

Public Document Pack



To: All Members of the Council

Town House,
ABERDEEN, 27 October 2023

ADJOURNED COUNCIL

The Members of the **COUNCIL** are requested to meet in Council Chamber - Town House on **FRIDAY, 3 NOVEMBER 2023 at 12.00pm**. This is a hybrid meeting therefore remote attendance is also available.

JENNI LAWSON
INTERIM CHIEF OFFICER - GOVERNANCE
(LEGAL)

BUSINESS

BUSINESS PLANNER AND OTHER MINUTES

8.1 Council Business Planner (Pages 5 - 14)

GENERAL BUSINESS

9.2 Options Appraisal on Working Arrangements with our ALEOs - CFS/23/315
(Pages 15 - 30)

9.3 Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 - Proposed Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance - COM/23/303 (Pages 31 - 150)

9.4 Finalised Draft George Street Masterplan - COM/23/304 (Pages 151 - 574)

9.6 Annual Procurement Report 2022-2023 - COM/23/309 (Pages 575 - 624)

9.7 Council Delivery Plan, Annual Review Report 2022-23 - COM/23/310 (Pages 625 - 654)

- 9.8 Aberdeen City Population Needs Assessment 2023 - CUS/23/312 (Pages 655 - 750)
- 9.9 Community Planning Aberdeen Annual Outcome Improvement Report 2022/23 - CUS/23/314 (Pages 751 - 828)
- 9.10 Community Planning Aberdeen Locality Annual Outcome Improvement Reports 2022/23 for North, South and Central Localities - CUS/23/313 (Pages 829 - 894)

NOTICES OF MOTION

10.1 Notice of Motion by Councillor Cooke

That Council;

1. Notes the Lord Advocate's statement "that it would not be in the public interest to prosecute drug users for simple possession offences committed within a pilot safer drugs consumption facility."
2. Agrees that safer drug consumption facilities are an important public health measure that could save lives, and supports all options within the existing legal framework being explored to enable the delivery of these facilities to prevent overdoses and reduce harm.
3. Notes the Minister for Drug and Alcohol Policy, on 19 September 2023 in the Scottish Parliament, stated "In the past two years, the University of Stirling has undertaken work to look at how we could roll out a drug-checking pilot within Scotland. During that research phase, several potential locations were identified. We know that Aberdeen, Glasgow and Dundee have expressed their wish to be part of the pilot. The research was published at the end of July and we are now helping those areas to apply for licences. We await a final communication from the United Kingdom Home Office that will help us to ensure that those licensing applications can go in and will be met with the most sympathetic ear possible."
4. Welcomes the Scottish Government's commitment to tackling drug harm as part of a public health approach and will work with partners to support and assist in applications for drug-checking facilities being made available in Aberdeen.
5. Instructs the Chief Officer - Health and Social Care Partnership to engage with relevant partners, in particular, the Aberdeen City Alcohol and Drugs Partnership, to support delivery of a drug-checking pilot in Aberdeen.
6. Encourages all Council Members, where comfortable to do so, to be trained and carry naloxone during their councillor duties, in the event that they encounter a member of the public in an overdose situation and to promote naloxone within their communities.
7. Instructs the Chief Officer - Health and Social Care Partnership to report to the Aberdeen City Integration Joint Board by March 2024 on the progress of those discussions with partner agencies, the Scottish Government and Home Office.

10.2 Notice of Motion by Councillor Cooke

That the Council:

1. Notes the report of the external auditor, Audit Scotland, into the audit of the 2022/23 North East Scotland Pension Fund Annual Report and Accounts;
2. Notes in particular Recommendation 3 of that report, namely: “we encourage Aberdeen City Council, as the administering authority, to fill the vacancies on the Pensions Committee and for members to work together for the benefit of the fund”; and
3. Deeply regrets the Labour Group’s continued failure to participate in the Pensions Committee contrary to the recommendation of the external auditor, noting that the interests of the 77,000 members of the Pension Fund would be best served by participation in the Committee being from across the political perspectives that make up Aberdeen City Council, the Administering Authority.

EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

11.1 Options Appraisal on Working Arrangements with our ALEOs - CFS/23/315 - exempt appendices (Pages 895 - 1030)

Website Address: www.aberdeencity.gov.uk

Should you require any further information about this agenda, please contact Martyn Orchard, tel 01224 067598 or morchard@aberdeencity.gov.uk

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	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	COUNCIL BUSINESS PLANNER The Business Planner details the reports which have been instructed by the Council as well as reports which the Functions expect to be submitting for the calendar year.								
2	Report Title	Minute Reference/Committee Decision or Purpose of Report	Update	Report Author	Chief Officer	Director	Terms of Reference	Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T	Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred
3	11th October 2023								
4	Broad Street	At its meeting of 14 December 2022, the Council instructed the Chief Officer - Operations and Protective Services to report back to Council on the implications of closing permanently the section of Broad Street between Queen Street and Upperkirkgate to all vehicles.		David Dunne	Strategic Place Planning	Commissioning	21	R	Further to feedback from both the bus operators and the Disability Equity Partnership raising significant concerns about the proposed closure of Broad Street, and in the context of the upcoming works to Union Street and the ongoing modelling work in relation to both the Beach and City Centre Masterplan and the Bus Partnership Fund project, it is recommended to remove this item from the planner. The purpose of the report can then be addressed through those other work streams, reporting back once more detail of transport routing is known

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2									
8	Annual Performance Reports - 2022/2023 for all Tier 1 ALEOs: Aberdeen Performing Arts; Aberdeen Sports Village; Bon Accord Care; Sport Aberdeen	To present the annual performance reporting of the Council's four Tier one Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEOs) covering financial year 2022/2023: Aberdeen Performing Arts (APA); Aberdeen Sports Village (ASV); Bon Accord Care; Sport Aberdeen (SA).	A report is on the agenda	Craig Innes	Commercial and Procurement	Commissioning	24.13		
9	Population Needs Assessment	To present the Population Needs Assessment every two years to understand the needs which public bodies must address.	A report is on the agenda	Anne McAteer	Early Intervention and Community Empowerment	Customer	24.1		
10	CPA Annual Outcome Improvement Report 2022/23	To present the annual report for the Local Outcome Improvement Plan	A report is on the agenda	Allison Swanson	Early Intervention and Community Empowerment	Customer	24.11		
11	Locality Annual Outcome Improvement Reports 2022/23 for North, South and Central Localities	To present the Annual Outcome reports 2022/23 against the North, South and Central Locality Plans published in July 2021. The plans underpinned the refreshed Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan, as well as individual partner plans, to cement a joint and coordinated approach between public services and local communities to improve outcomes city wide and at a locality level.	A report is on the agenda	Jade Leyton and Iain Robertson	Early Intervention and Community Empowerment	Customer	24.11		
12	Annual Procurement Performance Report	To present the annual procurement performance report	A report is on the agenda	Mel Mackenzie	Commercial and Procurement	Commissioning	24.14		
13	George Street Mini Masterplan	At its meeting of 14 December 2022, the Council instructed the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning to report the outcomes of the public consultation on the Draft George Street Mini Masterplan back to Council by December 2023, including any recommended revisions to the Draft Mini Masterplan.	A report is on the agenda	David Dunne	Strategic Place Planning	Commissioning	21		

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2									
14	Aberdeen Local Development Plan - Draft Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance	At its meeting of 14 December 2022, the Council approved the draft Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance documents and instructed the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning to publish them, subject to any minor drafting changes, for a six-week period of public consultation and report the results of the consultation and any proposed revisions to Members at a subsequent meeting of Full Council within 12 months of the consultation ending.	A report is on the agenda	David Dunne	Strategic Place Planning	Commissioning	21		
15	North East of Scotland Investment Zone Proposal	To outline and agree governance arrangements for the development of an Investment Zone proposal and seek authority to submit to the UK Government within the timescales they have set out.	A report is on the agenda	Julie Wood	City Growth	Commissioning	Introduction 6		
16	Appointment of an External Adviser to the Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee	To seek the appointment of an external adviser to the Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee to replace an external adviser who has stood down.	A report is on the agenda	Paul Tytler	Early Intervention and Community Empowerment	Customer	7		
17	13th December 2023								
18	Review of Community Council Governance and Boundaries - Stage 2	To present the Revised Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils including boundary proposals for various Community Councils and to seek approval for the documents to be issued for public consultation.		Karen Finch	Governance	Commissioning	19		
19	Children's Services Structural Model	At its meeting on 13 October 2022, the Council instructed the Chief Executive to review the Scottish Government's preferred structural model for Children's Services when it is published (anticipated to be later in 2023) and report back to Council, providing advice on the implications for the Council, and specific proposals in relation to the requirements for the Council's organisational structure going forward; including the impact on the Interim Director of Children's and Family Services role.		Angela Scott	Chief Executive	Chief Executive	21		

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20	City Centre - Streetscape Programme	At its meeting of 14 December 2022, the Council instructed the Director of Resources to progress with developing the remaining streetscape programmes, including options for the provision of physically segregated cycle tracks/lanes, and bring forward for consideration and approval an update to the Full Business Case following conclusion of design, planning and consultation stages on the following programmes by December 2023: (a) Union Street East and Castlegate and Justice Street; (b) Union Street West and West End; (c) Market Streetscape Phases 2 and 3 Further design work to be funded from the City Centre and Beach Masterplan budget.		Steve Whyte	Director of Resources	Resources	21		
21	Beachfront Masterplan - Outline Business Case	At the adjourned Council meeting of 4 May 2023, the Council approved the findings of the Beachfront Phase C Projects and Coastal Management in the prepared Strategic Outline Case (Appendix 7) and instructed the Chief Officer - Commercial and Procurement to progress to an Outline Business Case and report back to Council by December 2023		Craig Innes	Commercial and Procurement	Commissioning	21		
22	Treasury Management Mid-Year Review	To update the Council on Treasury Management activities undertaken to date, during financial year 2023/24.		Neil Stewart	Finance	Resources	5 and 6		
23	Governance Review of Trusts - 2023	At its meeting of 14 December 2022, the Council instructed the Chief Officer - Governance to bring a further update report to Council no later than December 2023 on future activity in relation to trusts to which the Council is connected.		Steven Inglis	Governance	Commissioning	21		
24	Organisational Structure	At its meeting of 1 March 2023, the Council instructed the Chief Executive to review the existing organisational structure, in light of the approved budget and to report back to Council by December 2023 on any suggested amendments to ensure the sustainability of Council operations.		Angela Scott	Chief Executive	Chief Executive	21		

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25	Funding to Cultural Organisations	At its meeting of 1 March 2023, the Council instructed the Chief Officer - City Growth, in consultation with partner organisations, such as Aberdeen Performing Arts (APA), to bring back a report on how best to allocate funding to cultural organisations from both the General Fund and Common Good budgets and to report back to Council before the end of the financial year 2023/24.		Mark Bremner	City Growth	Commissioning	21		
26	Council Annual Effectiveness Report and Committee Annual Effectiveness Reports	To present the annual effectiveness report for Council, as well as the annual effectiveness reports of the various committees, which have been considered by those committees.		Martyn Orchard	Governance	Commissioning	14		
27	Housing Revenue Account 2024/25	To provide members with information to enable the Council to approve a revenue and capital budget for 2024/25, including the setting of the rents and other charges on the Housing Revenue Account for the financial year.		Helen Sherrit	Finance	Resources	2		
28	Budget - Phase 2 Consultation	At its meeting of 23 August 2023, the Council noted that Phase 2 consultation would be based on the central scenario shown in the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023 and the results of this would be reported to Council in December 2023.		Jonathan Belford	Finance	Resources	1, 2, 3 and 21		
29	7th February 2024								
30	Treasury Management Policy	To outline the Council's Treasury Management Policy for 2024/25 to 2026/27 for approval.		Neil Stewart	Finance	Resources	5 and 6		
31	6th March 2024 - Budget								
32	Council Delivery Plan 2024/25	To present the Council Delivery Plan for 2024/25.		Martin Murchie	Chief Executive	Chief Executive	2		
33	General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme	To provide information on both the revenue budget for 2024/25 and capital programme for the period 2024/25 to 2028/29 in order that approved budgets and Council Tax value can be set by the Council for the year commencing 1 April 2024.		Jonathan Belford	Finance	Resources	1, 2 and 3		

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34	Common Good Budget 2024/25	To provide Council with details of the draft Common Good budget for 2023/24, to enable the Council to approve a final budget that will take effect on 1 April 2024.		Jonathan Belford	Finance	Resources	2		
35	17th April 2024								
36	Review of Community Council Governance and Boundaries - Stage 3 (April 2024)	To present the Revised Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils including boundary proposals for various Community Councils and to seek approval for the documents to be issued for public consultation.		Karen Finch	Governance	Commissioning	19		
37	3rd July 2024								
38	Treasury Management Year-end Review	To update the Council on Treasury Management activities undertaken during financial year 2023/24.		Neil Stewart	Finance	Resources	5 and 6		
39	Aberdeen Market - Project Update	At its meeting of 11 September 2023, the Council instructed the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to report to the July 2024 Council meeting with an update on the capital project.		Stephen Booth	Corporate Landlord	Resources	21		
40	21st August 2024								
41	City Centre and Beach Masterplan - Annual Update	At its meeting of 23 August 2023, the Council instructed the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning to keep the Masterplan report under review, and to provide another progress report to Full Council after 12 months.		Claire McArthur	Strategic Place Planning	Commissioning	21		
42	North East Population Health Alliance Strategic Partnership Agreement	At its meeting of 23 August 2023, the Council agreed that Aberdeen City Council be a signatory to the strategic partnership agreement and requested the Chief Executive to provide Council with an annual progress report on the strategic partnership agreement.		Martin Murchie	Data and Insights	Customer	21		
43	Council Diary 2025	To approve the Council Diary for 2025.		Martyn Orchard	Governance	Commissioning	18		
44	2nd October 2024								

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45	Beach Connectivity Project - Full Business Case	At the adjourned Council meeting of 4 May 2023, the Council instructed the Chief Officer - Commercial and Procurement in conjunction with the Chief Officer - Capital to join Justice Street, Beach Boulevard and Commerce Street/Beach Boulevard junction projects into a single Beach Connectivity Project and to progress detailed design and other preparatory work for the Beach Connectivity Project and provide a Full Business Case within an indicative timeline of 12-18 months.		Craig Innes	Commercial and Procurement	Commissioning	21		
46	11th December 2024								
47	101-103 Union Street	At its meeting of 14 December 2022, the Council noted the content of the Strategic Outline Case Upper Floor use options at 101-103 Union Street and instructed the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to continue to review and report back by August 2023.	Due to continued uncertainty over development costs and returns there has been no significant change to the risk in the development appraisal. On this basis officers would seek seek authority to delay any further reporting until December 2024.	Stephen Booth	Corporate Landlord	Resources	21		
48	Beach Masterplan - Phase 2 Development Framework	At its meeting of 23 August 2023, in relation to Phase 2 of the Beach area, the Council noted the summary of comments received on the initial public consultation exercise on how people currently use these areas, and instructed the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning to prepare a Development Framework for the Phase 2 areas, which would be reported back to Full Council before the end of 2024.		Claire McArthur	Strategic Place Planning	Commissioning	21		
49	Treasury Management Mid-Year Review	To update the Council on Treasury Management activities undertaken to date, during financial year 2024/25.		Neil Stewart	Finance	Resources	5 and 6		
50	Council Annual Effectiveness Report and Committee Annual Effectiveness Reports	To present the annual effectiveness report for Council, as well as the annual effectiveness reports of the various committees, which have been considered by those committees.		Martyn Orchard	Governance	Commissioning	14		

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51	Date to be confirmed								
52	Sport Aberdeen	At its meeting of 1 March 2023, the Council instructed the Director of Commissioning in conjunction with the Director of Resources to begin discussions with Sport Aberdeen to review their assets and their business delivery model, with a view to Sport Aberdeen becoming financially independent from the Council and to report back to Council before the end of the financial year 2023/24.		Gale Beattie	Commissioning	Commissioning	21		
53	Beachfront Masterplan - Castlegate	At the adjourned Council meeting of 4 May 2023, the Council noted that "Working in Partnership for Aberdeen" included the objective of making the Castlegate a gateway to our city's beachfront and instructed the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning to carry out consultation with key stakeholders on creating an active travel and public transport link through the Castlegate to deliver this objective as part of the Beach Connectivity Project and to report to a future Council meeting on this.		David Dunne	Strategic Place Planning	Commissioning	21		
54	Revised Council Climate Change Plan	At the Council meeting on 3 March 2021, the Council, amongst other things, instructed the Chief Operating Officer to report back to Full Council with a revised 5 year plan in 2025, or earlier if required.		David Dunne	Strategic Place Planning	Commissioning	21		
55	Energy Transition Zone - Land Options	At its meeting of 11 September 2023, the Council instructed the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to report the outcome of discussions regarding St Fittick's OP56 and Doonies OP61 sites to the earliest appropriate meeting of Full Council.		Stephen Booth	Corporate Landlord	Resources	21		

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	11 th October 2023
EXEMPT	The covering report is not exempt; however Appendices B to F are exempt under paragraph 6 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 because they contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of other organisations
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Options Appraisal on working arrangements with our ALEOs
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/23/315
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Craig Innes
REPORT AUTHOR	Eleanor Sheppard
TERMS OF REFERENCE	24.6 and 24.7

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 At its meeting of 6th July 2023, the Finance and Resources Committee instructed the Chief Executive to undertake an Options Appraisal on all potential working arrangements with our ALEOs (Arms-Length External Organisations) and develop an Outline Business Case with the output from that Options Appraisal, and for that Outline Business Case, accompanied by a draft Project Plan underpinning the preferred option(s) to be submitted to full Council at its meeting of 11th October 2023. This report, and subsequent delivery of the associated recommendations, help satisfy the instruction.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council:-

- 2.1 note the process undertaken in order to determine advantageous working arrangements in collaboration with ALEOs; and note the closer working relationships evident across ALEOs and Aberdeen Sports Village Joint Venture and the potential to realise shared objectives in the longer term by maintaining regular joint working;
- 2.2 note the exempt Options Appraisal documentation in Appendices B to F;
- 2.2 in relation to Aberdeen Heat and Power Company Limited, Sport Aberdeen and Aberdeen Performing Arts, agree to maintain current working arrangements;

- 2.3 in relation to Bon Accord Care (i.e. Bon Accord Care Ltd, and Bon Accord Support Services Ltd), note that the Options Appraisal process has highlighted potential benefits in bringing the associated services in-house and integrating them into the Council structure; and instruct the Head of Commercial and Procurement Services, following consultation with the Managing Director of Bon Accord Care, to outline the benefits of this potential option and provide indicative delivery milestones within an Outline Business Case for consideration by Council in December 2023; and
- 2.4 in relation to Aberdeen Sports Village Ltd (ASV), instruct the Council's Chief Officer – Finance, following consultation with the Head of Commercial and Procurement Services, to explore the potential for the Council and the University of Aberdeen to amend the shareholder agreement and ownership and report back to Council in February 2024 to align with Council budget setting process.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 As per the report to the Finance and Resources Committee of 6 July 2023 (Reconfiguration of working arrangements with Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEOs) - COM/23/218), an Executive Steering Group comprising Managing Directors from each of the in scope ALEOs and Joint Venture was established in July 2023 and chaired by the Chief Executive of Aberdeen City Council. The Group agreed a Project Definition Document (PDD) outlining the purpose, goals, roles and responsibilities, governance arrangements and high level project deliverables (Appendix A). The Group committed to meeting on a monthly basis to oversee progress.
- 3.2 The Executive Steering Group agreed the establishment of a Working Group to progress work in keeping with the PDD with membership nominated by the Managing Directors. Working Group members committed to regular meetings and engagement through an established Teams site to enable collaboration around the Council instruction.
- 3.3 The Working Group established a set of clear objectives and weightings to help measure the strength of the different working arrangements being explored through the process. Objectives were agreed to be:
- Increased financial efficiencies
 - Decreased duplication and increased synergies
 - Increased performance in meeting the health and wellbeing needs of the population
 - Increased focus on harm reduction
 - Ability to add social and/or economic capital to the city
 - Ability to deliver on net zero targets.
- 3.4 The Working Group met to enable each ALEO/ASV the opportunity to present an outline of their business and share how they currently support improved outcomes for citizens, this information was then transferred into the 'current state' on the Options Appraisal documentation. The Working Group analysed the information and data made available by each ALEO/ASV and used this to agree the different working arrangements to be considered through the Options

Appraisal process. Each of the Options was then fully considered through a series of meetings with individual ALEOs/ASV and more latterly with groups of ALEOs/ASV where potential benefits from more aligned working practices had been identified.

- 3.5 Options for each ALEO broadly included (i) a maintaining the status quo option, (ii) an improving performance and financial efficiencies within the status quo option, (iii) a considering readiness for the merging of some/all of the organisations into a more efficient entity option, and (iv) an aligning ALEOs to the Council/Group structure option.
- 3.6 The unique nature of each ALEO/ASV was taken into account in agreeing the options to be explored. Good collaboration between ALEOs, ASV and Council Officers was evident throughout the process and these stronger relationships now present an opportunity for further collaboration and on-going transformation.
- 3.7 As options were more fully scoped, each option was scored against the agreed weighted objectives by individual ALEOs, ASV and Council Officers with a 'best fit' sought for the recommendations presented to Council. Taking this approach helped ensure transparency and secure broad agreement on recommendations. All ALEOs/ASV were encouraged to look at the scoring undertaken by others and to offer support (by way of further synergies that might offer further benefits) and challenge.
- 3.8 Assurance was sought from Internal Audit on the impartiality of the scoring process post completion. Internal Audit confirmed that they did not identify any major concerns or challenge how the process was carried out based on their sampling of the data provided by the Interim Director Children and Family Services.
- 3.9 The Working Group presented the completed Options Appraisals to the Executive Steering Group for approval on Monday 18th September. The Executive Steering Group endorsed the output of the Options Appraisal process undertaken by the Working Group.
- 3.10 As a result of undertaking this Options Appraisal process, it is proposed that Aberdeen Heat and Power Company Ltd, Sport Aberdeen and Aberdeen Performing Arts remain as ALEOs with efficiencies considered as part of the Council budget setting process in keeping with current practice.
- 3.11 The working group identified that there may be benefits to be realised by winding up BAC Ltd and BASS Ltd and bringing the associated services in-house and integrating them back into the Council structure. It is proposed that the Head of Commercial and Procurement Services, following consultation with the Managing Director Bon Accord Care, outline the benefits of this potential option and provide indicative delivery milestones within an Outline Business Case for consideration by Council in December 2023.
- 3.12 The current shareholder agreement in place between Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeen University prevents changes to current working arrangements

for the Aberdeen Sports Village Ltd (ASV). It is suggested that the Council's Chief Officer – Finance, following consultation with the Head of Commercial and Procurement Services, explore the potential for the Council and the University of Aberdeen to amend the shareholder agreement and ownership and report back to Council in February 2024 to align with Council budget setting process.

3.13 One of the direct benefits of undertaking this process has been the building of stronger relationships across the ACC Group. Maintaining these close working relationships has the potential to realise further efficiencies and benefits to citizens of Aberdeen in the longer term and this planned collaboration has been built into the Project Delivery Plan. A number of key Council priorities have already been identified for exploration including:

- A need to better articulate the role of the ACC Group in delivery of the Council Delivery Plan and associated Local Outcome Improvement Plan
- A need to establish a multi-agency group, similar to the Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (PEPAS) Group associated with the Children's Services Board, to ensure a coordinated response to the physical wellbeing needs of our adult citizens
- A need to work together to review potential efficiencies by contracting services together in order to realise more favourable terms
- A need to work together, along with Aberdeen City Council, to more routinely consider assets and explore opportunities for co-location to reduce costs.

These will be taken forward as part of the Transformation Programme.

3.14 Given the importance of ensuring that ACC resources are focussed around the prevention agenda and that resources are more fully aligned to upstream activity, some focussed work will be undertaken with Public Health Scotland to fully explore the extent of the preventative work currently undertaken with Council funding to help inform our work around prevention. Mapping/auditing all activity focussed on prevention to determine how working together across the Group and with NHS Grampian and Public Health could elicit a stronger response, will help the Council further demonstrate best value and improve the provision of preventative services.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is a 5 year plan which sets out our commitment to provide services that meet the needs of people locally and represents value for money. The MTFS is aligned to the Council Delivery Plan, which in turn aligns the Council's commitments to the vision and priorities of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan. The MTFS presumes a saving from ALEOs as part of the Transformation Programme.

4.2 Given the importance of working within available budget, a considerable weighting of 40% of the total points available to score within the Options Appraisal was allocated to finance savings.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Under section 14 of the Local Government and Planning (Scotland) Act 1982, the Council has a duty to “*ensure that there is adequate provision of facilities for the inhabitants of their area for recreational, sporting, cultural and social activities*”. The Council also has a duty under section 1(3) of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 to secure for pupils in attendance at schools in their area “*the provision of adequate facilities for social, cultural and recreative activities and for physical education and training*”. These duties require adequate provision and do not stipulate precisely what facilities must be provided.
- 5.2 The Council does not have a statutory obligation to provide heat networks or heating, however it does have the power to produce and supply heat and electricity under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.
- 5.3 The Council has a variety of duties and powers in relation to the provision of care for the elderly. These powers and duties come from a number of different pieces of legislation including, but not limited to, the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968, the NHS and Community Care Act 1990, the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 and the Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013.
- 5.4 AHP, APA and SA are private companies limited by guarantee without share capital. BAC and BASS and ASV are private limited companies (i.e. limited by shares). Each of APA, SA and ASV have charitable status.
- 5.5 ASV was established in 2007 as a limited company with charitable status and is a joint venture between ACC and the University of Aberdeen (‘AU’). The current operating agreement with ASV cannot be terminated before 2034 unless the Joint Venture Agreement (containing annual Grant obligations) with AU is terminated, which would require to be negotiated with AU. Such negotiation has not been within the scope of this project to date.
- 5.6 In terms of section 16 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, an ALEO with charitable status may be amalgamated with another body only with the consent of OSCR (Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator). Such consent would need to be sought at least 42 days prior to any proposed amalgamation.
- 5.7 If either APA or SA were brought in-house, OSCR consent would similarly be required under the 2005 Act to wind them up and any assets owned by them would, in terms of those charities’ governing documents, require to be transferred to some other charitable body (or bodies) with similar objects. Any current benefits of charitable status would be lost.
- 5.8 For any ALEO being brought in-house, the company would require to be wound up after novating any necessary third-party contracts to ACC.

