



Living Well Locally Case Study: Cowdenbeath

January 2024

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INTRODUCTION

THE LOCAL LIVING AND 20 MINUTE NEIGHBOURHOODS APPROACH

Scottish Government provides the following definitions:

Local Living

‘Local living provides people with the opportunity to meet the majority of their daily needs within a reasonable distance of their home.’

20 minute neighbourhoods

‘The 20 minute neighbourhood concept is one method of supporting local living.

The 20 minute neighbourhoods concept aims to provide access to the majority of daily needs within a 20 minute walk, wheel or cycle.’

National Planning Framework 4 sets out that:

‘The principle can be adjusted to include varying geographical scales from cities and urban environments, to rural and island communities. Housing would be planned together with local infrastructure including schools, community centres, local shops and health and social care to significantly reduce the need to use unsustainable methods of travel, to prioritise quality of life, help tackle inequalities, increase levels of health and wellbeing and respond to the climate emergency.’

As part of work for Fife’s second Local Development Plan we have explored the concept of local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods and considered how the concept can be applied in Fife. There are two aspects to this work.

Firstly, a quantitative, high level mapping exercise which plots key services and facilities across Fife and applies walking/cycling buffer distances. This work gives us an indication of which parts of Fife appear to have the services and facilities that support local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods and where there are gaps.

The second part of the work was to carry out a qualitative exercise which looks in more detail at the quality, frequency and accessibility of the services and facilities on offer and the distance and quality of the routes that people need to travel to access these services. Given the scale and number of settlements in Fife it is not possible for us to carry out in depth analysis work for all settlements. Instead, we identified three different character areas to use as case studies for the more detailed qualitative analysis work:

- An accessible rural cluster – villages in the West Howe of Fife;
- Remote rural villages – Saline and Steelend; and
- An urban settlement – Cowdenbeath

This case study forms part of the qualitative exercise.

The three case studies have been carried out to understand the type and quality of services and facilities in each area; and how and where people travel to access these services, both within and outwith the study areas. This information will help us to identify opportunities for interventions and contribute to discussions around 20-minute neighbourhoods and local living and inform the local policy approach in the forthcoming Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) for Fife.

SETTLEMENT BACKGROUND

COWDENBEATH – URBAN AREA

This case study looks at the Cowdenbeath area, the study area includes Hill of Beath and Lumphinnans. The area was chosen to consider in detail how the local living/20 minute neighbourhood concept would work in a small urban area.

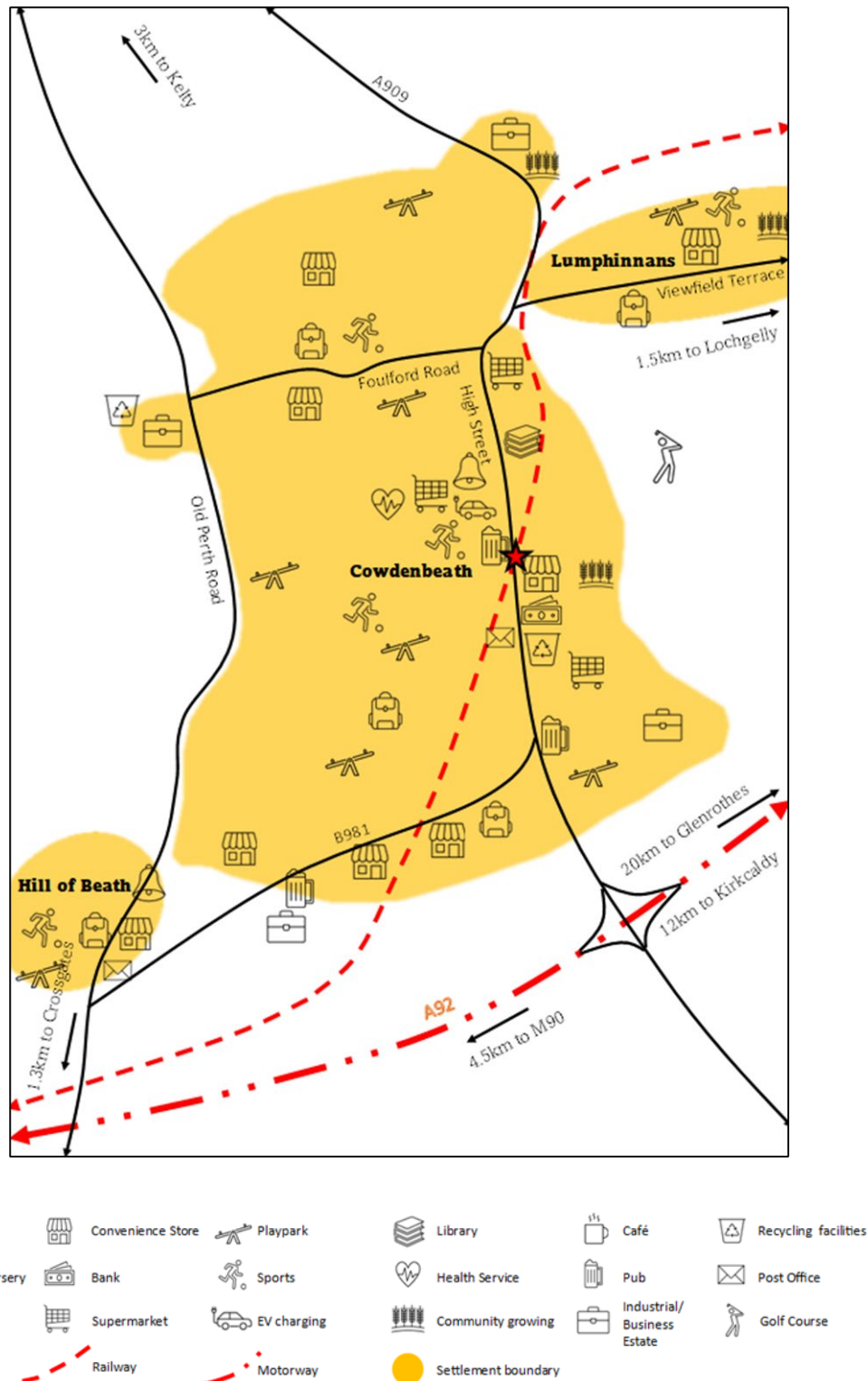


Figure 1: Diagram showing the location of services in Cowdenbeath.

Living Well Locally Case Study: Cowdenbeath – Urban area

Cowdenbeath is located in central Fife between Dunfermline and Kirkcaldy and is close to a number of small towns and villages including Lochgelly, Kelty and Crossgates. The Cowdenbeath area is a former coal mining centre and has had to adapt after the loss of industry several decades ago. [The Cowdenbeath study area has a population of around 13,000 people with Lumphinnans having just over 800 people and Hill of Beath just over 1,000 people.](#)

According to the [Fife Local Economic Profiles 2021-2022](#) approximately 20% of the population in the Cowdenbeath area's is aged 65 and older, with 62% being of working age and 18% under 16, this is similar to Fife and Scottish averages. The Cowdenbeath area has a significantly lower proportion (19.6%) of people employed in high skilled jobs such as managers, directors, and professionals than the Fife average, (31.1%). It also has the lowest proportion (30.2%) of people who are qualified to NVQ 4 or above, and a significantly higher proportion of its working population with no qualifications (13.1%) than Scotland and Fife as a whole (8.5% and 6.7% respectively).

[SIMD \(Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation\) data](#) shows that there are high levels of deprivation within the Cowdenbeath area, with some parts falling within the top 10% and 20% most deprived areas in Scotland.

The [Cowdenbeath Locality Plan](#), prepared by Fife's Health and Social Care Partnership, indicates that life expectancy in the Cowdenbeath area is estimated at 78.5 years for females and 76.2 for males, which is below the Fife average. It also shows that there are increasing numbers of over 70's and under 16's within the area but a decreasing number of people of working age.

The area is dominated by 2 storey semi-detached 20th century residences with some concentrations of single storey and detached housing.

Cowdenbeath has a train station, and the high street contains many food and retail services as well as public services in the form of the library and there is a community centre and leisure centre nearby (see figure 1). The area is relatively well served by bus services.

The Local Living Framework Assessment section of this document provides a summary of how and where people access services and facilities in the Cowdenbeath area. Full details of the qualitative assessment that we carried out is in [Appendix 1](#).

[Appendix 2](#) shows the distance an average adult could walk within 5, 10 and 20 minutes from a number of points within Cowdenbeath, Lumphinnans and Hill of Beath.

CONSULTATION

In Autumn 2022 we carried out detailed analysis in the case study area, gathering information on the provision of services and facilities.

We ran an online survey, which asked local residents about their experiences of the quality of services and facilities as well as their ability to access them. We also visited the area and carried out in person surveys.

To promote the online survey, we contacted community groups and community councils via direct e-mail and social media for their help in spreading awareness and generating community buy-in and posted about the survey on the Fife Planning Service Twitter account.

We contacted community halls and hung posters with QR code links to the online survey in the settlements. Flyers with QR code links were also handed out to people while doing in-person consultations in to encourage them and their family to participate in the survey at home and spread awareness.

We also provided paper surveys at local libraries and shops in each settlement so people who had issues accessing the survey online were able to respond.

As a result, the survey engaged 36 responses from within Cowdenbeath, and neighbouring Hill of Beath, and Lumphinnans. A breakdown of the age and location of responders is shown in Figure 2.

Survey Respondents by Age and Place:

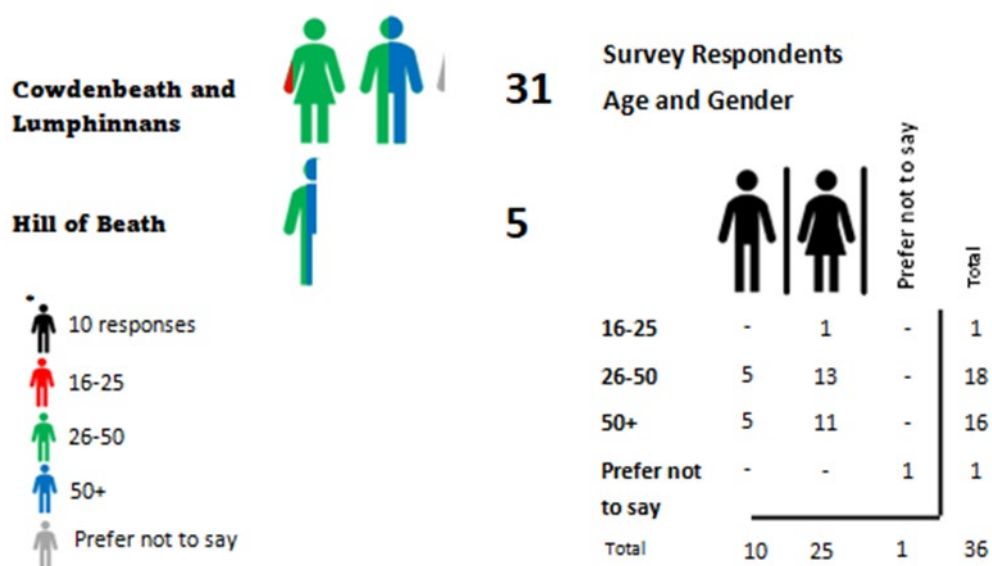


Figure 2: Breakdown of respondents to the living well locally survey from the Cowdenbeath area.

We also ran a survey for school aged children asking a number of questions about their experiences about where they live). This survey was made available for all children in Fife on the Council’s website. Head Teachers in Fife were contacted, and we carried out in-person workshops with classes at interested primary schools. In this case study area, we engaged 33 children at Lumphinnans Primary School. 15 girls and 18 boys were surveyed across three classes, between the ages of 6 and 12 (see [Appendix 5](#) for the results of the survey).

We also carried out background research to investigate the availability of services and facilities in the area using a variety of locally and nationally available data and we visited the area to carry out on the ground assessments. This involved examining not only the presence of local services, groups, and clubs, but their quality in terms of hours of operation, capacity, costs of goods and services, as well as the availability of mobile services. We also assessed the quality of key paths and active travel routes through the area (see [Appendix 3](#) for our findings).

LIMITATIONS OF THE CONSULTATION

During the course of the analysis of the survey results we identified several limitations of the data:

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- We realised we should have had an older age group category to clearly pick up responses from older age groups.
- We had a relative lack of responses from the area in particular from younger people (16-25 year olds).
- There was some confusion around the wording and purpose of question 27 in responses so this is something to be aware of for future consultations. (*Question 27: Do you feel that the facilities and services available to you locally meet the needs of your community, and why?*)
- Due to a desire to minimise the length of the survey answers to where people travelled for some specific services were difficult to isolate.
- For consistency the route assessments were conducted by the same officers across the case studies, the assessment information would have been enriched by being considered by people of different ages and abilities.

THE LOCAL LIVING FRAMEWORK ASSESSMENT

Scottish Government’s [Local Living and 20 minute Neighbourhoods draft guidance](#) document sets out an approach to assessing local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods using a framework (see figure 3). This identifies several key considerations based on the Place Standard approach, which area grouped into 5 themes based on health and wellbeing outcomes.



Figure 3: The Local Living Framework diagram

The key findings from the quantitative and qualitative assessments are summarised below using the local living framework approach.

MOVEMENT

Moving around, Traffic and parking:

Pedestrian connectivity in the Cowdenbeath area is good in most areas with just some of the late 20th and early 21st century housing being less permeable. The pedestrian routes tend to be reasonably wide, well-lit and provide direct access to public transport routes and services although maintenance has been raised as an issue. Many routes also include accessibility features to aid mobility although bins and cars can create obstacles on pavements. However, many routes lack interest and don't have features to make them more attractive to pedestrians such as seating, shading and shelter and there are some areas with slopes which could deter pedestrians.

There are some cycle routes in the area including off road multi-use paths through Central Park (see figure 4) but these are fairly limited. These routes are mixed in quality with some being poorly maintained and the on-road cycle routes don't meet acceptable requirements for a modern cycle route. The off-road cycle route in Lumphinnans is safe and well maintained but it is a short unconnected stretch primarily designed to serve the primary school.



Figure 4: Cycle routes in the Cowdenbeath area.

The survey showed that the majority of people who responded use a car for most of their day-to-day trips (here classed as supermarket, post office/financial, pharmacy, leisure, sports, work, café/restaurant). This is despite the general ease of walking in the area as a whole and the fairly high percentage of people who do not have access to a car ([31% vs 25% Fife-wide](#)). We did find that the majority of people would walk to convenience stores and pubs/bars rather than drive to them.

Other recent surveys carried out by Fife Council highlighted traffic along the High Street as an issue, particularly queues forming behind buses and poor maintenance of roads. These comments mainly relate to vehicle driver experience rather than pedestrian experience. There were conflicting comments regarding car parking in the area, some said there was plenty of parking whilst others said that a lack of parking led to people parking on the pavements - this could reflect some very local issues in the area; such as stock car racing events creating a parking problem in the roads around the stadium.

Public Transport:

Regular bus services including school buses are available throughout the area and providing access to neighbouring communities and larger towns nearby. These run from early morning to late at night including weekends. There is also a demand responsive transport (DRT) bus service which runs in the area and regular express buses which connect to Edinburgh and Dundee.

There are regular train services south to Edinburgh and north to Glenrothes with Thornton which run from early morning to late evening.

The Scottish Access to Bus indicator shows that the area has a reasonable access to bus services but travel time to employment can be slow (see Appendix A Figures A1-9 and A1-10). The cost of public transport was raised by some as an issue although a significant proportion of the population will have access to bus passes.



Although 58% of people said that they use public transport there were low results for how many people use public transport to access services and facilities locally. This might indicate that people are using public transport more for longer trips rather than day to day journeys.

Comments on what would encourage people to use public transport raised the frequency, cost and reliability of buses and trains, hours of operation and cleanliness.

SPACES

Streets and Spaces:

The centre of Cowdenbeath has a distinct character with its long, busy High Street. There are some attractive and historic buildings in the centre although in general the maintenance of the buildings has been poor. One comment received to a recent consultation said that: *“There has been a lack of vision or coherent plan for our town centre - it's cluttered with street furniture, feels overpowering sometimes and is very dark at night because of the high street lamps.”*

Along the High Street there has been investment in a number of spaces to enhance the public realm including seating areas, planting, cycle parking and public art. These spaces are well used and provide areas away from the busy pavements along the High Street. The High Street itself is well provided with benches and is reasonably well maintained.

