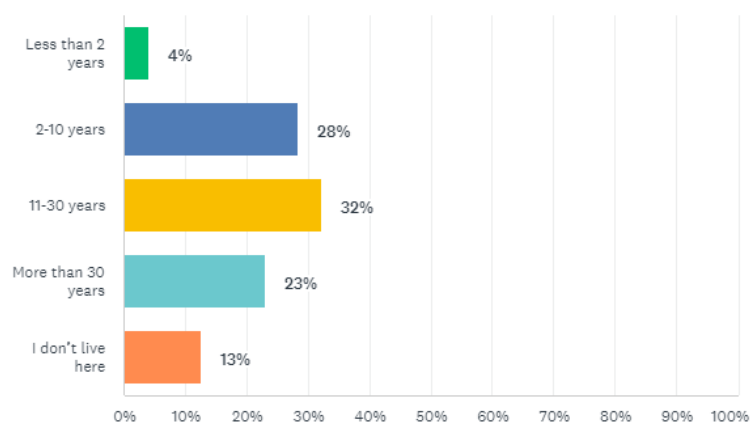
People completing the survey and the time they have lived in Penpont

There was a balanced mix of respondents, with both long-term residents and those who have lived in the community for less than 10 years.

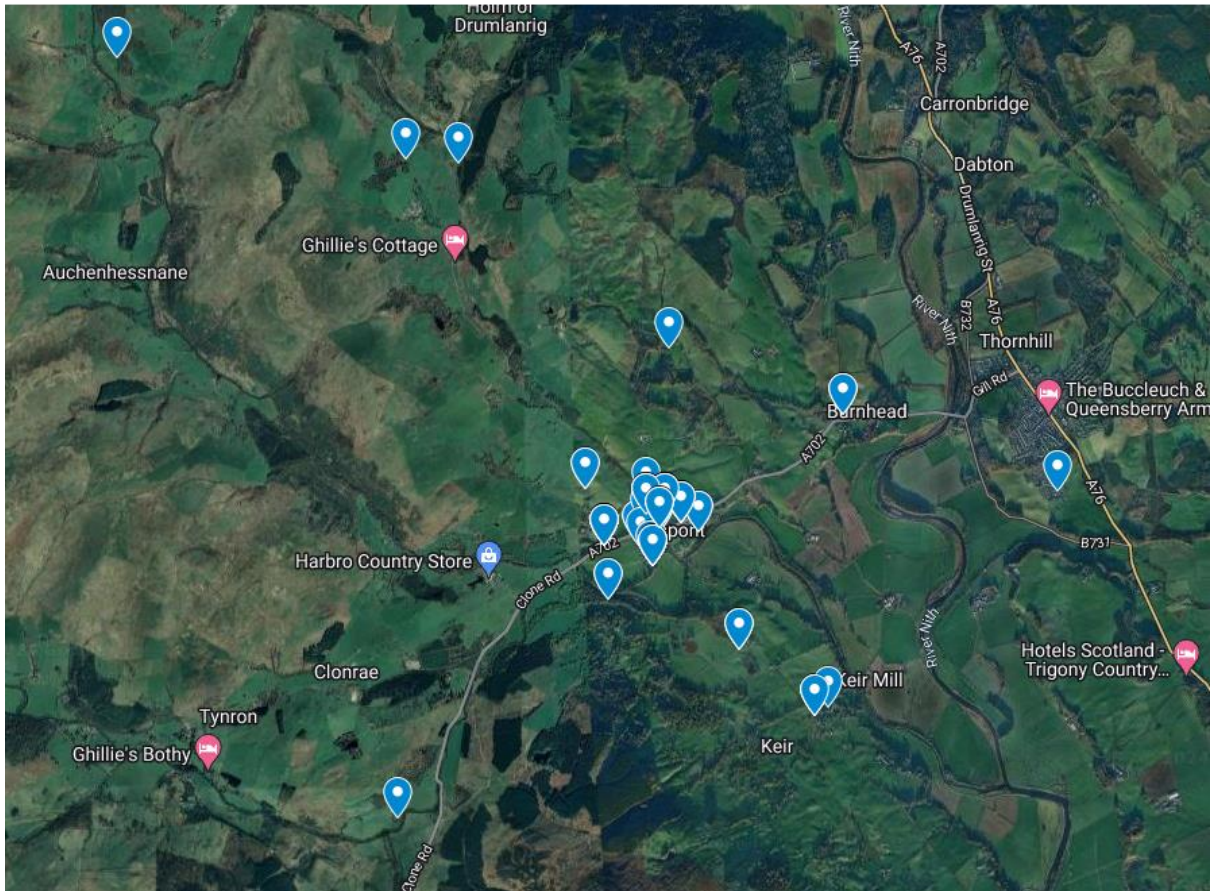
However, only 4% of respondents have lived in the village for under 2 years. This could suggest that there are very few newer residents living in the area.

We asked survey participants to share their home postcodes, and 124 individuals chose to respond. The map below illustrates the distribution of these postcodes, with most respondents living within

Q2. If you are a resident, how long have you lived in the Penpont area?



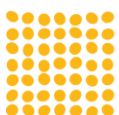
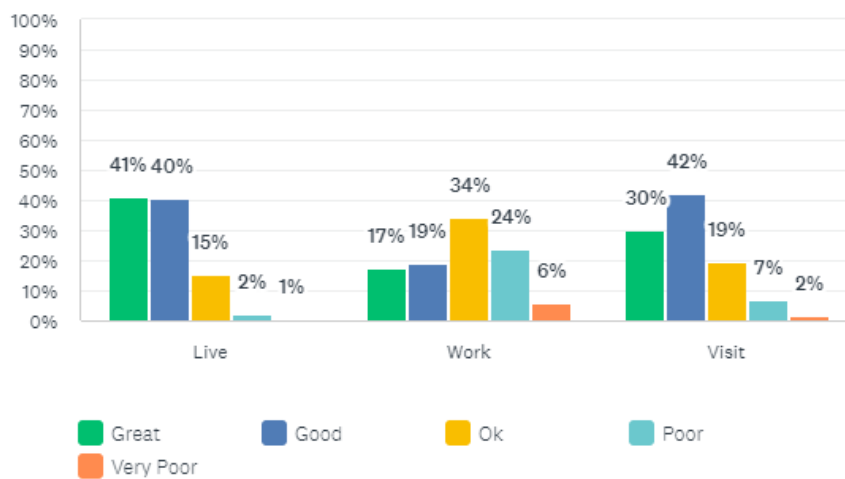
the village itself. However, residents from outlying areas within the Penpont Community Council boundary are also well-represented in the survey responses.