- 5.9 If AHP were to be brought in-house, the Council would require prior consent to trade from the Scottish Ministers, in terms of the Local Authorities (Goods and Services) Act 1970.
- 5.10 In terms of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006, employee rights are safeguarded when the business, or part of the business, in which they work changes hands from one employer to another. When the TUPE Regulations apply, their effect is that the employees' contracts of employment transfer automatically from the current employer (Transferor) to the new employer (Transferee). There are two types of TUPE transfer, namely (i) the transfer of a business or undertaking, and (ii) a service provision change. TUPE covers the following scenarios:-
- Outsourcing – where a contract to deliver services is awarded to a contractor.
 - Re-assignment – where a contract is re-let to a new contractor.
 - Insourcing – where services are brought back in house.
- 5.11 Directors of a company owe certain statutory duties to the company under the Companies Act 2006. These duties are to act within powers, to promote the success of the company, to exercise independent judgment, to exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence, to avoid conflicts of interest, not to accept benefits from third parties and to declare interests in proposed transactions or arrangements with the company. Similarly, the trustees of a charity must act in the interests of the charity, operate in a manner consistent with the charity's purpose, act with care and diligence, manage conflicts of interest and otherwise comply with the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005. A director of a charitable company will also be a charity trustee.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Council and partners continue to work towards ambitious net zero targets. Given the importance of this, a weighting within the Options Appraisal was allocated to net zero.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Risk that the current provision of services delivered through ALEOs is reduced to	Considerable time has been invested in looking at efficiencies and synergies to enable more efficient delivery of services	L	Yes

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
	take account of reducing resource and that this impacts on the delivery of our strategic outcomes	in keeping with the Council Delivery Plan in order to mitigate this risk.		
Compliance	<p>Risk of not complying with legislative duties concerning provision of sport, leisure, cultural and adult care services.</p> <p>Risk of not complying with TUPE, charity legislation or company legislation.</p>	<p>This risk is being mitigated by working to identify options which will enable the provision of services to continue within a smaller funding envelope.</p> <p>Full integrated impact assessments will be undertaken as part of the process to ensure our Public Sector Equality Duty is met.</p> <p>Project Plans would make allowance for the time needed to ensure compliance with such legislation (e.g. seeking OSCR consent and arranging for any transfer of assets and liabilities).</p>	L	Yes
Operational	Risk that staff are uncertain of the implications of any change in working arrangements	<p>Mitigated through on-going engagement with Trade Unions and staff</p> <p>Mitigated through the instruction to refer</p>	L	Yes

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) <small>*taking into account controls/control actions</small>	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
	<p>and this impacts on morale</p> <p>Risk that services to citizens are reduced.</p>	<p>through the budget process which will ensure that decisions are taken in the wider context of the full budget.</p> <p>Mitigated by recommending that further more detailed planning be undertaken for BAC before decisions are taken.</p> <p>Closer working arrangements amongst ALEOS will help realise further efficiencies.</p>		
Financial	<p>Risk of negative impact on the Council in terms of non-domestic rates.</p>	<p>Delivery of the recommendations within this report will help mitigate this risk.</p> <p>Budgetary implications of bringing ALEOs back in-house have been considered as part of the Options Appraisal process. This has included tax implications and non-domestic rates implications. These implications have influenced the scoring of options.</p>	L	Yes
Reputational	<p>Risk of citizens perceiving a reduction in services.</p>	<p>The report recommends that some of the options</p>	M	Yes

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
		are referred to the budget process. The savings required through more efficient ALEOs delivery will be realised over a number of years. This will enable services to continue to be shaped and prioritised around demand.		
Environment / Climate	Risk that decisions taken do not contribute to Net Zero targets.	A weighting within the Options Appraisal was allocated to net zero.	L	Yes

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	Delivering services in keeping with the financial envelope will enable the continued delivery of a broad range of Council services and more comprehensive delivery of the Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement.
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Economy stretch outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No one will suffer due to poverty by 2026 400 unemployed Aberdeen City residents supported into Fair Work by 2026 	All three economy stretch outcomes are impacted by this report. Aberdeen Heat and Power play a major role in supporting those most impacted by poverty through the provision of

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 500 Aberdeen City residents upskilled/ reskilled to enable them to move into, within and between economic opportunities as they arise by 2026. <p>Prosperous People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90% of children and young people will report that their experiences of mental health and wellbeing have been listened to. • 95% of care experienced children and young people will have the same levels of attainment in education, health and emotional wellbeing, and positive destinations as their peers • Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026 • Rate of harmful levels of alcohol consumption reduced by 4% and drug related deaths lower than Scotland by 2026. <p>Prosperous Place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen’s carbon emissions by at least 61% and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate 	<p>affordable heat. All other ALEOs offer subsidised or prioritised provision for those most in need. All ALEOs offer training and employment opportunities to local people and offer a range of pathways into employment. All three of these stretch outcomes are reflected in the Objectives and scoring matrix.</p> <p>Four of the prosperous people outcomes are particularly impacted by this report although, in real terms, all have the potential to be impacted. Supporting the health and wellbeing of citizens and more vulnerable groups has been reflected in the Objectives and scoring matrix.</p> <p>Climate change is a key area of focus for this ALEO review and this has been reflected in the Objectives and scoring matrix.</p>
<p>Regional and city strategies</p> <p>Climate Change Plan 2021-2025</p> <p>Council strategies</p> <p>Medium Term Financial Strategy</p>	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of the Climate Change Plan 2021-25 as net zero has been a objective within the process.</p> <p>The Medium Term Financial Strategy assumed a saving has been realised by our ALEOS and therefore a 40% weighting was applied to financial saving as part of the process.</p>

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Stage 1 impact assessments have been completed for all options. These will continue to be developed as options are presented to the Council budget or are brought back to Council for formal approval.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A - Project Definition Document
Appendix B – Options Appraisal: Aberdeen Heat and Power
Appendix C – Options Appraisal: Bon Accord Care
Appendix D – Options Appraisal: Aberdeen Performing Arts
Appendix E – Options Appraisal: Sport Aberdeen
Appendix F – Options Appraisal: Aberdeen Sports Village

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Eleanor Sheppard
Title	Interim Director Children and Families
Email Address	esheppard@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	01224 522707

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Project	Reconfiguration of working arrangements with our Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEOs)	Date	06/07/23
Author	David Leslie	Version	0.1
Purpose of document	To consolidate and summarise the purpose of the project, what it is trying to achieve and its governance arrangements.		

1. Project Purpose

The above project, agreed as part of the transformation programme within TOM 1.2, stated that the project would be “a phased approach looking at key strands, starting with a fresh review of all SLAs, ALEO Business Plans and usage of estate, to inform an option appraisal on potential alternative delivery models. The project will also look to deliver clear social outcomes through enhanced collaboration of early intervention programmes”.

This Project Definition Document (PDD) outlines the approach to deliver the next stage of the project, which is to carry out an option appraisal and complete an Outline Business Case identifying the preferred delivery model for each of the ALEOs:

- Sport Aberdeen
- Bon Accord Care
- Aberdeen Performing Arts
- Aberdeen Heat and Power

Aberdeen Sports Village is a joint venture between Aberdeen City Council and the University of Aberdeen. Therefore, it has a different legal form from the council's ALEO's. Given the Joint venture is within the council's Group structure and there are concerns about its financial sustainability, partners in the joint venture have agreed to participate in this project. Both parties to the Joint venture, recognise that any variation to the current joint agreement would require the agreement of both parties to the joint venture.

2. Project Goals

- The Council's working arrangements with our ALEOs is managed and delivered to support the achievement of Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) outcomes and improved performance levels, as agreed within revised Service Level Agreements (SLAs).
- The Council's ALEOs work in collaboration with each other, the Council, and partners (both third sector and private), with an operating model that is able to easily flex to shifting demands without compromising other areas of the business. The model includes a clear framework for what work is delivered in house and what work is commissioned through partners.
- The Council's ALEOs have clear budget accountability and ownership, with increased efficiencies and income generation, and reduced reliance on subsidy from the Council.
- The Council's joint venture, Aberdeen Sport Village, contributes to and benefits from any revisions made to the Council's group arrangements.

3. Project Roles and Responsibilities		
Role	Responsibility	Person(s)
Executive Steering Group (Project Board)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Approves the PDD. ▪ Agrees options to be taken forward as part of the options appraisal. ▪ Responsibility for overseeing the options appraisal and delivery of an Outline Business Case (OBC). ▪ Provides strategic direction to the Working Group. ▪ Allocates resources and approves any changes to the objectives, governance, and deliverables. ▪ Champions the project and embed effective and meaningful partnership working. ▪ Lead on engagement with Sport Scotland. 	CEO, Managing Directors of ALEOs/ASV and representative from the UoA
Senior Responsible Owner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ultimate accountability for successful implementation of the project, following the required approval by ACC for changes affecting its ALEO's and following the required approval of all parties to the Aberdeen Sports Village Joint Venture. ▪ Member of the Executive Steering Group (Project Board). ▪ Provides progress updates, and any required escalations, to the Executive Steering Group (Project Board). ▪ Chairs the Working Group. ▪ Directs the Working Group and has responsibility for achieving project deliverables. 	Interim Director Children and Families
Project Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implements agreed project governance arrangements, including ownership of the project team's site. ▪ Develops and owns the project plan and progress reporting arrangements. ▪ Leads and supports the Working Group in any aspect of the delivery of project tasks. ▪ Leads the delivery of the options appraisal, in conjunction with the Working Group. ▪ Leads on the development of the Outline Business Case. ▪ Responsibility for day-to-day management of the project. ▪ Facilitates the Executive Steering Group (Project Board). ▪ Supports the Senior Responsible Owner with the progress reporting to the Executive Steering Group (Project Board). 	Service Manager PMO
Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collate all data requirements for the completion of the options appraisal. ▪ Carry out analysis of all data requirements. ▪ Participate in workshops as part of the options appraisal. ▪ Deliver the options appraisal outlining a preferred option for each ALEO. ▪ Support the Project Manager with the development of the Outline Business Case. 	ALEO/JV representatives ACC Finance ACC People and Organisation ACC Legal

4. Programme Governance Arrangements

- Key deliverables and actions will be documented, updated, and monitored in the Project Plan.
- Project Manager, in conjunction with the Working Group, are responsible for ensuring the plan is on track and updates provided as necessary.
- The Working Group will meet as and when required with separate groups being established as necessary depending on the requirements to best meet the needs of delivering the options appraisal.
- Meetings of the Working Group, and/or separate groups, will be facilitated by the Project Manager.
- Executive Steering Group (Project Board) will meet on 7 July 2023, 14 August 2023, and 18 September 2023.
- The Project Manager will own the governance documents.
- All project documentation will be held in the dedicated Microsoft teams' site, and project collaboration should be through the team site.

5. Project Deliverables

Key Deliverable	Date
▪ Agree Project Definition Document	07/07/23
▪ Agree Executive Steering Group (Project Board) and Working Group members	07/07/23
▪ Agree options for taking forward as part of the options appraisal	07/07/23
▪ Agree data requirements	07/07/23
▪ Define options appraisal criteria	14/07/23
▪ Schedule all required workshops	14/07/23
▪ Receive all data and complete initial analysis	21/07/23
▪ Complete options appraisal workshops	07/08/23
▪ Complete options appraisal documentation with preferred option(s)	07/08/23
▪ Project Board consideration of options appraisal and preferred option(s)	14/08/23
▪ Draft Outline Business Case and Delivery Plan	09/09/23
▪ Project Board consideration of Outline Business Case and Delivery Plan	18/09/23
▪ ASV consideration of Outline Business Case and Delivery Plan	19/09/23
▪ Engagement with Sport Scotland	20/09/23
▪ Finalise Outline Business Case and Delivery Plan	20/09/23
▪ Submit Outline Business Case and Delivery Plan for Council pre agenda	20/09/23
▪ Finalise Outline Business Case and Delivery Plan	28/09/23
▪ Submit Outline Business Case and Delivery Plan for final report deadline	29/09/23
▪ Council meeting	11/10/23

6. Document Revision History

Version	Revision description and reason	By	Date

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	11 October 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 – Proposed Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance
REPORT NUMBER	COM/23/303
DIRECTOR	Gale Beattie
CHIEF OFFICER	David Dunne
REPORT AUTHOR	David Berry
TERMS OF REFERENCE	11

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report updates Members on a recent period of public consultation on proposed Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance to support the Local Development Plan 2023. It presents a summary of the comments received during the public consultation along with officer responses to the consultation comments. It also outlines the modifications to the Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance documents that are proposed following the consultation.
- 1.2 The report seeks approval to adopt the proposed Aberdeen Planning Guidance as non-statutory planning advice to support the Local Development Plan 2023. It also seeks approval to submit the proposed Supplementary Guidance to Scottish Ministers for formal ratification and to thereafter adopt it as part of the statutory development plan alongside the Local Development Plan 2023.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council:-

- 2.1 Note the comments received during the recent public consultation on the proposed Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance documents, and approve officers' responses to the consultation comments, as outlined in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Note that officers have reviewed the draft Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance documents to take account of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and have suggested minor technical changes to the documents as a result.
- 2.3 Note the ongoing partnership working between officers within Strategic Place Planning and Public Health Scotland and NHS Grampian to understand how each document relates either directly or in-directly to improving health and

wellbeing and working towards achieving the Public Health Priorities for Scotland.

- 2.4 Agree the proposed Aberdeen Planning Guidance documents in Appendix 2 and approve their adoption as non-statutory planning advice to support the Local Development Plan 2023.
- 2.5 Agree the proposed Supplementary Guidance on Planning Obligations in Appendix 3 and adopt it as Interim Planning Advice until such time as it can be formally adopted as statutory Supplementary Guidance in accordance with recommendation 2.6 below.
- 2.6 Instruct the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to submit the proposed Supplementary Guidance on Planning Obligations to Scottish Ministers for ratification and, once this is received, adopt the document as statutory Supplementary Guidance to accompany the Local Development Plan 2023.
- 2.7 Instruct the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to update the draft Aberdeen Planning Guidance on Wind Turbine Development in light of consultation responses received and the policy shift within NPF4 and incorporate it within draft Aberdeen Planning Guidance on Renewable Energy Development, a draft of which should be reported to the Planning Development Management Committee within 12 months.
- 2.8 Agree that the following historic non-statutory planning advice notes, which supported the 2017 Local Development Plan, are no longer required and should be revoked:
 - Hillhead Campus Planning Brief
 - Pinewood / Hazledene Planning Brief
 - Murcar Development Framework
 - Fire Station, North Anderson Drive Planning Brief

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 Members will recall that the new Local Development Plan 2023 was formally adopted on 19 June 2023. The Local Development Plan focuses on the vision, spatial strategy and key policies and proposals for the future development of Aberdeen.
- 3.2 The Council can also adopt additional supporting guidance in connection with the Local Development Plan and this can be used to provide more detail on how its policies and proposals will be implemented. At present, this guidance can either be statutory or non-statutory. Statutory guidance, known formally as Supplementary Guidance, has the same status as the Local Development Plan for the purposes of planning decision making. The Local Development Plan must contain a specific statement to confirm any topics that are proposed to be covered by statutory Supplementary Guidance. Non-statutory guidance, whilst not part of the statutory development plan, can also be treated as a material consideration in planning decisions and is a more flexible type of guidance

which can be more readily prepared and updated to reflect changing circumstances.

- 3.3 Under the terms of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, local authorities will not be able to produce statutory Supplementary Guidance to support future development plans. As such, it is considered appropriate to respond to this emerging change in legislation by developing a suite of non-statutory Aberdeen Planning Guidance documents to support the Local Development Plan 2023. In addition, one piece of statutory Supplementary Guidance is proposed to cover the topic of planning obligations (also referred to as ‘developer contributions’), as the Local Development Plan specifically states that this subject will be covered by statutory Supplementary Guidance.
- 3.4 A series of draft Aberdeen Planning Guidance documents and a draft Supplementary Guidance document on Planning Obligations were agreed at Council on 14 December 2022 and approved for a period of public consultation (report number COM/22/284). Two additional draft Aberdeen Planning Guidance documents were also approved for inclusion in the public consultation at the February 2023 meeting of the Planning Development Management Committee (reports PLA/23/046 and PLA/23/050).
- 3.5 An eight-week period of public consultation on the draft Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance documents was held from 24 February 2023 to 21 April 2023. A total of 30 respondents submitted comments during the consultation period. A number of the respondents commented on multiple Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance documents.
- 3.6 A summary of the comments received on each of the draft Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance documents is set out in Appendix 1. Appendix 1 also sets out officer responses to the consultation comments and, where necessary, outlines proposed changes to the draft Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance documents – a “you said, we did” approach to consultation feedback.
- 3.7 Officers have also reviewed the draft Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance documents to take account of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), which was adopted by Scottish Ministers on 13 February 2023. NPF4 has replaced the former national planning guidance and policies in NPF3 and Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), which were in force when the draft Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance was written. Technical changes are therefore proposed to the Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance documents to replace outdated NPF3 and SPP references with updated references to NPF4 wherever possible. These technical changes are minor in nature and have not changed the basic policy intent of the documents. The only exception to this relates to the draft Aberdeen Planning Guidance on Wind Turbine Developments. NPF4 sets out a significantly different approach to wind turbine developments when compared with the former SPP. As such, the draft Aberdeen Planning Guidance on this topic is considered to require more substantial review. Given the importance that NPF4 places on renewable and low carbon energy generation as part of a wider response to the climate and nature crises, it is recommended that the

draft Aberdeen Planning Guidance on Wind Turbine Developments should be subjected to a more comprehensive review and incorporated into a wider draft Aberdeen Planning Guidance document on Renewable Energy Development. It is recommended that this draft document should be reported to the Planning Development Management Committee within 12 months.

- 3.8 A general statement has also been added to each of the long-standing site-based documents to draw attention to the adoption of NPF4. Notwithstanding the adoption of NPF4, the content of the site-based documents remains relevant and up-to-date as an expression of the key principles which should be taken into account in the development of each site.
- 3.9 In reviewing the draft Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance documents, officers have also taken the opportunity to further develop the health in all policies approach, which helped to shape the Local Development Plan 2023. Working with colleagues from Public Health Scotland and NHS Grampian, each document has been reviewed, firstly to understand how the content of each document relates to health and wellbeing and which of the six Public Health Priorities for Scotland it can help to achieve. All of the documents relate either directly or in-directly to improving health and wellbeing and towards achieving at least one of the six Public Health Priorities for Scotland. Secondly, the documents have been assessed to determine their potential level of impact on health and wellbeing; this will help to frame any possible health impact assessments should they be required. Additional text has been added to each of the documents to reflect this. It is the intention of officers to build on the successful partnership working with Public Health Scotland and NHS Grampian in order to monitor the impact and effectiveness of these documents and to assess whether amendments or further detail will be required in future reviews.
- 3.10 Finally, a small number of other technical updates and clarifications have been incorporated, where necessary, to reflect changes in circumstances since the draft Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance documents were written, such as changes to other national guidance and good practice advice.
- 3.11 The proposed updated suite of Aberdeen Planning Guidance documents is set out in Appendix 2, and a proposed Supplementary Guidance document on Planning Obligations is included at Appendix 3. A summary of the key changes in each document is set out in Table 1 below. It is worth noting that the list of documents in this Table will be added to throughout the period of the Local Development Plan 2023 as new policy or site specific documents are produced, for example the proposed Masterplan for the Energy Transition Zone and proposed further guidance on health impact assessments for new developments.

Table 1: Proposed Changes to Draft Documents

Document Title	Key Change/s to Draft Document
Topic Area: Health and Wellbeing	
Air Quality	Updated references to some technical guidance. Otherwise, no significant changes.
Noise	Hyperlink updated. Text added to Appendix A giving context to Noise Management Areas / Quiet Areas.
Topic Area: Placemaking by Design	
Energetica	Minor technical changes.
Temporary Buildings	Minor technical changes.
Amenity (New)	Merged with Space Standards (see below). Minor typographical changes and reordering to ensure clarity.
Space Standards (New)	Merged with Amenity (see above). Minor text changes to add clarity regarding affordable housing. (NB - this document was approved for consultation purposes by the Planning Development Management Committee on 9 February 2023 [report no. PLA/23/050] and was incorporated within the overall consultation)
The Sub-Division and Redevelopment of Residential Curtilages	Minor typographical changes.
Conversion of Buildings in the Countryside	No significant change.
Development Along Lanes	Minor cartographical change.
Materials: External Building Materials and Their Use in Aberdeen	Minor typographical changes.
Aberdeen Placemaking Process	Minor changes to reflect new legislation and processes.
Big Buildings	No significant change.
A Guide to Planning Consents for the Aberdeen Inner City Multis	No significant change.
Landscape	Minor text changes to increase clarity.
Stonecleaning	No significant change.
The Repair and Replacement of Windows and Doors	No significant change.
Shops and Signs	No significant change.
Repair and Reinstatement of Cast Iron Railings	No significant change.
Topic Area: Vibrant City	
Hierarchy of Centres	No significant change.
Harmony of Uses	No significant change.
Serviced Apartments	No significant change.
Topic Area: Supporting Business and Industrial Development	

Document Title	Key Change/s to Draft Document
Aberdeen International Airport and Perwinnes Radar	Change in the title of the APG to include Perwinnes Radar. Number of minor updates to the text throughout. One map updated and four maps added for clarity.
Topic Area: Meeting Housing and Community Needs	
Householder Development Guide	Minor amendments to increase clarity.
Affordable and Specialist Housing	Increased emphasis on need for early engagement with Council's Housing Strategy Team to agree most appropriate approach for providing affordable housing . Clarification that affordable housing should broadly reflect the mix of dwelling types and sizes in the open market element of residential developments.
Houses in Multiple Occupation and Overprovision (New)	No significant change.
Children's Nurseries	No significant change.
Gypsy Traveller Sites	Minor terminology clarifications.
Student Accommodation	Removal of requirement for student housing developments to contribute towards affordable housing.
Topic Area: Delivering Infrastructure, Transport and Accessibility	
Transport and Accessibility	Changes throughout to improve layout and readability of document. Additional diagrams and images. Technical information largely moved to an appendix section. A designing accessible places section has been added which has a design focus. Building standards electric car charging data updated to match most up-to-date regulations. Reference to wheeling added and requirement to keep pavement passable where EV charging points are added.
Topic Area: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment	
Open Space and Green Infrastructure	Added definitions of green and blue infrastructure and clarifications around maintenance to reflect NPF4. Clarification that minimum open space standards might not be deliverable on all brownfield sites, and that financial contributions towards off site open space enhancements may be sought instead in such cases.
Natural Heritage	Minor technical clarifications.
Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality	Minor text and technical clarifications.
Trees and Woodland	Minor technical clarifications.
Food Growing (New)	Minor technical clarifications. Amendment to guidance for major developments to ensure consistency with guidance for local developments.
Outdoor Access (New)	Minor technical clarifications.
Topic Area: Sustainable Use of Resources	
Waste Management Requirements for New Developments	Minor technical clarifications.
Resources for New Developments	No significant change. (NB - this document was approved for consultation purposes by the Planning Development Management

Document Title	Key Change/s to Draft Document
	Committee on 9 February 2023 [report no. PLA/23/046] and was incorporated within the overall consultation)
Site Based Guidance	
Countesswells Development Framework and Phase One Masterplan	No significant change.
Dubford Development Framework	No significant change.
Former Davidson's Mill Development Framework and Masterplan	No significant change.
Friarsfield Development Framework	No significant change.
Grandhome Development Framework	No significant change.
Maidencraig Masterplan	No significant change.
Newhills Development Framework	No significant change.
Oldfold Development Framework and Masterplan	No significant change.
Persley Den/Woodside Masterplan	No significant change.
Rowett North AECC Development Framework	No significant change.
Bridge of Don AECC Development Framework	No significant change.
Statutory Supplementary Guidance	
Planning Obligations	<p>Revert to 7 year period for spending developer contributions (as per 2017 Supplementary Guidance) rather than 10 years as proposed in the draft document. This will strike a more appropriate balance between allowing sufficient time to spend contributions whilst retaining a clear relationship with the contributing development.</p> <p>Threshold for seeking contributions towards education facilities amended to instances where relevant school is operating over or is forecast to exceed 95% of capacity. This reflects the upper limit for efficient school operation as outlined in the School Estate Plan.</p> <p>Amendments to education mitigation rates in response to consultation comments and publication of updated data.</p> <p>Minor technical clarifications.</p>

- 3.12 Subject to approval, the Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance documents will be enhanced visually by the Council's Communications Team.
- 3.13 The final versions of the Aberdeen Planning Guidance documents will be published on the Council's website and their adoption will be advertised via the social media platforms and the Local Development Plan Newsletter. On adoption, the documents will become a material consideration in the determination of future planning applications.
- 3.14 Subject to approval, the final version of the Supplementary Guidance on Planning Obligations will be submitted to Scottish Ministers to seek ratification for it be adopted as Supplementary Guidance alongside the Local Development Plan 2023. Subject to such ratification, the adopted Supplementary Guidance will be published online and advertised via the Council's website, social media platforms and the Local Development Plan Newsletter. On adoption, it will form part of the statutory development plan alongside the Local Development Plan 2023.
- 3.15 It is also worth noting that several non-statutory planning advice notes which previously supported the 2017 Local Development Plan are considered by officers to no longer be required and it is therefore recommended that these documents be revoked and removed from the Council's website. These mostly comprise guidance for sites that are now either complete or substantially complete. They include the following:
- Hillhead Campus Planning Brief
 - Pinewood / Hazledene Planning Brief
 - Murcar Development Framework
 - Fire Station, North Anderson Drive Planning Brief

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report as the cost of preparing Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance is met through existing staff time and resource budgets.
- 4.2 As a major landowner in the City, proposals for the development of land and assets owned by Aberdeen City Council and any planning applications for development undertaken by or on behalf of the City Council will, where applicable, be subject to assessment against the Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance. This may have financial implications for the Council as a developer.
- 4.3 The proposal to retain the existing 7-year time limit for spending future developer contributions (rather than increasing it to 10 years as proposed in the draft version of the Supplementary Guidance) will need to be taken into account within the Council's future capital planning processes, such as the School Estate Plan. However, this does not represent a significant change to existing practice, as the Council currently applies a 7-year period for spending most developer contributions.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. Whilst the proposed Aberdeen Planning Guidance will not form part of the statutory development plan, it is important that this guidance is retained in a new non-statutory form and it will be a material consideration to inform decisions on future planning applications in Aberdeen. Any person who is aggrieved by the content of the final adopted supplementary guidance may submit an application to the Court of Session to question its validity and to request that it be quashed in whole or in part.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Having an up-to-date suite of Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance to support the Local Development Plan 2023 will lead to positive environmental impacts by helping to ensure that all new developments in the City are appropriately sited and designed to avoid adverse impacts on the environment. Each of the proposed Aberdeen Planning Guidance documents has been subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) pre-screening process in accordance with relevant legislation. The Planning Obligations Supplementary Guidance was assessed within the Environmental Report: Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation Appraisal for the Local Development Plan 2023 in accordance with relevant legislation.

7. RISK

Risk Appetite

- 7.1 The assessment of risk contained within the table below is considered to be consistent with the Council's Risk Appetite Statement.

Management Of Risk

- 7.2 The Local Development Plan 2023 was recently adopted. A new suite of proposed Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance documents therefore now needs to be adopted to support the new Local Development Plan and ensure continuity in the provision of comprehensive, up-to-date and relevant planning frameworks.