Natural Space:

The Cowdenbeath area has a range of parks and greenspaces of different types and sizes including grassed areas, playing fields and semi-natural spaces; and most people said that they use greenspaces. The area has an above [Fife] average amount of greenspace and the majority of houses have access to a greenspace within 250m. However, the quality of the greenspaces tends to be below average across the area and this was reflected in the comments received to recent surveys.

The area has good connectivity into the countryside and natural places around the settlements including walks around Dalbeath Marsh Nature Reserve; Leuchatsbeath Meadow and Woodland; Swan Pond north of Lumphinnans; and Cowdenbeath Community Woodland east of Hill of Beath.

Play and Recreation:

There is a good spread of playparks throughout the Cowdenbeath area with just a few areas in Cowdenbeath where people would have to walk more than 500m to get to the playpark. There is also a popular skatepark in Central Park. The quality of the playparks is mixed, Fife Council recently published [Fife's Play Sufficiency Assessment](#) which identified that there is insufficient play provision within Cowdenbeath with many of the play parks being described as of poor quality/poor play value. A few small playparks have been removed when their condition has deteriorated. However, Lumphinnans and Hill of Beath were both found to have sufficient play. The poor condition of playparks has been raised through recent public engagement although some newer playparks were praised.

Most people said they have access to playparks and a high proportion of people aged 26-50 reported using the playparks.

Children from Lumphinnans Primary School said that parks and the astro were their preferred places to play; but they highlighted maintenance issues and a high number of them wanted to see improvements in their local park, the need for a new slide was mentioned by a number of children and a couple referred to maintenance issues.

RESOURCES

Services and Facilities:

Schools – there are 5 primary schools located in the area including schools in Hill of Beath and Lumphinnans and there is a denominational school, St Brides Primary School. The area is within the Beath High School catchment and the school is located to the north west of Cowdenbeath. Many houses to the west and south west of Cowdenbeath are over a 10 minute walk away from a primary school but do not qualify for free school transport as they are under 1 mile from the school. In addition houses in Lumphinnans, Hill of Beath and to the west, east and south of Cowdenbeath are over a 10 minute walk from Beath High School but none of the houses in the Cowdenbeath area qualify for free school travel to the high school as the distance is under 2 miles.

Food stores – Cowdenbeath has a number of supermarkets located around the High Street including 'budget' supermarkets Aldi and Lidl. There is also a good range of convenience stores throughout the area including Lumphinnans and Hill of Beath. Areas on the periphery of Cowdenbeath has the

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poorest access to food shops. The cost of food in the shops varies considerably with the supermarkets generally being cheaper and certain of the convenience stores being considerably more expensive.

Hi-speed broadband is available throughout the area although there is a high proportion of people in the area who have limited or no interaction with the internet. People in the north of the settlement have the most internet interaction. Our survey found that there was a relatively low take up for internet services including online food deliveries and as low percentage of people working from home.

Healthcare – there is one medical practice in Cowdenbeath which is located fairly centrally in the town, there are also practices in Lochgelly and Crossgates and a number of clinic and other health services in the area. Lack of capacity and difficulty getting appointments was raised by many people in our survey and other recent surveys. There are pharmacies located at the southern end of the High Street, and Crossgates and Lochgelly have pharmacies. There are two dentists in the area but some survey responses said that they had difficulty getting registered. The majority of people tend to drive to access healthcare services in the area although a good proportion of people will walk and some use public transport.

Financial services – there is a Bank of Scotland branch along Cowdenbeath High Street which is open during the week and a mobile bank visits Cowdenbeath once a week. There is a Post Office on Cowdenbeath High Street and in Hill of Beath convenience store. There are ATM's in many of the convenience stores and at the bank.

Recycling – there are a number of recycling facilities located across the Cowdenbeath area and there is a recycling centre to the west of Cowdenbeath at Cuddyhouse Road. The north and south west of Cowdenbeath are the most poorly served in terms of recycling facilities.

Other shops and services – Cowdenbeath has a good range of other shops and services which are mainly located along the High Street. There were some negative comments about the mix of shops and services available in the area with too many fast food outlets, hairdressers and betting shops being cited.

Child care - There are council run nurseries in all the primary schools in the Cowdenbeath area and responses to our survey indicated that there are a lot of childminders in the area.

Cowdenbeath has a good variety of services available with the majority located fairly centrally or along Cowdenbeath High Street. Lumphinnans and Hill of Beath have some of the key day-to-day services but need to access a wider range of services in nearby settlements. In general it is the north and south west of Cowdenbeath that have longer distances to walk to access services and facilities.

Lack of awareness of services was a common theme in the survey, with many people not knowing about what was available in their area, particularly regarding social care and community initiatives. These are areas which could possibly be improved on through local action.

Work and Economy:

Employment opportunities in the area are mainly focused in a number of industrial estates in Cowdenbeath and Lochgelly. There is no major employer in the area but there are a good variety of local businesses providing retail, service, and trades employment opportunities. Despite that most of

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the people who answered our survey worked outwith Cowdenbeath and travelled to work by private car. A small percentage said they worked from home.

Housing and Community:

There is a high percentage of social rented housing in the Cowdenbeath area; particularly in Lumphinnans where it makes up 55% of the housing. Overall, in the area around 55% of the housing is owner occupied despite house prices in the area being around a third lower than the Fife average.

There have been fairly substantial areas of new housing built over the last ten year, with large private housing estates to the north of Cowdenbeath and in Hill of Beath and some affordable housing built; and nearly 300 additional houses have been granted planning permission.

There are relatively high levels of smaller houses available which could help first-time buyers or older people wishing to remain in the area.

Care home/Sheltered Housing – There are a number of residential care and nursing homes in the area including care facilities for adults with learning disabilities and there is some sheltered housing provision. There is a high need for additional one to two bedroom houses for people with specific needs.

Social Interaction:

Provision of community halls in the area is fairly limited. The main community centres are the Maxwell Centre in Cowdenbeath and Hill of Beath Community Hub. These have both fairly recently been upgraded so offer modern facilities. There are a couple of other halls in the area which offer classes or rooms for hire.

There are a number of formal sports facilities in the area including Cowdenbeath leisure centre, bowling clubs, fitness studios and a sports hub in Lumphinnans. In addition, facilities at Beath High School and Lumphinnans Primary School are available for community use. Some people thought the cost of some sports facilities was too high or the opening hours were too restrictive. Our survey showed that children in the area get involved in a number of different sporting activities.

There are a number of pubs, cafes and takeaways in Cowdenbeath although many of these are located along the High Street which makes them less local for some areas.

Cowdenbeath has a library located at the north end of the High Street which is open 5 days a week including Saturdays. A mobile library visits Hill of Beath every other week for half an hour.

There are a number of allotments in the area located in the north and east; Hill of Beath and the south west of Cowdenbeath does not have easy access to these facilities.

CIVIC

Identify and Belonging:

Cowdenbeath, Hill of Beath expanded rapidly during the end of the 19th Century and throughout the 20th Century to serve the collieries in the area. There are a few older buildings in the centre of Cowdenbeath including the listed Town House but many of these are quite changed in appearance. The mining history, local people and the stock car races are celebrated in attractive large murals on gables in the town centre located around two public spaces along Cowdenbeath High Street.

Cowdenbeath High Street is a long, busy, fairly narrow street which is bisected by the railway and has a distinct character provided by its form. The rest of the area is less distinctive although there are a couple of large greenspaces running through Cowdenbeath which provide an attractive setting within the settlement. The wider landscape setting is not generally a feature within the settlements apart from in Lumphinnans which has views to the Benarty and Navitie hills in the north.

Feeling Safe:

Cowdenbeath High Street is a very busy road and forms a key route through the town from the A92 for cars and public transport. The comments we received about Cowdenbeath High Street mainly related to problems for drivers because the number of pedestrian crossings slow traffic along the route and cause tailbacks. We also had comments that the roads are not considered suitable for cycling as there is no safe storage for bicycles and existing routes and paths are poorly maintained with too many obstacles.

We had quite a number of comments saying the people do not feel safe after dark even on well-lit routes and the behaviour of young people was mentioned a few times. Many of the greenspaces in the area are large and not well overlooked.

Generally, the children at Lumphinnans Primary Schools feel safe in their area. However, some children wanted to see more cameras, alarms and police indicating concerns about safety and some antisocial behaviour issues were raised; people destroying a car, presence of junkies; and teenagers throwing bottles. These comments were however in the minority.

STEWARDSHIP

Care and Maintenance:

There are a few areas of vacant and derelict land and buildings in Cowdenbeath with some buildings being long term vacant or derelict. The Crown Hotel at the north end of the High Street is one example; it is long term derelict after a fire although there are now plans to convert it into flats. There has been work or are plans to improve the look of many of the vacant or derelict areas with a view to future development. Hill of Beath and Lumphinnans do not have any vacant or derelict land.

We found that the main streets and public realm were generally fairly well maintained with relatively little litter and only occasional instances of graffiti. However, long term maintenance and investment is an issue with pavements and road surfaces often broken up and many buildings and shopfronts in poor states of repair. Maintenance of the area was mentioned by a number of people

in recent surveys particularly greenspaces and roads and pavements, with people raising that there was not enough care taken of the place.

Influence and sense of control:

There are some community led initiatives in the area such as food banks and community cafes run by local groups and the community council has supported efforts to promote more footfall in the town and has created a walking route in a local woodland.

However, we could not find much evidence of the community being active in the look and care of the public spaces; for instance, the public planters in the centre of Cowdenbeath were provided and maintained by Fife Council.

CONCLUSIONS

“I feel my home town (Cowdenbeath) has everything I need. I do feel like not enough care is taken when it comes to the look and feel of the place. Some areas are run down and lack maintenance, including the green spaces. I know there's not a lot of money but ignoring things that need maintained isn't an option.”

“Cowdenbeath is well served by local amenities, but they lack public ownership most of the time. Citizens should play a much more active role in how the local area is managed and use the local resources better to help us invest for the future. I'd like to see much more community ownership of assets.”

The above comments were made to a recent survey for the Fife Local Development Plan.

Seen as a whole the Cowdenbeath area has a good range of services and facilities. However, some key services such as healthcare, leisure facilities, the library and supermarkets are located close to the High Street and are beyond a 10-minute walk from some areas (peripheral areas to the north and south west of Cowdenbeath, Hill of Beath and Lumphinnans). The cost and opening times of some services was seen as a barrier to usage, and there is relatively poor access to community hall facilities in the area.

The area has good access to public transport with frequent buses to local settlements and further afield and a train station although few people appeared to use public transport to access local services and facilities within the immediate area. Cost, reliability, cleanliness, and safety were raised as reasons why people do not use public transport.

Most of the Cowdenbeath area has good pedestrian connections with direct and well-lit paths to the main places that people want to go. There are some cycle routes but these do not create an extensive or particularly well connected network. However, maintenance is an issue. The routes are often lacking in interest and there is a perceived lack of safety after dark. These will contribute to many people not choosing to walk or cycle for day-to-day trips. Making walking and cycling routes more attractive and better maintained could help to encourage people to use them.

There is not much evidence of the community taking on responsibility for the look or care of public spaces or picking up services and facilities which have been withdrawn by public bodies or which have proved unviable for traditional businesses. This is an area where support could be given to build community resilience and pride in their place.

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APPENDIX 1. SUMMARY OF QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT

LOCAL SERVICE AVAILABILITY

As part of the work on 20 minute neighbourhoods we have classified different services and facilities into *essential*, *important* and *desirable* categories based on how large a part of the community would use these features and/or frequency of use:

- **Essential** - Features which are necessary for anyone of any age on a daily basis;
- **Important** – Features which are used regularly by certain parts of the community or used slightly less frequently by all members of the community;
- **Desirable** - Features which are used regularly by a smaller proportion of the community or used on less frequent basis by the whole community.

Figure A1-1 sets out which services and facilities fall into which category. More information is provided in the 20 minute neighbourhood storymap.



Figure A1-1: Fife Council's proposed breakdown of Essential, Important and Desirable services

Cowdenbeath contains all the services and facilities needed for living well locally and meeting the requirements for being considered a 20 minute neighbourhood. Almost all of the Essential, Important, and Desirable services listed above in Figure A1-1 are present. The following section combines our background research with residents' survey responses to examine the quantity and quality of services and facilities locally.

ESSENTIAL SERVICES

HI-SPEED BROADBAND

Hi-speed broadband is available throughout the study area, averaging over 24mbps. Research by the [Consumer Data Research Centre](#) found that the area has a high proportion of people classed as

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Passive and Uncommitted Users and people who are e-Withdrawn, characterised by those who have limited or no interaction/engagement with the internet (see figure A1-2). These categories are typically associated with more deprived urban neighbourhoods and have the lowest rates of broadband use for seeking information or for financial services. Both categories, particularly e-Withdrawn, have higher levels of people who are not working (including housewives, or those with long term disabilities) and people living in social housing.

This pattern of internet use may have contributed to the lower numbers of survey responses received from the area although we did carry out on street surveys and had paper options.

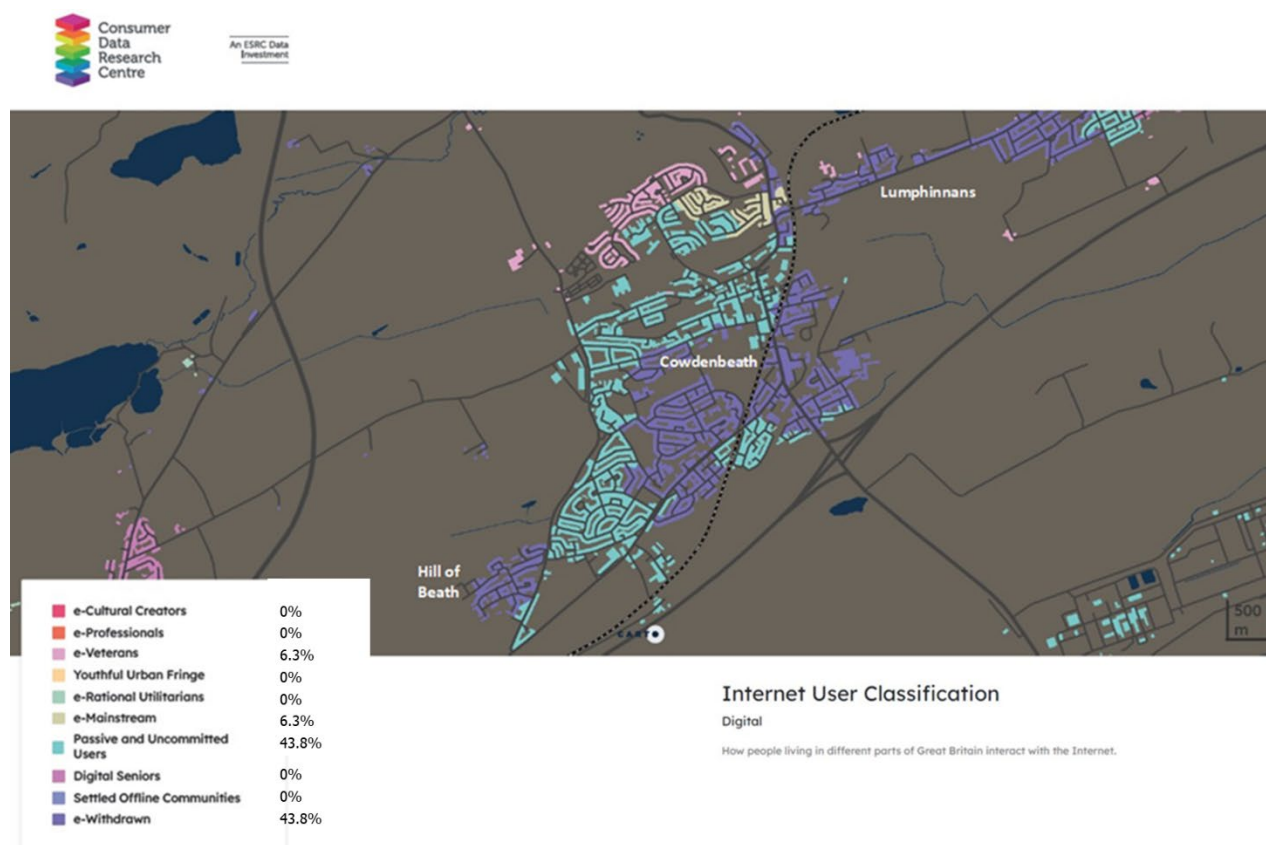


Figure A1-2: Internet User Classification for Cowdenbeath, Hill of Beath and Lumphinnans. Source: CDRC <https://data.cdrc.ac.uk/dataset/internet-user-classification>

Internet infrastructure has continued to develop and roll out since this data was collected and basic access and connection speeds will continue to improve, but the ability of some parts of the population to access and understand how to use online services will continue to be a barrier to full digital integration.