Rating Penpont

62% of respondents who live in the Penpont area, expect that they will still be living in the community in 10 years time.

Q6. Overall, how would you rate your community as a place to live, work and visit?



“I live in Penpont because I love rural life. I especially love the culture of this relatively unspoiled village.

I love the people, and the way the people themselves address their own needs, look out for each other, and have always had the ability to organise themselves whenever it is necessary.”

Respondents were asked to rate Penpont as a place to live, work and visit:

- 81% of respondents rated Penpont positively as a place to live, 15% rated it as okay and only 3% rated it poorly as a place live.
- 53% of respondents rated Penpont positively as a place to work, 34% rated it as okay and 30% rated it poorly as a place to work.
- 72% of respondents rated Penpont positively as a place to visit, 19% rated it as okay and 9% rated it poorly as a place to visit.

Assets

Respondents were asked to list three positive things about the Penpont area. 382 answers were received and have been grouped into thematic areas in descending order below.

Theme 1 - Natural Environment

An impressive 96 respondents identified the natural environment as one of Penpont’s most valued assets. This theme highlights the area’s rural charm, with its scenic views and the beauty of the surrounding landscape. Residents expressed their appreciation for the tranquillity of rural living, offering easy access to fresh air, nature, and the countryside for activities like walking and biking.

Penpont’s natural surroundings clearly play a significant role in shaping the quality of life for its community:

“Beautiful area to live – so many gorgeous places within walking distance from the front door.”

“Rural environment, close to nature, with fresh air.”

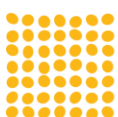
Theme 2 - Community

82 respondents highlighted the sense of community and friendly residents as one of Penpont’s primary assets. There is a general sense that Penpont has a strong community spirit that the people who live in the village are friendly and welcoming. A few mentioned that this makes it a great place for children to grow up.

The warm and friendly nature of the community contributes to the village’s appeal:

“Friendly village with nice residents.”

“The people are generally very friendly and pleasant.”



Theme 3 - Quiet and Peaceful

44 respondents highlighted Penpont as a quiet and peaceful place to live. Tied closely to its rural setting and small population, many felt that Penpont provides a relaxed and calming lifestyle, far removed from the hustle and bustle of towns and cities.

Penpont's serene atmosphere is a key factor contributing to its unique charm and appeal:

"Space, peace, and tranquillity of the area."

"Safe and peaceful community."

Theme 4 - Facilities and Amenities

44 respondents emphasised Penpont's existing facilities and amenities as key assets for the community. The café, shop, and church were frequently mentioned as important resources for residents.

These facilities contribute significantly to the convenience and overall quality of life in Penpont, enhancing the sense of community:

"Excellent local amenities, i.e., shop, KPT, café, and garage."

"Convenient local shop."

Other Assets

Thematic Area	Number of respondents mentioned
Parks and Greenspace	26
Local Walks	25
School and Nursery	22
New Cycle Path (to Thornhill)	14
Safe	12
Location (close to other towns and urban centres)	12

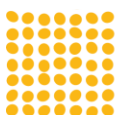
Challenges

Theme 1- Roads and Pavements

61 respondents mentioned roads and pavements as a key challenge for Penpont. This theme encompasses the condition of main roads including potholes and general need for better maintenance.

"The main road often has potholes and degraded surface."

"Condition of roads, far too many potholes, roads need properly resurfaced and maintained, better trimming of road verges."



Theme 2- Public Transport

35 respondents highlighted public transport as a key challenge for those living in Penpont. Comments under this theme emphasised the lack of options for travelling to other towns and cities (Thornhill, Dumfries and Edinburgh) and other local villages.

“Lack of linking public transport.”

“Public transport in and around the area.”

Theme 3- Parking

29 respondents highlighted lack of parking options as a challenge for the village of Penpont. It is felt that a lack of parking for residents is causing space issues on the main road which leads to other problems including lack of accessible pavements and road safety issues.

On street parking for residents is often their only option, which also means that they are unable to access EV charging at home.

“Improve limited car parking to free up space on the main road”

“A realistic plan to satisfy Penpont’s street parking problem.”

Theme 4- Community Facilities

23 respondents referred to lack of appropriate community facilities as a key challenge. Responses under this theme generally focus on the need for improvements to public spaces such as the community hall and the creation of a vibrant community hub. Others want to see more social spaces for the community such as a pub, and services like a post office.

“Facilities such as a bigger hall, functions, pub.”

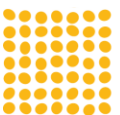
“Improved community spaces - hall and MUGA.”