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Ensuring up to date and relevant	Ensure that final versions of the Aberdeen Planning	L	Yes

	planning guidance to support the new Local Development Plan.	Guidance and Supplementary Guidance documents (as modified following the recent period of public consultation on draft versions of the documents) are adopted timeously.		
Compliance	Ensuring that the former Supplementary Guidance 2017 (which no longer has any status following adoption of the Local Development Plan 2023) is replaced with new Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance to comply with relevant planning legislation.	Ensure that final versions of the Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance documents (as modified following the recent period of public consultation on draft versions of the documents) are adopted timeously.	L	Yes
Operational	Ensuring timeously published and adopted supporting guidance for the new Local Development Plan to avoid delays in the issuing of planning application determinations.	Ensure that final versions of the Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance documents (as modified following the recent period of public consultation on draft versions of the documents) are adopted timeously.	L	Yes
Financial	Not having timeously published and adopted supporting guidance for the new Local	Ensure that final versions of the Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance documents (as modified following	L	Yes

	Development Plan could lead to uncertainty at planning application stage and potentially lead to more staff time being spent processing applications. It may also reduce the ability to secure developer contributions from future planning applications.	the recent period of public consultation on draft versions of the documents) are adopted timeously.		
Reputational	The planning authority has consistently reviewed the Local Development Plan and supplementary guidance within the statutory review period. Failure to continue this could damage the Council's reputation as a planning authority.	Ensure that final versions of the Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance documents (as modified following the recent period of public consultation on draft versions of the documents) are adopted timeously.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	Ensuring that planning frameworks take into consideration the relevant environmental and climate change legislation at	Each of the proposed Aberdeen Planning Guidance documents has been subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) pre-screening process in accordance with relevant legislation.	L	Yes

	the point of their development and production.	The proposed Planning Obligations Supplementary Guidance was assessed within the Environmental Report: Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation Appraisal for the Local Development Plan in accordance with relevant legislation.		
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8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2022-2023</u>	
	Impact of Report
<p>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</p> <p><u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u></p>	<p>The proposed Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance within this report will support the delivery of many aspects of the policy statement – primarily under the headings of ‘A City of Opportunity’, ‘A Vibrant City’, ‘Building a Greener and Sustainable City’, ‘Greener Transport, Safer Streets, Real Choices’, ‘Homes for the Future’, ‘An Active City’, and ‘A Prosperous City’. It will particularly support the following aspects of the policy statement:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and invest in our school estate, ensuring all of Aberdeen’s schools are fit for the educational needs and the challenges of the 21st century • Improving cycle and active transport infrastructure • Work with partners to produce a ten-year plan to increase the stock and variety of Council and social housing • Expand Aberdeen’s district heating network • Repeal the guidance that exempts student accommodation developers from affordable housing contributions • Back Sport Aberdeen in their efforts to invest in and improve sporting facilities • Work with partners to stimulate sustainable economic development
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	

Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	The proposed Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance will help to support the Stretch Outcome 'No one will suffer due to poverty by 2026.' The guidance will help to support sustainable economic growth and create a framework for the delivery of new energy efficient homes which will help reduce fuel poverty for residents.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	The proposed Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance will support Place Stretch Outcomes 13 – 15 by providing guidance to ensure that new developments within the City are designed to achieve high standards of energy efficiency, encourage sustainable methods of travel, and to achieve net gains for biodiversity wherever possible.
Regional and City Strategies	The proposed Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance will directly support the Strategic Development Plan and the Local Development Plan. It will also support the Regional Economic Strategy and the Regional Transport Strategy by setting out guidance to help deliver sustainable economic development and to ensure that new developments have proper regard to their impacts on the transport network. Through the proposed Planning Obligations Supplementary Guidance, contributions will also be sought where appropriate from new developments towards infrastructure enhancements such as schools and other community facilities. This will support delivery of the Council's Estates and Assets Strategies.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Stage 1 and 2 assessment has been completed and no medium or high negative impacts have been identified that would require mitigation.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	N/A

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix 1 – Summary of comments received during the public consultation on the draft Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance documents and Officer responses to them
- 11.2 Appendix 2 - Proposed Aberdeen Planning Guidance (click [here](#) to view online)
- 11.3 Appendix 3 – Proposed Supplementary Guidance (click [here](#) to view online)

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	David Berry
Title	Senior Planner
Email Address	dberry@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	01224 045804

Appendix 1: Summary of comments received during the public consultation on the draft Aberdeen Planning Guidance and Supplementary Guidance documents and Officer responses

Frequently used acronyms in this appendix:

ALDP = Aberdeen Local Development Plan

NPF4 = National Planning Framework 4

APG = Aberdeen Planning Guidance

SG = Supplementary Guidance

Respondee Number	Respondee
1	Member of the Public
2	Theatres Trust
3	Culter Community Council
4	Cults, Bieldside and Milltimber Community Council
5	SportScotland
6	Paths for All
7	Member of the Public
8	Member of the Public
9	Rosehill & Stockethill Community Council
10	University of Aberdeen
11	Old Aberdeen Heritage Society
12	Barratt and David Wilson Homes
13	Robert Gordon University
14	Kirkwood Homes
15	Homes for Scotland
16	Halliday Fraser Munro
17	Levelling Up Real Estate
18	Bancon Homes
19	Member of the Public
20	Stewart Milne Homes
21	Brodies / FRP Consulting Advisory Trading Limited

Respondee Number	Respondee
22	Transport Scotland
23	Member of the Public
24	Aberdeen City Council Waste and Recycling team
25	Member of the Public
26	Nestrans
27	NatureScot
28	Scottish Water
29	Cala Homes North

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
General Comment				
General Comment	25	The general tone very broad and unspecific. The environmental impact statement under the waste disposal and management heading is vague. It would be difficult to see how this statement would have any impact upon the Tullos waste incineration plant, were it at the planning stage.	There is no reference to an Aberdeen Planning Guidance document, therefore unable to establish to which document the comment is being made. The comment does not correlate to the content of the "Waste Management Requirements for New Developments" APG. Contact was made with the respondee but no further communication was received.	No revision proposed.
Topic Area: Health and Wellbeing				
Air Quality	15	Highlights extensive revisions to 2017 SG and notes a "broad brush" approach to assessment of air quality. It contends that air quality is not a city-wide problem in Aberdeen and that the guidance as drafted could result in a requirement for Air Quality Assessments in many cases where this is unnecessary. It seeks an approach where Impact Assessments are only sought in areas of known air quality issues. It also seeks clarity on the source for the criteria in Table 2, and cites a lack of clarity in the terminology resulting in uncertainty over the need for an Impact Assessment at an early stage. It also argues that air quality can be addressed via a	Air Quality guidance seeks to limit future impact on air quality from development across the city in order to prevent the need for additional Air Quality Management areas, not just to prevent existing ones getting worse. The information in Table 2 is sourced from Land-Use Planning & Development Control: Planning For Air Quality guidance produced by the Environmental Protection UK and the Institute of Air Quality Management. Table 2 is prescriptive and outlines when an Air Quality Impact Assessment would likely be sought.	Text inserted to reference the Environmental Protection UK and the Institute of Air Quality Management document.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
		Construction Management Plan, and questions need for further Impact Assessments.		
Noise	2	<p>Agrees with section 2 as this covers scenarios where new development comes forward in close proximity to existing noise-generating cultural and night-time uses.</p> <p>It seeks amendment to section 2.3 to include cultural and time-time economy uses as main sources which would need to be covered within an assessment.</p> <p>Inappropriate development, or that which lacks suitable mitigation, harms the vibrancy of the city centre and undermines social and cultural well-being of local people. Document could otherwise be seen to place limitations on existing venues coming forward through part 2.4.</p>	<p>The agreement with section 2 is welcomed.</p> <p>The statutory development plan, comprising National Development Plan 4 and the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023, addresses the concerns raised regarding cultural and time-time economy uses, and the requirements on new developments. There is no requirement for the Aberdeen Planning Guidance to readdress this.</p>	No revision proposed.
Noise	23	<p>Seeks inclusion of the list of "Noise Sensitive Areas" which includes north Bridge of Don.</p> <p>It also desires descriptions of efforts to ensure helicopter operators comply with the aims of these defined areas are included within the guidance.</p>	<p>Noise management area and quiet areas are already described within the Glossary of the ALDP on pages 114-115.</p> <p>Candidate Quiet Areas are explained in Section 5.13 of the ALDP.</p> <p>No need to include reference to Aberdeen Airport 5-yearly Noise Action Plan as this relates to its efforts to control and reduce noise from its existing operations. The purpose of the APG is to limit impact from future development.</p>	Added text to Appendix A briefly summarising Noise Management Areas / Quiet Areas.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
		Seeks inclusion of list of "Candidate Quiet Areas", as well as a reference to the airport's 5-yearly Noise Action Plan (due in 2023), and wants clarification on phrases 'noise management area', 'quiet areas' and 'candidate quiet areas'.	Lists of quiet areas/candidate quiet areas are only accurate at a snapshot in time. Website link should be used to check most up-to-date status of areas.	
Topic Area: Placemaking by Design				
Energetica	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	<p>This guidance is unnecessary as there is already guidance for design and energy efficiency, and Energetica guidance represents another layer of bureaucracy. The guidance may stifle development in the Energetica corridor. The Council seeks design excellence across the city and excellence cannot be bettered.</p> <p>The requirement for all major developments in the corridor to submit an Energetica Compliance Statement is unnecessary as major applications already need a Design and Access Statement.</p>	<p>The intention to retain Aberdeen Planning Guidance on Energetica is mentioned in the ALDP under section 7.5 (page 58) and Appendix 4 (page 165). There is no evidence to suggest that the proposed guidance will stifle development in the Energetica corridor, and similar guidance has been in place for several years (to support the 2012 and 2017 Local Development Plans).</p> <p>It is agreed, however, that the requirement for major developments to submit a specific Energetica Compliance Statement is onerous, as compliance with the Energetica guidance could be demonstrated as part of the Design and Access Statement that is required for such developments. The draft guidance already recognises that Energetica compliance <i>may</i> be included as part of the Design and Access Statement, but a change is proposed to clarify that compliance should be demonstrated as part of the Design and Access Statement rather than through a separate Energetica Compliance Statement.</p>	Amend the guidance to clarify that for major developments compliance with Energetica criteria should be demonstrated as part of the Design and Access Statement, rather than through a separate Energetica Compliance Statement.
Temporary Buildings	11	The guidance should be more robust with regards to length of temporary permissions and requests for renewals. The	The Report of Handling for application 210353/DPP outlines the decision making in respect of the annex to the Edward Wright Building.	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
		temporary annexe to the Edward Wright Building owned by Aberdeen University was a problematic case. Given there is no policy on temporary buildings the guidance takes on more importance. A section should be added that states where a temporary building is added on a landscaped area and in a conservation area, or affecting the setting of a listed building or amenity/outlook of a residential property, then a maximum of 5 years will be allowed with no renewal period allowed.	It is not deemed desirable to add the suggested section. The guidance in its current form is considered to strike a balance between providing detail and allowing officers the flexibility to make decisions on a case-by-case basis. The section proposed by the respondent is considered to be too prescriptive.	
Temporary Buildings	28	Development seeking a public water connection or connection to wastewater network should apply through Scottish Water while development should not drain surface water into the combined sewer. Developers should not build over existing water and drainage infrastructure and should contact Scottish Water even if works fall under permitted development.	These are standard responses that Scottish Water would apply to most applications, not specifically for temporary buildings. They are generally well understood by developers. There is no need to add these matters to this specific guidance.	No revision proposed.
Amenity	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Providing adequate levels of amenity is essential to creating successful places, particularly with domestic properties.	We welcome the recognition that amenity is paramount to ensuing successful places.	No revision proposed.
Amenity	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	The guidance is overly prescriptive and covers issues addressed by	The principle of policy D2 was addressed in the examination of the Local Development Plan, where	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
		building standards. The policies within the LDP are sufficient to address planning related amenity issues.	<p>reference was made to the relationship between building standards and planning. As outlined by the reporter, although Aberdeen Planning Guidance is outwith the scope of the Examination in Public being non-statutory planning guidance, the principle of the policy, which sets the parameters for the Aberdeen Planning Guidance, was addressed and it was noted, “there may be a degree of overlap with these requirements and standards covered by building regulations. Provided there is appropriate discussions and communication involving planning and building standards officers along with developers, I find that this should not complicate or prejudice the design process.”</p> <p>The focus on amenity was driven by the need to reconnect planning, health and wellbeing, as noted in the Planning (Act) Scotland 2019. This focus is not limited to external design and layout of sites. The impact of good amenity to mental, physical, emotional health and wellbeing was identified as being of importance, this requirement was identified before the COVID-19 pandemic, and the need and awareness of the importance for good amenity has intensified and been brought to the fore during the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>	
Amenity	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Section 2.2 should be used as best practice and not as a benchmark of all development, taking account of site constraints.	The importance of site context and the overall placemaking success of a proposal is a material consideration in the determination of any planning application. The Aberdeen Planning Guidance provides further detail on one policy within the Aberdeen Local Development Plan. A number of policies and associated Aberdeen Planning Guidance documents, along with national policy and guidance are considered when coming to a decision regarding a proposal. The Aberdeen	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
			Planning Guidance section 2.2 provides the benchmark expected regarding layout, orientation, shelter and aspect within developments, which will take account of landscape features and solar orientation, but this is always site context driven.	
Amenity	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Strongly object to the requirement to provide sunlight and daylight calculations to support development proposals and to also provide these for proposals affecting existing buildings; this is addressed through building standards.	The overlap between the two disciplines of planning and building standards are addressed above. The impact of good amenity to mental, physical, emotional health and wellbeing was identified as being of importance, this requirement was identified before the COVID-19 pandemic, and the need and awareness of the importance for good amenity has intensified and been brought to the fore during the COVID-19 pandemic.	No revision proposed.
Amenity	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	The requirement to provide sunlight and daylight calculations, and consider privacy and outlook will hinder the redevelopment of brownfield / urban development. This contravenes the aims of NPF4 and the ALDP. Amenity should be considered on a site by site basis and taken into account the site context and circumstances.	The importance of site context and the overall placemaking success of a proposal is a material consideration in the determination of any planning application. The Aberdeen Planning Guidance provides further detail on one policy within the Aberdeen Local Development Plan. A number of policies and associated Aberdeen Planning Guidance documents, along with national policy and guidance are considered when coming to a decision regarding a proposal.	No revision proposed.
Amenity	29	The requirements to provide information may make the planning process more difficult and onerous. Sunlight to gardens and open spaces can be assessed based on the submitted plans rather than requiring detailed assessments to be submitted with applications.	The requirement to provide information to support development proposals is noted in the Aberdeen Planning Guidance. Outlining what is required at an early stage will provide clarity, rather than the potential for delaying the planning process after the application has been submitted and is live.	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
Amenity	29	With warming temperatures, expected through future climate change, combined with increasingly insulated and airtight homes, from building standards, there is greater concern for overheating. With the need for south facing windows, mechanical ventilation may be required to address this issue.	The impact of climate change is a planning concern is as outlined within NPF4; south facing windows have the advantage of passive solar gain thereby reducing the need to mechanically heat a home. There are a number of ways to address overheating which do not require the need for mechanical ventilation, such as the use of internal blinds, shutters or curtains. External shading provision can be achieved by large overhangs and louvers but should be based on the need for it; it can restrict daylight from entering the space.	No revision proposed.
Space Standards	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	The guidance is overly prescriptive and we object on this basis. Space Standards are the concern of building standards, not the planning system.	At a national level, within Housing to 2040 – there is an awareness that housing is required to be adaptable so it can change to meet people’s needs. Housing to 2040 goes on to outline an expectation that homes need to be of a high quality and sustainable – to do so all homes are well designed and of a high standard, allowing all people to live well no matter what kind of home or tenure they live in. More recently, NPF4 Policy 16 part c identifies “Development proposals for new homes that improve affordability and choice by being adaptable to changing and diverse needs, and which address identified gaps in provision, will be supported”. The Scottish Government consultation on “Enhancing the accessibility, adaptability and usability of Scotland’s Homes” makes it clear that, NPF4 “supports proposals for new homes that improve affordability and choice by being adaptable to changing and diverse needs. This includes accessible, adaptable and wheelchair accessible homes”	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
			<p>The Aberdeen City and Shire Housing Needs and Demand Assessment outlines the need for easily adaptable homes, a projected increase in the number of older households, who will most likely require adaptations to homes, this is easier to achieve with space.</p> <p>Minimum space standards have been the remit of building standards, but there is a clear push into the planning system in terms of adaptability, and ensuring that housing is fit for purpose for current and future needs. As is proposed in the Scottish Government consultation on “Enhancing the accessibility, adaptability and usability of Scotland’s Homes” “As all developments are subject to planning considerations we would expect developers and planners to work together to implement the enhanced provisions we are proposing”.</p>	
Space Standards	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	The space standards will hamper brownfield and city centre living strategies.	<p>The guidance is clear that conversion will be assessed on an individual and case by case basis, and that due to various factors such as: historic interest, statutory designations and the location and floorplates of existing buildings, it may be necessary to compromise on the floor areas where there is no feasible alternative or where other benefits would be achieved.</p> <p>With regard to new builds within brownfield or city centre locations, the importance of site context and the overall placemaking success of a proposal is a material consideration in the determination of any planning application. The Aberdeen Planning Guidance provides further detail on one policy within the Aberdeen Local Development Plan. A number of policies and associated Aberdeen Planning Guidance documents, along with national policy and guidance are considered when coming to a decision regarding a proposal.</p>	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
Space Standards	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	The garden ground requirement is onerous	The garden lengths noted are well established through previous Landscape Supplementary Guidance. Garden length for any development is to be based on site context, the lengths noted in the APG set out the expectations required; these can be modified to take account of context. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increasing awareness of the benefit of private space.	No revision proposed.
Space Standards	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	The guidance will lead to an inability to provide housing and affordable housing	The importance of site context and the overall placemaking success of a proposal is a material consideration in the determination of any planning application. The Aberdeen Planning Guidance provides further detail on one policy within the Aberdeen Local Development Plan. A number of policies and associated Aberdeen Planning Guidance documents, along with national policy and guidance are considered when coming to a decision regarding a proposal.	No revision proposed.
Space Standards	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Paragraph 2.1 in relation to a 3 bedroom house is of particular concern, the standard is excessive and exceeds the minimum requirement of three bedroom dwellings elsewhere in Scotland. This should be revised.	Existing planning space standards can be found in 2 other cities within Scotland. The "Edinburgh Design Guide" which notes space standards for dwellings ranging from studio dwellings (35m ²) to three bedroom or more (91m ²). Within Dundee's 2019 Local Development Plan, Design of New Housing Standards are outlined within in appendix 4. There are standards outlined for flats, housing sites of 5 or more units, and housing sites of less than 5 units. The standards noted range from –2 bedrooms or a minimum gross internal floor area of 60 sqm to 3 or more bedrooms or a minimum gross internal floor area of 100 sqm. Noting the standards outlined above it is felt Aberdeen City Council's space standard are not in excess of others noted within Scotland. Again it should be recognised	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
			that all planning decisions are based on a site by site context, taking into account material considerations.	
Space Standards	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	This guidance should be amended to acknowledge that proposals should be assessed on a site-by-site basis.	This is a fundamental principle of the planning system. The importance of site context and the overall placemaking success of a proposal is a material consideration in the determination of any planning application. The Aberdeen Planning Guidance provides further detail on one policy within the Aberdeen Local Development Plan. A number of policies and associated Aberdeen Planning Guidance documents, along with national policy and guidance are considered when coming to a decision regarding a proposal.	No revision proposed.
Space Standards	29	Space standards are the remit of building standards and are developed from 'Housing for Varying Needs' and the Lifetime Homes concept developed by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.	<p>At a national level, within Housing to 2040 – there is an awareness that housing is required to be adaptable so it can change to meet people's needs. Housing to 2040 goes on to outline an expectation that homes need to be of a high quality and sustainable – to do so all homes are well designed and of a high standard, allowing all people to live well no matter what kind of home or tenure they live in.</p> <p>More recently, NPF4 Policy 16 part c identifies "Development proposals for new homes that improve affordability and choice by being adaptable to changing and diverse needs, and which address identified gaps in provision, will be supported". The Scottish Government consultation on "Enhancing the accessibility, adaptability and usability of Scotland's Homes" makes it clear that, NPF4 "supports proposals for new homes that improve affordability and choice by being adaptable to changing and diverse needs. This includes accessible, adaptable and wheelchair accessible homes"</p>	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
			<p>The Aberdeen City and Shire Housing Needs and Demand Assessment outlines the need for easily adaptable homes, a projected increase in the number of older household, who will most likely require adaptations to homes, this is easier to achieve with space.</p> <p>Minimum space standards have been the remit of building standards, but there is a clear push into the planning system in terms of adaptability, and ensuring that housing is fit for purpose for current and future needs. As is proposed in the Scottish Government consultation on “Enhancing the accessibility, adaptability and usability of Scotland’s Homes” “As all developments are subject to planning considerations we would expect developers and planners to work together to implement the enhanced provisions we are proposing”.</p>	
Space Standards	29	Having two sets of space standards will cause confusion. The reference to space standards for affordable housing is ambiguous. If this relates to Housing for Varying Needs, these standards are required by Registered Social Landlords.	The reference is to size standards for Aberdeen City Council social housing and to those required by Registered Social Landlords.	Text amended to clarify.
Space Standards	29	The requirement for ground floor flats to have private garden areas will reduce the open space available to those living on upper floors, and may lead to fenced off areas that can detract from amenity.	The ability to provide ground floor flats with privacy to the rear where they abut a communal garden is important, those living on upper floors will not have this possible privacy issue.	No revision proposed.
Space Standards	29	Section 2.2 with regard to no wooden fencing in the public realm	The Landscape Aberdeen Planning Guidance addresses boundary treatment further, and notes the interest,	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
		should be readdressed, in key locations and views there is a need to consider the appropriate boundary finishes along-side landscaping proposals.	biodiversity impact, placemaking impact and nod to landscape character that the use of stone dykes and planting can have.	
The Sub-Division and Redevelopment of Residential Curtilages	28	Development seeking a public water connection or connection to wastewater network should apply through Scottish Water while development should not drain surface water into the combined sewer. The respondent also states that developers should not build over existing water and drainage infrastructure and should contact Scottish Water even if works fall under permitted development.	These are standard responses that Scottish Water would apply to most applications. They are generally well understood by developers. There is no need to add these to this specific guidance.	No revision proposed.
Conversion of Buildings in the Countryside	28	When a non-domestic property is converted to a domestic property there is a duty on the owner /occupier to advise their Licensed Provider of the change of use. Development seeking a public water connection or connection to wastewater network should apply through Scottish Water while development should not drain surface water into the combined sewer. The respondent also states that developers should not build over existing water and drainage infrastructure and should contact	These are standard responses that Scottish Water would apply to most applications. They are generally well understood by developers. There is no need to add these to this specific guidance.	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
		Scottish Water even if works fall under permitted development.		
Development Along Lanes	28	Development seeking a public water connection or connection to wastewater network should apply through Scottish Water while development should not drain surface water into the combined sewer. The respondent also states that developers should not build over existing water and drainage infrastructure and should contact Scottish Water even if works fall under permitted development.	These are standard responses that Scottish Water would apply to most applications. They are generally well understood by developers. There is no need to add these to this specific guidance.	No revision proposed.
Materials: External Building Materials and Their Use in Aberdeen	12,14,15, 18, 20	The document is too prescriptive and fails to take account of rising building costs. It will restrict bespoke development which responds to site particulars and may limit viability of certain proposals. Materials should be considered on a site-by-site basis.	The document in paragraph 1.2 provides a benchmark for new builds and extensions, taking consideration of climate change and local distinctiveness. Paragraph 2.1 states, "This advice is not designed to be a prescriptive list or technical specification for materials ... Each development proposal will be considered on its merits and the context of both the immediate and wider area are crucial when developing ideas about material choices, colours and detailing." We feel this statement provides comfort regarding the concerns raised. The viability of development proposals is also a consideration when assessing development.	No revision proposed.
Aberdeen Placemaking Process	4	The intersection between Local Place Plans and Locality Plans will be minimal. The former are likely to be about specific land and buildings in a much smaller area than the proposed North, South and Central areas of Locality	We intend the relationship between Local Place Plans and Locality Plans to be one of support, whereby both spatial planning and community planning can understand and gain further awareness of the concerns and possible solutions coming forward from local communities regarding their areas. It is not the intention that Locality Plans will remove the need, desire or requirement to	Section 7.5 has been amended to further cement the complementary relationship between Local Place Plans and Locality Plans.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
		<p>Plans. We appreciate the attempt to take a "holistic" approach but consider that the proposed linkage is too strong. Locality Plans are prepared by "Local Engagement Groups" not necessarily related to Local Place Plans sponsors in a process which is currently indeterminate and should not be allowed to impede progress with Local Place Plans.</p> <p>Section 7.5 should be deleted.</p>	<p>produce Local Place Plans. As is noted in the Planning Act 2019, the Local Place Plan Regulations 2021, and Circular 1/2022, Local Place Plans need to have regard to any Locality Plan for the Local Place Plan area – it is therefore fundamental there is a complementary relationship between documents. There will be an invite for community bodies to prepare and submit Local Place Plans as is outlined in our Development Plan Scheme and Participation Statement.</p>	
Aberdeen Placemaking Process	12,14,15, 18,20	<p>The document does not reflect NPF4 policy on design, quality and place – in particular the six qualities of successful place.</p>	<p>The APG is linked back to the policies within the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023, which was adopted post NPF4. As outlined in legislation, where there is deemed to be an incompatibility between a development plan and NPF4, whichever is adopted later in date is to prevail; therefore the Local Development Plan will take precedence. Having said that, we do not consider the difference in policy terminology to be significant; the principles of the six qualities of successful place noted in the Local Development Plan and in NPF4 are like-minded, and both documents are part of the statutory development plan and will be used to assess planning applications.</p>	No revision proposed.
Aberdeen Placemaking Process	12,14,15, 18,20	<p>There is no requirement for design agents to prepare placemaking guidance on behalf of landowners and developers, as some house builders have this capacity in-house. Amend the wording to read: "Placemaking guidance will usually</p>	<p>The document states "usually" design guidance is prepared by a design agent, and also notes, "irrespective of the author". This allows for sufficient flexibility. No matter who prepares the guidance, it must meet the quality expected by Aberdeen City Council to be adopted as Aberdeen Planning Guidance. No text amendments are required.</p>	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
		be prepared by someone suitably qualified on behalf of landowners and developers”.		
Aberdeen Placemaking Process	27	Welcome the preparation of this guidance, and support the value placed on holistic, collaborative working through the Place Principle.	The support is noted and welcomed.	No revision proposed.
Aberdeen Placemaking Process	27	The document does not reflect NPF4 in particular the six qualities of successful place.	The APG is linked back to the policies within the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023, which was adopted post NPF4. As outlined in legislation, where there is deemed to be an incompatibility between a development plan and NPF4, whichever is adopted later in date is to prevail; therefore the Local Development Plan will take precedence. Having said that, we do not consider the difference in policy terminology to be significant; the principles of the six qualities of successful place noted in the Local Development Plan and in NPF4 are like-minded, and both documents are part of the statutory development plan and will be used to assess planning applications.	No revision proposed.
Aberdeen Placemaking Process	27	The document should look to tackle the global climate emergency and nature crisis through placemaking through promoting the incorporation of nature-based solutions, blue-green infrastructure and green networks. The references to open space and green infrastructure are welcomed; the guidance should go further in	The comment relating to the global climate emergency and nature crisis is noted. The APG outlines a number of considerations that have to be addressed in the “identity” section, including environment and landscaping, which includes enhancing biodiversity and green infrastructure and placemaking guidance. The “connection” section also notes, within sustainability, net zero carbon development, the consideration of whole lifecycle and nature-based solutions.	Section 1.1 updated to include Policy NE2: Green and Blue Infrastructure of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan, and further text added to the table to provide further guidance on “Environment and Landscaping” and “Sustainability and Climate Change”.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
		promoting these and seeking best practice to align with NPF4.	The APG is linked back to the policies within the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023, which was adopted post NPF4. As outlined in legislation, where there is deemed to be an incompatibility between a development plan and NPF4, whichever is adopted later in date is to prevail; therefore the Local Development Plan will take precedence. Yet in matters where the Local Development Plan is silent, NPF4 will identify the policy principles. Both documents are part of the statutory development plan and will be used to assess planning applications that come forth for any master planned site. To ensure the principle relating to green and blue infrastructure are at the forefront of the document, reference to the appropriate Local Development Plan policy will be noted in paragraph 1.1.	
Aberdeen Placemaking Process	27	Section 8 'Content of Placemaking Guidance' (p.13) 'NatureScot Neighbourhood Capacity Officers' are mentioned. However, this seems to be a typo and we suggest simply using 'NatureScot'.	This is a drafting error. Neighbourhood Capacity Officers should be on a separate line.	Text modified to show to these are two separate organizations / roles.
Aberdeen Placemaking Process	29	It is not appropriate or necessary to require a masterplan for sites circa 10ha and / or around 50 dwellings, this contradicts an earlier section which notes guidance is at the discretion of the Council. Masterplans should be required on a case by case basis. Additional processes will cause delays to the development and planning stages.	The section of the APG links directly to the preamble and policy H4: Housing Mix and Need, which notes sites of larger than 50 homes are to provide a masterplan to ensure a suitable housing mix. Paragraph 4.2 notes "and at the discretion of the Council" – this refers to the level of information required for guidance, not whether or not guidance is required. The APG is a refresh of the previous non-statutory planning document, Aberdeen Masterplanning Process – the preparation of a development framework, masterplan or planning brief has been found to smooth the	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
			development and planning stages, as much of the site parameters and overview work has been addressed before an application is submitted; thereby making the determination process more streamlined.	
Big Buildings	28	Development seeking a public water connection or connection to wastewater network should apply through Scottish Water while development should not drain surface water into the combined sewer. The respondent also states that developers should not build over existing water and drainage infrastructure and should contact Scottish Water even if works fall under permitted development.	These are standard responses that Scottish Water would apply to most applications, not specifically for big buildings. They are generally well understood by developers. There is no need to add these to this specific guidance.	No revision proposed.
A Guide to Planning Consents for the Aberdeen Inner City Multis	No comments received on this draft APG			
Landscape	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Providing separate guidance on Landscape, Food Growing, Natural Heritage, Trees and Woodland and Open Space & Green Infrastructure suggests that ACC is trying to be too prescriptive and control too much. These topics should be contained within one guidance note.	Although these topics are linked, each one is important in its own right. Although they could be combined into one APG, it is considered that retaining separate documents will aid reading and ensure that each topic is afforded due attention. The proposed approach will also allow the guidance on separate topics to be updated more easily if required in the future.	No revision proposed.
Landscape	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Paragraph 2.2.1 Requiring at least 50% of external space in private	The requirement to provide space for amenity, open space and landscape setting in flatted developments is	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
		courts to be used as amenity space is too onerous.	<p>well established through the 2012 and 2017 Supplementary Guidance documents, and prior to that via policy 6 of the 2008 Local Plan.</p> <p>The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has led to an increasing awareness of the benefit of amenity ground; this is particularly heightened for flatted developments where private space associated with individual units may be at a premium.</p>	
Landscape	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Paragraph 2.2.4 requires embankments to be adequately retained, drained and landscaped. The requirement for landscaping should be removed as turf can be an option extra; a personal choice for the owner.	The term 'landscaped' in the document and in particular this paragraph, as it is related to the earthworks and modelling, is the process of shaping and creating embankments that follow the parameters set out earlier in the paragraph – e.g. avoid sharp slopes. In this context, it would not relate to the laying of turf.	No revision proposed.
Landscape	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	The standards should be flexible and assessed on a site by site basis, responding to site characteristics to create a sense of place. This should be emphasized in the document.	Paragraph 2.1.2 notes the importance of site assessment and an analysis of the characterises of the site and its surroundings to create a sense of place. Paragraph 3.1 notes, "new developments will be designed with due consideration for their context". Paragraph 3.4 outlines the considerations for assessing local context. Assessing the site for its context is paramount in the development of landscape and landscaping within sites, as is noted in the document.	No revision proposed.
Landscape	27	Support the content of the document as a standalone and acknowledge the cross cutting nature of the document, in particular the relationship between people, places and natural environments.	We welcome the support for the document.	No revision proposed.