The presence of online shopping for food in the responses to the survey confirmed that food delivery services are available for those without physical access. Online banking was not mentioned.

Survey responses:

- 8% of the survey respondents use the internet for online grocery shopping and 8% of respondents work from home.

Impact of the internet

The internet has a significant impact on the lives and livelihoods of people, affecting all aspects of our daily lives, including health, education, employment, social networks, and is increasingly needed for participating in society. Poor quality access to the internet and poor digital literacy (the ability to understand and safely use digital technologies) can lead to worse health and wellbeing and entrench existing social, health, and economic inequalities.

Vulnerable people (older people, those with disabilities, socio-economically disadvantaged) tend to have lower rates of internet use and literacy. Results of a [2018 Citizens Advice Scotland survey](#), showed that of respondents aged between 65 and 79 years:



- 25% used the internet often
- 46% never used the internet
- 18% had difficulty using a computer
- 16% could not use one at all

COVID-19 has increased the numbers of people using the internet for everyday tasks partly as a result of many services moving online, and though use by those 75 and older has increased year-on-year, this group still have relatively low levels of internet usage compared with those 16 to 44. COVID-19 has also had an impact on the fast-forwarding of cashless transactions relying on bank cards and mobile banking, which have risks for those not familiar with these processes or have issues with access.

GREENSPACE

The Fife Greenspace Audit 2010 showed that the study area has above the Fife average amounts of greenspace and the majority of households have good access. However, the quality of the greenspaces were considered to be below average. The types of greenspaces present in the area are diverse, with open grassy parks, sports fields, and natural/semi-natural spaces. There are also some natural spaces at the west and north edges of the town, as well as routes through the golf course to the east. A summary of the findings of the Fife Greenspace Audit 2010 is in table A1-1.

Village	Quantity (hectares)	Quantity (hectares) per 1,000 population	Average Quality	Access (% of houses in 250m)
Cowdenbeath (incl. Hill of Beath)	85	7	Below Average	72%
Lumphinnans	4.3	4.5	Below Average	85%

Table A1-1: Greenspace quantity, quality and access by settlement. Source: [Fife Greenspace Audit 2010](#)

When asked if they had access to greenspace, the majority of people in the Cowdenbeath area said that they did with only a very small number of people saying that they did not have access to greenspace.

There are a number of natural spaces in the area which have routes through them, these include community woodlands to the north of Leuchatsbeath and east of Hill of Beath which have

community involvement in their management. There are also walks around Dalbeath Marsh Nature Reserve and Swan Pond to the north of Lumphinnans.

Survey responses:

- Nearly all the responses reported that they use greenspace in Cowdenbeath.



Of the people who answered:

93% said they use local greenspace.

- Some negative responses about the local greenspaces raise concerns about the quality of the greenspace available within Cowdenbeath.

“Parks need to be clean and safe. Dog fouling is rife and everywhere.”

“The park area would benefit from lighting.”

“No dog mess in greenspace... and less youths hanging about at play parks.”

“Local playpark has a picnic bench- nothing else!!!”

- There is a slight difference between the number of respondents reporting access to greenspace and those using greenspace. 13% of survey respondents reported that they don't have access to greenspace even when they answered they use greenspace. This could suggest that some people are travelling elsewhere to use greenspace due to not having access to good quality local greenspace.
- In the children's area survey 39% of the children reported that “the park” is their favourite part of their local area.
- Even though most children reported the park being their favourite part of the town, many children reported that there are still improvements that can be made and the park equipment was suggested as being potentially run down.

“wee bit rusty”

“make it easier to go to the park – a new slide and better pathway”

- 10 out of the 33 responses to the children's survey mentioned “a new/better park as something they would like as an improvement in the area (Lumphinnans).

ACTIVE TRAVEL

Transport Scotland defines active travel as travel that is fully or partially people powered, including walking, wheeling, and cycling. The importance of active travel routes has become increasingly important to help meet climate change emission reduction targets and in relation to people’s health and wellbeing. COVID-19 led to an increased appreciation by people of walking around their neighbourhoods and there was a 250% increase in cycling compared to pre-pandemic levels and these are trends the Local Transport Strategy for Fife 2023-33 is pushing to embed.

Cowdenbeath, Hill of Beath, and Lumphinnans are generally walkable in scale, with good accessibility and few barriers for pedestrians. Trips internally within Hill of Beath and Lumphinnans take less than 5 minutes, and most parts of Cowdenbeath have access to one or more services within 10 minutes walk. All but the most southwestern part of Cowdenbeath is within 20 minutes walk of the High Street (see walking distance maps in [Appendix 2](#)).

Our route quality survey found that routes are generally well lit, provide direct to services and transport, and have fairly wide, pavements with features allowing accessibility (see figure A1-3). Generally, the Cowdenbeath area has good permeability for pedestrians with just some of the late 20th Century/early 21st Century developments to the north and east being less permeable. However, our survey found that many of the routes lack interest and don’t have shelters, seating or shading. There are also slopes on some routes which could deter less able people from walking, and cars and bins can create obstacles on pavements which will not help to encourage people to use them. Maintenance of routes was also raised as an issue in recent surveys. The full findings of the route quality survey are in [Appendix 3](#).



Figure A1-3: Examples of pavements in the Cowdenbeath area.

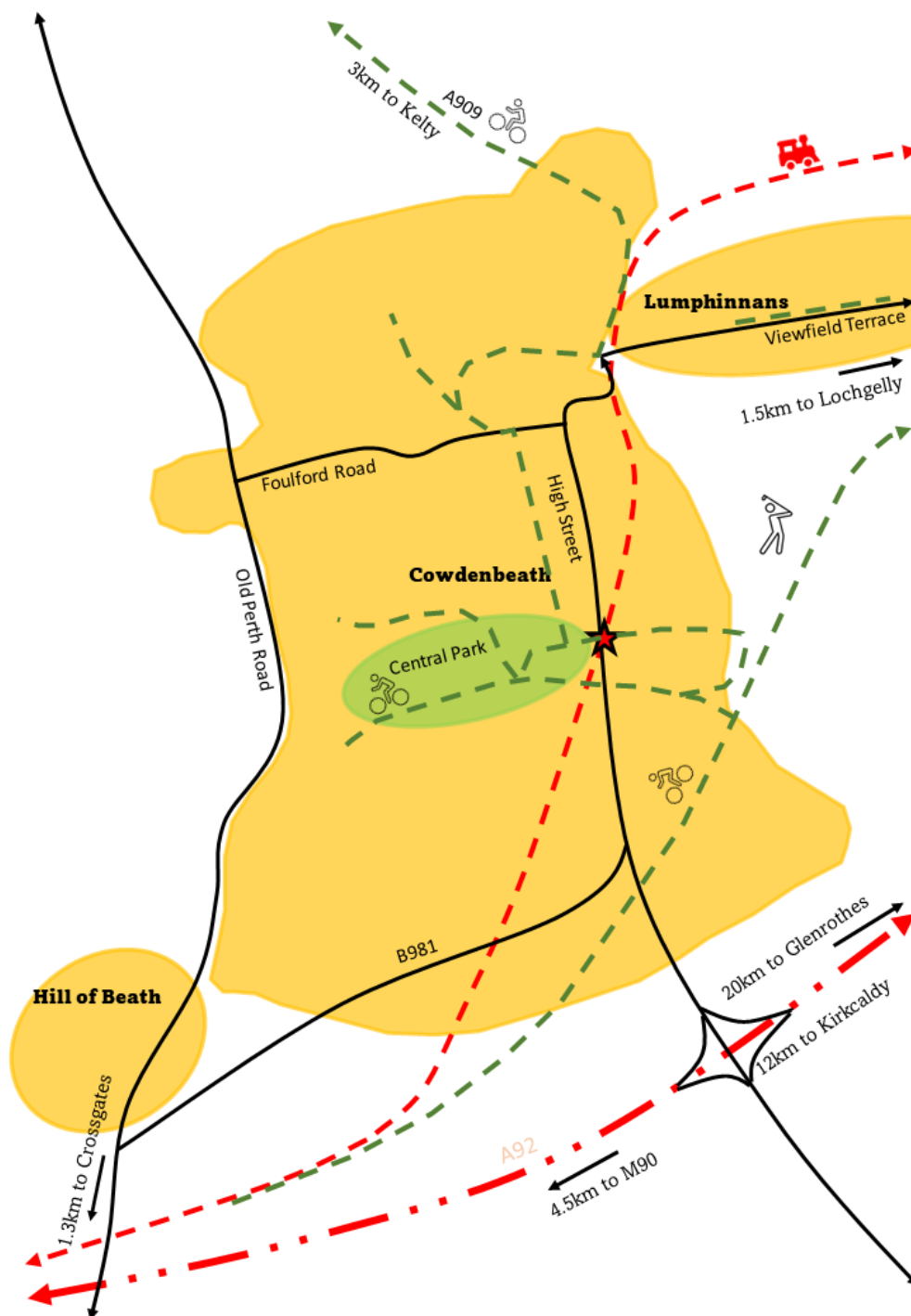


Figure A1-4: Cycle routes within Cowdenbeath and beyond

There are some cycle routes through the area consisting of a mixture of off-road multi-use paths and roads designated as cycle ways (see figure A1-4). Central Park has the most prominent cycle infrastructure in Cowdenbeath, with a painted lane on the off-road path through the park, separating pedestrians from cyclists. This leads from the west of the town to the leisure centre behind the High Street. The surface of this route is broken up in some areas (see figure A1-5)

About a 500m length of bike lane is painted on the southern pavement of the B981 between Lumphinnans and Lochgelly (see figure A1-5) this links to Lumphinnans Primary School. This pavement is in good repair but the bike lane is poorly marked. The former railway line running

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through the golf course and skirting the southeast of the town has been made into an off-road leisure trail.



Figure A1-5: Shared use paths in Cowdenbeath

To the north of Cowdenbeath there is an on-road painted cycle lane on the A909 linking to Kelty (see figure A1-6). Overall, the cycle lanes do not form an extensive or well-connected network in the town.



Figure A1-6: Painted cycle lane along the A909 north of Cowdenbeath. Source: Google Maps

Cycle lanes painted within existing carriageways are not now considered an appropriate approach. [Studies](#) show they do little to encourage new ridership because they do not relieve concerns over safety, one of the greatest barriers to cycling.



Figure A1-7: Example of protected bike lane.

Source: [SUstrans – Bike Life: Protected bike lanes will transform our cities](#)

Bike lanes which are separated from the road, preferably with some buffer space between cars and bikes (Figure A1-7), as well as off road paths, are generally considered safest by users, and are seen as the preferred option for most cyclists and motorists, particularly those people who are interested in riding a bike but are hesitant due to safety concerns. Protected cycle lanes, separated from traffic have been shown to increase bicycle trips.

Cyclists tend to prefer direct routes to destinations, with minimal interaction with vehicles and though willing to deviate from the most direct route to access a safer route they will generally limit their detour to less than 400m to access safe infrastructure.

Survey Responses:

- Around half of the survey respondents thought that it was enjoyable to walk, cycle or wheel around the local area, but 36% of people said it was not enjoyable.
- The following reasons were given as to why people don't enjoy walking or cycling travelling in their local area due to the following reasons:

"The area is in disrepair and has dog droppings everywhere. There is litter on the streets and damaged walkways and roads etc".

"Could do with cycling paths for safer use".

"Gates on core paths should be able to easily fit prams/ buggies".

"limited cycle paths"

- Better cycle path connections from Lumphinnans to nearby settlements was requested in a recent survey.
- When the children from Lumphinnans Primary School were asked how they get to school 55% reported that they use an active travel mode of transport (walk, scooter or cycle); with the majority walking to school; 21% are regularly driven to school; 15% do a mixture of active travel or getting dropped off; 6% of children use public transport to reach school and 3% didn't answer this question.
- Most of the children said they felt safe walking around where they live with just a couple raising some concerns about antisocial behaviour particularly at night.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Public transport is available across Cowdenbeath, Hill of Beath and Lumphinnans. Stagecoach has a number of bus routes serving the town, all of which provide access to neighbouring communities and larger centres, particularly Dunfermline and Kirkcaldy (see figure A1–8). Many of these have regular services throughout the day running from early morning to late in the evening, including weekends. There are also regular express buses to Edinburgh and Dundee throughout the day. Bay Travel run additional local services in the area which pick up in some different neighbourhoods particularly to the north of Cowdenbeath. A Demand Response Transport service (Fifebus) also operates in the area three days a week providing door to door transport for people who are unable to access mainstream public transport.



Figure A1–8: Extract from Stagecoach Cowdenbeath route map dated November 2022

Public transport is considered by [Transport Scotland](#) and [Fife Council](#) as a priority for reducing inequalities, contributing to climate action, promoting economic growth, and improving health and wellbeing. So having access to frequent and reliable options which take people where they want to go is important for anywhere wanting to encourage public transport use.

Data on [bus accessibility](#) indicates that people in Cowdenbeath, Lumphinnans and Hill of Beath generally have fairly good access to bus services (see figure A1-9). However, the [Local Transport Strategy for Fife 2023-2033](#) shows that travelling on public transport from Cowdenbeath to places of employment is fairly slow which could impact on people choosing to use it (see figure A1-10).

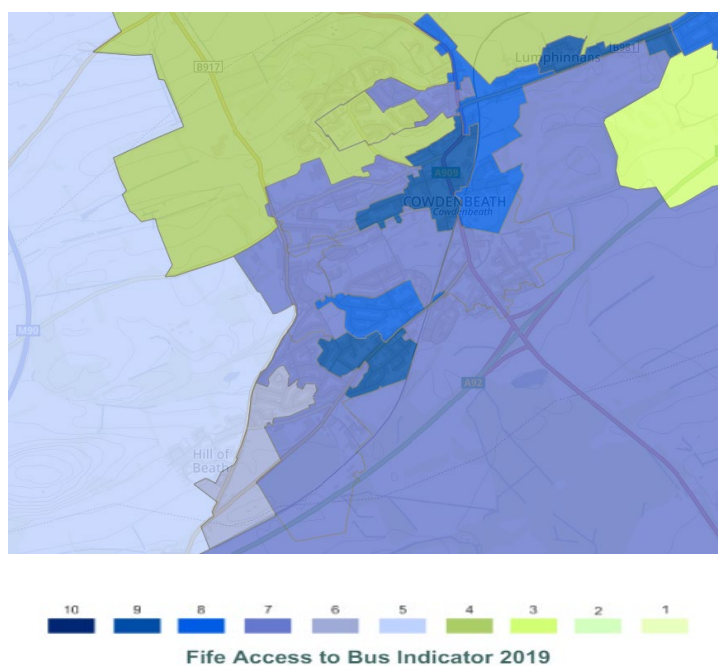


Figure A1-9: Map showing the accessibility of bus services in Cowdenbeath categorised into deciles where 1 indicates poorest accessibility and 10 greatest accessibility. Source: [Scottish Government Bus Accessibility 2019](#)

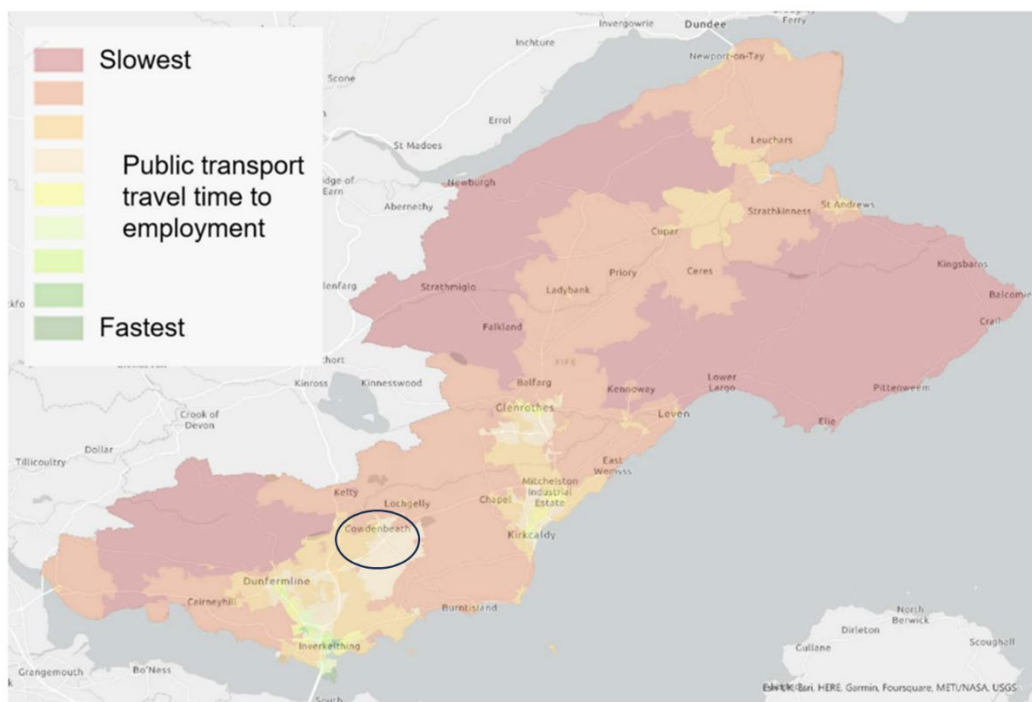


Figure A1-10: Map of public transport time to employment. Source: [Local Transport Strategy for Fife 2023-2033](#)

Cowdenbeath has a rail station which is on the Fife Circular route, there are regular trains heading south to Edinburgh (around twice an hour) and hourly trains north to Glenrothes with Thornton. The trains run from early morning to late evening.