Other Assets

Thematic Area	Number of respondents mentioned
Facilities and activities for young people	20
Village maintenance and upkeep (dog waste a particular issue)	18
Housing	18
Economy and employment	17
Traffic speed and volume	16
Lack of community activity	14
Park and other public greenspace areas	10



DRAFT

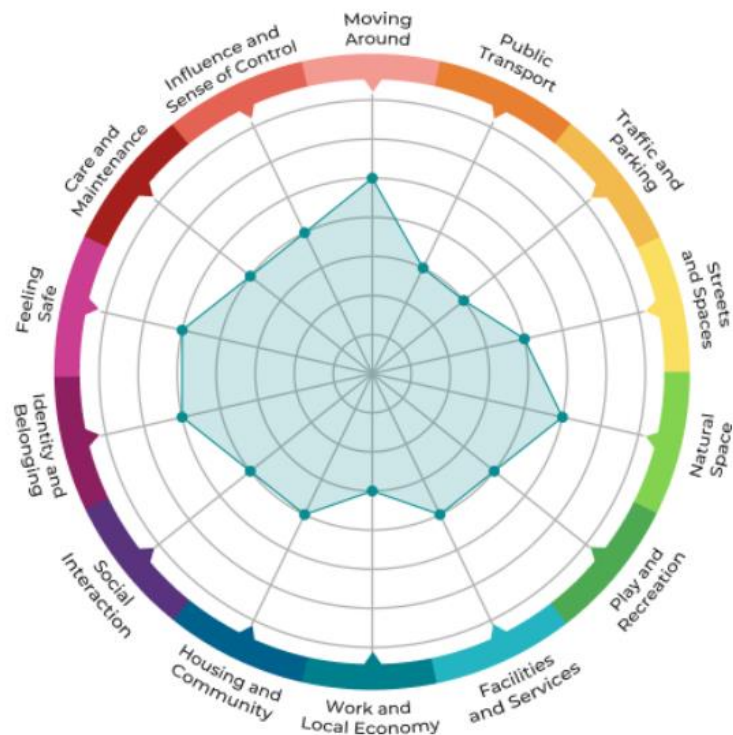


Place Standard

Respondents were asked to rate the categories below as a part of the Place Standard assessment for Penpont. The Place Standard tool provides a simple framework to structure conversations about place, and the framework has been used in supporting focus group discussions.

This approach allowed respondents to think about the physical elements of Penpont (for example its buildings, spaces, and transport links) as well as the social aspects (for example whether people feel they have a say in decision making).

The tool pinpoints the assets of a place as well as areas where a place could improve. A summary of Penpont's place standard indicator scores is shown in the diagram adjacent:



Moving Around

4.7★
average rating

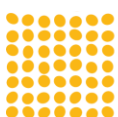


The majority of respondents praised the addition of the active travel path toward Thornhill, viewing it as a valuable improvement for the community that is already well utilised.

Many expressed a strong desire for the path's completion, fully linking Penpont to Thornhill.

In addition, respondents suggested placing more bins along the route to address issues with dog waste. They also called for better maintenance of paths, including those leading to Keir, Tynron, and along the riverside.

Some people also raised concerns about the narrow pavements in the village, which pose challenges for people with mobility issues or those using pushchairs.



Public Transport

2.6★

average rating



Respondents highlighted the need for more buses and alternative transport options including increased availability of community transport. There is a sense that people would use public transport if there was more regular provision.

To facilitate onward journeys to Dumfries and Sanquhar, bus times should link up with departures from Thornhill.

It was also highlighted that timetabling needs to be clearer and better advertised. Renewed local taxi provision was highlighted as a positive development.

Traffic and Parking

2.8★

average rating



Parking for both residents and visitors is a significant issue in Penpont. Cars parked along the main road cause traffic flow problems and congestion, impacting the ease of movement through the village.

Respondents noted that improving parking facilities would enhance the visitor experience and attract more passersby to use local amenities, such as the community café.

These parking issues also affect pedestrian access, particularly for individuals with mobility issues or those using pushchairs and mobility scooters.

Additionally, the lack of electric vehicle (EV) charging facilities was frequently mentioned. Many homes in Penpont lack driveways, exacerbating roadside parking challenges and limiting residents' ability to charge electric vehicles at home.

Streets and Public Space

3.5★

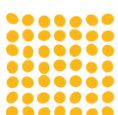
average rating



The condition of roads, particularly potholes and deteriorating surfaces, was highlighted as a significant challenge. Uneven and narrow pavements, along with a lack of dropped kerbs, further complicate mobility, especially for those with mobility issues or using pushchairs.

These issues are worsened by street parking, which restricts pedestrian access.

Several respondents also raised concerns about drainage problems, noting that inadequate drainage is leading to frequent flooding in certain areas.



Natural Space

5.0★
average rating



Respondents widely acknowledged Penpont's beautiful surroundings and praised recent improvements to pathways, including the new active travel path, which has made it easier for people to access and enjoy the outdoors.

However, many felt that access to natural spaces could be further enhanced.

Suggestions included better information and signage about local walks and pathways to encourage more use of the surrounding green spaces and countryside.

Some respondents also noted that certain paths could benefit from more regular maintenance by the Council. Additionally, litter and dog fouling were raised as concerns in various areas around the village, including parks and pathways.

Play and Recreation

4.4★
average rating



Gladstone Park is a well-loved and valued asset in the community, and it was generally felt that it has adequate play equipment for younger children. However, some felt that the equipment could be updated and extended.

There are some play opportunities, but these are restricted, especially for older teenagers and adults.

The main concern under this theme is making the Multi Use Games (MUGA) area usable again and coming up with a sustainable plan for how to maintain this asset in the future.

Other suggestions included outdoor gym equipment to cater for different age groups and an undercover area in Gladstone Park providing a space for teenagers to socialise.

Facilities and Services

4.0★
average rating

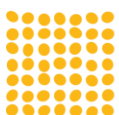


While facilities and services in Penpont are limited, they are generally considered adequate for the village's size. The café and shop are highly valued community assets.

However, the limited post office service and lack of courier pick-up points are noted concerns.

The school and pre-school are also valued by many, with a strong sentiment towards their preservation for the future.

The community hall is recognised as an asset, though some believe it requires renovations and upgrades to become a vibrant and well-used community hub.



Work and Local Economy

3.4★
average rating



The local economy is supported by a private software business, a garage and various self-employed people (new taxi firm, for example) but opportunities are otherwise limited, and many people travel out with the village for work.

The café and shop are recognised as assets which provide some employment opportunities for local young people.