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Landscape	27	The use of graphics in the final document would be of benefit as this can outline best practice, aid clarity and add vibrancy.	The document will be desktop published and the final version, to be produced after the final committee cycle, will contain graphics.	No revision proposed.
Landscape	27	Insert into 1.2 - Paragraph 7.14 of the Proposed Plan notes the relationship between well designed landscapes and health and wellbeing. This should be added to the APG.	As noted, the Local Development Plan has already outlined the relationship between the health priorities for Scotland and each policy. To further continue this thread, text has been added to the APG to highlight how the topic area relates to health and wellbeing.	Text added on health and wellbeing.
Landscape	27	Insert into 1.3 – further emphasis on the value landscape has on tackling climate change and the biodiversity loss crisis would be of value. The Proposed Plan 2022 outlines a number of goals that can be supported through careful landscape consideration including health and wellbeing; life below water; and sustainable cities and communities.	The purpose of the APG is to provide further detail on the policies within the Local Development Plan; the APG should not be repeating text that is in the statutory development plan.	No revision proposed.
Landscape	27	Paragraph 2.1.2 – welcome the need to retain and protect appropriate existing landscape elements. Adding in “enhance and reinforce existing landscape features (built or natural assets) as well as incorporating them into the design of the development to maximise on their benefits”.	We welcome the support. With regard to the additional text, Policy D4 of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan, notes “development will provide opportunities for conserving and enhancing....features”. Policy D1 also outlines the requirement to create distinctive places, with a sense of identity and deliver biodiversity enhancements. The purpose of the APG is to provide further detail on the policies within the local development plan; the APG should not be repeating text that is in the statutory development plan.	No revision proposed.
Landscape	27	Paragraph 2.1.2 – The inclusion of the Aberdeen Landscape	We welcome this comment.	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
		Character Assessment as an information source is positive.		
Landscape	27	Paragraph 2.1.2 – bullet point 4 is confusing. Clarification is sought on the sentence, “visual analysis of wildlife habitats and species”.	Agree. The term “Surveys” will be used.	Text modified to read, “ A visual analysis Surveys of wildlife habitats and species, including protected habitats and species, designated natural heritage sites, trees, woodlands, waterbodies, wetlands and other wildlife habitats and corridors (refer also to the Aberdeen Planning Guidance on Natural Heritage);”
Landscape	27	Paragraph 2.1.2 – bullet point 1 and 2 could be amalgamated – with the “Key views and gateways to the city as identified in the Aberdeen Landscape Character Assessment, including a more detailed views and visual analysis where relevant or required” added into bullet point 1.	This is noted and the change welcomed.	Change actioned and bullets amalgamated.
Landscape	27	Paragraph 2.1.3 – modify the first bullet point on page 6 to consider biodiversity enhancement in line with NPF4 and paragraph 7.14 and Policy D5.	The purpose of the APG is to provide further detail on the policies within the local development plan; the APG should not be repeating text that is in the statutory development plan. Both NPF4 and the local development plan from the statutory development plan therefore both documents will be used to determine planning applications.	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
Landscape	27	Paragraph 2.2.1 – include text on active frontages to create interest, activity and a sense of place.	This is already noted under Policy D1. The purpose of the APG is to provide further detail on the policies within the local development plan; the APG should not be repeating text that is in the statutory development plan.	No revision proposed.
Landscape	27	Paragraph 3.1 – the second paragraph should be amended to align more closely with D4, as it provides stronger protection for built and natural assets.	This section of the APG links more closely to Policy D5: Landscape Design, than Policy D4: Landscape. However, it is agreed a link to other overarching aim of Policy D4 would be of benefit within the paragraph.	Text amended to read: The Council's general environmental approach to development indicates that developments will <i>not adversely affect landscape / seascape / townscape character and existing elements which provide, or contribute to, a distinct 'sense of place</i> be allowed where, they will do not destroy or damage natural resources or their setting, adversely affect amenity or be visually damaging to the appearance or setting of Aberdeen.
Landscape	27	Paragraph 3.3 - It is perhaps worth clarifying that formal landscape and visual impact assessments (LVIAs) are required as part of Environmental Impact Assessments rather than simply Environmental Assessments as this could create confusion with other environmental assessments	Noted and welcomed.	Text amended to read: "A formal LVIA is often a requirement of Environmental <i>Impact</i> Assessments."

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
		such as Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).		
Landscape	27	Paragraph 3.4 - this section is well structured and provides a useful summary of landscape considerations. In relation to landscape features, emphasis should be placed on retaining existing landscape features and incorporating them into the development design.	We welcome the support for this section. The primary policies in the local development plan associated with the APG are Policy D4 and D5. Policy D4 notes, “. Development will provide opportunities for conserving or enhancing existing landscape / seascape/ townscape elements (natural and built), including linear and boundary features or other components which contribute to character and ‘sense of place’. Policy D5 states, “Landscape Design will.. ensure a sense of place is maintained and enhanced through an assessment of the site and its surrounding landscape/seascape/townscape character; and sympathetically incorporate existing key characteristics and features that contribute to landscape/seascape/townscape character”. Text modified to align more clearly to the primary policies.	Text amended to read: “...and important views are examples of the type of feature which shall be highlighted, and where feasible or required, retained in a development. Key features that contribute to character will be sympathetically incorporated”.
Landscape	27	Paragraph 3.4 - In relation to vegetation, provide direct reference to the Natural Heritage APG where it states “On some sites ecological surveys will be required to identify important, protected and sensitive habitats and species” to provide greater clarity	The paragraph has been reworked so the reference to the Natural Heritage APG is beside its associated text.	Existing text in the paragraph moved to provide clarity.
Landscape	27	Paragraph 3.5 – emphasis placed on maintenance and management for long-term success is welcomed.	This is noted and welcomed	No revision proposed.
Landscape	27	Paragraph 3.7 – strongly support the alignment with policy NE3 that	This is noted and welcomed	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
		all development proposals should make provision to achieve an overall biodiversity gain.		
Landscape	27	Paragraph 3.10 – Under ‘Green Space Network’ include a question on enhancement in line with Policy NE2 – Green & Blue Infrastructure. For example, Does the development enhance the Green Space Network?’	Agree this would be beneficial to add to the checklist.	Text amended as per suggestion.
Landscape	27	Paragraph 3.10 – include a question under ‘Site features’ or ‘Proposals’ on whether landscape features have been incorporated into the proposal design, for example, ‘Does the proposal incorporate existing and new landscape features (built and natural) into the design?’	Agree this would be beneficial to add to the checklist.	Text amended as per suggestion.
Landscape	27	Paragraph 3.10 – Under ‘Open Space’ part e) amend ‘wildlife enhancement’ to ‘biodiversity enhancement to provide a broader scope.	Agree this would be beneficial to add to the checklist.	Text amended as per suggestion.
Landscape	28	Any risk of tree root intrusion should be addressed by adhering to the guidelines set out in Water for Scotland 4th Edition and Sewers for Scotland 4th Edition. Copies of water or waste water network drawings can be ordered from Asset Plan Providers.	Comment noted. The same comment has been made against a number of other draft APGs. Appropriate text has been added to the final version of the Trees and Woodlands APGs to ensure that new developments give due consideration to this point. There is limited value in including additional text within this APG as: i) it does not have a directly relevant section; and ii) the entire suite of APGs should be read as a whole so introducing additional text in this document would result in	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
			unnecessary duplication of content. No change is recommended in the context of this APG.	
Landscape	29	The guidance overlaps with the amenity Aberdeen Planning Guidance, and risks a lack of awareness on this Aberdeen Planning Guidance.	Although these topics are linked, each one is important in its own right. Although they could be combined into one APG, it is considered that retaining separate documents will aid reading and ensure that each topic is afforded due attention. The proposed approach will also allow the guidance on separate topics to be updated more easily if required in the future.	No revision proposed.
Landscape	29	Section 2.2.1 – the garden lengths noted are excessive. 9m garden length should be the standard for house over 2.5 storeys. There is no rationale for a longer garden for a 3 storey house. Daylight is addressed in the Amenity APG. The public can choose the requirements of their garden, and what they seek in external spaces.	The garden lengths noted are well established through previous Landscape Supplementary Guidance. Garden length for any development is to be based on site context, the lengths noted in the APG set out the expectations required; these can be modified to take account of context. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increasing awareness of the benefit of private space.	No revision proposed.
Landscape	29	Section 2.2.1 it is unclear if the list of additional space requirement is to be found within the dimensions identified. The comment of cars is noted; is this indicating carparking should be accessed from a lane? The list of requirement for gardens to be designed to allow for the future extension of buildings should be removed.	The list of requirements is well established through previous Landscape Supplementary Guidance, and requirements can be accommodated within the dimensions noted, if appropriate to the context, layout and design of the development. Text has been modified. Car parking may not be appropriate for every development as this is context and design specific; the transport and accessibility guidance covers car parking in more detail. If individual car parking is proposed to be located in garden ground, it must not cause an obstruction to pavement or road uses. Thinking of the ageing demographic, or new working practices e.g. working from home and reworking of	Text modified to read: “There must be <i>consideration of additional space provided</i> for:

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			building layouts, the ability to add additional space can add value to the quality of life a household. This document is guidance; it sets out the expectations required, these can be modified to take account of context.	
Landscape	29	Section 2.2.3 – there is very specific detail on planting beds. What is suitable will depend on the type of planting proposed for these areas. The section should remove the general rule and dimensions.	The paragraph relates to large scale car parking, not individual car parking. The use of landscaping within car parks such as these can provide design interest, solar shading, biodiversity, and provide small scale nature based solutions to mitigate the impact of climate change.	No revision proposed.
Landscape	29	Section 2.2.4 one of the concerns noted is changes to drainage patterns. Changes to overland flows will happen with all development as the surface water will require to be directed to surface water drains and provide adequate attenuation following the principles of SUDS.	The section notes that bunds can have an impact on natural habitats by changing drainage patterns, the emphasis of the text is the impact to wildlife. Development proposals should not have a detrimental effect (directly or indirectly) on habitats.	No revision proposed.
Landscape	29	Section 2.2.4 makes reference to slopes not being useable within gardens. These areas can provide amenity and privacy to residents, could be planted, landscaped and their use will depend on the desires and interests of the owner. A slope or terrace does not negate any value of this.	The APG states, “garden ground on a slope will need to be functional and usable”. It is steep embankments that are not considered usable garden space, and they should be avoided. The APG also states, “Where that is no alternative, the embankment should be adequately retained, drained and landscaped”. The principle of the paragraph is the same as the response received.	No revision proposed.
Landscape	29	Section 2.2.5 requires all existing boundaries that contribute to the local landscape character to be retained and incorporated into the	The APG does not require all existing boundaries to be retained and incorporated into design. It notes those that contribute to local landscape character shall be retained, or reinstated and incorporated into the design. The	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
		design. This will not be possible in all situations Agree that these features should be worked into the design approach to provide a sense of place and character, but there will require to be an assessment about which features should and can be maintained.	primary policies linked to this APG, Policy D4: Landscape and D5: Landscape Design both take a considered approach, "Landscape / seascape / townscape character and existing elements which provide, or contribute to, a distinct 'sense of place' will not be adversely affected by development" and "Landscape design will:... ensure a sense of place is maintained and enhanced through an assessment of the site and its surrounding landscape/seascape/townscape character; and sympathetically incorporate existing key characteristics and features that contribute to landscape/seascape/townscape character".	
Stonecleaning	7	Streets need the drains cleared and pavements need fixing. Clean up Union Street.	The comments refer to grievances over existing street maintenance and do not appear to relate to the preservation of built heritage or the specific content of this draft guidance.	No revision proposed.
The Repair and Replacement of Windows and Doors	11	The respondent seeks further clarity on what circumstances necessitate planning permission for rear windows and doors within Conservation Areas. Their view is that all applications for replacement doors or windows (irrespective of position on the building) should require planning permission, as the contributing value to a Conservation Area is not limited to the visibility of the features from the road.	The requirement for Planning Permission for any given development is set out in planning legislation. Replacement of windows and doors is a provision included within the General Permitted Development Order (as amended) 1992. The exceptions requiring formal consent include Listed Buildings and properties within Conservation Areas. In instances where an application is required, it would be for the Planning Officer to determine the importance of the built heritage feature to be altered, irrespective of whether it was a public facing elevation or not. The APG provide guidance on instances when planning permission is required, and what is expected for listed buildings, and public and non-public facing elevations of unlisted buildings in conservation areas.	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
Shops and Signs	9	The respondent queries whether fast food drive-throughs are considered within this guidance. Large totem signs and illuminated decals and fascias are used. There should be special consideration of these matters within residential streets to avoid detrimental impact on the character of the neighbourhood.	As noted within paragraph 1.2 of the APG, it applies on a city wide bases and the signage guidance should be considered in all instances, no matter what the proposal. The APG includes reference to general principles for signage, and guidance on fascias, totems and illuminated signage. Assessment of signage is controlled via Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (Scotland) Regulations 1984. Regulation 4 of this requires an assessment of amenity and public safety when determining an application of this nature.	No revision proposed.
Repair and Reinstatement of Cast Iron Railings	No comments received on this draft APG			
Topic Area: Vibrant City				
Hierarchy of Centres	No comments received on this draft APG			
Harmony of Uses	28	Respondee (Scottish Water) advises early engagement with the Pre-Development Enquiry process to review proposals. This is due to risk of blockage/damage to wastewater drainage system as a result of commercial kitchen waste products entering the system.	Comment noted. These are standardised comments that Scottish Water would submit to proposals for hot food uses.	No revision required as guidance sufficiently addresses the need for full details of grease traps to be included and promotion of pre-application discussions with Environmental Health.
Serviced Apartments	No comments received on this draft APG			
Topic Area: Supporting Business and Industrial Development				
Aberdeen International Airport	28	Development within the area surrounding Aberdeen International Airport may require a Soil Investigation Report. Early	These issues would be addressed through other relevant policies in the Local Development Plan, such as policies R2 (Degraded and Contaminated Land) and NE4 (Our Water Environment). The Local Development Plan should	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
		engagement with Scottish Water's PDE process is advised.	be read as a whole, and new developments will need to comply with all relevant policies within it. The proposed additions are therefore unnecessary as they would result in duplication of other parts of the Local Development Plan. Developers will engage with Scottish Water's PDE process separately to planning.	
Topic Area: Meeting Housing and Community Needs				
Householder Development Guide	28	The respondent (Scottish Water) states that the owner/occupier/developer should not build over existing water and drainage infrastructure and should contact Scottish Water even if works fall under permitted development. Contact details for Asset Plan Providers are provided to enable developers to obtain copies of water or waste water network drawings	This is a standard response from Scottish Water which would apply to most development sites Such matters would be generally be addressed with a formal note on the decision notice as part of any planning consent granted	No revision proposed.
Affordable and Specialist Housing	3	The commuted sums figures in Table 1 (section 2.10) are too low. This gives developers incentive to declare that provision on-site is either not viable or not feasible rather than providing real affordable housing within their developments. The figures in Table 1 need to be reassessed with skilled commercial input.	The commuted sum rates in Table 1 were set in the 2017 Supplementary Guidance and have been carried forward into the draft APG. The process of calculating the commuted sum rates was undertaken by the District Valuer in accordance with the guidance in PAN 2/2010 'Affordable Housing and Housing Land Audits'. Given the significant short-term shocks that have recently affected the economy and the development industry, it was not considered appropriate to undertake a review of the commuted sum rates prior to publishing the APG for consultation. However, the Council intends to undertake an early review of the commuted sum rates in Table 1 and this will be undertaken by a suitably qualified	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
			professional in accordance with all relevant guidance. No change is necessary at this stage.	
Affordable and Specialist Housing	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	No objection in principle to new expectation (in sections 2.1 and 2.5) that allows for affordable housing for developments of 20 units or more to be delivered onsite as social rent, provided that appropriate funding is available to deliver this.	Comment noted.	No revision proposed.
Affordable and Specialist Housing	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Support the statement in para 2.6 that contributions may be reduced where the developer can demonstrate there are exceptional costs above what is expected from most developments.	Support welcomed.	No revision proposed.
Affordable and Specialist Housing	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Para 2.6 states that "a list of developer obligations is contained within SG on Planning Obligations. Therefore it is expected that these requirements will have been planned into the development and will not normally be seen as exceptional costs". This statement demonstrates a lack of appreciation of the nature and variety of arrangements between land owners and developers, and the timelines involved in reaching such agreements. The significant and unjustified increases in developer obligations will significantly affect viability. It is	See the officer's response to comments on the draft Planning Obligations SG for more detailed information on the justification for the proposed developer obligation rates. Both the draft Affordable and Specialist Housing APG and the Planning Obligations SG include provisions for developers to submit Viability Statements to make the case for reduced contributions in situations where exceptional circumstances mean that the normal requirements would render a development unviable. The Council will consider any such Viability Statements on a case-by-case basis taking into account the individual circumstances of the proposed development. No change is necessary.	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
		<p>questioned how these increases could be sufficiently planned into a development if a site is already owned by the developer with no opportunity to make provision for these changes. When a site is secured through conditional missives, some costs will still need to be determined through further investigations. It is not always possible to fully appraise the development costs from the outset, as such it is essential that the Council allow a degree of flexibility when considering individual circumstances, including the impact of planning and affordable housing obligations.</p>		
Affordable and Specialist Housing	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	<p>Welcome that ACC accepts the overprovision and banking principles for the delivery of affordable housing under para 2.9. However, it is not accepted that these should be tied to sub-market areas. The developer obligations secured from a specific development can be spent on city-wide basis, therefore the same flexibility should apply for the provision of affordable housing.</p>	<p>Support for the principle of overprovision and banking is welcomed. Banked units must be located in the same housing sub-market area as any future development/s that seek to utilise the banked units to offset some or all of their own affordable housing requirement. This is an important principle as it helps to retain the benefit of the affordable housing in the same geographic area as the future development. Contrary to the respondent's assertion, it is not the case that other developer obligations are spent on a city-wide basis – rather they are spent on enhancing facilities and infrastructure that serve the development in question (i.e. they also have a geographical link with the contributing development). Notwithstanding the above, it should also be noted that the APG says that the units</p>	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
			<p><i>“must be delivered in the same housing market area, unless agreed otherwise with the Council”.</i> This provides flexibility for units to be delivered in a different sub-market area where the Council agrees there are exceptional reasons for doing so. No change is necessary.</p>	
Affordable and Specialist Housing	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	<p>Object to the basis on which commuted sums are calculated as detailed in para 2.10. PAN 2/2010 advises that where it is agreed an alternative to a contribution of land within the proposed development site is acceptable, the developer will provide either land or homes or a commuted sum of a value equivalent to the cost of providing the percentage of serviced land required by the policy. When determining the value applicable they should have regard to development costs, other contributions being sought and other relevant factors e.g. layout and design. Related policy is therefore clear that it is the cost of the land for affordable housing that is being sought. Therefore there is no justification for the DVO to make an assessment of a commuted sum based on the difference between the market value of a mainstream residential unit land value and the assessed market value of land for affordable</p>	<p>The commuted sum rates in Table 1 were set in the 2017 Supplementary Guidance and have been carried forward into the draft APG. The process of calculating the commuted sum rates was an open one which involved the development industry. All the calculations and methodology were provided and the work was undertaken by the District Valuer in accordance with the guidance in PAN 2/2010 ‘Affordable Housing and Housing Land Audits’. In instances where the applicant does not agree with the commuted sum figure derived from Table 1, section 2.11 of the APG provides scope for an individual site valuation approach to be pursued. No change is necessary.</p>	No revision proposed.

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		house land value. This approach can only be described as a “cash grab”. Additionally, the basis for valuation is wrong. We do not agree with the RICS methodology for valuing affordable housing land. The residual valuation methodology is not appropriate in such transactions. We also challenge the nil value of land transfer. Why would a willing seller sell their land for nil value, as all land has value?		
Affordable and Specialist Housing	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Object to the instruction of an independent valuer (para 2.11) related to the disagreement over commuted sums. The previous Supplementary Guidance stated that this was jointly appointed by the developer and the Council. The District Valuer is not independent and it is vitally important that any instruction is made jointly between the developer and the Council. The previous Supplementary Guidance wording should be reinstated.	Comment acknowledged. The end of the final sentence of section 2.11 was omitted in error from the draft APG. Wording should be reinstated to clarify that any valuer (whether that be the District Valuer Service or another independent valuer) will be jointly appointed by the developer and the Council. A modification is recommended accordingly.	Add the following additional wording (in bold below) to the end of the final sentence in section 2.11: “...by means of an independent valuer or the District Valuer Service, jointly appointed by the developer and the Council. ”
Affordable and Specialist Housing	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Support the acceptance (at para 2.14.3) that key worker accommodation is acceptable as affordable housing, and that affordable housing can be designated as key worker	Support welcomed.	Comment noted.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
		accommodation where this meets a need.		
Affordable and Specialist Housing	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	No objection in principle to the new requirement for the provision of varying needs (in para 2.15.3). However, the requirement for 15% of affordable housing to be provided as fully wheelchair accessible does not appear to be derived from the HNDA, with the requirement being 10% in other local authority areas. This should be assessed on a site-by-site basis. The wording should be amended to state that "...there is a requirement for a minimum percentage of affordable homes to be provided as fully wheelchair accessible. The required figure should be determined on a site-by-site basis based on particular needs at that time, but not exceeding 10%," in line with standards in other local authority areas.	The requirement for a minimum percentage of affordable homes to be provided as fully wheelchair accessible is derived from the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP). The current SHIP (2023/24 – 2027/28) sets a 15% target for delivery of wheelchair accessible affordable housing. Chapter 7 of the SHIP outlines a detailed justification for the 15% target, which includes a comprehensive review of existing evidence on the need for wheelchair accessible housing. For brevity, the detailed evidence is not repeated here. In broad terms however, Aberdeen City's Health and Social Care Partnership's Strategic Plan identifies the challenges of an ageing population and the desire to support people in a community setting, and there has been a recent increase in the overall number of applicants applying for accessible housing in the City. It is essential that an adequate supply of good quality accessible housing is in place in order to address these challenges, and the 15% target reflects this need. No change is necessary.	No revision proposed.
Affordable and Specialist Housing	28	The developer has a responsibility to ensure that they are not building over existing water and drainage infrastructure. They should contact Scottish Water even when their works falls under permitted development. Copies of water or waste water network drawings can	These are standardised comments that Scottish Water would submit to most applications, not specifically for affordable housing proposals. There is no need to add content covering these matters to this specific guidance. No change is necessary.	No revision proposed.

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		be ordered from the undernoted Asset Plan Providers who have developed internet based, plan collation services, which deliver substantial benefits over traditional methods of plan provisioning.		
Affordable and Specialist Housing	29	Do not agree that the presumption should be for the delivery of affordable housing as social rent as noted in section 2.5 of the APG. NPF4 defines affordable housing as “Good quality homes that are affordable to people on low incomes. This can include social rented, mid-market rented, shared-ownership, shared-equity, housing sold at discount (including plots for self-build), self-build plots and low cost housing without subsidy.” This statement is therefore not in accordance with the current Development Plan and should be removed.	NPF4’s definition of affordable housing is acknowledged. However, it is significant to note that it says affordable housing <u>can</u> take one of the stated forms. It does not necessarily follow that all the stated forms would be appropriate in every instance. Policy 16 (e) of NPF4 is more nuanced. It states that “ <i>Development proposals for new homes will be supported where they make provision for affordable homes to meet an identified need.</i> ” It is therefore entirely appropriate for the Council to provide clarification on the type/s of affordable housing that are most likely to meet identified needs within the City and to set out a presumption in favour of delivering these as part of new developments. Section 2.2 of the APG acknowledges that there are different types of affordable housing. Section 2.3 goes on to outline a preferred hierarchy, which identifies that social rented accommodation is the Council’s main preference as it will best address identified local needs. As such, it is reasonable for section 2.5 to identify a general expectation that affordable housing contributions will be delivered on site as social rent unless otherwise agreed by the Council’s Housing Team. No change is necessary.	No revision proposed.
Affordable and Specialist Housing	29	What justification is there for the transfer of serviced land at nil value to the Council or RSL for affordable housing (as outlined in section 2.8). There is a value in	Section 2.8 only applies in cases where the Council agrees that off-site affordable housing is appropriate. Bullet point 4 (which covers scenarios where the developer is not constructing the affordable housing) does not require the site to be transferred at nil value in	No revision proposed.

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		<p>affordable housing and there are costs associated with servicing sites. This should be amended to state that the land is transferred at an agreed value.</p> <p>Criterion 4 (in Section 2.8) also states that where the affordable units are not being delivered by the developer, the land must be transferred prior to the delivery of any units on the primary site. Any trigger in the transfer should be related to the timing of the delivery of affordable units in the development. This adds upfront cost to development that will have implications for viability.</p>	<p>every case. Rather, it states that the site should be transferred to the Council or an RSL “<i>at an agreed or nil value</i>”. This provides flexibility to take account of site specific circumstances.</p> <p>With respect to the timing of transfer, if off-site affordable housing provision is to work the Council must have certainty that the off-site units will be built at an appropriate time. Without this certainty, off-site provision could not be accepted as a credible solution to meeting the affordable housing requirement for the primary development site. In order to provide this certainty, and to allow sufficient time for the off-site affordable units to be delivered by the Council or RSL, the land must be transferred prior to the delivery of any open market units on the primary development site. This approach has been carried forward from the 2017 Supplementary Guidance without change and remains appropriate. No change is necessary.</p>	
Affordable and Specialist Housing	29	<p>Object to the method of calculating commuted payments. The APG provides no detail as to how these payment amounts have been calculated and how they relate to the delivery of affordable housing. Given there is suggestion of amending these figures periodically, there is a need to agree the method and rationale for this.</p>	<p>The commuted sum rates in Table 1 were set in the 2017 Supplementary Guidance and have been carried forward into the draft APG. The process of calculating the commuted sum rates was an open one which involved the development industry. All the calculations and methodology were provided and the work was undertaken by the District Valuer in accordance with the guidance in PAN 2/2010 ‘Affordable Housing and Housing Land Audits’. In instances where the applicant does not agree with the commuted sum figure derived from Table 1, section 2.11 of the APG provides scope for an individual site valuation approach to be pursued.</p>	No revision proposed.