The [Fife Local Transport Strategy](#) highlights that public transport costs are rising faster than costs associated with personal vehicles, although many people in the area will have access to free bus travel. Nationally, [transport and travel results from the Scottish Household Survey](#) show there has been a steady decrease in the percentage of journeys made by bus from a high of 11.2% in 2006 to 7% in 2019. Public transport use [was further reduced by COVID-19](#) from which services are still. These aspects contribute to a reluctance in using public transport through both perceived and actual issues which was reflected in many responses to the Living Well Locally survey.

Of the streets we surveyed most had conveniently located bus stops and the rail station is centrally located in Cowdenbeath. Some areas have bus shelters but many did not. Many areas have raised kerbs at bus stops to improve accessibility.

Survey responses:

- The majority (58%) of people in Cowdenbeath responded that they use public transport. With one respondent stating that they use public transport “all the time”. However, there is still a significant percentage of people in the area who do not use public transport.
- The following improvements to public transport services (bus and train) were suggested to encourage greater usage:
 - Greater frequency and reliability of services,
 - Lower fares



- Longer hours of operation and improved cleanliness
- Better connectivity and directness.

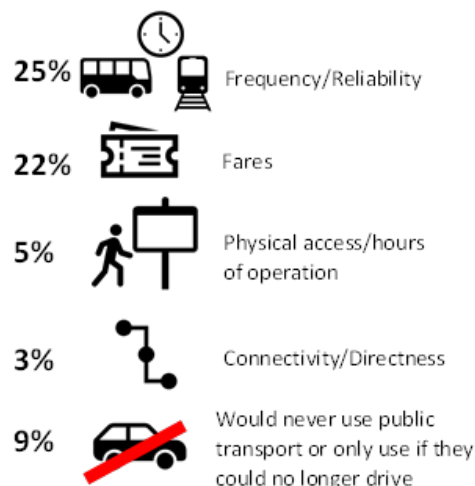
“Cleaner buses, cheaper fares, safer to use, later services in the evening and more frequent and reliable services. It’s a shambles the bus and train cancellations lately and makes it dangerous to use at night when cancellations just happen out of the blue”.

“Reduce cost, far too expensive to get between towns on the bus. I use the train for trips to Edinburgh”.

“On occasion when I have used local buses, they have had litter lying around the floor and multiple broken seats”.

- These responses align with themes of comments made to the recent [Transport Strategy](#) for Fife Main Issues consultation, which returned similar concerns and perceived barriers to wider public transport use across Fife.

Responses about Barriers to Increased Public Transport Use*:



*Note many people included multiple themes in their responses so the figures do not add up to 100%

FOOD AND CONVENIENCE STORES

The town is well served by convenience stores, with most houses within 400m of at least one. Several are spread along the High Street (though concentrated towards the north end), with others along the B981 (Broad Street). Hill of Beath and Lumphinnans each have their own convenience store, too.

Cowdenbeath also has three larger supermarkets. These are Lidl, ALDI, and Morrisons, which are all located close to the High Street. There is also a Co-op located in the south west of Cowdenbeath and Iceland and Farmfood stores along the High Street. See figure A1-11 for locations of stores in the area.

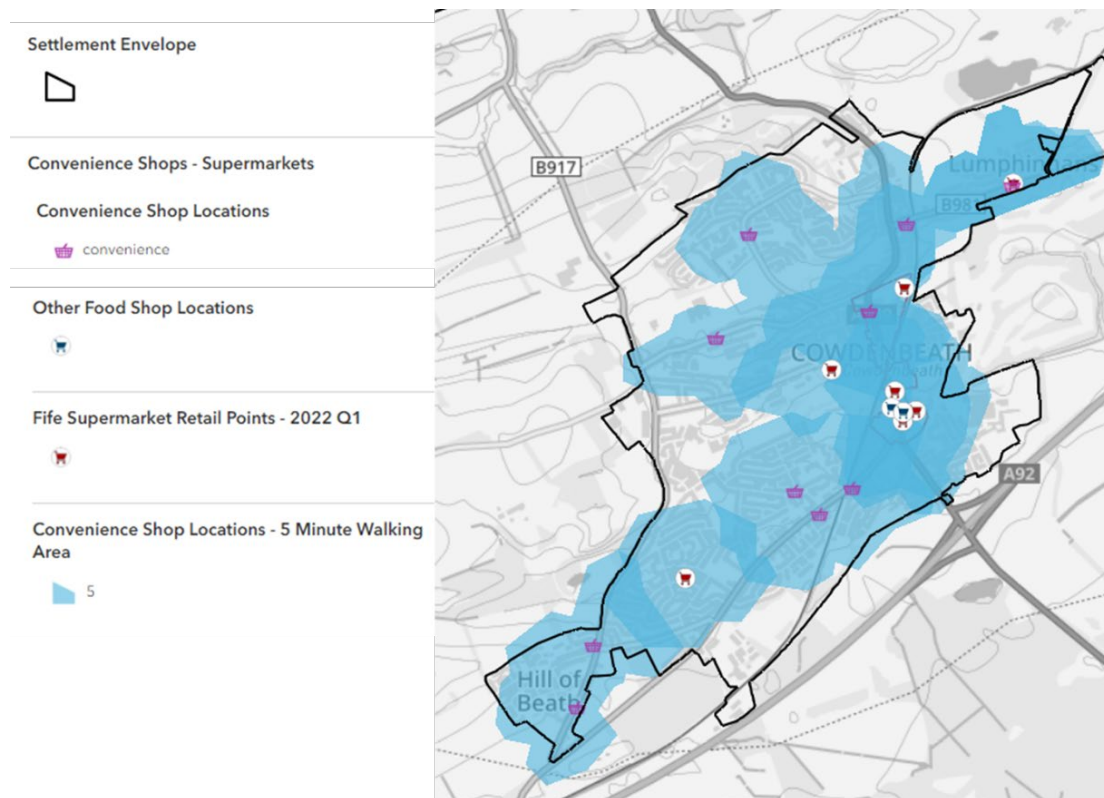


Figure A1-11: Location of convenience stores and supermarkets in the Cowdenbeath area.

[Research by the Consumer Data Research Centre \(CDRC\)](#), examines supermarket use trends based on socio-economic SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) areas, using factors such as distance to stores, size and density of stores, and neighbourhood socio-economic and demographic characteristics. They found that most of the Cowdenbeath area has reasonable access to cheap, healthy, and sustainable sources of food, with Lumphinnans, Hill of Beath and the Leuchatsbeath areas having the poorest access. (see figure A1-12).



Figure A1-12: Priority for supermarket access in the Cowdenbeath area Source: CDRC Priority Places for Food Index

The CDRC also maps online access to food shopping and found that there is low usage of online services in Cowdenbeath (see figure A1-13). The recent private housing to the north of Cowdenbeath has the most people who use online grocery chopping.



Figure A1-13: Access to online food deliveries showing low access in the Cowdenbeath area Source: CDRC Priority Places for Food Index

In October 2022 we carried out a comparison of the relative prices of certain key food and household items (see figure A1-14). When looking at prices in convenience stores across the Cowdenbeath area there was a wide range and no one store was consistently more or less expensive, however the Raja Convenience Store on Stenhouse Street and Rapid Mini Market in Hill of Beath were generally the most expensive shops (A full list of the price comparison is available in [Appendix 4](#)).

Grocery List—October 2022—high and low prices





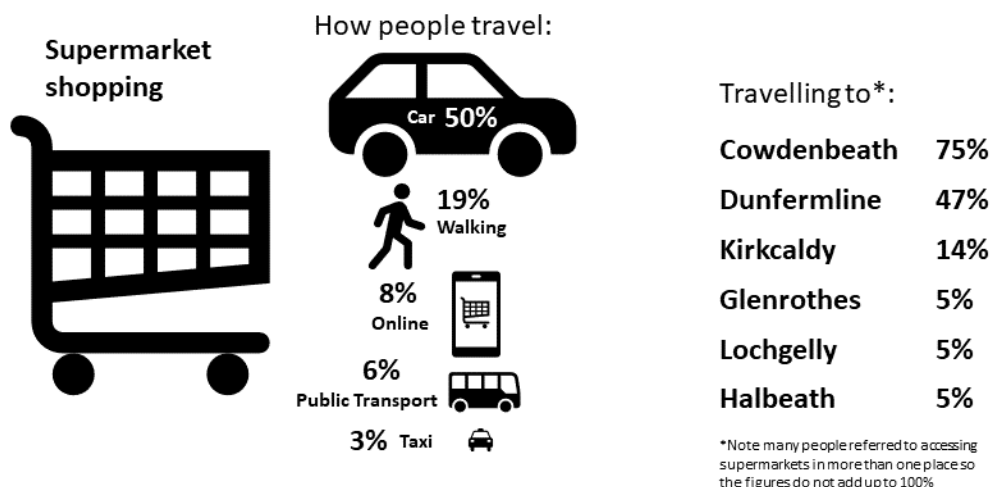
	<p>£££: 1.65 ALDI £: 1.09 Usave, Broad St.</p>		<p>£££: 3.60 Moss Side Rd. £: 1.85 Morrisons</p>
	<p>£££: 1.8 Rapid Mini Market, Hill of Beath £: 0.39 ALDI & Lidl</p>		<p>£££: 1.68 Usave, Broad St. £: 0.85 ALDI, Lidl, Morrisons, Iceland</p>
	<p>£££: 0.50 Raja Bros, Moss Side Rd. £: 0.14 ALDI & Lidl</p>		<p>£££: 1.59 Rapid Mini Market, Hill of Beath £: 0.99 Morrisons</p>
	<p>£££: 1.32 Raja Bros, Moss Side Rd. £: 0.42 Lidl</p>		<p>£££: 1.75 Co-op, Dalbeath Crescent £: 0.45 ALDI & Lidl</p>
	<p>£££: 1.99 Rapid Mini Market, Hill of Beath £: 0.55 Morrisons</p>		<p>£££: 1.69 Raja Bros, Moss Side St. £: 0.29 ALDI & Lidl</p>
	<p>£££: 1.50 Iceland £: 0.48 ALDI & Lidl</p>		<p>£££: 2.55 Morrisons £: 1.00 Rapid Mini Market, Hill of Beath</p>

Figure A1-14: Highest and lowest prices for some key items in the convenience shops and supermarkets in Cowdenbeath.

There was a large variance between the stores in the price for most goods. Milk and orange juice had the least variance in price between cheapest and more expensive although there was still a difference of over 50%. The other products all varied by considerably more with the highest prices for bread, bananas, bacon, toilet paper, paracetamol and potatoes being double the lowest price and in the case of paracetamol being nearly five times the price. This difference in cost is mainly due to the cheaper prices available in supermarkets over convenience stores. These results align with findings by [Nourish Scotland in Our Right to Food report](#) which reports a lack of choice in convenience stores and general higher prices over supermarkets.

Survey responses for supermarket use:

- Our survey responses indicated that travel to the supermarket was overwhelmingly by car with relative few trips by public transport.
- Most people use supermarkets in Cowdenbeath although some also use supermarkets in a number of nearby towns.



- Most people (50%) said it would take over 10 minutes to get to a supermarket but 36% thought it would take them under 5 minutes although that may be a car journey.
- 8% of people said they do a food shop online, this is similar to the results in the West Howe case study area and may reflect the age of respondents to the survey rather than the level of online shopping occurring in the area.

Survey responses for convenience store use:

- Most people walk to convenience stores in the Cowdenbeath area except in the Leuchatsbeath area; which is probably due to there being limited convenience store provision in that part of Cowdenbeath.



- The percentage of people who travel to convenience stores by car is similar to that in the West Howe case study area which could indicate that this is a mobility issue or behaviour choice rather than the distance to the store.
- Of the people who answered most people reported that it took 1-5 minutes to travel to convenience stores and overall 83% of people reported that it took under 10 minutes to get to a convenience store. This would indicate that there is a good provision of convenience stores in Cowdenbeath although the new housing to the north of the town is less well served.

When asked about what would encourage people to use local convenience stores more often:

- Of the people who answered a quarter indicated that they are happy with current levels of service.
- Cost, range of goods and the presence of cheaper supermarkets was raised as reasons why people didn't use convenience stores.
- For the Cowdenbeath area as a whole the main criteria that would encourage people to use local shops more often would be a change in prices and an increase in the range of goods and services offered.

"Presence of larger supermarkets. I go to the convenience store/ post office only for odds and urgent needs"

"I tend to shop local first....the problem I have is I'm lazy and don't always have time to walk to where I need to go and back again."

"I'd shop more locally if their prices were cheaper"

"good choice of supermarkets and local shops providing everything that you need"

IMPORTANT SERVICES

COMMUNITY HALL

Hill of Beath and Cowdenbeath each have a community hall which are open to the public during the week and on weekends by arrangement. They offer classes, clubs, and halls for hire. The Maxwell Centre in Cowdenbeath also serves as a foodbank. There is Scout Hall in Cowdenbeath which has some classes and is available for hire and the Ex-Serviceman's Club in Hill of Beath is also available for hire.

Despite the provision of community halls being fairly limited the majority of people who answered said that they used the community halls in some capacity.



66% of people who responded said they used their local halls.

Survey responses:

- When asked what would encourage people to use the local community facilities more often people wanted better access to and improvements to the quality of facilities and services; expanded hours and an increased range of activities.
- There was a comment that the Hill of Beath community centre was not fully operational.
"Community Hall – not really opened – opened just before covid and hasn't really properly ever opened but it is great as its right on the doorstep".
- The majority of people who reported using the community halls were in the 26-20 age bracket.

"perhaps if the community centre offered more activities or classes that I or my partner is interested in"

“community hall open longer”

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Cowdenbeath has one of the highest proportions of social rented housing in Fife, estimated at about 33% of the overall housing stock in 2022. The majority of housing in Lumphinnans is social rented housing at over double the Fife average (see Figure A1-15). Data collected for the Cowdenbeath Local Housing Strategy Area - Housing need and demand profile 2021 found that:

- The area has the fifth highest housing need in Fife;
- There is a high demand for 1 & 2 bed houses in both Lumphinnans and Cowdenbeath;
- There is a very high demand for Council properties in Hill of Beath and Lumphinnans.