It was felt by some that re-instating a village pub would provide further employment opportunities locally and add a sense of community. There is a sense that there are a lot of remote workers in the village and there was a suggestion that some remote desk space and storage facilities would be welcomed.

Housing

3.9★
average rating



The sense is that there is a good mix of housing in the village at the moment, however people have recognised the need for affordable housing to allow people to stay in the area, especially first-time buyers.

The availability of rental properties has been highlighted as an issue, despite there being a number of vacant properties in the area.

The issue of holidays lets was raised several times under this theme, and many believe that these have caused the price of property in the village to increase.

Social Interaction

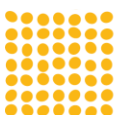
3.9★
average rating



The cafe, church and community hall are places that provide space where people can come together and provide opportunities for individuals to socially interact during day time hours.

However, many would like to see the pub re-instated as a community meeting place and a space for people to socialise in the evening.

Some suggested this could be a part time or 'pop-up' pub. There were some suggestions that there should be more activities and events taking place of different types to attract new audiences.



Identity and Belonging

5.0★
average rating



There is a generally a sense that people are friendly and welcoming, and that there is a strong sense of identity amongst residents. Some noted that it can be difficult to integrate into the village as a newcomer.

However, it was generally felt that residents could be involved more as volunteers helping to deliver projects and initiatives.

However, others noted that many residents are involved in supporting the community in a more informal way and are willing to 'dig-in' where needed.

Feeling Safe

5.3★
average rating



Generally, people feel that Penpont is a very safe place to live except for the roads. The speed and volume of heavy vehicles through the village is a primary concern.

On-pavement parking forces pedestrians to use the road which compounds this issue.

Care and Maintenance

4.1★
average rating



The sense is that buildings and parks are generally well maintained, but roads, pavements and the MUGA are a major issue as stated previously.

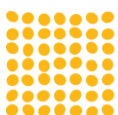
Sense of Control/Influence

3.8★
average rating



It is generally felt that the Community Council and KPT engage with local people well and help to give local people a voice.

By contrast, many local people do not feel listened to by local government. Some people feel that the Community Council could be better supported and there is a need to get new and younger people involved.



Projects and Initiatives

Respondents were asked to list up to two projects or initiatives that they would like to see happening in the Penpont area. A long list of projects has been provided here, grouped into thematic areas.

Thematic Area	Projects
Community Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Hub space • Community Pub • Library • Use of school hall for leisure activities • Protect village shop
Economy and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remote desk space and storage
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car parking • EV charging points • Affordable housing projects • Completion of cycle path
Parks and Greenspace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor exercise space in Gladstone Park • MUGA refurbishment • Covered area in Gladstone Park • Extended play area in Gladstone Park
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allotments/Growing Spaces • Conservation projects including rewilding • Community woodland • Map of local walks and cycling routes
Community Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gala Day/Week • Arts event/music events • Regular entertainment and social events • Activities for teenagers and young adults • Youth arts and sports clubs



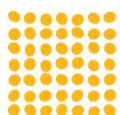
3.2 Focus Groups

KPDT conducted a series of focus groups to capture the views of a range of different age groups within the community. The feedback from these sessions has been summarised below:

Group	Assets	Challenges	Project Ideas/Improvements
12-18 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active travel path Local walks and swimming spots Shop Café Some local job opportunities Friendly community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public transport Parking and speed of traffic coming through village Limited opportunities for social interaction Lack of investment in places such as MUGA, pitches, park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MUGA refurbishments New facilities such as basketball courts suitable for teenagers The provision of sports clubs for this age group Afterschool clubs
Preschool and Infant Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Park Natural spaces Nursery Friendly community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speed of traffic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements to park
Penpont Primary P1-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Park Active travel path Film night and ceilidh club Cafe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expensive shop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linking active travel path to Thornhill More equipment in park
Penpont Primary: P4-5 groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Park Shop School Café Friendly community Places to ride bike Natural spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not many places to hang out Litter Potholes in roads Parking Public Transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements to park (including sheltered area) MUGA refurbishments Meeting places Library for kids books



<p>Over 40's</p> <p>Views of 17 people, based on answers to the Place Standard Tool.</p> <p>12 of the participants were split evenly between those in the 40-65 age group and those in the 66-74 age group</p> <p>5 were over 75</p> <p>All represented their own views</p> <p>4 have lived in the area for less than 10 years, 7 for between 11-20 years, 4 for over 20 years and 2 since birth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paths • Attractive and historic buildings in the village • Proximity to open spaces • Shop • Café • Access to Thornhill • Other: children's nursery, a primary school, a garage and a taxi service based in the village. • Church • Sense of belonging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paths maintenance is poor • Pavements, drop kerbs and village accessibility • Parking and vehicle congestion • Pedestrian safety • Poor public transport • Road potholes and the problems they present for walkers, cyclists and cars • Playpark equipment needs renewed and updated for children of all ages • Church hall and primary school hall are under used assets • Lack of a pub / community hub was a major issue for many. • Job opportunities • The need for housing for local people • Community connections in evenings and weekends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community transport scheme • Parking at Glebe field at the eastern entrance to the village; in the centre behind the war memorial; and on a small patch of grass at the entrance to the Grennan estate at the western end of the village (location of a former electricity sub-station) • Traffic calming measures, signage and/or road markings. • Signposting for buildings and attractions • Better signage for Gladstone Park is required • Outdoor gym • Sports courts eg tennis and basketball • Community Hub • Pub • Economy and enterprise boost • Community housing project • Penpont Gala
--	--	--	---



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council maintenance programmes are poor 	
--	--	---	--

3.3 Feedback Event

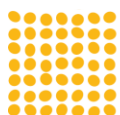
Public Event

A public consultation event was held in Gladstone Hall on Saturday 21st September 2024. This event gave participants the opportunity to review thematic areas and project ideas emerging from the research. Approximately 55 people dropped in to the consultation session throughout the day. In addition, KDPDT displayed the same information in their office in the week after the event. The number of people who commented is not known but their feedback is included in the below table which sets out project suggestions, number of votes against each and comments.