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			<p>Given the significant short-term shocks that have recently affected the economy and the development industry it was not considered appropriate to undertake a review of the commuted sum rates prior to publishing the APG for consultation. However, the Council intends to undertake an early review of the commuted sum rates in Table 1 and this will be undertaken by a suitably qualified professional in accordance with all relevant guidance. No change is necessary at this stage.</p>	
Affordable and Specialist Housing	29	<p>The affordable mix of accommodation is referred to in 2.15.3, which states that the mix will be set out by the Council's Housing Team. It is acknowledged that there requires to be a demand for the type of housing, but it is not necessary to secure the full mix on every site and in some cases a single type of delivery will be appropriate. For example, with a flatted development in a more urban location, if there is a desire to see affordable housing it should be acceptable to include this within flats. To dictate the mix of affordable unrelated to the development proposed will negatively impact on delivery of developments.</p>	<p>In accordance with LDP Policy H4, an appropriate mix of sizes and types of dwellings should be provided across both the open market and affordable components of residential developments. In general terms, it is agreed that the mix of affordable units should broadly reflect the mix of open market units on a development site. For example, on a development where the open market units comprise a mix of dwelling types and sizes, the affordable component should reflect this and it is unlikely to be appropriate for the affordable units to be provided exclusively in one form (e.g. flats). It is acknowledged, however, that there may be instances where the open market units consist of a single type such as flats (e.g. in denser urban environments). If on-site affordable housing is sought in such cases, it is likely to be acceptable for the affordable units to mirror this and the Council is unlikely to require a full mix of affordable units including houses. It is agreed that text could be added to the first paragraph of section 2.15.3 to clarify this. A modification is recommended accordingly.</p>	<p>Amend the first paragraph of section 2.15.3 to read as follows (amended text identified in bold):</p> <p><i>"In accordance with policy H4 of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan, a good mix of sizes and types of dwellings should be provided across both the open market and affordable components of all residential developments. The affordable housing component should broadly reflect the mix of dwelling types and sizes within the open market element of residential developments. Affordable housing which consists entirely of one particular type or size of units (eg</i></p>

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				<i>exclusively flats) is unlikely to be considered appropriate unless this reflects the open market component of the development and is agreed by the Council. Early discussions with the Council's Housing Team will be needed..."</i>
Houses in Multiple Occupation and Overprovision	11	Warmly welcome the Draft APG, which will go some way to achieving more sustainable communities in terms of balance.	Support welcomed.	Comment noted.
Houses in Multiple Occupation and Overprovision	11	Welcome the setting of a level of occupancy of 3 or more unrelated people as the threshold where a material change of use will be considered to take place, whether for a house or flat.	Support welcomed.	Comment noted.
Houses in Multiple Occupation and Overprovision	11	The LDP explains that the percentage threshold to be used when measuring overprovision will be "based on an appropriate area definition such as single small data zones or census output areas". However, in the Draft APG the measurement of overprovision is only to be based on small data zones, with no mention of census output areas. Small data zones would not control the distribution of HMOs adequately because of their	The potential benefits of using the smaller Census Output Areas instead of Small Data Zones as the geographical basis for assessing Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) percentages are acknowledged. However, it should be noted that Planning Circular 2/2012 states that when setting HMO concentration levels planning authorities should take account of the demand for HMOs in each area as well as the need to protect residential amenity. It is very difficult to assess the demand for HMOs at the very localised Census Output Area level. This, in turn, would make it difficult to demonstrate compliance with the Circular guidance if such geographical areas were used as the basis for assessing	No revision proposed.

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		<p>size. As shown in a previous submission from Old Aberdeen Community Council, with an area of this size the entire 12% of HMOs could be crowded together in one corner. If the percentage of HMOs in that particular corner were measured, it could be 50% or more. An example of such a corner is University Road but there are others.</p> <p>We believe the best geographical areas for percentage measurements should be Census Output Areas. They would be small enough to make it less likely for there to be areas where most of the HMOs are located together. We request that the Draft APG be amended to set Census Output Areas as the geographical area by which percentage HMO measurements will be taken.</p>	<p>HMO concentration levels. It is therefore considered more likely that the proposed approach to managing HMO concentrations could be successfully challenged by prospective developers/applicants if the APG was amended to set Census Output Areas as the geographical area by which percentage HMO measurements will be taken. As such, no change is recommended in response to this comment.</p>	
Children's Nurseries	28	<p>The respondent (Scottish Water) states that the developer should not build over existing water and drainage infrastructure and should contact Scottish Water even if works fall under permitted development. Contact details for Asset Plan Providers are provided to enable developers to obtain</p>	<p>This is a standard response from Scottish Water which would apply to most development sites. Such matters would be generally be addressed with a formal note on the decision notice as part of any planning consent granted.</p>	No revision proposed.

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		copies of water or waste water network drawings		
Gypsy Traveller Sites	28	The respondent (Scottish Water) states that the owner/occupier/developer should not build over existing water and drainage infrastructure and should contact Scottish Water even if works fall under permitted development. Contact details for Asset Plan Providers are provided to enable developers to obtain copies of water or waste water network drawings.	These are standardised comments that Scottish Water would submit to most applications, not specifically for gypsy traveller sites. There is no need to add these to this specific guidance. Guidance sufficiently covers site selection, design, layout and pre-application advice. Comment noted.	No revision proposed.
Student Accommodation	10	Expresses concern over seeking Affordable Housing contributions for student accommodation given the absence of any reference to student accommodation in the wording of Policy H4 and H5. It contends that student accommodation is specialised development and not the same as market housing, and there are no references to such housing being the same as market housing in Policy H4, H5 or the NPF4.	Policy H5 requires all housing developments of five or more homes to contribute towards affordable housing provision. It does not distinguish between 'specialised' or 'market' housing. Student accommodation is a form of housing and it is reasonable to expect that it would generally be subject to the requirements of Policy H5 (or that it is at least capable of being so). This view is supported by the fact that previous iterations of planning guidance on this topic have expressly exempted purpose built student housing developments from the normal requirement to contribute towards affordable housing – there would have been no need for such an exemption if student accommodation was not capable of being subject to the normal affordable housing policy requirements in the first place. It is also supported by the fact that other forms of 'specialised' housing (e.g. retirement homes) are generally subject to affordable housing contributions under Policy H5. The draft APG therefore simply sought to remove the previous planning guidance that exempted	Remove the requirement to seek affordable housing contributions from purpose built student accommodation development, and modify the text as below: "In accordance with Policy H7 of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023, applications for purpose built student accommodation will be assessed for developer obligations. Where a development for purpose built student accommodation is

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			<p>student accommodation developments from affordable housing contributions under policy H5 – not to introduce fundamentally new affordable housing policy.</p> <p>Notwithstanding the above, it is acknowledged that the Council does treat purpose built student accommodation differently to other forms of housing for a range of other planning purposes. For instance, purpose built student accommodation is not monitored in the annual Housing Land Audit and it is not generally considered to contribute towards meeting overall housing targets.</p> <p>It is also acknowledged that there are likely to be practical difficulties with requiring affordable housing contributions from student accommodation developments. For example, it is unlikely that affordable housing could be provided on site within student developments as this may cause operational issues for the student accommodation and / or affordable housing providers. Furthermore, it is likely to be difficult to calculate the normal 25% affordable housing requirement for a student development. This is because the requirement normally represents 25% of the total number of dwelling units on the site, but student developments often comprise a series of bedrooms / bed spaces (potentially with en-suite facilities) which share access to the facilities such as living rooms and kitchens which would normally be present within an individual dwelling unit. This is likely to make it difficult to quantify the total number of 'dwelling units' for the purposes of calculating the normal 25% requirement. An additional robust methodology would need to be developed to enable this to be calculated in practice.</p>	<p>proposed, the requirement for a 25% contribution towards affordable housing on or off site will apply.</p> <p>Purpose built student accommodation is not required to contribute to affordable housing, and it is for these reasons that all student accommodation will be conditioned to limit occupancy to students.”</p>

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			<p>Additional research has been undertaken since the close of the consultation and this has been unable to identify any other examples of local authorities in Scotland that currently seek affordable housing contributions from student housing developments.</p> <p>On balance, and for the reasons outlined above, it is recommended that the exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.</p>	
Student Accommodation	10	It is unclear over how such a contribution could be secured, and it expresses concern that any on-site provision would affect the university's ability to afford pastoral care to students if some residents had no contractual relationship with management of student accommodation.	Comment noted. See the response above which acknowledges that there are likely to be practical difficulties with requiring affordable housing contributions from student accommodation developments and, on balance, recommends that the exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.	See modification recommended above to reinstate exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.
Student Accommodation	13	Supports statement in 2.1 for Student Accommodation. Raises serious concern over the pursuit of affordable housing contributions on student accommodation. It refers to a total shift from the (then) extent LDP and SG which outlined that such contributions would be waived for student accommodation. It seeks	The support for paragraph 2.1 is noted. Comment noted. See the response above which notes that the draft APG simply sought to remove the previous planning guidance exempting student accommodation developments from affordable housing contributions rather than introduce fundamentally new affordable housing policy, but based on further analysis recommends that the exemption should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.	See modification recommended above to reinstate exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.

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		the removal of this new requirement for AH contributions		
Student Accommodation	13	Such a measure would have fundamental issues from a planning legislation perspective, and serious implications for funding and delivering purpose built student accommodation (PBSA) schemes in the city. PBSA is not housing and is of sui generis use class (rather than residential), so is not assessed as such, and should not be subject to AH contributions	Student accommodation isn't within a Class 9 use, but neither are flats (sui generis) and affordable housing contributions are sought for those. Notwithstanding, see the response above which acknowledges that purpose built student accommodation is treated differently from other forms of housing for a range of other planning purposes and, on balance, recommends that the exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG. See the response above which acknowledges that purpose built student accommodation is treated differently from other forms of housing for a range of other planning purposes and, on balance, recommends that the exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.	See modification recommended above to reinstate exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.
Student Accommodation	13	Planning Circular 6/2013 outlines that matters which should not be included in supplementary guidance include items for which financial or other contributions (including AH) would be sought.	Comment noted. See the response above which notes that the draft APG simply sought to remove the previous planning guidance exempting student accommodation developments from affordable housing contributions rather than introduce fundamentally new affordable housing policy, but based on further analysis recommends that the exemption should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.	See modification recommended above to reinstate exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.
Student Accommodation	13	Aberdeen struggles to compete with Glasgow, Edinburgh and other	Comment noted. See the response above which acknowledges that there is no evidence of other Scottish	See modification recommended above to

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		regional cities to attract PBSA schemes and this move will further deter investment, particularly as no other city in Scotland seeks contributions for PBSA at present.	planning authorities seeking affordable housing contributions from student accommodation and, on balance, recommends that the exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.	reinstate exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.
Student Accommodation	13	Raises questions over how the necessary contributions would be delivered (particularly on site), and how this could conflict with the tests set out in Circular 3/2012 - Planning Obligations and Good Neighbour Agreements.	Comment noted. See the response above which acknowledges that there are likely to be practical difficulties with requiring affordable housing contributions from student accommodation developments and, on balance, recommends that the exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.	See modification recommended above to reinstate exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.
Student Accommodation	16	APG does not provide guidance, detail or clarity. Highlights age of existing student accommodation as something which is not accounted for. Views PBSA as being critical to success of universities and college in the city.	In cases where the age of existing accommodation is a factor in its diminishing suitability for purpose, this should feature in an agent's supporting statement. It is agreed that purpose built student accommodation plays an important role in providing housing for students.	No revision proposed.
Student Accommodation	16	Regarding 2.2 of draft APG, it identifies that the "need" criteria is not derived from a policy requirement in the LDP or NPF4. Market forces should dictate this. There is also no mechanism described to evidence 'need'.	The policy context is noted in paragraphs 1.1 and 2.1 of the Aberdeen Planning Guidance, primary Policy H7: Student Accommodation Developments. Market forces do dictate this. It still falls on developer to demonstrate this, as well as why Purpose Build Student Accommodation is appropriate ahead of other residential uses within that location (that may otherwise address housing demand).	No revision proposed.

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Student Accommodation	16	Policy H7 of LDP does not require affordable housing contributions from student accommodation and there is no link between this policy and the proposed requirement.	Comment noted. See the response above which notes that the draft APG simply sought to remove the previous planning guidance exempting student accommodation developments from affordable housing contributions rather than introduce fundamentally new affordable housing policy, but based on further analysis recommends that the exemption should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.	See modification recommended above to reinstate exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.
Student Accommodation	16	Student accommodation is not housing in standard sense and should not be assessed as such. As mix and matching student and private accommodation is not desirable, this would push financial contributions over on-site provision which creates financial burden on these developments. There is also no detail on how these contributions would be implemented.	Comment noted. See the response above which acknowledges that there are likely to be practical difficulties with requiring affordable housing contributions from student accommodation developments and, on balance, recommends that the exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.	See modification recommended above to reinstate exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.
Student Accommodation	16	Seeking AH contributions on student accommodation would fail to meet any of the five tests for DO contributions under Circular 3/2012 Planning Obligations and Good Neighbour Agreements.	Comment noted. See the response above which acknowledges that there are likely to be practical difficulties with requiring affordable housing contributions from student accommodation developments and, on balance, recommends that the exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.	See modification recommended above to reinstate exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.

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Student Accommodation	16	The draft APG (in this form) was not available when the LDP was going through the review process. It was only after the LDP was finalised that the Council sought to repeal guidance exempting student accommodation from AH contributions. This is a policy change and not a new piece of guidance, and it questions the procedural legality of this approach.	Comment noted. See the response above which notes that the draft APG simply sought to remove the previous planning guidance exempting student accommodation developments from affordable housing contributions rather than introduce fundamentally new affordable housing policy, but based on further analysis recommends that the exemption should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.	See modification recommended above to reinstate exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.
Student Accommodation	17	Strongly objects to requirement of 25% AH contribution for PBSA	Comment noted. See the response above which acknowledges that there are likely to be practical difficulties with requiring affordable housing contributions from student accommodation developments and, on balance, recommends that the exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.	See modification recommended above to reinstate exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.
Student Accommodation	17	Questions legality of introducing such a measure through supplementary guidance after LDP had been agreed. Such an approach is altering what was agreed "through the back door".	Comment noted. See the response above which notes that the draft APG simply sought to remove the previous planning guidance exempting student accommodation developments from affordable housing contributions rather than introduce fundamentally new affordable housing policy, but based on further analysis recommends that the exemption should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.	See modification recommended above to reinstate exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.

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Student Accommodation	17	Student accommodation is not within residential use class and has been treated as commercial by Council for years. Questions legality of requestion affordable housing.	Student accommodation isn't within a Class 9 use, but neither are flats (sui generis) and affordable housing contributions are sought for those. Notwithstanding, see the response above which acknowledges that purpose built student accommodation is treated differently from other forms of housing for a range of other planning purposes and, on balance, recommends that the exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.	See modification recommended above to reinstate exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.
Student Accommodation	17	This approach will drive away students from PBSA, into private rental market which will drive up demand and rents, which would be contrary to Council's aims.	It is noted that the rents within the private market are currently lower in Aberdeen than other Scottish university cities. However, it is agreed there is a potential impact to the private housing market. The advantage of providing Purpose Built Student Accommodation is that it can potentially "free up" the private housing market, thereby providing more choice, flexibility and affordability. A negative impact to the private housing market would not be desirable.	See modification recommended above to reinstate exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.
Student Accommodation	17	Lack of clarity on how contributions would be calculated and secured in the SG.	Comment noted. See the response above which acknowledges that there are likely to be practical difficulties with requiring affordable housing contributions from student accommodation developments and, on balance, recommends that the exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.	See modification recommended above to reinstate exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.

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Student Accommodation	17	No other planning authority in Scotland takes this approach, so it would disadvantage Aberdeen to other Scottish cities without such a burden.	Comment noted. See the response above which acknowledges that there is no evidence of other Scottish planning authorities seeking affordable housing contributions from student accommodation and, on balance, recommends that the exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.	See modification recommended above to reinstate exemption for purpose built student accommodation developments from contributing towards affordable housing should be reinstated in the final version of this APG.
Student Accommodation	28	States that the developer should not build over existing water and drainage infrastructure and should contact Scottish Water even if works fall under permitted development. Contact details for Asset Plan Providers are provided to enable developers to obtain copies of water or waste water network drawings	This is a standard response from Scottish Water which would apply to most development sites. Such matters would be generally be addressed with a formal note on the decision notice as part of any planning consent granted.	No revision proposed.
Topic Area: Delivering Infrastructure, Transport and Accessibility				
Planning Obligations	5	Welcome the recognition that new development may demand a requirement for new sports facilities, or the improvement of existing provision.	Support noted.	No revision proposed.
Planning Obligations	5	Different sports facilities have different costs and applying a standard figure may not deliver the sports facilities required where substantial development is proposed. It is not clear how the contribution amount has been	It is acknowledged that different types of sports facilities will have different costs. The contribution rate for sports and recreation facilities was reviewed in liaison with Sport Aberdeen. It has been calculated using nationally accepted benchmark quantity guidelines and is based on the actual cost of delivering new sports facilities in Aberdeen. It is not considered appropriate to include	No revision proposed.

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		calculated and would be useful to understand how this has been derived.	detailed justifications for all of the contribution rates within the SG itself as this would constitute an unnecessary level of detail and significantly lengthen the document, rendering it more difficult to read for most users. However, further evidence of the methodology used to calculate them is available on request and such further evidence is regularly provided during site-specific discussions with developers.	
Planning Obligations	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	There is concern over the one size fits all approach that ACC appear to be taking on a number of contributions sought under the draft SG. This is at odds with the purpose of planning obligations and will, in many cases, not meet the 5 tests set out in Circular 3/2012, which needs to be met in all instances.	ACC does not take a 'one size fits all' approach to developer obligations. Notwithstanding the potential contribution headings and rates outlined in the draft SG, the third paragraph in section 2 makes it clear that individual Developer Obligations Assessments are carried out by the Developer Obligations Team for each and every development proposal for which they are consulted. The exact contributions required as a result of each proposed development will therefore be determined on a case-by-case basis and outlined in the Developer Obligations Assessment. Contributions are only sought where all of the tests in Circular 3/2012 are met based on the site-specific circumstances, and contributions are not routinely sought under every potential contribution heading. It is also important to note that the scale and mix of every development is taken into account when calculating the contributions that are required – section 3 of the draft SG explains how a 'Standard House Unit Equivalent' (SHUE) is calculated for each development, and this ensures that all contributions are fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development. This is an established practice which has been operated by ACC for many years. No change is necessary.	No revision proposed.

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Planning Obligations	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	If developer contributions are sought in every potential category (which is increasingly likely to be the case), then significant additional costs will be incurred by developers. Together with increasing build costs, the viability of developments will become seriously compromised.	As outlined above, developer contributions are not routinely sought under every potential contribution heading in the draft SG. Rather, Developer Obligations Assessments are carried out on an individual site-by-site basis, and contributions are only sought where they are required to mitigate the impact of the proposed development and can be justified against the tests in Circular 3/2012 based on the site-specific circumstances. Section 2.4 of the draft SG outlines the measures that ACC will be willing to take towards the timing or phasing of contributions to assist development viability. It also makes provision for developers to submit Viability Assessments for consideration by ACC in cases where it is asserted that the necessary developer contributions will have an adverse impact on the viability of a development. Again, this is an established practice which has been operated by ACC for many years. No change is necessary.	No revision proposed.
Planning Obligations	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Objection is made to paragraph 2.1 (Management of Funds). All contributions must be kept in a separate ring-fenced interest-bearing account for each development. This is to ensure the funds are only used for the purposes they are collected and for the appropriate amount, including interest, to be returned if not spent within the relevant timeframe. Objection is also made to the use of interest to manage the developer obligations fund and	All financial contributions are held in an interest-bearing account separate from other Council accounts and which is specifically for developer obligations. All payments into and out of that account are clearly referenced to the development in question. This allows the financial contributions for every individual development to be clearly identified and monitored (and returned with interest if necessary if they are not spent within the relevant timeframe). It is not necessary for there to be a separate account for each individual development, and the administration of such would be onerous. An associated database is also used to monitor and manage the financial contributions that are held at any given point in time, and robust governance procedures are in place to ensure that any spend of developer obligation funds	No revision proposed.

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		this is not considered to be competent.	<p>accords with the s69 or s75 legal agreement for the relevant development. Again, this is an established practice which has been operated by ACC for many years.</p> <p>The final paragraph in section 2.1 of the draft SG states that 9% of the total interest accrued on contributions will be used to support the monitoring and management of developer obligations funds. Identical text appeared in the 2017 Planning Obligations SG and this part of the guidance is therefore unchanged (although it is understood that ACC has not actually utilised a proportion of the interest accrued for this purpose over recent years). No change is necessary.</p>	
Planning Obligations	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Increasing the time permitted to spend contributions to 10 years is completely unacceptable and unjustified. Any contributions sought on that basis are not justifiable in terms of Circular 3/2012 and cannot be deemed reasonable or fairly relate to the development as the perceived deficit will not be made good until years after the development is complete.	<p>An analysis of practices in a wide range of other planning authorities shows that many authorities apply 10 year periods (and in some cases even longer) for developer contributions to be spent.</p> <p>In many cases, improvements to infrastructure and facilities are required to mitigate the cumulative impact/s of several developments in a given area. Budget pressures within the public sector mean that it is rarely possible to 'forward fund' the necessary infrastructure improvements in advance of collecting appropriate contributions from all the relevant developments. In such cases, it can take a relatively long time to collect all the necessary contributions as the contributing developments often progress at different rates. It would generally not be appropriate if the contributions from the earlier developments in such circumstances had to be returned because insufficient time had been allowed to collect payments from other later developments in the area and then deliver the necessary infrastructure.</p>	In the third paragraph of section 2.1 replace all references to '10 years' with '7 years'.

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			Notwithstanding the above, on balance it is considered that reverting to the existing 7 year spend period (which is well established and has been applied by ACC for a number of years) would strike a more appropriate balance between allowing sufficient time to collect and then spend contributions whilst ensuring that there is an appropriate and clear relationship between the infrastructure that is ultimately delivered and the development/s that contributed towards it. A change is recommended accordingly.	
Planning Obligations	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Object to the use of the All-in Tender Price Index at paragraph 2.3. This is not publicly available to the house building industry for scrutiny and any increases should relate to the publicly available RPI.	The BCIS All-In Tender Price index is an industry accepted standard and is directly related to build costs in the development and construction industry. It is therefore the most appropriate mechanism for index-linking developer contributions. Conversely, RPI covers a wide range of other unrelated factors (household spending, entertainment, leisure etc) and would therefore not be appropriate to use for this purpose. Again, it should be noted that using the BCIS All-In Tender Price to index-link developer contributions is an established practice which has been operated by ACC (and other local authorities) for many years. No change is necessary.	No revision proposed.
Planning Obligations	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	General concern is expressed at the increased rates contained within the draft SG and the lack of clarity and justification for the proposed increases, with some being substantially more than the current SG. It is questioned how these increases have been calculated as no breakdown or justification is provided.	The rates under each of the potential contribution headings in the draft SG have been subject to comprehensive review. This has included a review of the methodology by which they have been calculated. It is not considered appropriate to include detailed justifications for all of the rates within the SG itself as this would constitute an unnecessary level of detail and significantly lengthen the document, rendering it more difficult to read for most users. However, further evidence of the methodology used to calculate them is available on	No revision proposed.

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			<p>request and such further evidence is regularly provided during site-specific discussions with developers.</p> <p>The rates within the draft SG also reflect the well-documented rises in build costs since the previous guidance was published. These significant increases have a direct impact on the costs of delivering the mitigation works that will be necessary to accommodate the impact/s of new development. It is therefore reasonable and appropriate for these increased costs to be reflected in the contributions sought from new developments. However, it is also important to note that developer contributions will be index-linked at the time of payment (using the BCIS All-In Tender Price index as stated above). As outlined in section 2.3 of the draft SG, the base date for indexation purposes will be taken as the date of SG adoption. This means that contributions may be lower at the point of payment if the index value is lower at that point in time.</p>	
Planning Obligations	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Objection is made to the requirement to contribute to any cycle hire scheme, car clubs and bus permits. In Aberdeen, these facilities are run by private companies and it is not acceptable for housebuilders to subsidise privately run schemes. It is also questioned whether a contribution to all of these measures is applicable for 'all developments', which appears to be the suggestion from the draft, as opposed to on a site-by-site basis	The fact that these facilities are delivered by private companies does not preclude developer contributions from being sought towards them in principle. The argument that they are privately operated fails to take account of the fact that they are still relied upon to provide an important public service. Circular 3/2012 does not make any distinction between services and facilities based on ownership or management arrangements, and it does not preclude contributions being sought towards privately operated facilities in principle. Where contributions are required towards the enhancement of such facilities, robust arrangements will be put in place to ensure that the contributions are spent appropriately on	No revision proposed.

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		<p>following a detailed assessment of the proposed development.</p>	<p>increasing the capacity of those facilities to accommodate additional users resulting from new development.</p> <p>By way of illustration, Aberdeen's car club scheme is operated by a private company under a contract with ACC. Any developer contributions towards the car club are paid to ACC and subsequently released to the car club for specific purposes aligned to spend conditions set out in the s69 or s75 legal agreement for each relevant development. These arrangements are well established and have been operated by ACC for many years. Similar arrangements exist for bus permit contributions, which are rarely required in practice but may be sought in instances where a contribution towards sustainable transport measures is required as a consequence of limited parking provision or other site specific circumstances. Equivalent arrangements will also be put in place to ensure the appropriate use of any developer contributions towards the cycle hire scheme, which was launched as a partnership between ACC and a private operator in late 2022.</p> <p>It should also be noted that contributions towards these measures will not be required for all developments. The draft SG already makes this clear by stating that these contributions "<u>may apply</u> to all residential developments of 3 or more units...". As identified above, the exact contributions for any given development proposal are determined on a case-by-case basis taking account of the site-specific circumstances. Contributions are only sought where they satisfy the tests in Circular 3/2012, and the contribution details are all outlined in a site-specific Developer Obligations Assessment.</p>	

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Planning Obligations	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Explanation is sought as to why contributions are required towards Core Paths under paragraph 3.2 as not every site has capacity or ability to provide a Core Path or a link to the Core Path Network. The contribution of almost £700 per SHUE is excessive and further details of what this calculation is based on are required.	Core path contributions are not sought for every development. As noted above, the exact contributions for any given development proposal are determined on a case-by-case basis. Contributions are only sought where they satisfy the tests in Circular 3/2012, and the contribution details are all outlined in a site-specific Developer Obligations Assessment. Core Path contributions are only sought in cases where there are specific core paths in the vicinity of the development site and where those specific paths require enhancement to accommodate the new users that the development is expected to generate. As noted in response to other submissions, it is not considered appropriate to include the full methodology used to derive the £651 core path contribution rate in the SG itself, but further evidence of the methodology is available on request and such further evidence is regularly provided during site-specific discussions with developers. No change is required.	No revision proposed.
Planning Obligations	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Strongly object to the requirement to contribute to primary or secondary schools where they are operating at over 90% capacity or are forecast to exceed 90% capacity. This is not based on any robust justification and there is no explanation why this has changed from the current 2017 SG. Scottish Government Guidance which recommends that planning capacity should be used. HFS therefore do not accept that contributions are required unless a	An analysis of practices in a range of other neighbouring planning authorities shows that many apply a 90% capacity threshold (and in some cases even lower) as the point at which developer contributions towards education capacity enhancements are sought. There is therefore a well-established precedent for this approach elsewhere and no reason in principle to suggest that a similar approach cannot be applied in Aberdeen. ACC's School Estate Plan states that in order to ensure that spaces in schools can be used flexibly and for their intended purpose to support curriculum delivery, the optimum range for all schools to operate at is between 80% and 95% of their available capacity. The Estate Plan	In section 3.3 replace all references to '90%' with '95%'.