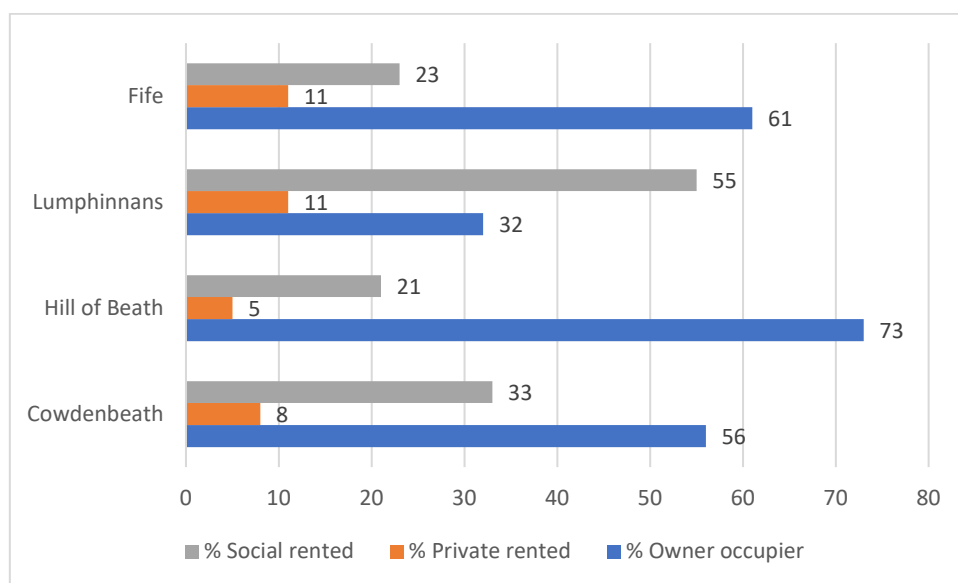
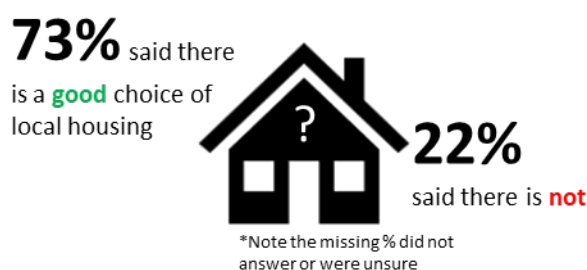


Figure A1-15: Breakdown of housing tenures in the Cowdenbeath area. Source: Cowdenbeath Housing Need and Demand Area profile 2021

[Statistical data](#) shows that the Cowdenbeath area has lower house prices than the Fife average (around a third lower in 2022).

There have been nearly 500 new houses built in Cowdenbeath and Hill of Beath since 2012 including new affordable housing developments. Planning permission has been granted for a further 180 houses in Cowdenbeath and nearly 100 houses in Lumphinnans.

The majority of housing in the area has 3-4 habitable rooms (2-3 bedrooms); typically bedrooms and living rooms are considered habitable rooms but not kitchens, as defined by [National Records of Scotland](#). [Scottish Government statistics](#) show that in 2017 this accounted for 73% of the housing and 53% of the housing had 1-2 bedrooms.



A [Housing Market Area Assessment](#) produced for the Edinburgh and South East Scotland HNDA3 found that in the four years between 2015-2019 80% of the people who bought houses in the area came from within the Dunfermline and West Fife Housing Market Area.

The comparatively high levels of smaller houses could be beneficial for older residents and first-time buyers who wish to remain in the area. According to the [World Health Organisation](#) a variety of housing and provision of supportive housing is important for older people, giving them the option to move to a suitable home but remain within the community. Those who wish to maintain their connections to the community but want to live in a more manageable sized home once children have left, have mobility restrictions, or generally want to maintain their independence but with the option of assistance should have reasonable local housing options in this area.

Survey responses:

When asked whether they thought there was a good choice of housing in the area:

- Most responses said there was a good choice of housing in the area although difficulties in getting new social rented housing and the cost of new private housing were raised.

“New housing is good”

“Housing – not good availability of affordable housing”

“Housing – a lot of council but there is also private – will always be a shortage of affordable housing”

“There has been little housing investment in Cowdenbeath leading it being dominated by mid-century former Council housing”

“Top end is too expensive”

- There was some frustration with the management of some areas by housing associations raised:

“The local housing association responsible for the housing stock in my street .. show no interest in the residents or the appearance of the street. It is being left to become run down and there is a growing issue kerb drugs and drug selling.”

NURSERY AND CHILDCARE

Each of the primary schools in the area has a nursery. Fife Council provides up to 1140 hours of free childcare to children between the age of 3 and when they start school, this is also available for 2-year-old children who meet the eligible criteria set out by the Scottish Government. A response to the survey said that there are a lot of childminders in the area, but this is something we did not look at in our data collection.

Lumphinnans Primary Community School have a nursery with 24 spaces; Beath Primary School has capacity for 54 and St Brides RC Primary School Hill offers 98 spaces. These three run 38 weeks a year sessions 5 days a week, 9am-3pm.

The following schools run ½ day nursery sessions 49 Weeks a year – Monday to Friday. Morning Sessions from 8am-12:40; afternoon sessions from 1:20-6pm:

- Foulford Primary School has capacity for 81,

- Cowdenbeath Primary School has capacity for 39 nursery children
- St Brides RC Primary School Hill also offers morning and afternoon session through the Cowdenbeath Leisure Centre Annex
- Hill of Beath Primary School

Other services are located nearby in neighbouring Crossgates and Lochgelly.

- Crossgates Nursery
- Lochgelly - St Kenneths Nursery, Denend Nursery in Lochgelly and Lochgelly South and West nurseries, and Sunflower Family Nurture Centre. And Noah’s Ark Private Nursery Ltd

Childcare.co.uk estimated private nursery costs in Fife is around 5.12 per hour (see table A1-2). Cost across the various types of childcare (nannies, childminders, babysitters, nurseries) in Fife trend below the national average (Feb. 2023 prices obtained from Childcare.co.uk).



cost/hour	Fife	Nationwide
Nanny	£11.00	£12.13
Childminder	£4.71	£5.79
Babysitter	£9.72	£10.66
Nursery	£5.12	£5.76



Table A1-2: Table showing average private childcare prices in Fife and nationwide

Survey responses:

- Only 11% of people answered this question, but they all said they had access to affordable childcare.



“There is a good nursery in the community hall”

“Lots of childminders around – as affordable as it can be”

PRIMARY SCHOOL

There are five primary schools serve the area, with three in Cowdenbeath (including one denominational school) and one each in Hill of Beath and Lumphinnans:

- Foulford Primary School
- St Brides RC Primary School
- Cowdenbeath Primary School
- Hill of Beath Primary School



- Lumphinnans Primary School

The council provides free travel to primary schools where pupils live 1 mile away however, many houses to the west and south west of Cowdenbeath are over a 10 minute walk away from a primary school but do not qualify for free school transport as they are under 1 mile from the school.

Survey responses:

- 78% of children surveyed at Lumphinnans Primary School said they walked, cycled or scooted to school although some of these do get driven at times.
- 22% of the children get driven to school.
- 2 of the children travel by bus to school.

SECONDARY SCHOOL

Beath High School is in Cowdenbeath. Bus services also run to St Columba's RC High School in Dunfermline and Lochgelly High School in Lochgelly. Houses in Lumphinnans, Hill of Beath and to the west, east and south of Cowdenbeath are over a 10-minute walk from Beath High School but none of the houses in the Cowdenbeath area qualify for free school travel to the high school as the distance is under 2 miles.

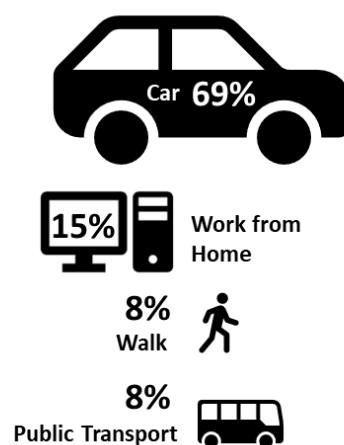
EMPLOYMENT

There is a range of employment opportunities in the wider Cowdenbeath area, which are mainly located within the two largest settlements of Cowdenbeath and Lochgelly. There are no major employers in the area but there is a variety of local businesses providing retail, service, and trades based within several well occupied industrial estates including: Woodend Business Centre; Gateside IE; Thistle IE; and Glenfield IE as well as the town centres and other locations. Planning permission has been granted for a number of houses to be built on part of the Thistle IE.

Survey responses:

- About a third of responses did not answer how they travel to work or said they are retired.
- Those who did respond overwhelmingly travelled to work by car, with people working from home being the next largest share.
- One person said they sometimes cycle to work in Glenrothes but other than that nobody said they cycled to work.
- Of the 7 respondents whose work is based in Cowdenbeath, 3 drive to work, 2 walk and 2 work from home.
- The majority of those who work outside Cowdenbeath travelled to Glenrothes, Dunfermline, Edinburgh and Kirkcaldy, with the rest working in a wide range of places across west and central Fife and neighbouring regions.
"Here is no jobs around. But that's fine, we can find them in Dunfermline, Edinburgh, Kirkcaldy and more far away."

How survey respondents who answered travel to work:



- Respondents tended to not change their mode of travel through the year, though some did mention walking or scootering in better weather.

RECYCLING FACILITIES

Recycling facilities are distributed across Cowdenbeath, Hill of Beath and Lumphinnans. A larger recycling centre is located at the western edge of Cowdenbeath (see figure A1-16). The north and south west of Cowdenbeath do not have access to recycling facilities within a 10 minute walk.

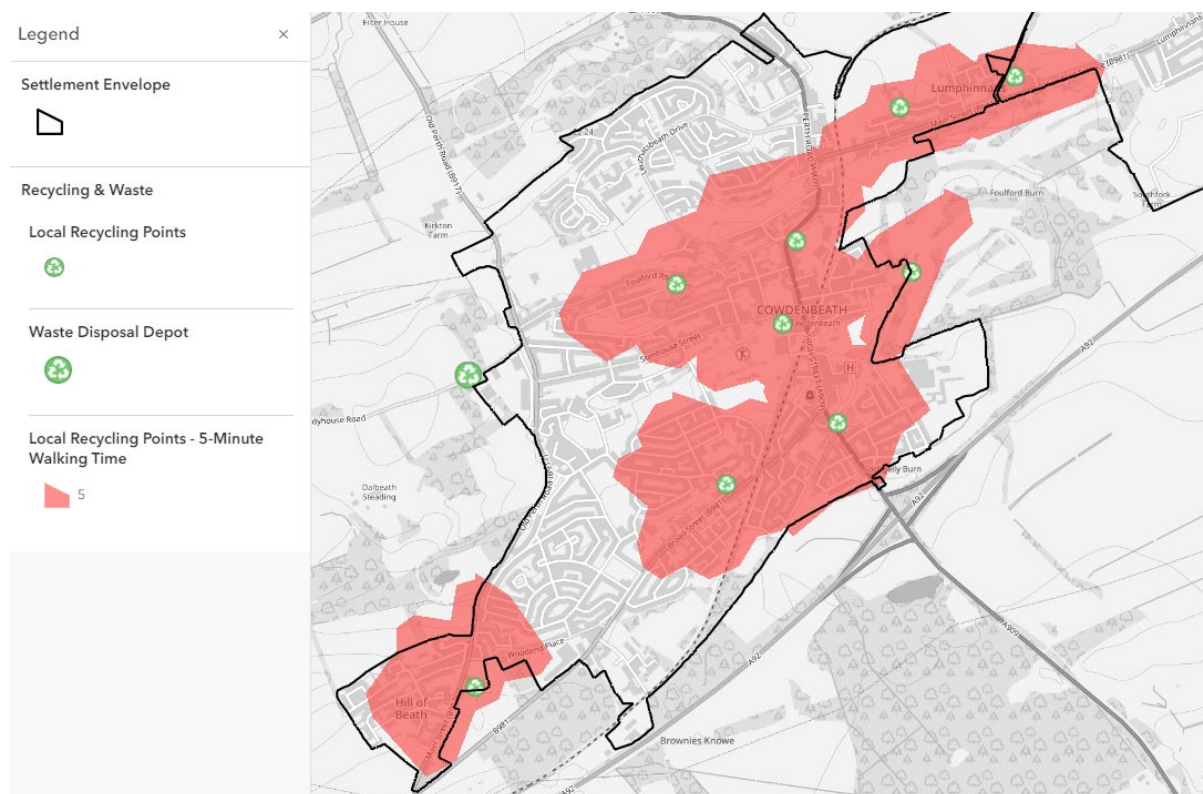


Figure A1-16: Location of recycling points and depot across the Cowdenbeath areas with 5 minute (400m) walking times highlighted.

Survey responses:

- The majority of people reported having access to a recycling facility and using it.
- A couple of responses said they had access but did not use recycling facilities.
- There were a couple of comments about a lack of recycling places in Hill of Beath although there is a facility located at the community centre.



[What would encourage you to use local community facilities more often?] "If there was a recycling area in the village." – Hill of Beath

"Have a community recycling spaces, with discreet bin sheds where people can dispose of excess rubbish, especially glass bottles, at a more convenient place." – Hill of Beath

PLAYPARK

13 Playparks (including a skatepark at the leisure centre) are located across the Cowdenbeath area in many of the parks and greenspaces (see figure A1-17). A recent audit has looked at the quality of playparks across Fife and found that the best quality playparks are located at Keirs Beath Park, in Hill of Beath, Cowdenbeath Public Park, Westburn Avenue and Hilton Road. There are a few playparks which are fairly low quality and several playparks have been removed over the last few years.

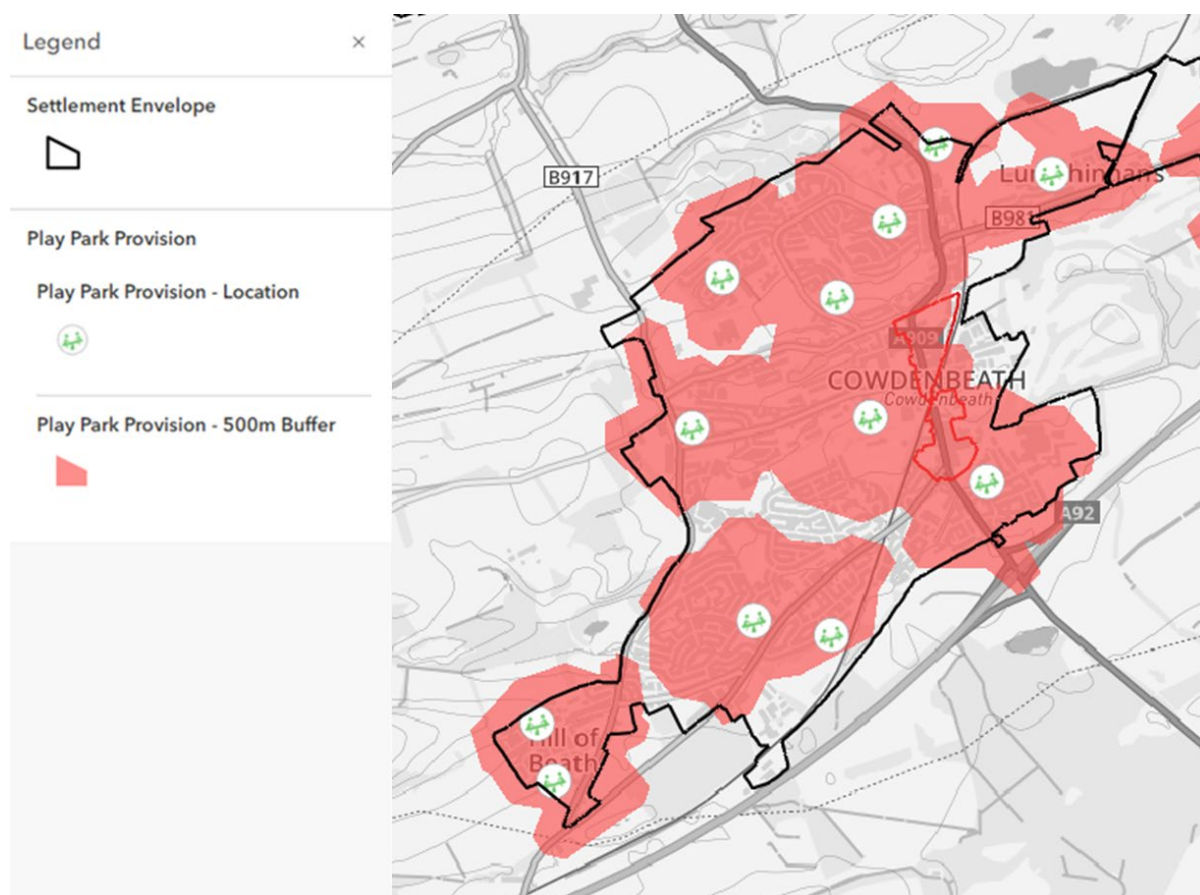


Figure A1-17: Location of playparks in the Cowdenbeath Area with 500m buffers

Survey responses:

- The majority of people said they had access to a playpark and there are high levels of usage.