Project	Number of Votes	Comments
Additional Parking Provision	34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Situate behind the houses on Pringleton. - Situate on Green Space at the end of Grennan Rd near the A702. - Retain Glebe (between war memorial and church) as it is part of the scenic character of the village ie not a car park! - Build a car park on the field of the Church/School. - Additional parking provision to take cars off the road.
Continue with Gala Week	34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Needs volunteer support.
Community Pub	28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Could be a part of a café.
Community Hub	27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Absorb the café (whose premises are too small). - Open up school after hours for activity e.g. basketball. - Must keep the school open. - Church could make better use of their buildings. - Community Hub including café with bigger kitchen and occasional pub night. - Repurpose the Gladstone Hall. - The hall is a definite asset but don't think it needs any expensive renovations except for the kitchen and the toilets.



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A new community hub would be good but finding a suitable position and cash are major issues. - Old hall useful for football and other activities but needs a lot of investment to upgrade. Money better spent on a new hub and just keep the old hall ticking over.
MUGA Refurbishment	27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pump track instead. - It is important to maintain this facility.
Regular Social Events	26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to encourage volunteers and involvement. - These should take place in the Gladstone Hall. - Village activities are good for bringing people together and building a sense of belonging and getting to know others in the village.
Traffic Calming Measures	26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Move the 30 mile per hour limit on the east of the village further out beyond the holiday park for safety of existing driveways. - Move the 30 mph further up road (east of village) to include safe crossing of camping site and cross over point at entrance to the path. - Active travel to school is a challenge due to parking on the streets. - Widen the road to the school by moving the dyke back a bit. - Traffic lights at Nith Bridge. - Traffic management is a major issue for Penpont. Roads are narrow and visibility poor.
Covered Seating Area in Gladstone Park	24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small shelter for gathering.
Completion of Cycle Path	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Urgent to finish cycle / footpath to Thornhill to provide a safe path for both children and adults. - Do not agree with suggestion to include Boat Brae as a part of the active travel path. Locals in cars use this route and potential for accidents would outweigh any benefits of active travel. - If active travel path was completed this would be a major benefit for the environment. The current path is used for recreation only, not as originally intended to reduce travel by car. - There are safety issues.



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is important to maintain the paths to Keir and Tynron, through grants etc.
Annual Arts and Music Event	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Combined with regular social events for the community.
Youth Arts and Sports Clubs	19	
Easily Accessible Maps of Local Walking and Cycling Routes	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local walking and cycle maps erected in Thornill/Drumlanrig
Extended Play Equipment in Gladstone Park	14	
Outdoor Gym	13	-
Community Allotments	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nursery would take on an allotment. - Co-located with community woodland project. - Create a market garden.
Community Woodland	12	
Affordable Housing	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Affordable housing for local people to retain a community in an area with relatively low wages where it is difficult to find housing that they can afford. - There needs to be mixed housing development. - Housing for all ages. - Give priority to local needs – there is a demand for good quality housing both to rent and buy. - How will vehicle access be managed to new housing? - There needs to be off street parking. - How will competitive tendering operate? Criteria for selection? Community say? - Is there a survey of short term lets in Penpont for comparison with potential number of family houses?
Local Library	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bring back the mobile library.
Workspaces/Workshop	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jobs create businesses.

Online Feedback

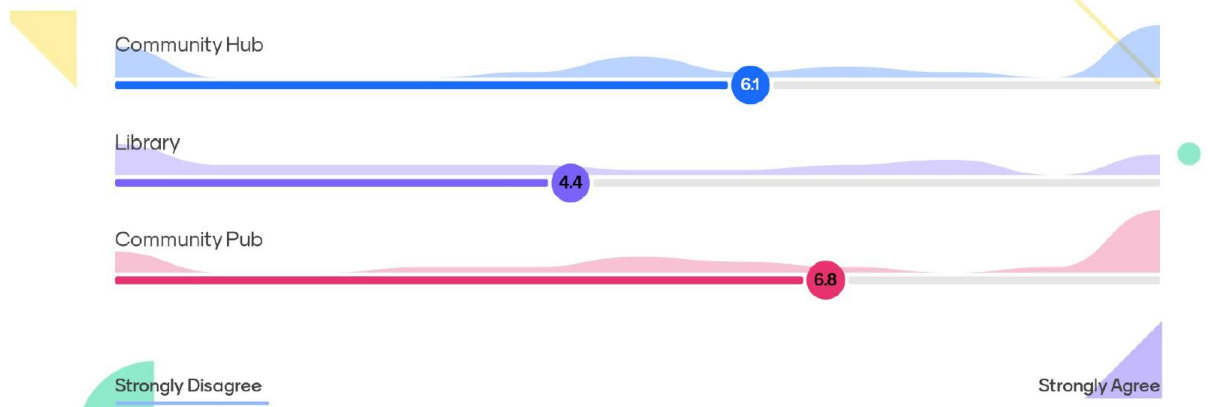


To complement the public event, we also provided opportunity to feedback online via Mentimeter. This was provided alongside a digital version of the boards displayed at the community event, to provide context and research results. 26 people provided feedback through this online platform.

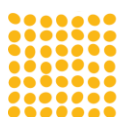
Online participants were asked to rate each project out of 10 (with 10 being strongly agree and 0 being strongly disagree).