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		<p>school has reached 100% capacity. If schools cannot operate effectively at 90% or indeed 100% capacity, it would be apparent that the school has wider issues affecting it (e.g. staffing issues), rather than just physical capacity. Seeking developer contributions to try and mitigate such issues would not be appropriate and fails to meet the tests of Circular 3/2012.</p>	<p>goes on to state that school roll forecasts are used to allow officers to identify at an early stage where there may be pressures on the number of available spaces at a school and to enable appropriate action to be taken to address any emerging capacity issues (ie mitigation works to increase capacity). In the context of identifying the need for mitigation works, the Estate Plan reiterates that officers work to the principle that the occupancy level of all schools should be maintained at between 80% and 95% of their maximum available capacity.</p> <p>It is also significant to note that schools need flexibility to allow for different class configurations due to statutory maximum class sizes for different year groups (particularly in primary schools). As a result, the way in which classes need to be configured in any particular year can make it impossible to reach 100% of the planning capacity of the school.</p> <p>There is therefore a reasonable and justifiable case for setting the threshold for seeking developer contributions towards education capacity enhancements at a level below 100% of the planning capacity of the relevant school. However, to ensure full consistency with the School Estate Plan, it is recommended that the threshold should be amended to 95% of the planning capacity in the final version of the SG (as this is defined as the upper limit for efficient school operation within the School Estate Plan and is the threshold above which mitigation works will generally be introduced to increase capacity). A modification is recommended accordingly.</p>	
Planning Obligations	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	The education mitigation rates per pupil in the draft SG are	The education mitigation rates in the draft SG were calculated using cost information from actual recent	See recommended changes to education mitigation rates

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		<p>significantly higher than current 2017 SG rates. The minimum increase is 26% higher for secondary new build for a 1,000 pupil capacity school, with reconfiguration of a primary school seeing a massive 216% increase compared with current rates. The development industry requires further information in relation to how these increases are calculated to explain why they have risen so significantly. They should be based on The School Premises (General Requirements and Standards) (Scotland) Regulations 1967 (and it is understood that these have not changed since the 1973 and 1979 Amendment Regulations). Further, the costs should be based on build costs only and should not include fitting out which should come from revenue streams and not capital budgets.</p>	<p>examples of education capital projects in Aberdeen City, or by using information on education space requirements and benchmark cost data from other nationally recognised sources including Scottish Futures Trust.</p> <p>As noted in response to other submissions, it is not considered appropriate to include the full methodology used to derive the education mitigation rates in the SG itself, but further evidence of the methodology is available on request and such further evidence is regularly provided during site-specific discussions with developers. In this case further information on the calculation of the education mitigation rates is also provided in the response to respondent 29 below, where a number of amendments to the mitigation rates are proposed to address the detailed comments raised by that respondent.</p> <p>The School Premises (General Requirements and Standards) (Scotland) Regulations 1967 prescribe the minimum standards that school premises and equipment must meet. ACC complies with these and other relevant regulations when delivering new education infrastructure projects. The school premises regulations do not provide cost information on which to base mitigation rates for planning obligations, and it is therefore reasonable to utilise the information sources noted above to calculate the necessary mitigation rates.</p> <p>The education mitigation rates outlined in the draft SG include all capital costs associated with the delivery of a building / structure to a state which is suitable for</p>	<p>in response to respondent 29 below.</p>

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			occupation and educational use. They do not include any revenue costs.	
Planning Obligations	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	<p>Object to the requirement to contribute to healthcare facilities. Further information is required and requirements need to be fully justified in terms of Circular 3/2012. The guidance needs to be clear that healthcare contributions will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and the development industry should not be expected to contribute to privately owned and operated GP and dental practices, due to the limited control that exists over such facilities.</p> <p>It is also understood that not all monies collected to date have been passed onto healthcare facilities for any required mitigation. This suggests that healthcare contributions are not essential to make residential developments acceptable in planning terms. Further clarity is therefore required on how these contributions have been spent and no further healthcare contributions should be collected until such matters have been clarified.</p>	<p>The fact that some healthcare facilities such as GP and dental practices are privately owned and operated does not preclude contributions from being sought towards their enhancement where necessary. This issue has been considered multiple times during LDP Examinations, including during the Examination of ACC's current LDP. In the Examination Report for the current LDP, the Reporter concluded that:</p> <p><i>"I acknowledge that some facilities are privately owned and run, but their funding is provided by the local health board (NHS Grampian) in order to provide an essential public service. If a development would generate additional need and demand for public services for which there is not currently the physical capacity to accommodate, a developer contribution towards appropriate mitigation would be capable, in principle at least, of aligning with Circular 3/2012.</i></p> <p><i>The point that some healthcare facilities are privately owned and run fails to take account of the fact that they are still relied upon to provide a public service. The Circular does not make any distinction based on ownership or management arrangements. Without developer contributions, there may be no prospect of healthcare capacity being increased to a sufficient level, whether at privately or publicly owned premises, to accommodate patients from new developments"</i> (paras 9 & 10, pg 764).</p>	No revision proposed.

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			<p>As noted above in response to other comments, the exact contributions for any given development proposal are determined on a case-by-case basis. Contributions are only sought where they satisfy the tests in Circular 3/2012, and the contribution details are all outlined in a site-specific Developer Obligations Assessment. Contributions towards healthcare are only sought in cases where the existing healthcare facilities that would serve a new development do not have sufficient physical capacity to absorb the additional patients that are expected to be generated and where mitigation is required to provide the necessary additional capacity.</p> <p>ACC's Developer Obligations Team Leader works collaboratively with NHS Grampian to help ensure that the healthcare contributions collected from new developments are used to deliver appropriate capacity enhancement works in accordance with the spend terms and time periods outlined in the s69 or s75 legal agreement for all relevant developments. Developer obligations funds have been used to deliver a number of recent capacity enhancements to healthcare facilities within the City.</p>	
Planning Obligations	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Any reference to the requirement to contribute to libraries should be removed. There are a number of libraries closing across the city which demonstrates that there are no capacity issues with these facilities. Keeping library facilities open is a revenue cost and not a capital cost and it is not justifiable	It is acknowledged that ACC recently announced the closure of a number of libraries, and it is agreed that there is unlikely to be any justifiable case for seeking developer contributions towards library facilities during the timeframe of the current LDP. In practice, the Council has not been seeking such contributions from new developments for several years. It is therefore agreed that the reference to libraries should be removed from section 3.6. A change is recommended accordingly. This	Delete the reference to libraries from the first sentence in section 3.6.

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		to seek contributions towards these on this basis.	will not preclude contributions being sought towards community facilities.	
Planning Obligations	29	Homes for Scotland has prepared a response on behalf of the house building industry and we concur with the comments and points raised in that response. Further comments are made below setting out additional reasons for objection.	See officer's response to respondents 12, 14, 15, 18, 20.	See action/s in response to respondents 12, 14, 15, 18, 20.
Planning Obligations	29	The percentage increases in figures contained within this guidance are staggering and will impact the viability of development across the city. No supporting detail is provided for these increases and we would encourage the Council to share the workings behind these figures in full so that there can be proper engagement and comment made.	This issue was also raised by respondents 12, 14, 15, 18, 20 and a response to it is outlined above.	See action/s in response to respondents 12, 14, 15, 18, 20.
Planning Obligations	29	Section 2.1 (Management of Funds) advises that money will be held for a period of 10 years from payment of the final contribution. In the main this will result in money being held for 10 years after the completion of a development. An improvement required this length of time after a development is complete cannot reasonably relate to 10 years after a development has been completed.	This issue was also raised by respondents 12, 14, 15, 18, 20 and a response to it is outlined above.	See action/s in response to respondents 12, 14, 15, 18, 20.

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Planning Obligations	29	Section 2.1 also suggests that the monitoring of payments is an administrative cost and will total 9% of the total interest accrued to support this. This is not directly related to the impact of development. The use of funds to provide Council administrative services in holding and allocating money internally is not considered to be in accordance with Circular 3/2012. All contributions made should be used to fund physical improvements in infrastructure.	This issue was also raised by respondents 12, 14, 15, 18, 20 and a response to it is outlined above.	See action/s in response to respondents 12, 14, 15, 18, 20.
Planning Obligations	29	The rates set out should not be altered in accordance with the All-in Tender Price Index (as noted within section 2.3) without first consulting on these changes. The scale of obligations contained within the Supplementary Guidance will have significant implications on development viability and this lack of review is not acceptable. In the case that such a statement remains it must be made clear that the obligation costs may either increase or decrease in accordance with the Index.	This issue was also raised by respondents 12, 14, 15, 18, 20 and a response to it is outlined above. As outlined in the response above, developer contributions will be index-linked at the time of payment (using the BCIS All-In-Tender Price index) and may therefore either increase or decrease in accordance with the index.	See action/s in response to respondents 12, 14, 15, 18, 20.
Planning Obligations	29	Section 3.1 makes reference to roads improvements and that in some instances the Council will	The requirement for any developer contribution towards roads improvements is assessed on a case-by-case basis taking into account site specific circumstances. In	No revision proposed.

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		take on the responsibility for works with costs met by the developer. It should be clarified that these works should be competitively tendered with information provided to the developer to confirm that the costs are necessary to make the required improvements.	cases where contributions are required towards local roads infrastructure, a justification for the necessary improvements and details of the associated costs will be provided to the developer by ACC's Roads Team. Such contributions will only be sought in cases where the tests of Circular 3/2012 are met in full. This is an established practice which has been operated by ACC for many years, and this section of the draft SG has been carried forward from the 2017 Planning Obligations SG unchanged. No modification is necessary.	
Planning Obligations	29	There is reference to payment of a membership for bike hire scheme for residential developments where parking is limited. Contribution to cycle hire memberships would only be necessary where bike storage within a development is unavailable. At £400 per annum any individual would most likely choose to own a personal bike.	It is acknowledged that contributions towards Aberdeen's cycle hire scheme will generally only be required in cases where secure cycle parking / storage is not provided as an integral part of the development. It is agreed that additional text could be added to the final version of the SG to clarify this point. On a more general note, the contribution rate of £480 per unit reflects the cost of providing two annual memberships of the cycle hire scheme per household and that the scheme provides access to ebikes, which are typically more expensive to purchase than traditional bikes.	Amend the text in Table 2, in the row for 'Cycle Hire Scheme', as follows (new text in bold): <i>"May apply to all residential developments of 3 or more units where full secure cycle parking and storage provision is limited."</i>
Planning Obligations	29	The car club contribution figure per unit appears to be expensive. These costs have been previously based on an assessment of the car club spaces that are sustainable and necessary and would provide a cost better linked to the impact of development.	The car club contribution rate of £400 per unit reflects the actual cost of providing two memberships of the car club for each dwelling for three years, providing an allowance of driving credit to each dwelling for three years, and a contribution towards maintaining/sustaining the nearest car club vehicle to the development in question. This rate is unchanged from the 2017 Planning Obligations SG and has therefore been established for several years. As outlined in the SG, this contribution will only be sought from developments where full parking provision is limited and where the shortfall in parking is not mitigated by other forms of transport. For major developments, site	Add additional text to the end of the 'Car Clubs' section in Table 2, as follows: <i>"For major developments, contributions may be required towards additional car club vehicles and/or parking spaces, based on the specific circumstances of the site. The Transport</i>

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			specific assessments of car club requirements (e.g. new parking spaces, additional vehicles etc) will continue to be undertaken to inform site specific financial contributions in line with established practice and as set out in the Transport and Accessibility APG. Additional text could be added to clarify this and a change is recommended accordingly.	<i>and Accessibility APG provides guidance on the factors that will be taken into account to determine any car club contribution in such cases."</i>
Planning Obligations	29	Education contributions are listed as applying to developments where 90% of a school's planning capacity is reached. Previously the Supplementary Guidance made reference to schools exceeding the maximum capacity of a school as the trigger for developer obligations. Currently 6 out of 11 Academies are over 90% of capacity and have been operating at this level for significant periods of time. With increasing costs and budget pressures it is unrealistic to assume that development can finance the improvements across schools that the Council would like to achieve.	This issue was also raised by respondents 12, 14, 15, 18, 20 and a response to it is outlined above.	See action/s in response to respondents 12, 14, 15, 18, 20.
Planning Obligations	29	The costs of education contributions have increased significantly. We have reviewed information available on Council projects and are not of the opinion that these increased rates are fully attributable to the infrastructure necessary to serve the new	The education mitigation rates in the draft SG were calculated using cost information from actual recent examples of education capital projects in Aberdeen City, or by using information on education space requirements and benchmark cost data from other nationally recognised sources including Scottish Futures Trust (SFT).	Amend the new build two stream primary school rate per pupil from '£47,235 plus proportionate land value' to '£37,160 plus proportionate land value'.

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		<p>development. Countesswells Primary School was completed by the Council at a cost of £20.5m for 434 pupil spaces. Dividing the cost by pupil numbers equates to the new figure proposed. This school, however, includes a nursery and also additional sports provision. There is no suggestion in policy that contributions will be made towards Early Years provision and sports and recreation are covered by separate contribution figures so should be excluded from the primary pupil contribution.</p> <p>SFT have undertaken analysis of designs for a range of schools and have produced a report on findings. The cost information is not up-to-date, but the information on areas remains a good benchmark for which to judge new development. This indicates that for primary schools of 434 pupils there should be a target of 7.5 sqm per pupil. Floor plans of the Countesswells School identify that the GIA is 4,163.6sq.m and 1.28 times larger than the reference design. If the build cost was reduced to 78% of the budget figure then this would provide a</p>	<p>It is acknowledged that the mitigation rate for a new two-stream primary school in the draft SG was based on the cost of delivering the new Countesswells Primary School. It is accepted that this new school includes an element of nursery /early years provision and that there is no basis in the LDP for seeking contributions towards nursery / early years provision. A further review has therefore been undertaken to establish the cost of Countesswells Primary School excluding the nursery / early years component. This review has resulted in a reduced mitigation rate for a new two-stream primary school of £37,160 per pupil, and a change to the SG is recommended accordingly. It is also accepted that the new Countesswells Primary School includes sports provision. However, the level of sports provision is necessary to meet the minimum requirements of the school itself. A 3G all-weather pitch was included within the school design since this was the most efficient way of meeting the sports demands of the school, as grass pitches would have required a significantly greater land take. As the 3G pitch can be used more intensively than grass pitches, it can also be made available for wider public use on occasion. However, it is important to stress that this is only outside school hours, and that it should not be viewed as an alternative to or replacement for other public sports and recreation facilities. It is therefore not appropriate to exclude the sports provision element from the cost calculations.</p> <p>Although not specifically raised by the respondent, it should be noted that the mitigation rate for a new three-stream primary school in the draft SG was based on the cost of delivering the new Riverbank Primary School.</p>	<p>Amend the new build three stream primary school rate per pupil from '£46,237 plus proportionate land value' to '£40,865 plus proportionate land value'.</p> <p>Amend the secondary school permanent extension rate per pupil from '£27,300' to '£39,414'.</p> <p>Include a footnote to the primary and secondary school permanent extension rates to identify that they are based on Q4 2019 costs.</p>

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		<p>pupil rate of £36,932, which would be a 14% increase from previous figures. This remains expensive but is more realistic than the figures identified.</p> <p>The school extension figures have increased by 200% from previous figures without justification. There have not been many recent school extensions to compare to, but the Council did report on an extension for 300 pupils at Bucksburn Academy and there was a figure of £1.5m identified for budget cost. This equates to £5,000 per pupil - less than the current figure let alone 200% higher.</p> <p>(Supplementary evidence provided in support of the above comments on costs).</p>	<p>This new school also includes an element of nursery / early years provision and, for the reasons outlined above, a further review has been undertaken to establish the cost of Riverbank Primary School excluding this element. This has resulted in a reduced mitigation rate for a new three-stream primary school of £40,865 per pupil, and a change to the SG is recommended accordingly.</p> <p>The extension mitigation rates in the draft SG are based on data from SFT. They were calculated using the (then) emerging Phase 3 Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP) metrics, terms and conditions. These provide benchmark figures for the amount of space (in sqm) required per pupil and cost metrics (in £/sqm) which have been used to establish the extension mitigation rates. These are nationally accepted standards, and in the absence of recent extension projects in Aberdeen City to compare to (as acknowledged by the respondent) it is reasonable to use them as the basis for calculating the extension mitigation rates. Following publication of the Draft SG for consultation, the SFT Phase 3 metrics were formally published in May 2023. The published metrics include different/individual space and cost metric figures for primary and secondary schools, whereas the mitigation rates in the Draft SG were based on single/combined space and cost metrics for both types of school. This additional data identifies the need for a different (higher) secondary extension mitigation rate of £39,414 per pupil. The SFT Phase 3 metrics also include additional detail on the index base date for the cost metrics, which was not known at the time of writing the Draft SG. Technical changes are therefore recommended to update the secondary school extension mitigation rate</p>	

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			<p>and to identify the index base dates for both primary and secondary extension mitigation rates. This will bring the final version of the SG into full alignment with the SFT Phase 3 metrics. Contrary to the respondent's assertions, ACC has not identified a budget cost of £1.5m for an extension at Bucksburn Academy. The committee report to which the respondent's supplementary evidence refers sought approval of an outline business case for an extension to Bucksburn Academy. It noted that £1.5m would be required to progress the project to the detailed design stage. This figure was therefore not a total budget cost for delivering an extension at the school. Modular accommodation has recently been installed on a temporary basis pending the delivery of a permanent extension in the future. An update report to the Finance and Resources Committee on 17 May 2023 noted that the gross budget for installation of the temporary accommodation alone is £2.56m, and it is reasonable to expect that the future permanent extension will cost significantly more. No change is necessary in this respect.</p>	
Planning Obligations	29	<p>Section 3.4 advises that where new build facilities are provided then a land value will also be required. Any land value attributable must only relate to the proportional contribution of the development. If the practice serves a wider area then it would not be reasonable to provide serviced land at nil value. Furthermore, there is a cost to a landowner / developer in servicing a site. This</p>	<p>The text in section 3.4 already makes clear that for developments where a new build facility is proposed a <u>proportionate</u> land contribution will be required. This will ensure that any land contribution will fairly and reasonably relate in scale and kind to the proposed development in accordance with Circular 3/2012. It is acknowledged that if a new facility is intended to serve an area which is wider than the development itself, it may not always be reasonable to seek the provision of serviced land at nil value. However, the SG does not state that this will be required in all cases – rather it states that the contribution <u>may</u> be in the form of serviced</p>	No revision proposed.

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		is not free and should either be paid for by the NHS or discounted from any contributions for the development.	land at nil value. This allows flexibility to take account of site-specific circumstances. This text has been carried forward from the 2017 Planning Obligations SG unchanged. No modification is necessary.	
Planning Obligations	29	Contributions for facilities such as sports facilities and community facilities, must be linked to the local area. For transparency it would assist if facilities requiring investment could be identified as a part of this guidance with an area identifying the extent of use and contribution. The costs of the Sports and Recreation contribution has increased significantly and justification for this increase is necessary.	<p>Any contributions towards sports and recreation or community facilities will be linked to facilities which serve the development in question and which therefore have a direct relationship with it. The exact details of any such contributions will be determined on a case-by-case basis and outlined in the Developer Obligations Assessment for each individual development. Robust governance procedures are also in place to ensure that any such developer contributions (and indeed all developer obligation funds) are spent on infrastructure enhancements which have a direct relationship with the contributing development and in full accordance with the relevant s69 or s75 legal agreement.</p> <p>It is not possible to identify all the facilities that are expected to require investment during the LDP timeframe within this SG, and it is unlikely that this would be appropriate as it would not provide flexibility to accommodate changing circumstances over the plan period. However, the details of the specific facilities that require upgrading will be outlined in the detailed Developer Obligations Assessment Reports for individual developments. There may also be opportunities to provide an indication of the facilities that are likely to require capacity enhancements through other mechanisms (eg Locality Plans). These opportunities will be investigated as far as practicable.</p>	No revision proposed.

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			The contribution rate for sports and recreation facilities was reviewed in liaison with Sport Aberdeen. It has been calculated using nationally accepted benchmark quantity guidelines and is based on the actual cost of delivering new sports facilities in Aberdeen. As identified in response to other submissions, it is not considered appropriate to include the detailed methodologies used to calculate the contribution rates in the SG itself. However, further evidence is available on request and such further evidence is regularly provided during site-specific discussions with developers.	
Transport and Accessibility	1	There should be reference within the guidance to the necessity of private car use by caregivers who work full time. The guidance could be perceived as a judgement upon their need to use a private car.	The Scottish Government has declared a climate change emergency and it is incumbent upon Planning Authorities to seek to address this. A significant proportion of Scotland's carbon emissions are a result of our dependence as a society upon the usage of private cars. The Transport and Accessibility Planning Guidance sets out how and where development should be planned and how development should be designed in order to reduce dependence upon private car usage. It is not the aim of planning guidance to make judgements upon the personal circumstances of individuals. The reference that the respondent seeks is not material to the planning aims of the guidance.	No revision proposed.
Transport and Accessibility	6a	There should be reference to wheeling as well as walking. There should also be guidance upon 20-minute neighbourhoods. Finally, with respect to the section about electric vehicle charging infrastructure, reference should be made to this infrastructure not	The reference to wheeling in addition to walking is considered to be an appropriate change that reflects a wider range of users of pedestrian infrastructure. Reference will also be made to electric vehicle charging infrastructure not impeding wheelchair users as well as walking.	References to wheeling have been added to the document. A reference to EV infrastructure not blocking wheelchair users has been added to section 2.3.2

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		impeding walking or wheelchair users on the pavement.		
Transport and Accessibility	8	There is far less cycle parking space required for offices and other buildings compared to car parking space, which goes against active travel goals.	Whilst it is true the spatial requirement for bicycles is less than the spatial requirements for private cars, it should be noted that a single private car requires significantly more space than a single bicycle. The spatial requirement for car parking was chosen in order to reduce the need for on-street parking which would clutter public roadways. The spatial requirement for bicycles was chosen in order to accommodate current and future demand.	No revision proposed.
Transport and Accessibility	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	The guidance is too prescriptive which does not fit in with the Council's agenda for good design and that of 'Designing Streets' and wider placemaking principles. Many standards conflict with other placemaking priorities and these aspects should be aligned or allowed greater flexibility so that applications can be assessed on a site by site basis.	It is agreed that the draft planning guidance contains a significant amount of information on technical standards. Consequently, a section on designing accessible places has been added which has a greater focus on the overall principles of placemaking. Nevertheless, many sections of the proposed guidance are required to be prescriptive as they relate to Building Standards legislation. The comment in relation to a perceived conflict between technical standards in the document and placemaking priorities is not clear – no specific example has been highlighted so it is difficult to apply changes to address this perception. Applications will always be assessed upon a site by site basis.	Section 2.1 has been changed to 'Designing Accessible Places' which is more in line with design guidance.
Transport and Accessibility	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Paragraph 2.1 requires sites to be within 400m of public transport and this is onerous and contrary to some existing allocated sites and unreasonable to be delivered through a planning application. Also, the reference to 400m is outdated and should be reconsidered given the move towards 20 minute	Paragraph 2.1 states '...ideally public transport should be available within 400 metres of the origins and destinations of trips within the development.' This is not a 'requirement' as outlined in the respondent's representation. It is understood that some allocated sites are not within 400m of public transport stops. There is nothing within the guidance or policy which states that developers must ensure public transport is within 400m of all parts of such development sites. The Council do not agree that the reference to 400m is outdated. The	No revision proposed.

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		neighbourhoods (10 minute walk each way being 800m).	'Walkable neighbourhoods' section within National Policy Document - Designing Streets still refers to 400m walking distance (5 minute walk) as being ideal in new development.	
Transport and Accessibility	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Developers should not be required to contribute towards car clubs that are privately run as this is inappropriate, nor towards annual bus permits and cycle hire schemes which are considered excessive.	The comments in relation to developers contributing towards car clubs, annual bus permits and cycle hire schemes have also been raised against the draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Guidance. A full response to the comments on these issues can be found in the summary table for that Supplementary Guidance.	No revision proposed.
Transport and Accessibility	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	The importance of enabling transition to electric vehicles is noted, but the reference within the guidance to active provision and passive provision charge points is not clear in terms of what is required for developers to provide. Question whether the requirement to allow for a future charge point for each house complies with current building regulations, and the guidance should recognise the ongoing challenges in securing electrical capacity for electric vehicle infrastructure which could prevent rollout of active provision.	The section on electric vehicle charge points has been rewritten in line with Building Standards requirements. There is no need to specifically reference any difficulty in securing electrical capacity for EV infrastructure – Building Standards regulations set out the requirements of developers.	Section 2.3.2 (Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure) has been updated and now reflects the requirements of the updated BS handbook June 2023.
Transport and Accessibility	26	The respondent has compared the draft guidance to that of other major cities and identified several points that they deem worthwhile to include. These include:	The Council has taken on board a number of comments raised by NESTRANS and has sought to address these as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is now reference to National Policy, specifically NPF4, Designing Streets, Local Living 	Reference to national policies have been added in sections 2.1.1 (NESTRANS 2040) and 2.1.2 (National Planning Framework 4 - local living and 20-minute

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be more discussion about the national, regional and local policy context and links could be included to key documents. • The guidance is dry and does not link reasoning behind concepts to the 'bigger picture' – eg identifying key city specific issues and explaining why measures are important. • The guidance lacks colour, images and plans, which could be used to make the main points clearer before technical discussion. • The refresh of the Local Transport Strategy should be mentioned as well as the Regional Transport Strategy. • More use of tables and smaller bullet points, particularly in the car club section, would help. • The overall tone could be more optimistic, for example the low car development section should be stronger in relation to city centre and 	<p>and 20 Minute Neighbourhood Draft Guidance and Building Standards Technical Handbooks in relation to Electric Car Charging Infrastructure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional commentary on the climate change crisis and a link to the reasons why progressive standards for transportation and accessibility is necessary. • Additional pictures and diagrams to explain concepts and to break up the text and make the document more user friendly and colourful. • Instead of applying more bullet points for sections that are of a technical standard, much of this information has been referenced and moved to the back of the document as an appendix in order to improve the readability and flow of the document. • NESTRANS 2040 aims and policy concerning places for people has been added. The Local Transport Strategy 2016-2021 has been referenced. The guidance can be undated to refer to the newer Local Transport Strategy post consultation. • It is felt that the section on low car development strikes a good balance of tone at present. It is clear the circumstances which would allow for low car development. • A reference has been added to the 3 park and ride facilities within the city boundary and the potential for developers to reference this in assessments and this is deemed sufficient. It is difficult to specify how development might maximise the use of park and rides. 	<p>neighbourhoods) and 2.1.3 (Designing Streets) and Section 2.3.2 (Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Building Standards Handbook June 2023)</p> <p>Reference to climate change crisis added to the beginning of section 2.</p> <p>Pictures and diagrams have been added throughout section 2.1 and within section 2.3.</p> <p>A number of sections have been taken out of the main text and added as appendices at the end of the document.</p> <p>Section 2.1.1 (NESTRANS 2040) has been added. Reference to the Local Transport Strategy 2016-2021 has been made under section 1.2.</p> <p>Section 2.1.6 includes an additional reference to the</p>

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		<p>inner city locations due to bus priority investment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More detail is required for different layers of the city, such as Bridge of Don and Kingswells. • The guidance should mention how development should contribute to park and ride and maximise these sites, including the site at Portlethen outside city. • Sustainability needs more prominence in discussion. • The discussion about priority of sustainable modes needs to mention that good access routes are to be accessible to all. The discussion should go further such as value of pelican crossings in terms of accessibility for all. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More reference to sustainability has been made within the text • Reference has been made to the need for access routes to be accessible to all and the potential need for a pelican crossing to facilitate this. 	<p>Core Paths Plan and its supplementary maps.</p> <p>Section 2.3.3 (Park and Ride) has been added.</p> <p>More reference to sustainability has been made at the beginning of section 2.</p> <p>Section 2.1.7 includes a new reference to the potential need for formal crossing points.</p>
Transport and Accessibility	28	Sustainable materials should be used for driveways, this could include replacing hardstanding with permeable surfaces.	It is not within the remit of planning to control existing lawful development. A reference has been included to state that developers may want to consider the use of permeable paving in order to improve urban drainage.	Reference to permeable paving has been added under section 2.4.
Topic Area: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment				