72% Said they **have**
access to a playpark



72% of those who
answered said they
use a playpark

- A higher proportion of those 26-50 reported using the play park than those 50+ which would tie in with people having young families.
- There were positive and negative comments made about playparks in the area.

*“New play park is brilliant for kids.” - Hill of Beath
 [park is] “a wee bit rusty” – Lumphinnans Primary School Pupil*

- The poor condition of playparks has been raised through other public engagement processes.
- One respondent thought that play parks encourage “youth hanging about at play parks”
- Parks and the astro were the most frequently mentioned as favourite places to play by children at Lumphinnans Primary School. Four children said the school was their favourite place, three said the shops and one said the woods.
- 45% of children surveyed wanted to see improvements to the park and five children specifically mentioned wanting a new slide. 9% of the children wanted a skatepark in Lumphinnans. Two children referred to maintenance issues asking for more bins and “not dirty things”.

INFORMAL/FORMAL SPORTS FACILITIES

There are a number of informal sports pitches and open grassy areas across the Cowdenbeath area where informal sports can be played. The area also has several formal sports facilities and pitches (see figure A1-18). There is a sports hub in Lumphinnans with grass and astroturf pitches. Cowdenbeath leisure centre, which also has a skate park and hockey fields, offers pickleball and walking football sessions and has a swimming pool and gym. Cowdenbeath also has two bowling clubs and several fitness and martial arts studios which offer classes. There is also a bowling club in Lumphinnans. Beath High School and Lumphinnans Primary School are community use schools so their sports facilities including football pitches, tennis courts and sports halls are open for community use. A number of classes are run in Beath High School. The Cowdenbeath Golf Course lies to the east of Cowdenbeath and Lochgelly Golf Club is situated to the north east of Lumphinnans.

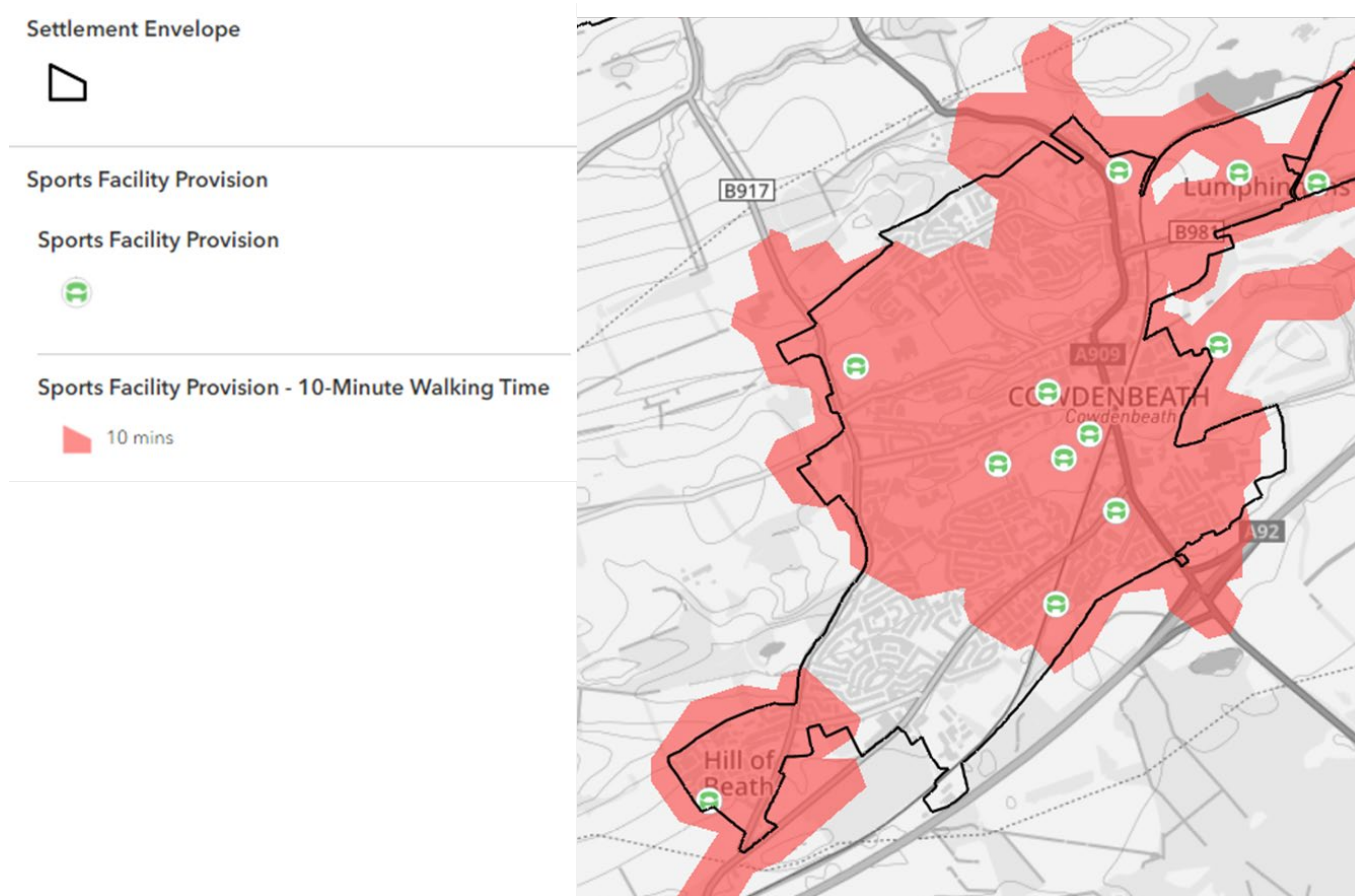


Figure A1-18: Formal sports facilities in Cowdenbeath area.

Physical activity is recognized by the Scottish Government and NHS Scotland as being important for physical and mental health and is included as one of the six priorities for public health in Scotland. Fife's Strategy for Physical Activity 2021 to 2024 aims to create an active Fife, encouraging access and take up of sports, leisure, and physical activity. It has the potential to strengthen community ties and connections between neighbours as well as tackling issues of social isolation alongside contributing to preventative health through having a positive impact on sleep, mood, stress, depression and others.

Survey responses:

- 50% of people did not respond when asked about travel or use of sports and leisure facilities which could indicate that they do not use the facilities.
- 86% of people who answered use sports facilities in Cowdenbeath (although some said they also use facilities outwith the area). Of these around half drive to use these facilities and indicated that it would take over 10 minutes to travel to the facility.
- One person indicated that they travel to Dunfermline to access a gym as:
"Cowdenbeath Leisure Centre Gym lacks equipment and is massively overpriced and only available at some times"
- No one indicated that they cycle to use sports facilities.
- Suggested improvements to sport and leisure facilities included cheaper costs, more and better facilities and activities, longer opening times and improved safety:

"Better facilities, improve access times, lower costs, better activities.

"More gym classes available at the local gym"

"Facilities – leisure centre could be better, shuts too early – can't take children swimming after work as (its) full of clubs".

"Cheaper and less gym bunnies at Cowdenbeath."

- Lumphinnans Primary School children indicated they were involved in a lot of different sporting activities in the area with football, basketball, swimming and netball being the most frequently mentioned.

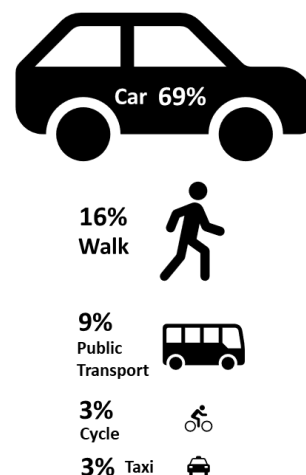
GP PRACTICE AND HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Cowdenbeath has one large GP medical practice centrally located on Stenhouse Street. There are also GP practices in Crossgates to the south or Lochgelly to the northeast which serve this area. There is an optometrist and a podiatry/chiropractic clinic on Cowdenbeath High Street. The nearest hospitals are Queen Margaret Hospital in Dunfermline and Victoria Hospital in Kirkcaldy which has the closest A&E services. Based on information gathered from the [Traveline Scotland website](#), it is estimated that it takes between 15-45 minutes to travel by bus to these hospitals from different parts of the Cowdenbeath area. There is a small local hospital - Cowdenbeath Clinic which runs a number of clinics in the area.

GPs in Scotland have been under pressure for several years, with a [recent survey by the British Medical Association](#) finding that 8/10 practices reported “demand was exceeding capacity” and 34% having at least one practice vacancy. Pressures on the system were exposed by COVID-19 and continued with current economic strains. Services are moving online with Near Me video consultations and other digital solutions supported in the Scottish Government’s Care in the Digital Age: delivery plan 2022 to 2023 and set out in the original 2018 Digital Health and Care Strategy. These continuing issues and emerging tools will have an impact on the availability of in-person health infrastructure in Fife, potentially leading to a reduction in local service levels in Cowdenbeath in coming years. How this will impact the future consideration and measurement of this service in relation for Living Well Locally is unclear, and services may come to rely more on home visits alongside virtual consultations, potentially reducing the number of local GP practices.

Survey responses:

- Most people in the area drive to access health care services and said that it takes over 10 minutes to travel to the GP.
- Many people complained about the capacity of the GPs in the area (both Cowdenbeath and Crossgates were mentioned) and the difficulty in getting appointments.
 - “Greater capacity in local GP healthcare. Moved from Lochgelly to Cowdenbeath some years ago but never left Lochgelly GP practice due to lack of availability elsewhere”.
 - “Increase GPs, local ones never see us when needed”.
 - “More access to appointments. Sometimes a three or four week wait to see a specific GP”
 - “Really struggle to get any kind of appointment locally. There is a reputation that it is impossible to get registered at doctors here.”
 - “Phone calls to make an appointment on average at 8am is at 85 attempts”
- There were some more positive comments:
 - “GPs – no complaints – good appointments”
 - “Getting a slightly better.”
- The most common answer to what could be encouraged to use/access the local health services, was improved staffing and service availability. Not having adequate bus and taxi services was also an issue mentioned.
 - “more appointments available for working people”
 - “Make appointments in person available”
 - “Increase GPs, local ones never see us even when in need!”
- Other surveys carried out for the Local Development Plan identified that there is a general concern that healthcare facilities were not keeping up with demand from new housing.
 - “Building houses in the area yet no more GPs etc. Insane!”
 - “Local population has grown, but so didn’t the services around us.”



PHARMACY

There are pharmacies in Morrisons, Boots, and Gordons Chemists all located in the southern part of the High Street. Other nearby pharmacies are located in Crossgates and Lochgelly.

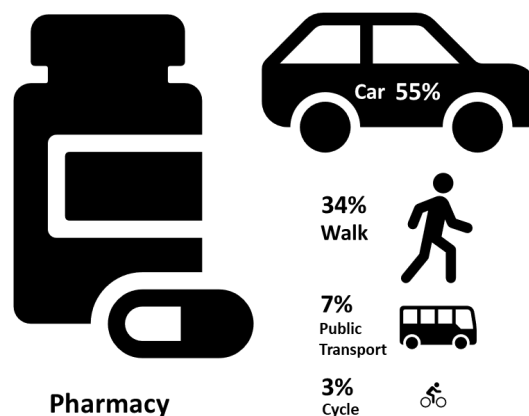
Their hours are:

- 9 -17:30 Monday to Friday (Gordons Chemists shuts between 13.00-14.00pm)
- 9 -12:30 Saturday (Boots stays open until 13:00 and Morrisons to 17.00)

Pharmacies are important primary health infrastructure for communities, providing not only access to medication but to consultations, referrals and health literacy, relieving pressures on other health services. The Royal Pharmaceutical Society Scotland in their [2021 manifesto](#) stated the potential pharmacies have for outreach and community engagement and their intention to expand the role of pharmacies to include managing common ailments and long-term conditions. They also offer weekend access to health services outside of GP hours, increasing access for those who have other responsibilities during the week.

Survey responses:

- Most people in the Cowdenbeath area drive to the pharmacy, and the majority of people say it takes more than 10 minutes to travel to the pharmacy.
- 34% of people who responded said they walk to the pharmacy; nearly all of them said it took under 10 minutes to travel to the pharmacy.



DENTIST

There are two dental practices in Cowdenbeath, Breeze Family Dental Care on the High Street and the Cowdenbeath Dental Access Centre on Stenhouse Street.

[An article from the Journal of Dentistry](#) published in 2013 highlighted that oral health is an important aspect of general health and wellbeing so access to a dentist is as important as access to a GP. Another [article](#) published in 2012 outlined that lacking or perceiving to lack access to dental services has been linked to worse oral health outcomes, contributing to longer periods of time between visits, increased oral health issues, and subsequent impacts to the overall nation's oral health. The British Dental Journal published an [article](#) in 2019 which raised the fact UK dentistry has been facing issues around stress, burnout and resulting loss of dentists for years, and more [recent studies](#) have found that COVID-19 has led to many in the profession considering their future due to restrictions placed on services during the pandemic and the resultant service and personal stresses. According to a [2022 BBC survey](#) of dental practices with NHS contracts, 90% of those in Fife were not accepting new NHS patients.

Survey responses:

- The majority of people said they travelled to the dentist by car, with only 10% of those who answered saying that they use public transport.

- 23% of those who answered said they walked to the dentist.
- People accessed dentists in Cowdenbeath, Lochgelly, Dunfermline as well as further afield.
- Lack of capacity and being unable to register with a dentist in Cowdenbeath were raised as issues:

“Can't get registered at a dentist in Cowdenbeath”

“the dentists are not taking on new patients”

FINANCIAL SERVICES (POST OFFICE/BANK)

There is a post office along Cowdenbeath High Street with banking and an ATM, it is open 9:00-17:00 Mon-Fri and 10:00-13:00 on Saturday. There is also a Delivery Office to the north of the High Street which is open for 2 hours a day Mon-Fri and 4 hours on Saturday. The convenience store in Hill of Beath has postal services and the convenience stores along the High Street and Broad Street in Cowdenbeath and Main St in Lumphinnans have ATM services. There is a Bank of Scotland Branch along Cowdenbeath High Street which is open 9-3:30 during the week but closed on weekends.

The Royal Bank of Scotland runs a mobile branch which visits Bridge Street Car Park in Cowdenbeath for an hour on Mondays.

Research shows that access to in-person banking has declined dramatically over the past few decades, with 53% of (often rural) branches closing or reducing their hours since 2015. Access to online services is being pushed by providers as a replacement, though that risks excluding vulnerable populations and doesn't allow for the social interactions which come from accessing services in person.

Post Offices provide day-to-day personal banking services including transactions for many high street banks, as well as cash services which do not require a bank account. As bank branches continue to close these services have become more relied on, seeing consistent rises in cash deposits in areas where nearby branches have closed.

Citizen Advice advise access to these services are especially important for those who rely on cash for everyday spending and deposits and are important lifelines for communities, especially for older people and other vulnerable groups.

Survey responses:

- Similar numbers of people walked or took a car to access financial services.
- Most of those who walked said it would take them under 10 minutes to travel to access the facilities, whilst most of those who drive said it would take them over 10 minutes.
- No one in the Cowdenbeath area answered that they used online banking, despite over half of the respondents in this area being under 50.
- People expressed a wish for more in person banking and longer bank opening times:

“My bank being in the high street. Don't want to use internet banking.”

“More local banking services needed.”

“Opening hours of library and post offices are really random and inaccessible.”

How people travel to financial services:

% of the people who answered

42%
walk



46% of
people take
the car



12% of people
use public
transport

LIBRARY

Cowdenbeath has a library at the north end of the High Street. Its hours are 11-12:30 and 1:30-5 Mon, Tues, Fri. Thursday has the same but extends hours to 6. On the weekend it is open 10-2 on Saturday. A mobile library visits Hill of Beath once every fortnight for 30 minutes.

Libraries are an important part of communities in Scotland and provide a host of services while being one of the few free to use indoor public spaces. Library use in Scotland has been declining in the last decade, with data from Scottish Government showing from 2011 to 2016 overall library use declined from 61% to 50% of people using a library, though it still remains at a higher level than other parts of the UK. In 2016 over three quarters of people considered libraries as important to communities. Those 25-54 were found to have the highest levels of library use, while those over 55 used the library the least.

According to [The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy](#), library funding and visits have been directly affected by the impacts imposed by COVID-19. Despite this, the results of the CIPFA Public Library Actuals Survey 2019-2020 detail that Fife was ranked second compared to library services across the UK for number of issues per annum at 114,455.