Theme 1 Priority Project: Community Pub

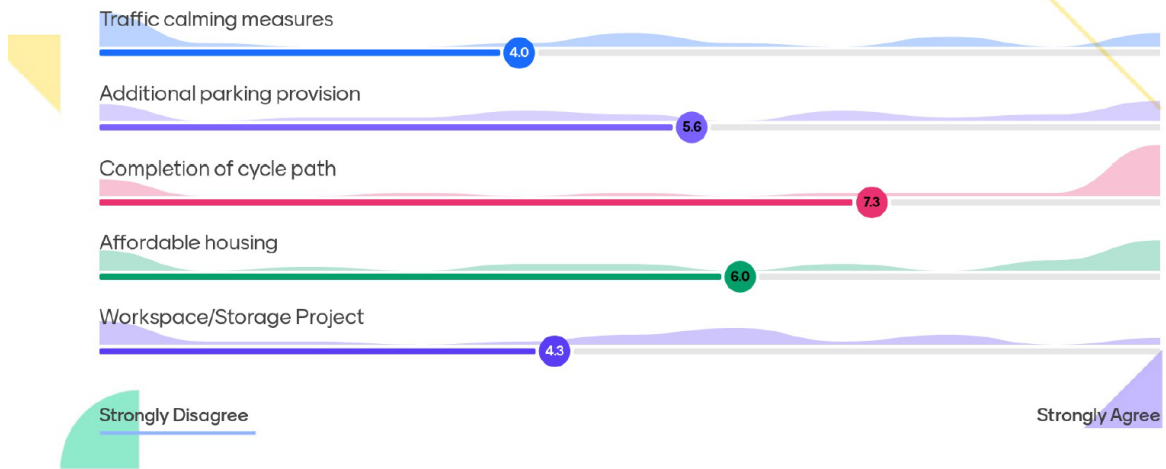
Theme 1: Community Facilities



Theme 2 Priority Project: Completion of Cycle Path

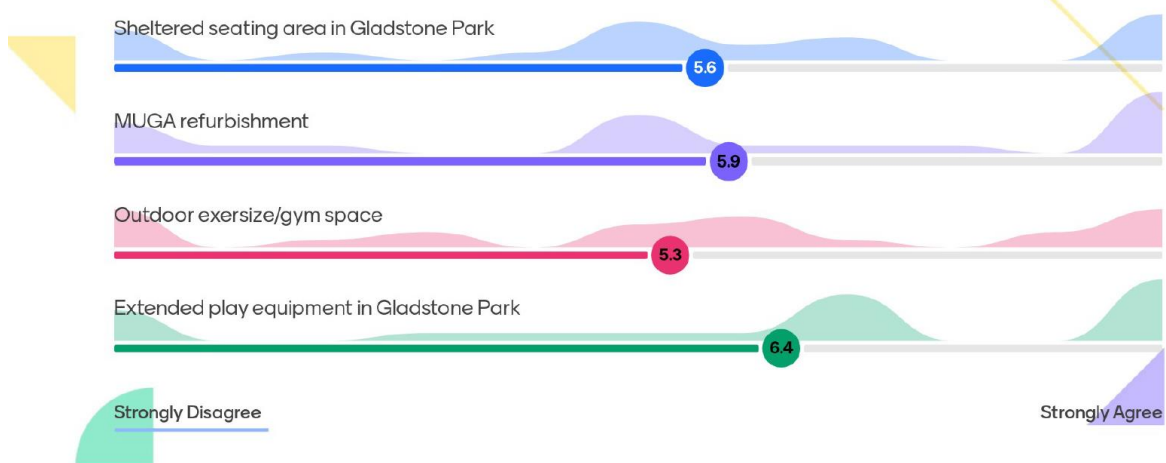


Theme 2: Infrastructure

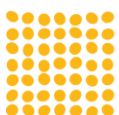


Theme 3 Priority Project: Extended Play Equipment in Gladstone Park

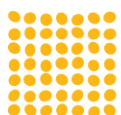
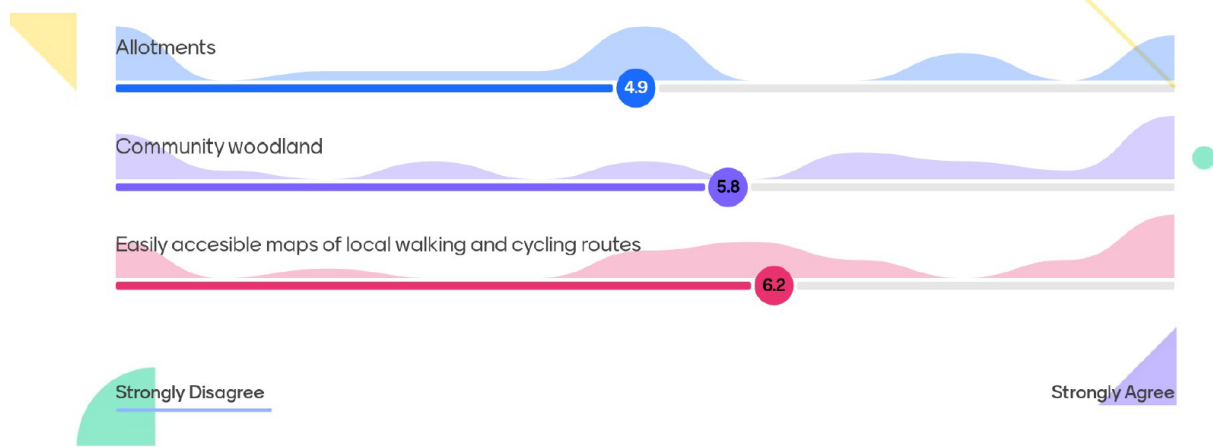
Theme 3: Play and Leisure