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Open Space and Green Infrastructure	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Providing separate guidance on Landscape, Food Growing, Natural Heritage, Trees and Woodland and Open Space & Green Infrastructure suggests that ACC is trying to be too prescriptive and control too much. It is argued that these topics should be contained within one guidance note.	Although these topics are linked, each one is important in its own right. Although they could be combined into one APG, it is considered that retaining separate documents will aid reading and ensure that each topic is afforded due attention. The proposed approach will also allow the guidance on separate topics to be updated more easily if required in the future. This point is particularly relevant for this specific topic, as the Open Space and Green Infrastructure APG is expected to require substantial update once the Council has completed its ongoing review of the current Open Space Audit and Open Space Strategy (see comment below on this issue).	No revision proposed.
Open Space and Green Infrastructure	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Comments on this draft guidance should wait until the Open Space Audit and Open Space Strategy is completed by Aberdeen City Council. Full consultation should take place at that time instead.	As noted in the draft APG, a comprehensive review of the Council's Open Space Audit and Open Space Strategy is underway and once those documents are finalised a more substantial update of the Open Space and Green Infrastructure APG will be undertaken. As also noted in the draft APG, any significant updates that are required to the APG once the Open Space Audit and Strategy are finalised will be subject to a further period of public consultation.	No revision proposed.
Open Space and Green Infrastructure	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Paragraph 2.7 requires open space provision in all developments, including brownfield sites. Previous guidance accepted that brownfield sites were more sustainable and if there were additional costs in delivering such sites, they may not need to apply the minimum open space standards. We object to the more onerous wording that open space standards now apply to brownfield	The wording in paragraph 2.7 of the draft APG effectively replicates the wording in the relevant section of Policy NE2 of the LDP, which was found to be appropriate by the Examination Reporter. It already recognises that it might not be possible to increase the amount of open space on some brownfield sites (e.g. where existing buildings are being retained). Nevertheless, it is accepted that some brownfield developments may also involve additional costs, such as site preparation, contaminated land remediation and demolition etc. It is acknowledged that where there are	Amend section 2.7 to read as follows (additional text shown in bold): <i>"As outlined in policy NE2 of the Local Development Plan, we will seek open space provision in all developments, including on brownfield sites. However, it may not be possible to increase the amount of</i>

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		sites. The previous wording should be reinstated.	exceptional costs associated with a site it may not always be appropriate to apply the minimum standards for open space. A contribution towards off-site open space enhancements may be sought instead in such instances. It is agreed that text to this effect could be reinstated into the APG.	<p><i>open space on some brownfield sites. For example where existing buildings on the site are being retained. In these cases, appropriate design solutions to deliver onsite amenity will be sought in the first instance and commuted sums towards off-site provision or enhancement of existing open spaces will be sought where appropriate.</i></p> <p>Brownfield development can also involve additional costs, such as site preparation, contaminated land remediation and demolition. If developers can satisfy the Council that there are exceptional development costs associated with a site, it may not always be appropriate to apply the minimum standards for open space to such developments. The Council may instead seek a contribution towards off-site open space</p>

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				enhancements. The necessary contribution will reflect the scale and type of development. (See the Planning Obligations Supplementary Guidance for more information on developer contributions towards open space and green infrastructure)."
Open Space and Green Infrastructure	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	It is welcomed that wording related to the preferred approach being Council adoption has been deleted from paragraph 2.11. It is also welcomed that there is provision for factoring arrangements under "possible arrangements for the management of open spaces".	Support welcomed.	Comment noted.
Open Space and Green Infrastructure	27	In general, we are happy with the guidance. We strongly support the emphasis on delivering high quality, accessible open space, rather than simply extra quantitative provision.	Support welcomed.	Comment noted.
Open Space and Green Infrastructure	27	Given the nature networks concept which has emerged through NPF4, we would like to see the guidance set out the Council's thinking and approach on developing this in Aberdeen. We note that this is a draft document and that a review of the Open Space Audit and Open Space Strategy is expected to be	Comment noted. This will be taken into account as far as possible when this APG is updated more substantially following completion of the Open Space Audit and Open Space Strategy.	Take account of nature networks concept as far as possible when this APG is updated more substantially following completion of ACC's Open Space Audit and Open Space Strategy.

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		completed in early 2023 and this guidance will be updated in light of the review.		
Open Space and Green Infrastructure	27	It would be beneficial to include graphics such as best practice examples in the final guidance to provide greater clarity on what is expected of developers.	Comment noted. This will be taken into account when this APG is updated more substantially following completion of the Open Space Audit and Open Space Strategy.	Include graphics to illustrate key principles if possible when this APG is updated more substantially following completion of ACC's Open Space Audit and Open Space Strategy.
Open Space and Green Infrastructure	27	There are some references to 'SNH' in the guidance so we suggest updating this to 'NatureScot'.	Comment noted and agreed.	Replace references to 'SNH' with 'NatureScot'.
Open Space and Green Infrastructure	27	It would be useful to include definitions for 'green infrastructure' and 'blue infrastructure' in the introduction section, and a definition for 'brownfield' in section 2.7.	Comment noted and agreed.	Include definitions for 'green infrastructure' and 'blue infrastructure' in the introduction section, and a definition for 'brownfield' in section 2.7.
Open Space and Green Infrastructure	27	We recommend emphasising the need to consider open space and green networks from the outset of the design process. The following changes (in bold) could be added at section 2.10: "Open space and the Green Space Network need to be considered from the outset of the design process in Strategic Frameworks..."	Comment noted and agreed.	Amend section 2.10 to read as follows (additional text shown in bold): "Open space and the Green Space Network need to be considered from the outset of the design process within Strategic Frameworks..."
Open Space and Green Infrastructure	27	We strongly support the inclusion of section 2.11 (maintenance and management of new open spaces)	Support welcomed. NPF4, policy 20 e) outlines more robust requirements with respect to management and maintenance of green infrastructure. It states that	Amend the second paragraph in section 2.11 to read as follows

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		as maintenance is key for provision of long-term benefits.	“development proposals that include new or enhanced blue and/or green infrastructure will provide effective management and maintenance plans covering the funding arrangements for their long-term delivery and upkeep, and the party or parties responsible for these”. A technical change is recommended to bring section 2.11 of the APG into better alignment with this new policy requirement.	(additional/amended text shown in bold): “In accordance with policy 20 e) of NPF4, development proposals that include new or enhanced open spaces and/or green infrastructure will need to make provision for their effective management and maintenance. The planning system has limited control over open space maintenance. It can however, make provision for management and arrangements through planning conditions or agreements.”
Natural Heritage	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Providing separate guidance on Landscape, Food Growing, Natural Heritage, Trees and Woodland and Open Space & Green Infrastructure suggests that ACC is trying to be too prescriptive and control too much. It is argued that these topics should be contained within one guidance note.	Although these topics are linked, each one is important in its own right. Although they could be combined into one APG, it is considered that retaining separate documents will aid reading and ensure that each topic is afforded due attention. The proposed approach will also allow the guidance on separate topics to be updated more easily if required in the future.	No revision proposed.

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Natural Heritage	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Contents page does not correlate with content (including incorrect labelling of sections 2.7 and 2.8). References to SPP in paragraph 2.1 should be amended to reflect NPF4.	Comment noted. The contents page and references to SPP will be updated in the final version of the APG.	Contents page updated and SPP references / terminology replaced with updated NPF4 references / terminology.
Natural Heritage	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	It is not clear whether Preliminary Ecological Assessments (PEA) will be required for all applications or on a site-by-site basis. Clarification would be welcomed.	As identified in the CIEEM Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, PEAs are rapid assessments that are generally undertaken in the early stages of a design process to inform a developer (or other client), and their design team, about the key ecological constraints and opportunities within a project and the need for any detailed further surveys. They are not generally appropriate for submission to the planning authority and the Council will not generally be seeking the submission of PEAs as part of any planning application. The draft APG does not specifically state that PEAs will need to be submitted in support of planning applications – rather it intends to draw attention to their value in the early design process for new developments. However, it is accepted that additional text could be added to clarify this. A change is recommended accordingly.	Amend the third sentence of the section headed 'Initial Assessment and Informing Design' in section 2.4 of the APG to read as follows (new text in bold): <i>“Although the findings of any initial walk over survey / PEA will not generally need to be submitted to the Council, this report should inform the production of any further reports which are then submitted in support of the planning application.”</i>
Natural Heritage	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Paragraph 2.11 deals with enhancements and overall biodiversity gain, and provides examples including bat and bird boxes and habitat linkages. Paragraph 2.12 deals with mitigation and compensation, which also includes bat and bird boxes and habitat connectivity.	There is no contradiction in the advice in sections 2.11 and 2.12 as these sections cover different circumstances. Measures such as bat and/or bird boxes may provide entirely appropriate biodiversity enhancements for some developments (as envisaged in section 2.11). However, in other cases where bat and/or bird boxes are being proposed as mitigation and compensation measures because of the development's impact on bats and/or birds, they will only be considered appropriate where the	No revision proposed.

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		However, this paragraph states that mitigation and compensation should only be applied where impacts are unavoidable and there is no alternative. The guidance suggests these measures are acceptable, but later suggests only where there is no alternative. This is confusing. Clarification is required.	<p>initial impacts cannot be avoided through careful design and there is no alternative (as identified in section 2.12). These are two distinctly different scenarios, and it is therefore appropriate for the APG to provide separate advice for each.</p> <p>Section 2.11 already clarifies this point by stating that whilst some of the suggestions for mitigation and compensation in the following section (section 2.12) can also be used to add net gain in some instances, they would not be considered net gain unless they go above and beyond what is necessary to compensate any loss which has prompted their inclusion in a given development.</p>	
Natural Heritage	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Paragraph 2.14 requires all new development to incorporate SUDS where previous guidance stated that this was required for “the majority” of sites. Providing SUDS on brownfield sites has capacity implications and this guidance should revert to the previous wording to reflect this.	The wording of paragraph 2.14 is consistent with LDP Policy NE4 and the Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality APG. It also identifies some exceptions to the requirement for SuDS (single dwellings, extensions to residential properties or discharges to coastal waters). These exceptions are also identical to those outlined in LDP Policy NE4 and the Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality APG. Paragraph 2.14 goes on to highlight the dual benefits of SuDS in helping to meet the requirements for securing biodiversity gains at the same time as helping to manage surface water. No change is necessary.	No revision proposed.
Natural Heritage	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	The requirement for a Lighting Impact Assessment (LIA) under paragraph 2.15 is not specifically required under this guidance as this can be covered through an appropriately worded condition attached to a planning consent in	Paragraph 2.15 states that an LIA should be provided for all developments where bats are confirmed to be roosting at the site, or for larger scale developments where bats are known to forage in the area. The LIA requirement is therefore precise/specific in nature and necessary to mitigate the impact of relevant developments on a protected species. Although in some cases it may be	No revision proposed.

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		the relevant cases. This should be removed. If this is not accepted, it should be acknowledged that lighting is requested by Roads and therefore they need to be clear of the impacts before seeking a specific form of lighting.	appropriate to cover this issue through an appropriately worded condition attached to a planning permission, it is nevertheless helpful for the APG to draw attention to this potential requirement. No change is necessary.	
Natural Heritage	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	There are concerns that the requirement for unnecessary additional studies will add to the costs and timescales for obtaining planning consents and delivering much needed housing and affordable housing. Guidance needs to be clear that sites and requirements will be assessed on a site-by-site basis.	NPF4 places an enhanced emphasis on natural heritage and addressing the biodiversity crisis. It is essential that these matters are afforded due consideration in the development management process and appropriate studies will be required to enable this. However, it is important to stress that 'unnecessary additional' studies will not be required to support planning applications. Requirements will be limited to those studies that are necessary to ensure appropriate consideration of natural heritage features based on site specific circumstances. No change is necessary.	No revision proposed.
Natural Heritage	23	Reference to policy NE1 Green Belt is essential in either paragraph 2.5 or 2.6.	Green Belt serves an important planning purpose, but it is important to note that it is not a natural heritage designation. It would therefore be inappropriate to refer to Green Belt within these sections of the APG.	No revision proposed.
Natural Heritage	23	It is good to see acknowledgement of the importance of Ancient Woodland in paragraph 2.5, but reference should be made for readers to access a list of Aberdeen's Ancient Woodland locations.	It is acknowledged that the APG could helpfully provide a reference to where more information on the location of ancient woodlands can be found. Appropriate text could be added to the end of the section on Ancient Woodlands (in section 2.5, pg 8 of the draft APG).	Add the following text to the end of the section on Ancient Woodlands (in section 2.5, pg 8 of the APG): <i>"The Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) is a map-based tool that gives a provisional guide to the</i>

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				<i>location of ancient woodland”.</i>
Natural Heritage	23	The link to the Land Use Strategy for Scotland on pg 18 (Further Reading) is not working.	Comment noted. The Further Reading section will also be subject to a more general review to ensure it includes details of all relevant documents that are referenced in the APG text.	Broken link repaired. Further Reading section also generally reviewed to ensure it includes details of all relevant documents that are referenced in the APG text.
Natural Heritage	27	We strongly support the emphasis on tackling the climate change and biodiversity loss crises. We welcome that this guidance will assist in identifying natural heritage assets on development proposal sites and will guide the design of development to meet multiple targets.	Support welcomed.	Comment noted.
Natural Heritage	27	The guidance could go further in clarifying the need for enhancement measures separate to mitigation and compensation, ensuring it is in line with NPF4.	Section 2.3 of the APG sets out a hierarchy of measures that should be used to improve the effects of development on biodiversity. This includes: avoidance; mitigation; compensation; and enhancements. This makes it clear that enhancement applies separately from, and in addition to, any mitigation and compensation that may be required. The APG also includes separate and distinct sections on ‘enhancements and overall biodiversity gain’ (section 2.11) and ‘mitigation and compensation’ (section 2.12). The section on enhancements and overall biodiversity gain makes it clear that <u>all</u> developments should make provision to achieve an overall biodiversity gain on their	No revision proposed.

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			site. It also clarifies that whilst some of the suggestions for mitigation and compensation in the following section (section 2.12) can also be used to add net gain in some instances, they would not be considered net gain unless they go above and beyond what is necessary to compensate any loss which has prompted their inclusion in a given development. The APG therefore already clarifies the need for enhancement measures separate from and in addition to mitigation and compensation. No further change is recommended.	
Natural Heritage	27	NPF4 introduces the concept of nature networks in local development plans and it would be useful for the guidance to set out the Council's thinking and approach to these.	This APG provides further guidance on the LDP. It cannot introduce new concepts or requirements that are not already included in policies in the LDP (which was produced prior to the publication and adoption of NPF4). There are therefore limited opportunities to develop the concept of nature networks at this stage, although this will be explored in more detail in the next LDP. It should also be noted that the Council is currently reviewing its Open Space Audit and Open Space Strategy, which will in turn inform an update of the Open Space and Green Infrastructure APG in the near future. There may be some scope to develop the concept of nature networks through these documents, and this will be explored as far as practicable.	No revision proposed.
Natural Heritage	27	We note that the guidance still references Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) and National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3) rather than the now adopted National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4).	Comment noted. The draft APG was approved for consultation prior to the formal adoption of NPF4, when SPP and NPF3 were still valid. These references will be updated in the final version of the APG.	SPP and NPF3 references/terminology replaced with updated NPF4 references/terminology.
Natural Heritage	28	Any risk of tree root intrusion should be addressed by adhering	Comment noted. The same comment has been made against a number of other draft APGs. Appropriate text	No revision proposed.

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		to the guidelines set out in Water for Scotland 4th Edition and Sewers for Scotland 4th Edition. Copies of water or waste water network drawings can be ordered from Asset Plan Providers.	has been added to the final versions of some APGs to ensure that new developments give due consideration to this point. There is limited value in including additional text within this APG as: i) it does not have a directly relevant section; and ii) the entire suite of APGs should be read as a whole so introducing additional text in this document would result in unnecessary duplication of content. No change is recommended in the context of this APG.	
Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	No objection to the Guidance.	Support welcomed.	Comment noted.
Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	References to Scottish Planning Policy in paragraphs 2.1, 2.3 and 2.7 should be removed, since Scottish Planning Policy has now been superseded by NPF4.	Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) has been superseded by NPF4 and so, references to SPP will be removed and replaced with reference to NPF4 where appropriate.	Paragraphs 2.1, 2.3 and, 2.7 references to Scottish Planning Policy removed.
Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	SEPA's 2022 climate change guidance has been queried by Homes for Scotland. The APG approval should await the outcome of those conversations, or para 2.9 should be modified to allow for future proofing regarding the outcome of the discussions.	Aberdeen Planning Guidance has been prepared giving consideration to all relevant national and local guidance at the time of writing, and consultation with key agencies. Should there be future updates these can be actioned via a review of the Aberdeen Planning Guidance.	No revision proposed.
Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality	23	Ensure SuDS Guidance is adequate to protect and not pollute watercourses and adjacent lands in times of severe rainfall. Taking account that SuDS are not designed to alleviate flooding in times of severe rainfall, which are	The APG reflects the guidance and principles that have been set out in national and local guidance that were current at the time of preparation. The document includes links to all of the policy and guidance used. Whilst the Authority recognises the limitations of SuDS, the Planning Authority prepare Flood Risk Management Plans on a local level that set out requirements for flood	Comment noted.

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		likely to increase due to climate change.	prevention and surface water management on a local level. The Authority works closely with SEPA and Scottish Water to ensure guidance reflects the level of need for surface water management across the City and how it interacts safely with the existing watercourses and drainage infrastructure.	
Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality	28	In accordance with Sewers for Scotland where a shared drainage system is proposed for adoption by Scottish Water, this applies to assets sized for a 1:30 storm event. Any requests to vest SUDS infrastructure sized to 1:200 storm events will require a Joint Maintenance Agreement between Local Authority and Scottish Water under Section 7 Sewerage (Scotland) Act 1968.	Comment noted. Text will be added to the final version of the APG to draw attention to this.	Text added to APG.
Trees and Woodland	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Providing separate guidance on Landscape, Food Growing, Natural Heritage, Trees and Woodland and Open Space & Green Infrastructure suggests that ACC is trying to be too prescriptive and control too much. It is argued that these topics should be contained within one guidance note.	Although these topics are linked, each one is important in its own right. Although they could be combined into one APG, it is considered that retaining separate documents will aid reading and ensure that each topic is afforded due attention. The proposed approach will also allow the guidance on separate topics to be updated more easily if required in the future.	No revision proposed.
Trees and Woodland	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	The requirement for buildings and structures to allow adequate space for a tree's natural growth, and appreciation of a trees zone of influence is too strict, and its	The requirement for buildings and structures to allow adequate space for a tree's natural growth, and the 'zone of influence' concept, is not new. This section of the draft APG is unchanged from the 2017 Supplementary	No revision proposed.

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		<p>application onerous. The requirement will be unworkable in built up areas and will have implications for delivery aspirations of existing, and LDP allocated sites. There is no mention of 'zone of influence' in the LDP. A strict requirement regarding a tree's 'zone of influence' will hinder sustainable development goals in new development.</p> <p>The guidance should be reviewed to offer greater degree of flexibility, and a merit-based approach to effective tree management. The current guidance may encourage individuals to adopt rogue measures, such as unnecessary felling of trees without statutory protection prior to the submission of a planning application. The 'zone of influence' requirement should be removed and a more pragmatic, flexible approach to the management of trees should be adopted.</p>	<p>Guidance, which has been operating successfully across Aberdeen for several years.</p> <p>Although LDP Policy NE5 does not specifically include the phrase 'zone of influence' (ZOI) it nevertheless states that <i>"Buildings and infrastructure should be sited to allow adequate space for a tree's natural development, taking into account the predicted mature height..."</i>. The APG is consistent with this policy. The ZOI terminology comes from the National House Building Council Standards 2021, Part 4.2 (Building Near Trees). As a familiar industry term that refers to the lateral extent of the influence of trees, and one that is referenced in terms of the mature height of trees, ZOI is considered an appropriate description for this purpose. Objections were raised to this part of policy NE5, and to the overall ZOI concept, at the Proposed LDP stage and the Examination Reporter concluded that <i>"this guidance is logical and reasonable and therefore is appropriate in assessing the impact a development may have on trees"</i> (Examination Report, pg 639, para 29).</p> <p>Further, it should be noted that the APG's references to ZOIs say variously: <i>"Buildings and associated infrastructure, including garden ground, should generally be located outwith the zone of influence..."</i>, <i>"The zone of influence is generally considered to be the distance from the bottom of a tree that is equal to the mature height..."</i> and <i>"In certain cases, the zone of influence may need to be increased..."</i>. None of these statements represent mandatory / prescriptive requirements, but rather they are guidance.</p>	

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			With respect to the comments about the guidance potentially encouraging individuals to adopt rogue measures such as unnecessary felling of trees prior to the submission of a planning application, it should be noted that the APG expressly discourages this. The final paragraph in section 2.5 states that ACC will not accept the deliberate clearing of sites as a pre-emptive step to the planning application process, and that where there is evidence of this having happened the site will be treated as if the trees were still in existence.	
Trees and Woodland	23	There is no mention of ACC's Trees and Woodland Strategic Implementation Plan (TWSIP) in paragraph 2.1. This is important information that must be made available to the public and developers. Areas categorised as 'Preferred sites for woodland expansion' in the TWSIP should warrant protection when considering potential development proposals.	It is agreed that a general reference to the TWSIP could helpfully be included within the APG. However, it should also be noted that the areas categorised as 'preferred' for woodland expansion exclude existing built-up areas and LDP allocations (where the vast majority of built development is expected to take place), and that the identification of an area as 'preferred' for woodland expansion within the TWSIP would not preclude development in and of itself.	Include an additional sentence at the end of the third para in section 1.1 of the APG to read: <i>"In addition, it relates to the Council's Trees and Woodland Strategic Implementation Plan, which sets out the vision, strategic priorities and an action plan for the future stewardship and expansion of the City's urban, street trees, rural trees and woodlands."</i>
Trees and Woodland	27	In general, we are happy with the content and welcome the emphasis given to the value of trees and woodland in tackling the climate change crisis.	Support welcomed.	Comment noted.
Trees and Woodland	27	We would like to see the guidance have greater consideration for	Although these comments are acknowledged, the LDP and its associated suite of APGs should be read as a	No revision proposed.

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		<p>biodiversity and the important role trees and woodland can play in addressing the biodiversity loss crisis and contributing to biodiversity enhancement in line with NPF4.</p> <p>The climate change and biodiversity loss emergencies are inherently interlinked which could be meaningfully emphasised throughout the guidance. As such we consider that it would be more appropriate to amend the heading of Section 1.3 'Climate Change' to 'Climate Change and Biodiversity'.</p> <p>We note that the guidance refers to the Natural Heritage Aberdeen Planning Guidance. However, it would be useful if the Trees and Woodland guidance referred to protected areas as well as highlighting that should a development (e.g. tree removal, ground works etc.) be likely to have a significant effect on a protected area, NatureScot would need to be contacted.</p>	<p>whole and the issues raised in these comments are addressed through the Natural Heritage APG. It is considered that including more information on these issues within this APG would result in unnecessary duplication.</p>	
Trees and Woodland	27	<p>In relation to masterplanning under Section 2.5 (p. 8), we welcome the promotion of early consideration of existing trees and woodland. This</p>	<p>Agreed. A change is proposed accordingly.</p>	<p>Amend the first sentence under the bullet point titled 'masterplanning' in section 2.5 to read as follows</p>

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		<p>section could also highlight that existing trees and woodland should be not only retained but incorporated into the development design.</p>		<p>(additional text in bold):</p> <p><i>“At the start of the masterplanning process, consideration must be given to the retention of existing trees and their incorporation into the development design, and the planting of new trees.”</i></p>
	28	<p>Any risk of tree root intrusion should be addressed by adhering to the guidelines set out in Water for Scotland 4th Edition and Sewers for Scotland 4th Edition. Copies of water or waste water network drawings can be ordered from Asset Plan Providers.</p>	<p>Comment noted. Additional text could be included in the seventh bullet point under the heading ‘Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) and Design Considerations’ on pg 11 of the APG to draw attention to this point.</p>	<p>Amend the seventh bullet point under the heading ‘Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) and Design Considerations’ on pg 11 of the APG to read as follows (additional text in bold):</p> <p><i>“requirements for infrastructure, above and below ground services (with any risk of tree root intrusion on water infrastructure being addressed by adhering to the guidelines in Water for Scotland 4th Edition and Sewers for Scotland 4th Edition or successor documents), roads and footpaths ...”</i></p>

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Food Growing	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Providing separate guidance on Landscape, Food Growing, Natural Heritage, Trees and Woodland and Open Space & Green Infrastructure suggests that ACC is trying to be too prescriptive and control too much. It is argued that these topics should be contained within one guidance note.	Although these topics are linked, each one is important in its own right. Although they could be combined into one APG, it is considered that retaining separate documents will aid reading and ensure that each topic is afforded due attention. The proposed approach will also allow the guidance on separate topics to be updated more easily if required in the future.	No revision proposed.
Food Growing	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Paragraph 2.2 requires development of all scales to consider incorporating food growing and only in exceptional circumstances will it be acceptable for food growing spaces not to be incorporated. This conflicts with the LDP. LDP policy NE2 makes no reference to the requirements for food growing.	There is no overall conflict between the APG and the LDP. LDP Policy NE2 makes specific reference to food growing. It states that: <i>"We will require the provision of biodiverse, usable and appropriate open space in new developments to ensure functionality. Please see Aberdeen Planning Guidance ... for information on how to calculate open space requirements, as well as different types of provision (including food growing)..."</i> . It goes on to say that: <i>"We will seek open space provision in all developments..."</i> . Para 6.20 of the LDP also specifically highlights the contribution that meaningful open space provision in new developments can make towards food growing in the city. However, it is acknowledged that the last sentence in the third paragraph of section 2.2 is likely to be overly prescriptive. A modification is recommended to address this.	Amend the last sentence in the third paragraph of section 2.2 to read as follows (amended text in bold): "As such, developments will be expected to give appropriate consideration to the incorporation of only in exceptional circumstances will it be acceptable for food growing spaces to not be incorporated into the design."