OnFife, Fife's library service, ran a successful [summer reading challenge](#) for children in 2020-22, securing funding in 2020 and has achieved high participation rates. [Scotland's Library Strategy 2021-2025](#) promotes libraries as way to combat issues around digital exclusion and social isolation, having the potential to offer community resources to enable literacy and re and upskilling, particularly in combination with Connecting Scotland programme offering devices to digitally excluded families to enable internet access and literacy.

A [report by Arts Council England](#) discussed the evolution of the role of public libraries and how they have expanded to include health and wellbeing spaces promoting mental health, adult education, skills and employability resources, digital literacy and resources, heat-hubs, makers spaces, and overall contributing to community support and cohesion. Staff contributed to responses to COVID-19 in a number of ways which highlight their flexibility, such as [delivering food and care packages](#) or [providing phone line support services for vulnerable individuals](#). Despite these strengths and potential there has been a dramatic reduction in funding and volunteer numbers in the last few years, putting strains on already stretched services overly reliant on volunteers.

Survey responses:

- There was a fairly even split of people who said they did or did not have access to a library.
- Three responses mentioned the mobile library.
- Our survey and other consultations carried out for the Local Development Plan suggested that the library could be improved with longer and more accessible opening hours or a better position:

"Library opening hours"

"Nice library, but it could be in a better position for access"



48% of people who responded said that they have access to a library

CARE HOME/SHELTERED HOUSING

There are a number of care and nursing homes in Cowdenbeath, including several run by Abbotsford Care Ltd. These are Argyle House with 6 spaces for those with learning disabilities, Chambers Court with provision for 32 adults with dementia and related illnesses and 16 for those with learning disabilities, and Dute House with space for 10 for those with learning disabilities. Roselea House Care Home with space for 20 supporting those with dementia

Cedar House Extra Care Housing and Lindsay House in Lumphinnans provide day care and residential services.

Meldrum Court Retirement Housing and Sunnyside Court Retirement Housing provide sheltered accommodation.

There are additional services in neighbouring and nearby settlements including very sheltered housing in Lochgelly and Dunfermline. And additional care and nursing homes in Crossgates.

The Cowdenbeath housing need and demand profile identified that there was a need for specific needs properties in the area, in particular 1-2 bedroom properties.

Information from Turas Care Management tool showed that Fife-wide there was a significant and steady increase in the monthly use of care home beds through 2022, consistently up from 2021 occupancy rates. Moreover, [population data](#) suggests that the number of over 65s in Fife is expected to rise significantly over the next 20 years.

Studies have shown the area within 500 metres of older people's residences has a much higher impact in influencing older people's travel behaviours, particularly access to safe and attractive active travel routes to parks and shops, than is seen in younger adult groups.

Survey responses:

- Despite the number of facilities available in the area most people were unaware of what was available locally or did not answer.
- The majority of people who answered said that they did not have access to local care facilities or didn't know.

Access to Care Homes and Sheltered Housing Of those who answered:



14% did not know

50% said there was **not**

26% said there **was**

DESIRABLE SERVICES

CULTURAL AND LEISURE FACILITIES

There are a range of leisure activities available in Cowdenbeath.

The Cowdenbeath area has two football clubs. Cowdenbeath Football Club and grounds which are located off the High Street and the Hawthorn FC Grounds in Hill of Beath. The Cowdenbeath Football Club grounds also includes the Cowdenbeath Racewall which hosts popular motor racing events.

There are a number of cafes, takeaways and pubs in the area mainly focused along Cowdenbeath High Street.

The bingo hall to the north of Cowdenbeath recently closed (Aug 2023) as the company went into administration but the facility could potentially reopen. There are a number of betting shops along the High Street.

The Little World of Play is a softplay centre in the Gateside Industrial Estate to the west of Cowdenbeath.

The nearest cinema is the Vue in Halbeath Leisure Park.

Survey responses:

- The majority of the people who answered said that they walked to access pubs and bars (56%), this was the highest percentage of people who said they walked to any service or facility in the area.
- There were a number of comments on leisure and cultural facilities made to our survey and other surveys carried out for the Local Development Plan:

“There are a number of leisure and entertainment facilities missing within the surrounding area.

Only having access to one cinema that is the most expensive in Scotland in the largest council is disappointing.

There are too many fast food chains/large high Street retailers.”

“Places for LGBT+ people to feel safe.”

TOWN CENTRE WITH RANGE OF SHOPS

The High Street in Cowdenbeath has a good variety of retail, services, takeaways, cafes, and other food and drink along it. The rail station is also along the High Street and frequent buses run along the road. The High Street is located to the east of the town which increases distances from the west of Cowdenbeath and Hill of Beath (which is closer to services in Crossgates).

Survey responses:

- We received a number of responses about the quality of the High Street in Cowdenbeath

“There are too many fast food chains/large high Street retailers. I would like to see more opportunity for local businesses to have access to retail facilities.”

“Cowdenbeath high street is a nightmare! It's too late now, but a by-pass is something I think that should've been considered years ago.”

“so many barbers, hairdressers, betting shops in the high street - possibly just slightly more than charity shops now.”

“Plenty of these services [hairdressers, pubs, libraries] in Cowdenbeath I think.”

“Wasted a lot of money on inappropriate town centre redesign - clearly not by people who had a clue about locals and more suited to more affluent areas. Better designing appropriately and using rest of budget to keep maintained. Too many pedestrian lights in high street - doesn't flow. Better spending

more money trying to attract shops and market stalls on Thursdays rather than shops closed for years and deserted market. Used to be a thriving high street 20 years ago and market was good."

FURTHER EDUCATION FACILITIES

The nearest further education facilities are in Dunfermline (Carnegie College) or Fife College campuses in Kirkcaldy and Glenrothes. There are a number of universities within a 40 mile radius with those in Edinburgh being the easiest to travel to on public transport.

Less formal learning opportunities are provided in the library and community growing areas.

HAIRDRESSER

There are a number of hairdressers, barbers and beauty salons in Cowdenbeath mostly located along the High Street. There is also a hair salon in Hill of Beath and a number of mobile hairdressers operate in the area.

EV CHARGING FACILITIES

There are two EV stands outside Cowdenbeath Leisure Centre along Stenhouse Street that are part of the ChargePlace Scotland network. The next closest points in the network are in the Park and ride at Halbeath and in Dunfermline.

COMMUNITY GROWING OPPORTUNITIES

There are several community growing spaces in the area including Brucefield Allotments to the east of Lumphinnans, Rosebank Allotments near the train station in Cowdenbeath, and Perth Road Allotments at the north entrance to Cowdenbeath.

RAIL STATION

There is a railway station along the High Street in Cowdenbeath. The station is along the Fife circle which links a number of settlements in Mid Fife and Edinburgh. The station has ramped access to both platforms. There is no parking at the station.

Survey responses:

- A few comments were made in the survey that related to rail services:

"A train service you can rely on!" this comment was made twice

"(The) train station very local also"

"I use the train for trips to Edinburgh"

APPENDIX 2: ISOCHRONES - WALKING DISTANCES WITHIN COWDENBEATH

Isochrones are used to display travel time from a point. Below are isochrones generated from a central point within each West Howe settlement using data provided by Parish.com. They display how far a person can reasonably be expected to walk in 5 (green), 10 (yellow), and 20 (red) minutes based on an average adult walking pace.

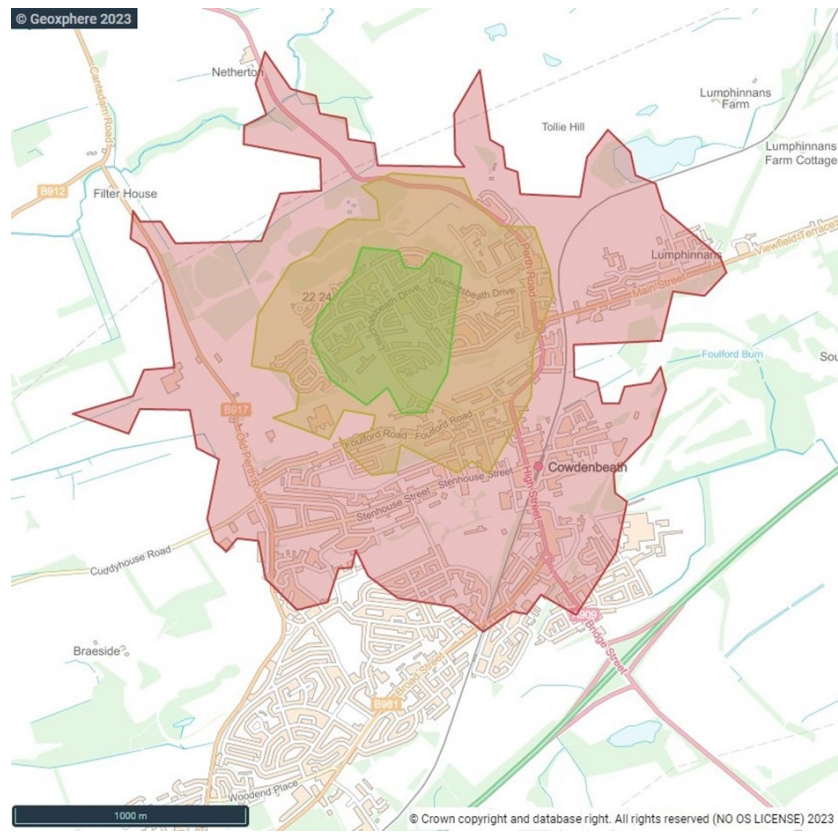


Figure A2-1: Walking Distance from Beath High School

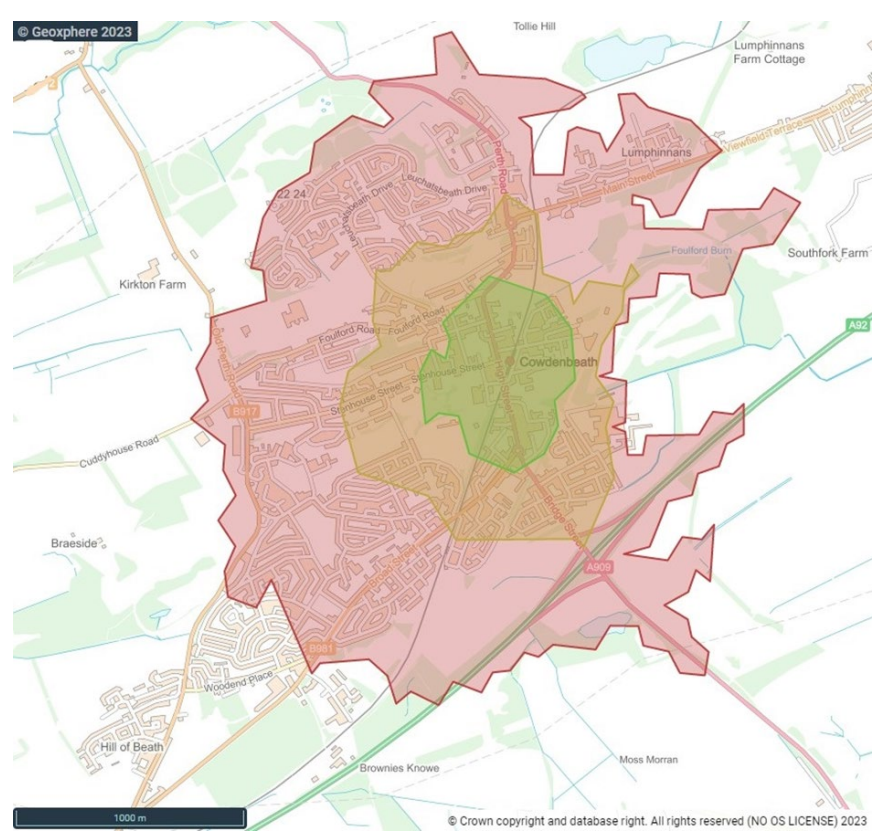


Figure A2-2: Walking Distance Cowdenbeath rail station

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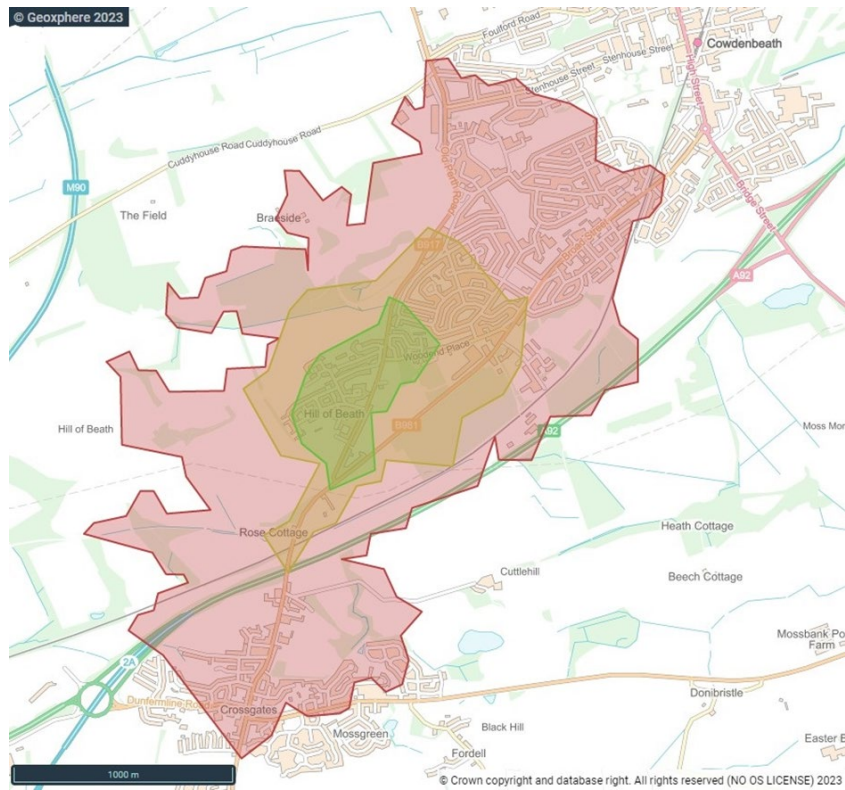


Figure A2-3: Hill of Beath Community Centre

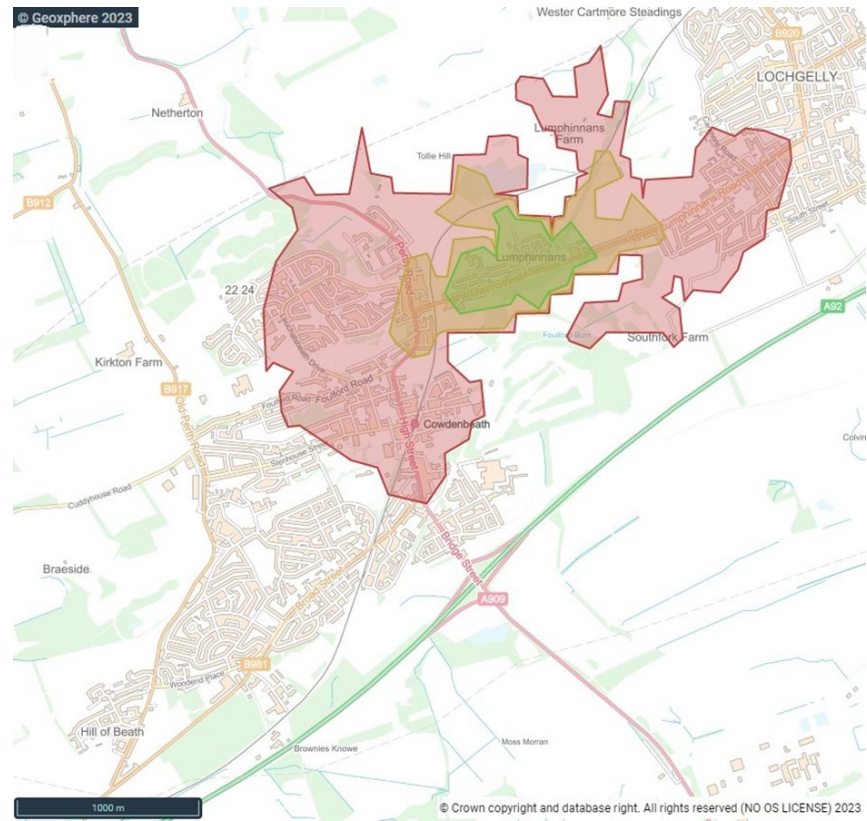


Figure A2-4: Walking Distance from Lumphinnans Spar

APPENDIX 3: SURVEY OF KEY WALKING AND CYCLING ROUTES

We carried out a survey of key walking and cycling routes in Cowdenbeath, Hill of Beath and Lumphinnans. Routes were surveyed in person in March 2023, on a dry day and walked for their entire length.