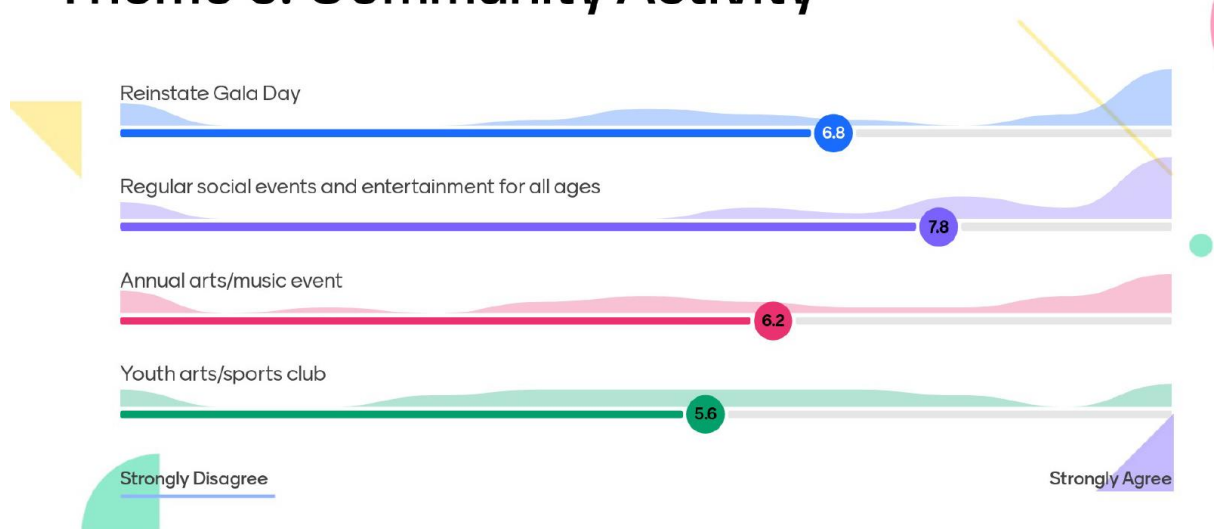
Theme 4 Priority Project: Easily accessible maps of local walking and cycling routes



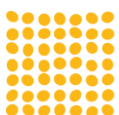
Theme 4: Environment and Greenspace



Theme 5: Community Activity



DRAFT

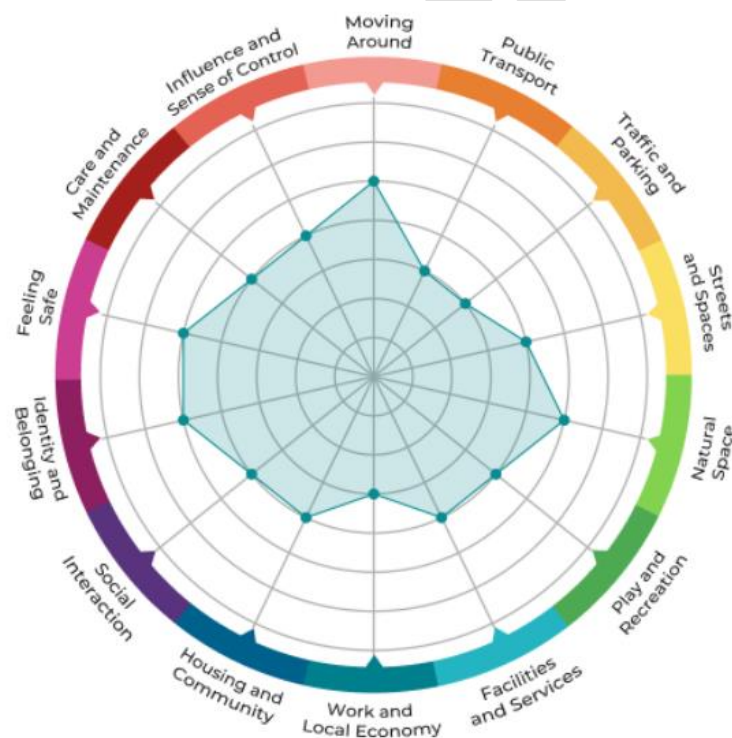


3. Findings

3.1 Place Standard Assessment

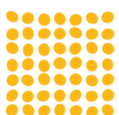
The people of Penpont have engaged well with the Local Place Plan Process and have utilised it as an opportunity to change the area for the better. The first phase of the development of the LPP was to undertake robust engagement practices and engage people from across the community. This phase helped to identify positive aspects, issues, ideas, and possible solutions.

The consultation was structured using the Place Standard tool, which provides a simple framework to understand all elements of place in a methodical way and pinpoint key areas of strength and areas for improvement. The community survey and focus groups were used to assess the different categories. The image below visualises this assessment. The highest scoring areas are **natural space, identity and belonging, feeling safe and moving around**. The lowest scoring areas are **work and local economy, traffic and parking and public transport**.



3.2 Assets

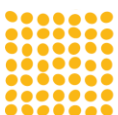
- 81% of survey respondents rated the Penpont area highly as a place to live and 72% rated the area highly as a place to visit.
- 62% of survey respondents identified the **natural environment** when asked about the positive things about the Penpont area. This theme highlights the area's rural charm, with its scenic views and the beauty of the surrounding landscape. Residents expressed their appreciation for the tranquillity of rural living, offering easy access to fresh air, nature, and the countryside for activities like walking and biking.
- 53% of survey respondents mentioned that the Penpont area has a **strong sense of community** and that the people who live in the area are **friendly and welcoming**.



- 28% of survey respondents mentioned the **peace and tranquility** of the area as a positive. Tied closely to its rural setting and small population, many felt that the Penpont area provides a relaxed and calming lifestyle, far removed from the hustle and bustle of towns and cities.
- 28% of survey respondents emphasised Penpont's existing **facilities and amenities** as key assets for the community. The café, shop, and church were frequently mentioned as important resources for residents. These facilities contribute significantly to the convenience and overall quality of life in Penpont and enhance the sense of community and place.
- An asset mapping exercise revealed that Penpont is an asset rich community, relative to its size. The cafe, church and community hall (Gladstone Hall) all provide spaces where people can come together and provide opportunities for individuals to socially interact.
- Penpont Primary School and Pre-School were frequently mentioned as a key asset during consultations and local people want to ensure that it is protected for the future. Penpont Primary School has an excellent relationship with the local community, a strong Parent Council and the school acts as a vibrant social hub for families with young children.
- The Active Travel Path which leads from Penpont towards Thornhill is a very popular walking, running, cycling and wheeling route for locals and visitors to the area. During the consultation, community members said that the active travel path is a valuable improvement for the community that it is already well utilised. Many expressed a strong desire for the path's completion, fully linking Penpont to Thornhill.
- The community Micro-hydro is another important community asset, and its profits are transferred to a community benefit fund to which residents can apply for funding for worthwhile projects.
- Penpont has a diverse mix of different greenspaces within the community including Gladstone Park (maintained by D&G Council) which has a grass pitch, multi-use games area (MUGA) and a small play area for children. Bridgend Community Garden is an important community run greenspace. The garden's produce is used in the Community Café, where surplus is available to local people. The garden is also a popular venue for children's and family activities, with a varied programme of activities provided by KPT Development Trust.