Route Quality Checklist: Hill of Beath, 24/3/23

	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?	x		
Is the route attractive/interesting?	x		Nice rural setting let down by lots of leftover liminal space that has no use/signs against use
Are there shelters/places to rest?		x	
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)	x		
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)	x		
Does the route connect to other routes?	x		Lots of connections with the settlement to other pathways
Is there signage?		x	
Is signage appropriate?			
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		
Is the route shaded?	x		tree cover in places
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)	x		
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?	x		
Are pavements well maintained?	x		
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?	x		
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	

Public Transport:

Are bus stops/train stations conveniently located for access to houses and services by walking or biking?	x		
Are bus stops/train stations comfortable and provide shelter day and night?	x		sheltered
Are stops clear of barriers (steps, street furniture, etc.) to accessing public transport?	x		
Is there enough space provided for buses to pull up to pavement for those with disabilities?	x		

Route Quality Checklist: Cowdenbeath High Street

	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?	x		
Is the route attractive/interesting?	x		Lacks identity, but fairly active shopping/social side
Are there shelters/places to rest?	x		poor shelter outside of bus stops, plenty of places to rest on benches near planters/art
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)	x		
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)	x		railway is over a bridge, the road is fairly busy for a high st though
Does the route connect to other routes?	x		
Is there signage?	x		a little for leisure centre, train station; overall lacking
Is signage appropriate?	x		
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?	x		bike racks, but none of the others
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		
Is the route shaded?		x	
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		train station at centre. Active travel route through park to the north connects well
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)	x		
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?	x		
Are pavements well maintained?	x		
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?	x		although some bus stops fairly central on the pavement
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	none

Public Transport

Are bus stops/train stations conveniently located for access to houses and services by walking or biking?	x		train station in the centre of high st, number bus stops
Are bus stops/train stations comfortable and provide shelter day and night?	x		
Are stops clear of barriers (steps, street furniture, etc.) to accessing public transport?	x		

Is there enough space provided for buses to pull up to pavement for those with disabilities?	x		raised kerbs for most
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Route Quality Checklist: Foulford Road Cowdenbeath

	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?	x		
Is the route attractive/interesting?		x	
Are there shelters/places to rest?		x	not other than bus stops, a lot of which weren't sheltered
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)	x		plenty of railings but some cars on the pavement
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)	x		busy road with some on street/pavement parking. steepish hill
Does the route connect to other routes?	x		
Is there signage?		x	
Is signage appropriate?			
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		
Is the route shaded?		x	
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		a good number of corner shops, and active travel root connections - although disjointed
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)	x		
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?	x		
Are pavements well maintained?	x		yes, although narrow at points
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?	x		not other than bins scattered on bin day
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	

Public Transport:

Are bus stops/train stations conveniently located for access to houses and services by walking or biking?	x		
Are bus stops/train stations comfortable and provide shelter day and night?	x	x	some were, but most open with no shelter
Are stops clear of barriers (steps, street furniture, etc.) to accessing public transport?	x		
Is there enough space provided for buses to pull up to pavement for those with disabilities?	x		Raised kerbs well implemented

Route Quality Checklist: Old Perth Road, Cowdenbeath

	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?	x		
Is the route attractive/interesting?		x	
Are there shelters/places to rest?		x	
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)	x		kerb cuts and some pedestrian crossings, railing, also
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)	x		slight slope and busy wide road, but not bad
Does the route connect to other routes?	x		lots of paths/green spaces off it; if a bit unkempt
Is there signage?		x	
Is signage appropriate?		x	
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		although cars parked on the pavement
Is the route shaded?		x	
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		some active travel paths connected, although not obviously or directly
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)	x		
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?	x		mostly, but not in all places, especially with parked cars and bins
Are pavements well maintained?	x		
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?	x		other than bins/cars
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	

Public Transport:

Are bus stops/train stations conveniently located for access to houses and services by walking or biking?	x		
Are bus stops/train stations comfortable and provide shelter day and night?		x	
Are stops clear of barriers (steps, street furniture, etc.) to accessing public transport?		x	very few crossings for stops on the other side of the road (edge of settlement so no houses)
Is there enough space provided for buses to pull up to pavement for those with disabilities?	x		

Route Quality Checklist: Stenhouse St, Cowdenbeath

	Yes	No	Comments
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Is the route well lit?	x		
Is the route attractive/interesting?		x	primarily residential road
Are there shelters/places to rest?		x	
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)	x		
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)	x		traffic calming measures
Does the route connect to other routes?	x		pathways connected to the park and paths through it
Is there signage?		x	
Is signage appropriate?		x	
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		
Is the route shaded?		x	
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		several connection to parks and active travel route; leads to high street and train station
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)	x		
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?	x		
Are pavements well maintained?	x		
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?	x		
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	

Public Transport

Are bus stops/train stations conveniently located for access to houses and services by walking or biking?	x		
Are bus stops/train stations comfortable and provide shelter day and night?		x	Open
Are stops clear of barriers (steps, street furniture, etc.) to accessing public transport?	x		
Is there enough space provided for buses to pull up to pavement for those with disabilities?	x		

Route Quality Checklist: Broad Street, Cowdenbeath

	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?	x		
Is the route attractive/interesting?		x	although some interesting buildings – churches/karate school
Are there shelters/places to rest?	x		just bus stops but well designed/covered
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)	x		although kerb cuts could have been better
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)	x	x	not really, but fairly fast road, despite some traffic calming measures and crossings
Does the route connect to other routes?		x	
Is there signage?		x	
Is signage appropriate?		x	
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		
Is the route shaded?		x	
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)	x		
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?	x		although some cars parked on pavement
Are pavements well maintained?	x		
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?		x	although good bins everywhere
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?		x	

Public Transport:

Are bus stops/train stations conveniently located for access to houses and services by walking or biking?	x		
Are bus stops/train stations comfortable and provide shelter day and night?	x		well designed shelters
Are stops clear of barriers (steps, street furniture, etc.) to accessing public transport?	x		
Is there enough space provided for buses to pull up to pavement for those with disabilities?	x		

Route Quality Checklist: Mixed-use active travel path through park, Cowdenbeath

	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?	x		not all connecting paths were
Is the route attractive/interesting?	x		very green, although could be landscaped better
Are there shelters/places to rest?		x	
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)	x		
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)	x		although some slopes may deter the less mobile

Does the route connect to other routes?	x		
Is there signage?	x		some, although mostly warnings about cyclists
Is signage appropriate?		x	
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		
Is the route shaded?		x	trees to the side, although not properly covering the route
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		connected to a hub - skatepark, leisure centre, Aldi, job centre, train station, etc.
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)	N/A		
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?	x		
Are pavements well maintained?	x		New pathway
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?	x		
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?	x		

Route Quality Checklist: Main Street, Lumphinnans

	Yes	No	Comments
Is the route well lit?	x		
Is the route attractive/interesting?		x	
Are there shelters/places to rest?	x		lots of benches, little shelter
Is the route accessible? (ramps, curb cuts, steps, railings where needed)	x		
Are there no barriers to access? (busy roads, railways, rivers, steep slopes)	x		
Does the route connect to other routes?		x	
Is there signage?		x	
Is signage appropriate?		x	
Are there bike racks, water fountains, or lockers to encourage active travel at destinations?		x	bike lane along pavement
Are there pavements throughout the route, separating walkers from vehicles?	x		
Is the route shaded?		x	
Are paths direct to services and transport? (do they encourage or discourage walking/wheeling?)	x		
Are there pavements along both sides (one side?)	x		
Are pavements wide enough for safe use by all, including passing others and wheelchair users?	x		although pavement has bike lane that isn't well marked
Are pavements well maintained?	x		
Are routes clear of cluttering street furniture limiting use, especially for those with disabilities?	x		although good bin provision
Is there cycle infrastructure along the route?	x		on the pavement, although poorly marked/signed posted

Public Transport

Are bus stops/train stations conveniently located for access to houses and services by walking or biking?	x		
Are bus stops/train stations comfortable and provide shelter day and night?	x		although sheltered they have no seats
Are stops clear of barriers (steps, street furniture, etc.) to accessing public transport?		x	no crossings for stops on the other side of the road
Is there enough space provided for buses to pull up to pavement for those with disabilities?	x		

APPENDIX 4: FOOD PRICES AT LOCAL CONVENIENCE STORES

Below are prices for basic goods available at convenience stores in Cowdenbeath and Hill of Beath. The list of goods was determined by researchers considering the most commonly used items alongside what was most likely to be available across supermarkets and convenience stores. Prices were obtained by in-person survey during November 2022.

Food Prices		Price (£)	Lowest	Highest									
Settlement	Store	S-Skimmed Milk 1L	White bread	6 eggs	1kg potatoes	1 Banana	Pack of bacon (per 100g)	250g butter	Orange juice 1L	Digestives	1KG sugar	Paracetamol	Pack of 4 Toilet Rolls
Hill of Beath	Rapid Convenience Store	1.45	1.80	1.99	1.33		0.86	2.99	1.59	1.59	1.29	1.49	1.00
Hill of Beath	Co-op	1.45	0.68	1.35	0.85	0.26	0.92	2.10	1.10	1.75	0.95	0.80	1.95
Cowdenbeath	Premier	1.50	1.70		0.80		0.87		1.19	1.59	1.00	1.49	2.20
Cowdenbeath	Usave	1.09	1.49	1.09	0.85	0.20	0.76		1.19	1.59	0.89/500g	0.99	1.29
Cowdenbeath	Day-Today (High Street)	1.29					0.60		1.19	1.59	1.29	1.49	1.25
Cowdenbeath	Raja Convenience Store	1.29	1.50	2.50	0.80	0.50	1.32	3.60	1.19	1.59	1.09	1.69	1.25
Cowdenbeath	SPAR	1.25	1.65	1.65	0.72	0.24	0.90	2.69	1.19	1.00	1.00	1.49	1.75
Cowdenbeath	Morrisons	1.30	0.79	0.55	0.50	0.16	0.66	1.85	0.99	0.71	0.85	0.49	2.55
Cowdenbeath	Iceland	1.30	0.69	1.65/12	1.50	0.20	0.48	2.15	1.25	2.50/2pack	0.85		1.75
Cowdenbeath	ALDI	1.65	0.39	0.99	0.48	0.14	0.48	1.99	1.25	0.45	0.85	0.29	1.59
Crossgates	Costcutter	1.19	1.35	1.49	0.73	0.33	0.66	2.39	2.00 for 2l	1.59	1.09		1.29
Cowdenbeath	Lidl	1.30	0.39	1.19	0.48	0.14	0.42	1.99	1.25	0.45	0.85	0.29	1.69
High/low Difference (£)		56p	£1.41	£1.95	£1.02	36p	90p	£1.75	60p	£1.30	93p	£1.40	£1.55

APPENDIX 5: RESULTS OF CHILDRENS SURVEY

Which town or village do you live in?	What age are you?	Are you a girl or boy?	What is your favourite part of your town or village, and why do you like it so much?	Do you feel safe walking about your town or village?	What clubs or sports do you take part in, in your town or village?	How do you get to school?	Where do you play in your town or village?	If you could add one thing to your town or village, what would it be?
Cowdenbeath	P5/6	Boy		Safety – feel safe all the time	Sports – plays football – enjoys it	Get to school – by car	Play – plays outside mainly in the park and forest, however, the park was suggested as being potentially rundown – ‘wee bit rusty’.	
Crossgates - Cowdenbeath	P6/7	Girl		Safe – feels safe in her area		School – Crossgates – walk	Play – outside in garden – nowhere else really	If she could have anything – a big park
Cowdenbeath	9	Boy	Park	Yes	Football, swimming	Bus	Outside house	Trampoline park
Lumphinnans	8	Boy	Astro	Yes, because I have nice neighbours	Football, rugby, swimming, basketball	I walk and car	Astro	A safe slide and dog, basketball court
Lumphinnans	9	Girl	School, home	Kinda - someone destroyed a car	School clubs	Walk	Near home or friend's house	Cameras, alarms
Lumphinnans	10	Girl	Astro, gran's house	Yes	Youth clubs, school football, basketball and netball	Scooter	Gagarin Way, Sycamore Crescent, Main St (shop only)	Police - sometimes it can be sketchy

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Lumphinnans	9	Boy	Play park	No - the people/person near me aren't nice junkies	School football	Scooter or my bike	Park or football pitch	Skate park in Lumphinnans
Lumphinnans	8	Boy	The shop	Yes	Football	Walk	Astro	Gaming
Cowdenbeath	10	Girl	Public park	Yes	Youthclub	I get dropped off	Public park, Bellway	A new park
Lumphinnans	9	Girl	My park	Yes	Netball, dancing, youth club, basketball	Walk	Park	Shop, a bigger back garden, cafe, make it easier to go to the park, a new slide, better pathway
Cowdenbeath	8	Girl	Wee Jimmies	Yes I feel safe	Youth club	Car	Public park	A shopping centre, better park, Apple store, McDonalds
Lumphinnans	9	Boy	The school and the park. Lochgelly centre astro	I feel safe because there are no robbers in town	Karate, football, jumping on trampoline	Use my scooter to go to school	Astro is my favourite, park, and my trampoline	I would add a skate park and a cafe and a better slide
Lumphinnans	9	Girl	The park, my gran's	Yes	Basketball, netball, gymnastics	Walk	The park and my house	More good shops
Lumphinnans	9	Girl	Park, my house and friend's house	Yes!	Basketball, horse riding in Lochgelly	In the car or walk	Park or astro	A farm or better park
Cowdenbeath	10	Boy	Astro	Yes!	Football, badminton	Car and walk	Astro	A good shop

Living Well Locally Case Study: Cowdenbeath – Urban Area

Lumphinnans	9	Boy	Park	Yes	None	Walk	Park	A shop that sells free stuff
Cowdenbeath	10	Boy	Astro	Yes	Football, basketball	Car	Astro	Another astro
Cowdenbeath	10	Boy	Football pitch	Yes!	Football	Walk, scooter	Football pitch	Starbucks, safe park, Primark, park
Cowdenbeath	10	Boy	Astro, skate park, park	Teenagers are not nice and they throw bottles	Football, running, tennis, swimming	Walk, bus, car, scooter, run	Astro park, skate park, swimming pool	A big football pitch and a big forest and more houses
Cowdenbeath	10	Boy	Parks, the woods	Not at night, but with friends	Tennis, swimming	Walk	Fields	Bigger swimming pool
Cowdenbeath	10	Boy	Public park	Yeah	Basketball	I walk	Public park	Basketball court
Cowdenbeath	10	Girl	Broad Street	Yes, it has good police!	Knitting club	Car, my grandad drives me	In my street, Cullalloe View	A shopping centre
Cowdenbeath	10	Girl	My gran's house	Yes	None	I go to my gran's house and walk down	The field	A park
Lumphinnans	10	Boy	Chess	Yes	Nothing	Walk	Park, home, my friend's	The park
Lumphinnans	10	Boy	Recreation, dam	Yes	Football	Walk		Slide
Cowdenbeath	10	Girl	The park at the back of the my home	Yes I like my town a lot	I don't do any	I walk or my grandad drives	In my home	More slides at the park
Cowdenbeath	10	Boy						We need a bigger park, more trees, more bushes, more skate parks, more bins

Living Well Locally Case Study: Cowdenbeath – Urban Area

Lumphinnans	10	Boy	The school	Yes I do	I don't do much	I walk on Thursday and Friday, and drive on Monday to Wednesday	The park near my house	A better park
Cowdenbeath	10	Boy	I don't have one	Well kinda	None	By car	Well sometimes the park	More parks
Cowdenbeath	10	Girl	School	Yes	No	Bus	Cowdenbeath	Better parks
Cowdenbeath	10	Girl	Shops and maybe park	Yes	Volleyball/football	I drive - I live like 20 minutes walk	Bellway Park	Better park, not really dirty things
Cowdenbeath	11	Girl	B&M, swimming	Yes	Youth club, Dancing, basketball, swimming	Walk	In my street	Shopping centre, McDonalds
Cowdenbeath	11	Girl	Public park, swimming	Yes	Youth club, basketball, netball	Walk	In my street and public park	Shopping centre, McDonalds