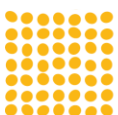
3.3 Challenges and Needs

- The parish area has seen a decline in population, there has been a 22% decrease in the local population between 2011 to 2022.
- Penpont is located within the Thornhill – 04 data zone (SIMD 2020), which also encompasses the neighboring areas of Keir and Tynron. This data zone is within the most deprived 10% of areas in Scotland in terms of geographic access to services. This covers travel times by car and public transport to basic services such as GPs, post offices, schools, retail and fuel stations.
- 39% of survey respondents referenced **roads and pavements** as a key challenge in the Penpont area, people told us about the condition of main roads including potholes and a general need for better maintenance.
- 23% of survey respondents told us that **public transport** is a challenge in the Penpont area. Respondents highlighted the need for more buses and alternative transport options including an increased availability of community transport. There is a sense that people would use public transport if there was more regular provision. To facilitate onward journeys to Dumfries and Sanquhar, bus times should link up with departures from



Thornhill. It was also highlighted that timetabling needs to be clearer and better advertised.

- In the context of public transport challenges and the rural nature of the community, it is statistically significant that 12% of households in Penpont do not have access to a car.
- **Parking** for both residents and visitors is a significant issue in Penpont (mentioned by 18% of survey respondents). Cars parked along the main road cause traffic flow problems and congestion, impacting the ease of movement through the village. These parking issues also affect pedestrian access, particularly for individuals with mobility issues or those using pushchairs and mobility scooters.
- A lack of electric vehicle (EV) charging facilities was also mentioned during the consultation. Many homes in Penpont lack driveways, exacerbating roadside parking challenges and limiting residents' ability to charge electric vehicles at home.
- While facilities and services in Penpont are limited, they are generally considered adequate for the size of the village. However, the limited post office service and lack of courier pick-up points are noted concerns. Generally, Gladstone Hall is recognised as an asset, though there is a sense that it requires renovations and upgrades to become a vibrant and well-used community hub.
- Throughout the consultation, local people highlighted that there is a need for more affordable housing to allow people to stay in the area, especially first-time buyers. Lack of rental properties is also an issue, meaning that people looking to rent in the Penpont area often have to go elsewhere. The issue of holiday lets (particularly those given over to Air BnB) was raised several times throughout the community consultation, and many believe that these have caused the price of property in the village to increase and is linked to the lack of availability of rental properties. A statistic that could be linked to the lack of affordable housing to buy or let is the decline in population in the Penpont area (22% decrease) between 2011 to 2022.
- A lack of facilities and activities for young people was another frequently mentioned challenge. Young people aged 12-18 told us during a focus group session that there are limited opportunities to interact socially and 'hang out'. When asked for ideas for the future they suggested things like better sports facilities, sports clubs and after school clubs. Similarly, Primary School aged children in P4-5 said that there are not many places where they can hang out in the village. 18 children under the age of 12 completed the survey and lack of places to meet up and socialise was mentioned as a challenge frequently and ideas for future projects included art and sports clubs, and a new park shelter as a gathering space for young people.
- While there is a strong sense of community spirit and identity in the area, the consultation has highlighted that there is a need to boost volunteer involvement. It was generally felt that residents could be involved more as volunteers helping to deliver projects and initiatives, in particular large events like the annual Gala Week.



3.4 Projects (Long List)

Based on the research and community consultation summarised above, we produced a long list of projects, grouped into five key thematic areas. A second round of community consultation, consisting of an in-person event and online option, provided local people with the opportunity to start prioritising projects and initiatives (see detailed feedback in Community Consultation section). The long list of projects has been grouped into key headings with projects listed in order of preference under each:

1: Community Facilities	
Community pub	28 votes in person Top priority online (average score of 6.8/10)
Community hub	27 votes in person Second priority online (average score 6.1/10)
Local library provision	9 votes in person Third priority online (average score 4.4/10)

2: Infrastructure	
Additional parking provision	34 votes in person (ranked top priority overall) Second priority online (average score 5.6/10)
Completion of cycle path	21 votes in person Top priority online (average score 7.3/10)
Traffic calming measures	26 votes in person Fifth priority online (average score 4/10)
Affordable housing	12 votes in person Third priority online (average score 6/10)
Workspace/Storage Project	5 votes in person Fourth priority online (average score 4.3/10)

3: Play and Leisure	
MUGA refurbishment/upgrades	27 votes in person Second priority online (average score 5.9/10)
Covered seating area in Gladstone Park	24 votes in person



	Third priority online (average score 5.6/10)
Extended play equipment in Gladstone Park	14 votes in person Top priority online (average score 6.4/10)
Outdoor gym	13 votes in person Fourth priority online (average score 5.3/10)

4: Environment and Greenspace

Easily accessible maps of walking and cycling routes	16 votes in person Top priority online (average score 6.1/10)
Community woodland	12 votes in person Second priority online (average score 5.8/10)
Allotments	12 votes in person Third priority online (average score 4.9/10)

5: Community Activity

Reinstate Gala week	34 votes in person Second priority online (average score 6.8/10)
Regular social events and entertainment for all ages	26 votes in person Top priority online (average score 7.8/10)
Annual arts and music events	20 votes in person Third priority online (average score 6.2/10)
Youth arts and sports clubs	19 votes in person Fourth priority online (average score 5.6/10)