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Food Growing	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	<p>The APG provides thresholds for local and major developments in relation to communal food growing areas. Although there is a degree of flexibility in that food-growing provision will be appropriate to the scale and setting of each site (and this is welcomed) the requirements are too prescriptive. Also, the requirement for “appropriately sized” communal food growing spaces is ambiguous and risks creating uncertainty.</p>	<p>The support for the APG’s flexibility for food growing spaces to be appropriate to the scale and setting of each site is welcomed.</p> <p>The wording in section 3 of the APG is designed to offer flexibility to respond to site specific circumstances. The second sentence in the second paragraph says “...<i>all developments will be expected to consider incorporating food-growing into their plans...</i>”. The guidance for both local and major developments goes on to say that “...<i>new developments should seek to provide at least one appropriately sized communal food growing space...</i>” and that “<i>for households without a private growing space at least one communal food growing space for every 5 households is advised</i>”. These are not prescriptive requirements. Rather, they outline the Council’s general expectation that food growing spaces should be considered as part of the overall open space provision for a development and provide advice on the level of food growing provision that may be appropriate for different scales of development.</p> <p>The phrase ‘appropriately sized’ is used to allow site specific circumstances to be taken into consideration, and to ensure that any food growing spaces are appropriate to the scale and setting of each development, as noted above.</p> <p>Although not specifically raised in this comment, it is noted that there is a drafting error / inconsistency in the guidance for local and major developments in section 3 of the APG. As currently worded, local developments are advised to provide at least one appropriately sized food</p>	<p>Amend the guidance for major developments to state that they seek to provide at least one appropriately sized food growing space per 25 households or 5,000m² floor space.</p>

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			growing space per 25 households or 5,000m ² floor space, whereas major developments are advised to provide a lower level of at least one appropriately sized food growing space per 50 households or 10,000m ² floor space. It is recommended that this inconsistency be corrected in the final version of the APG by bringing the guidance for major developments into line with that for local developments.	
Food Growing	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	The requirement to provide allotments or community orchards in new developments over 50 homes is excessive when private gardens are provided, giving most homeowners the opportunity to grow food without the need for separate allotments and orchards.	The final sentence of the guidance for major developments in section 3 of the draft APG states that all new developments of over 50 homes are “ <i>expected to provide</i> ” allotments or community orchards within the mix of food growing spaces that are provided. It is acknowledged that this wording is more prescriptive than the remainder of the guidance in section 3 of the APG. It is also acknowledged that this may be excessive in some cases, particularly where private garden spaces are being provided for most / all of the dwellings in a development. It is agreed that it would be appropriate to amend the wording of this part of the APG to allow more flexibility and bring it into line with the rest of section 3.	Amend the final sentence of the guidance for major developments in section 3 of the APG to read as follows (additional text in bold): “Additionally, all new developments of over 50 homes are expected to consider providing allotments or community orchards within the mixture of food-growing spaces provided.”
Food Growing	28	Any risk of tree root intrusion should be addressed by adhering to the guidelines set out in Water for Scotland 4th Edition and Sewers for Scotland 4th Edition. Copies of water or waste water network drawings can be ordered from Asset Plan Providers.	Comment noted. Additional text could be added to the end of section 2.3 (B) ‘Orchards’ to draw attention to this point.	Add additional text to the end of section 2.3 (B) ‘Orchards’ to read: “ <i>Any risk of tree root intrusion should be addressed by adhering to the guidelines set out in Water for Scotland 4th Edition and Sewers for Scotland 4th Edition (or any</i>

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				<i>relevant updates thereof). Copies of existing water or waste water network drawings can be ordered from Asset Plan Providers.”</i>
Food Growing	29	The APG requires provision of food growing spaces as a part of new residential development, with different standards for local developments and major. It only refers to an ‘appropriately sized space’. There needs to be an assessment of the appropriateness of such a space and if it would be sustainable and the best solution for the delivery of open space for a development. This will particularly be the case for housing with private gardens, where there may be more limited demand for community growing space. These spaces will also depend on residents retaining and managing them as a cost burden to them.	See the comments on provision of ‘appropriately sized’ spaces and the requirements for allotments and community orchards in housing developments with private garden space in response to respondents 12, 14, 15, 18, 20 above. With respect to management and maintenance of food growing spaces, the APG provides best practice guidance on management and maintenance in section 2.2. It also notes that food growing spaces need not always result in additional costs when compared with other forms of open space.	No revision proposed.
Outdoor Access	6	We welcome the Outdoor Access APG. We welcome the inclusion of all non-motorised users of all abilities. We welcome that new development should not compromise the integrity of existing or potential recreational opportunities and the commitment to the Core Paths Plan. We	Support welcomed.	Comment noted.

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		welcome that development should not impede access and new paths should link with other routes to form part of a wider network. We welcome that Design & Access Plans should be provided detailing future access provision. We welcome the inclusion of our Lowland Path Construction Guide.		
Outdoor Access	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Section 1 states that "This APG specifically relates to and expands on the following policy in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan". It is not for the APG to go beyond supplementing policies within the LDP, or to introduce new and more onerous requirements for developments to meet. The APG must be limited to the provision of further information or detail in respect of policies or proposals set out in the LDP itself.	The text in section 1.1 (or a variation of it) was included in all of the draft APG documents. The phrase "expands upon" is intended to convey the meaning that the APG provides further information and/or detail on the specified LDP policies, not that it goes beyond supplementing those LDP policies. None of the guidance in this APG (or any of the other APGs) goes beyond supplementing the relevant LDP policies and it does not introduce any new or more onerous requirements for developments to meet beyond those that are set out in the relevant LDP policies. No change is recommended in response to this comment.	No revision proposed.
Outdoor Access	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	The APG appears to be sufficiently flexible to allow for unique solutions on a site-by-site basis.	Comment noted.	No revision proposed.
Outdoor Access	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	The draft guidance provides more overt recognition of the potential for developments to improve the existing Core Path Network and public rights of way. We do not object in principle, but greater flexibility is required in the wording to ensure that improvements are	In accordance with Circular 3/2012 'Planning Obligations and Good Neighbour Agreements', it is acknowledged that any improvements to the existing Core Path Network can only be sought where (amongst other things) they fairly and reasonably relate in scale and kind to the proposed development. It is agreed that additional wording could be added to the APG to confirm this. A change is recommended accordingly. Comments on the	Add an additional sentence to the end of the sixth paragraph in section 2.1 of the APG to read: <i>"Any enhancements to, or contributions towards, the Core Path Network or other</i>

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		sought only on a commensurate basis. We also maintain concerns over proposed developer contributions for Core Paths (see "Planning Obligations").	Planning Obligations Supplementary Guidance are addressed elsewhere.	<i>public rights of way must fairly and reasonably relate in scale and kind to the proposed development, as well as meeting the remaining tests in Circular 3/2012 'Planning Obligations and Good Neighbour Agreements'.</i>
Outdoor Access	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Further clarity is needed on what will trigger the requirement for a Design and Access Plan (DAP) in support of proposed developments. The guidance should clearly state when this is required, such as where a development will impact the Core Path Network or public rights of way. If this is not clearly defined, the preparation and submission of a DAP may be requested when not explicitly necessary.	It is agreed that additional guidance could helpfully be added to the APG to identify the circumstances when a DAP is likely to be required. A change is recommended accordingly.	Add an additional sentence to the end of the first paragraph in section 2.2 of the APG to read: <i>"A Design & Access Plan is likely to be required for major developments, developments where there is an existing Core Path or other right of way within or in close proximity to the site boundary, or where the planning authority consider it expedient for other specific reasons (e.g. if the development is likely to have an impact on a specific user group, or where access needs to be carefully managed for environmental reasons)."</i>

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				Since one of the example circumstances where a DAP is likely to be required involves cases where access needs to be managed for environmental reasons, a corresponding technical change is required to include 'environmental impacts' in the subsequent list of factors that the DAP should consider where appropriate.
Outdoor Access	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Most of the issues raised in the guidance can be addressed through good design and further control will be possible following the approval of developments, using the model condition given in Appendix 1. On that basis, the guidance can potentially be consolidated in its entirety.	It is agreed that the issues raised in the guidance can (and should) be addressed through good design. However, it is important to retain specific guidance on outdoor access in order to help inform the design process for new developments. As such, it is not proposed to consolidate this guidance or combine it with other more general design guidance.	No revision proposed.
Topic Area: Sustainable Use of Resources				
Waste Management Requirements for New Developments	24	On Page 14 – Part B – Waste & Recycling - add 2 bullet points as below to the Applications must demonstrate the following part:	Agree – this will ensure residents can deal with their waste efficiently and will encourage safe and convenient recycling and disposal.	Add 2 bullet points as below to the “Applications must demonstrate the following” section:

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban Locations – Residents maximum wheeled bin pull to vehicle collection point 50 metres. • Rural Locations - Residents maximum wheeled bin pull to vehicle collection point 100 metres. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban Locations – Residents maximum wheeled bin pull to vehicle collection point 50 metres. • Rural Locations - Residents maximum wheeled bin pull to vehicle collection point 100 metres.
Resources for New Developments	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Welcomes flexibility regarding 'density' in section 2.1, but suggests flexibility to assess proposals on a site-by-site basis needs to be made clearer to allow for greater appreciation of potential site constraints (i.e. difference of density potential between brownfield and greenfield sites).	Agree that proposals should be considered on a site-by-site basis, this is a fundamental aspect of the plating system. This is sufficiently encouraged in Section 2.1 which states: ' <i>The planning for this should take into consideration the sites characteristics and the surrounding area.</i> ' This is reinforced in Section 5, which states: ' <i>We do not intend to make the process burdensome; therefore, the submission of information should be proportionate and relevant to the development proposed.</i> '	No revision proposed.
Resources for New Developments	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Queries topic layout in document; 'Energy use in Buildings' is introduced in section 2.2, whereas measures to achieve energy efficiency are identified in section 4.	These sections cover different aspects of energy use in new buildings and are therefore separated in the document. Section 2.2 offers context to the subject of 'Energy Use in New Buildings' and gives an overview of the challenges in improving energy efficiency in new buildings in Aberdeen. While section 4 details the specific measures to be implemented to achieve energy efficiency in new buildings.	No revision proposed.
Resources for New Developments	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Overall concern that APG is extensive and overly prescriptive. Queries whether detailed guidance concerning energy use and energy efficiency in buildings is necessary given the role of Building Standards in determining current	It is noted that there is an overlap between the regulatory function of Building Standards and the discretionary nature of planning. Section 4.2 adequately outlines the legislative context, as per Section 72 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, and the Building Standards context. Section 5 states: ' <i>The overarching purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement</i>	No revision proposed.

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		regulations. Suggests consolidating these issues and excluding non-planning matters.	<i>of sustainable development.... the collective implementation of all policy documents and strategies are what will ensure that Aberdeen is genuinely delivering sustainable development.</i> This statement justifies the intent of the content included in this APG and satisfies concerns raised.	
Resources for New Developments	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Questions how use of LZCGT for the reduction of carbon emissions specified in APG and policy R6 will be applied in the assessment of planning applications, aside from use of Sustainability Checklists. Concern that requirement for incorporating use of a wide range of LZCGT is unreasonable and will be unviable for many developments (particularly for brownfield sites, that are already cost prohibitive but can offer net carbon benefits when developed).	Section 4.2.4 details the information required by applicants for assessment of proposals outwith the use of the Sustainability Checklist; the use of SAP calculations and Simplified Building Energy Model (SBEM), or other Dynamic Simulation Software. Section 5, which states: <i>'We do not intend to make the process burdensome; therefore, the submission of information should be proportionate and relevant to the development proposed.'</i> We feel this statement provides comfort regarding the concerns raised. The viability of development proposals is also a consideration when assessing development.	No revision proposed.
Resources for New Developments	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Suggests placing greater emphasis on passive measures (layout, building fabric etc) for achieving carbon reduction of new developments. This should shift focus towards reducing the need to generate energy through passive means, rather than generating energy.	Welcome the comment and agree that passive measures for improving the energy efficiency of new buildings should be implemented in the first instance. This is encouraged throughout Section 2.2, which outlines the benefits of passive measures for carbon reduction; and in Section 4.3.1, which states: <i>"By reducing the energy demand of a building in the first instance, as far as is practicable, it becomes more feasible to then provide the lower energy requirements through low and zero carbon generating technologies."</i> This should also be considered when adhering to the APGs guidance on achieving the 'Gold' Building Standards requirement, which encourages	No revision proposed.

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			developers to adopt a “whole-dwelling approach” to energy demand reduction in a new build.	
Resources for New Developments	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Refers to comments on ‘Amenity’ APG document for section 2.3. Suggests including wording that recognises the best practice for layout, orientation, shelter and aspect is not feasible for all developments.	Comments noted. The viability of development proposals is also a consideration when assessing development. Section 2.3 highlights a range of passive measures for reducing energy demand, and does not imply that all measures are relevant to every development. Rather, it intends to provides options for developers to consider applying to their development.	No revision proposed.
Resources for New Developments	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Requests clarity to demonstrate why the issue of water use in buildings should be considered at all within the scope of planning applications in Section 3. Concern this is not a planning matter, as its addressed in building regulations.	As is noted in the ALDP 2023 managing the use of water and increasing water efficiency is vital to reduce pressure on the River Dee, which is the main source of drinking water for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, and is a special area of conservation. The combined impact of climate change, population and economic growth may have a long term impact on abstraction rates from the River Dee, therefore managing this resource is necessary.	No revision proposed.
Resources for New Developments	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Policy R6 and this APG should be applied on site-by-site basis, proportionate to each proposal (with consideration of constraints and merits of each proposal, e.g., the reuse of a brownfield site) to ensure viability. Suggests wording to clarify this in section 4.3.	Section 72 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 requires Planning Authorities to make provisions to tackle greenhouse gas emissions in all new buildings. This is echoed within the statutory development plan. All material considerations including viability are assessed when determining planning applications, there is no requirement to clarify.	No revision proposed.
Resources for New Developments	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Sustainability Checklist is extensive, suggests that issues covered within Checklist should be set out in the LDP rather than APG.	Comments noted. It is understood that the Checklists cover a wide range of topics. However, these are included to inform discussion about the overall sustainability of new buildings in Aberdeen. As these are intended to offer guidance for new development, their inclusion is not required in the LDP. There is no requirement to “set out” within the LDP, or provide a hook	No revision proposed.

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			between the LDP and the APG as there is for supplementary guidance, as the document is non-statutory planning guidance.	
Resources for New Developments	12, 14, 15, 18, 20	Welcomes Checklists as tools for officers and developers to provide guidance on best practice. Objects to use of Checklists to determine planning applications in terms of relevant LDP policies, with officers using Checklists as negotiation tools for discussions of applications, and as a material basis for officers' recommendations of individual applications. Checklists would be too rigid as a formal assessment method and unlikely to be used on a proportionate basis. Achieving compliance with many issues covered on Checklist is not specified, and how this will be demonstrated this within a planning application is unclear. Checklist covers topics already addressed in building regulations.	Comments noted. Concern regarding over-reliance on use of Checklists is understood. However, we feel that Section 5 adequately highlights to users that the intent of the Checklists are to guide new development, outlining areas for users to consider, rather than forming a formal assessment of a proposal.	No revision proposed.
Wind Turbine Development	27	The respondent believes that the guidance is outdated and would benefit from review to bring it up to date with current policy landscape, such as NPF4. The respondent recommends looking at its suite of guidance. The mapping should also be reviewed and could	It is agreed that the guidance is out of date. The comments relating to the suite of guidance and landscape sensitivity assessment guidance are noted.	In light of the adoption of NPF4 and the policy intent of Policy 11, to encourage, promote and facilitate all forms of renewable energy development onshore and offshore, it is considered that the adoption of this

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		reference Landscape Sensitivity Assessment Guidance (2022).		APG be paused to allow for investigation and the possible development of a renewable energy APG, which will address more than wind turbine developments. The comments relating to the suite of guidance and landscape sensitivity assessment guidance are noted and will be taken on board in any future review.
Wind Turbine Development	28	Refers to regulatory requirements under article 7 of the Water Framework Directive and that developers submit to Scottish Water for their review. There are other related informatives attached in relation to discharge of trade effluent.	These are informatives that Scottish Water would apply to wind turbine applications and refer to separate legislation outside planning. There is no need to add any of the included to planning guidance.	In light of the adoption of NPF4 and the policy intent of Policy 11, to encourage, promote and facilitate all forms of renewable energy development onshore and offshore, it is considered that the adoption of this APG be paused to allow for investigation and the possible development of a renewable energy APG, which will address more than wind turbine developments.
Wind Turbine Development	30	Seeks reference to the pipeline consultation zone in the attached maps. Reference should be made that any turbines proposed in the consultation zone must accord with	The pipeline consultation zone is included within the Constraints map of the Local Development Plan and there is no need for it to be replicated in the guidance.	In light of the adoption of NPF4 and the policy intent of Policy 11, to encourage, promote and facilitate all forms of renewable energy

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		HSE's land use planning advice and methodology.		development onshore and offshore, it is considered that the adoption of this APG be paused to allow for investigation and the possible development of a renewable energy APG, which will address more than wind turbine developments.
Wind Turbine Development	30	<p>Reference should also be made to guidance prepared by United Kingdom Onshore Pipeline Operator's Association (UKOPA) regarding siting of wind turbines close to high pressure pipelines. The following text is sought for section 2.8:</p> <p>"All wind energy developments must ensure that and any wind turbines proposed within pipeline consultation zones must accord with the Requirements of the Health and Safety Executive's land use planning advice and the Guidance prepared by the United Kingdom Onshore Pipeline Operator's Association (UKOPOA) regarding the siting of wind turbines close to high pressure pipelines."</p>	<p>Consultation with the Health and Safety Executive, and use of their land use planning advice is standard procedure within the determination of application within pipeline consultation zones. The UKOPA Good Practice Guide, provides guidance for wind turbine developers and designers; is it not a statutory document.</p> <p>Reference could be made to the UKOPA Good Practice Guide in the Further Reading section of the APG.</p>	In light of the adoption of NPF4 and the policy intent of Policy 11, to encourage, promote and facilitate all forms of renewable energy development onshore and offshore, it is considered that the adoption of this APG be paused to allow for investigation and the possible development of a renewable energy APG, which will address more than wind turbine developments.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
Wind Turbine Development	30	The guidance should reference NPF4 Policy 23 in relation to proposals within the vicinity of a major accident hazard pipeline. The respondent notes that Angus and Fife Councils have referenced UKOPO guidance on their equivalent documents.	NPF4 is part of the statutory development plan, there is no need to reference this in the APG, it should be a given that NPF4 will be part of any assessment and determination of an application.	No revision proposed, however note comments above re a wider review of this document in the context of NPF4.
Site Based Guidance				
Countesswells Development Framework and Phase One Masterplan	21	The Countesswells Development Framework and Phase 1 Masterplan should be adopted as non-statutory planning guidance to allow for flexibility in approach. The document was first produced in 2014, and rolled forward in to the 2017 Aberdeen Local Development Plan. A number of changes have occurred to the site since its creation; the Development Framework and Phase 1 Masterplan should be viewed as an overview of the development, setting out principles and a framework. Under the new planning act supplementary guidance is to be removed from the planning system.	In line with the amendments made to planning legislation through the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 and to be in step with these, Aberdeen City Council took the decision to progress the majority of documents associated with the Aberdeen Local development Plan 2023 as non-statutory planning guidance, titled Aberdeen Planning Guidance. The single Supplement Guidance document is Planning Obligations. Committee Report COM/22/284 presented to Full Council on 14 December 2022 outlines the background into this decision. The Countesswells Development Framework and Phase 1 Masterplan is proposed to be adopted as non-statutory planning guidance, titled Aberdeen Planning Guidance	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
Countesswells Development Framework and Phase One Masterplan	27	Supportive of the vision and the focus on creating a distinctive, inclusive, mixed- use place with an integrated approach to design, which has a focus on setting and path networks.	The support for the vision and focus of the masterplan is welcome.	No revision proposed.
Countesswells Development Framework and Phase One Masterplan	27	The document should be updated to consider the climate change and biodiversity loss crisis more acutely and demonstrate this in the vision, and throughout the document; as is noted in NPF4.	This APG provides further guidance on the LDP. Both the APG and the LDP were prepared prior to the publication and adoption of NPF4. There are therefore limited opportunities to develop the concept of nature networks at this stage, although this will be explored in more detail in the next LDP. It should also be noted that the Council is currently reviewing its Open Space Audit and Open Space Strategy, which will in turn inform an update of the Open Space and Green Infrastructure APG in the near future. There may be some scope to develop the concept of nature networks through these documents, and this will be explored as far as practicable. It should also be noted that NPF4 forms part of the statutory development plan, which means that it will be taken into account in the determination of any future planning applications for the site.	No revision proposed.

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
Countesswells Development Framework and Phase One Masterplan	27	NPF4 also sets out ambitions for nature networks and Countesswells presents an excellent opportunity to explore options for creating a nature network between Hazlehead and Countesswells. The green network and path network can provide a foundation for this and we would be happy to discuss nature networks further with the Council	This APG provides further guidance on the LDP. It cannot introduce new concepts or requirements that are not already included in policies in the LDP (which was produced prior to the publication and adoption of NPF4). There are therefore limited opportunities to develop the concept of nature networks at this stage, although this will be explored in more detail in the next LDP. It should also be noted that the Council is currently reviewing its Open Space Audit and Open Space Strategy, which will in turn inform an update of the Open Space and Green Infrastructure APG in the near future. There may be some scope to develop the concept of nature networks through these documents, and this will be explored as far as practicable.	No revision proposed.
Dubford Development Framework			No comments received on this draft APG	
Former Davidson's Mill Development Framework and Masterplan			No comments received on this draft APG	
Friarsfield Development Framework			No comments received on this draft APG	
Grandhome Development Framework			No comments received on this draft APG	
Maidencraig Masterplan			No comments received on this draft APG	
Newhills Development Framework			No comments received on this draft APG	

Document	Respondee	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Action as a result of Representation
Oldfold Development Framework and Masterplan			No comments received on this draft APG	
Persley Den/Woodside Masterplan			No comments received on this draft APG	
Rowett North AECC Development Framework			No comments received on this draft APG	
Bridge of Don AECC Development Framework			No comments received on this draft APG	

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	11 October 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Finalised Draft George Street Masterplan
REPORT NUMBER	COM/23/304
DIRECTOR	Gale Beattie
CHIEF OFFICER	David Dunne
REPORT AUTHOR	Nigel McDowell
TERMS OF REFERENCE	21

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval of the Finalised Draft George Street Masterplan as the George Street Masterplan being the Council's 'place' strategy for the George Street area.
- 1.2 Council of 14 December 2022 approved the Draft George Street Mini Masterplan for public consultation in early 2023 with instruction to report the outcomes of the consultation, including any revision to the Draft Masterplan, by December 2023.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council:

- 2.1 Review the Consultation and Engagement Report (Appendix 1) which records and analyses the public and stakeholder consultation and engagement undertaken, and notes that the consultation responses have shaped the Finalised Draft George Street Masterplan.
- 2.2 Note the contents of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report, and the non-technical summary report (Appendix 5 & 5a), whose findings are recorded in, and have given direction to, the content of the Finalised Draft George Street Masterplan.
- 2.3 Approve the Finalised Draft George Street Masterplan (Appendix 2) as the George Street Masterplan being the Council's 'place' strategy for the George Street area.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

Background

- 3.1 The City Growth and Resources Committee of 12 November 2021 instructed that public and stakeholder engagement be undertaken in early 2022 on the

future of the George Street area because of the closure of John Lewis (Norco House) and defined the focus area within the city centre boundary between the Bon Accord Centre, Gallowgate, Spring Garden / Maberly Street and Charlotte Street with part of George Street at its centre.

- 3.2 An online consultation to scope interest in the preparation of a Masterplan for the area took place on the Council's Citizen Space consultation hub from 7 February 2022 for four weeks until 7 March 2022 and sought opinions on the 'strengths', 'weaknesses', 'opportunities' and 'threats' as a place health-check.
- 3.3 A summary of the 297 responses received was presented to Council of 29 June 2022 indicating a desire for positive change to be brought forward to support the area. Officers were instructed to report a draft George Street Mini Masterplan to Council of 14 December 2022, which was approved for public consultation commencing in early 2023. (Appendix 4 - Draft George Street Mini Masterplan)
- 3.4 Public consultation and engagement took place from March 2023 with three strands of activity 1) **an online Citizen Space survey** – posing key questions on sections through the draft Masterplan, 2) **direct stakeholder invitations to be involved** – by email notification and follow-up briefing presentations, and 3) **an organised programme of engagement with children and young people** - based on the theme of a 'sense of place' within the streets and spaces of the Masterplan area. In addition, traders were invited to display posters regarding the consultation. At the end of the consultation and evaluation programme an open evening presentation meeting took place on 21st September with stakeholders to share the findings of the public consultation and engagement as well as to discuss and conclude the revisions before the Finalised Draft Masterplan was re-presented to Council.

Summary of Consultation and Engagement Programme and Responses

- 3.5 **Citizen Space Survey** - An online survey ran on Citizen Space for 6-weeks between 17 March and 28 April 2023. The survey provided a summary context to the Draft Masterplan and was structured by posing questions to key topics throughout the Draft Masterplan, page numbered for easy reference, as well as offering opportunity for any further comment. ACC Officer contact details were provided to offer discussion and guidance on the Draft Masterplan as well as to offer hard copy of the Draft Masterplan and survey questions, etc.
- 3.6 The 102 survey responses were received from a range of user groups: Pupil/Student/Education (19), Resident (4), Local Authority Officer (1), NHS Grampian (2), Police Officer (1), Prefer not to say (58), Professional / Business (14), Tertiary Education (3). Most of the questions posed on the key sections and topics through the Draft Masterplan generated a supportive response to their principles. Appendix 1 – Draft George Street Masterplan Consultation and Engagement Report provides full returns, evaluation and revisions made.

Response Summary

- 3.8 **Question 1** - The proposed place '**Vision**' – '**George Street Connected! – a vibrant and inclusive neighbourhood at the heart of reinvention**' gained 73% support because the George Street area is part of the city centre and

needs to be connected to the city and region for its success, as well as functioning as a neighbourhood entity, however concern was raised on the use of 'jargon', budget, and likelihood of implementation etc.

- 3.9 **Question 2 – The 'Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats'** appraising the built environment aspects of the Masterplan provide the basis for regeneration projects that seek to make positive change particularly within the existing streets, spaces and redevelopment opportunities. The question asking if you agree with the appraisal gained 80% support endorsing the Draft Masterplan's baseline findings, though concern was raised principally around 'place' management with issues cited such as the 'dying high street', traffic management and being inclusive in project delivery.
- 3.10 **Question 3 – Invited opinions on the principles of promoting more Active Travel and Greenspace** to create a more diverse, inclusive, and attractive George Street area gained 65% support with a further 12% in general agreement but having some reservations. The reservations centered on the ability to maintain the projects proposed, where financial investment would come from, the prospects of anti-social behaviour taking place in greenspace, the lack of greenspace, as well as concerns regarding the need for more inclusive design and greater certainty on vehicular movement and accessibility.
- 3.11 **Question 4 – Destination not a Through-Route** Applied a crucial ambition of the City Centre Masterplan in creating a city centre that is a destination by reducing opportunity for through-routing for private vehicles in the Masterplan area. The question gained 53% support with a further 17% in support but with some reservations, and 30% not in support with the consideration that there is too strong an emphasis on improving the quality of pedestrians' space rather than a balanced consideration. Through the consultation period the traffic management modelling has been revised to provide what is now considered the optimum reduction in through-routing in the area, to enable proposals for significant place and environmental improvements for the streetscape redesign to be considered. These projects would provide the opportunity for improved accessibility for everyone, introduce street-greening, sustainable urban drainage, more equitable use of space and ultimately create a more attractive environment and a distinctive place unlike any other within the city centre. (Appendix 3).
- 3.12 **Question 5 – Sought opinion on the six transformational regeneration Projects** proposed which gained 75% support, with 25% of those citing some reservations and with 7% stating that they were unsure or did not support the projects. Concern on budget for delivery and maintenance was cited, and that prioritising pedestrians over private vehicles is a considered risk to business success, repeating concerns raised to Question 4. Responses also encouraged 'quick win' projects, that our heritage of George Street's historic granite buildings is recognised as a strong asset, and that with more outside seating and uses and that premises opening hours could be extend. In addition, encouraging evening activity/economy and the well-considered use of colour and greening to give a new 'sense of place' to the area were considered important.
- 3.13 **Question 6 – Norco House** Illustrated redevelopment scenarios for the currently vacant Norco House building, formerly John Lewis, which explored

new uses and forms of redevelopment for the site. The scenarios gained 80% supporting the identified need for positive change as an 'area of influence', for redevelopment with a variety of uses, to support the wider George Street area, though 18% were unsure or disagreed. The scenarios have been brought out of the Draft George Street Mini Masterplan appendices, distilled, and presented within the 'Transformational Project's' section to encourage appropriate redevelopment that would capitalise on the array of amenities and business opportunities within and around the Masterplan area, and act as a regeneration catalyst. The site could also provide the only opportunity for significant greenspace which is identified as lacking from the Masterplan area to support recreational needs, community greenspace and a wider range of activities such as the provision of communal recycling facilities, etc.

- 3.14 **Question 7 – Invited Further Comments** and generated a wide range of considerations: questioning the budget to deliver projects, questioning place management, encouraging opportunities street markets/food, more outdoor seating, seeking more greening and the consideration for better health and wellbeing opportunities, encouraging more independent business into the area, creation of areas for safe socialising and improved street infrastructure. A social ask raised is for increased support of marginalised groups to use the area and to try to strengthening support for existing community groups to take forward project ownership. In addition, a 'place branding' project between NESCol and George Street partners in 2019 was referenced and remains relevant.
- 3.15 **Stakeholder Invitations** - In addition to the ACC Press release advising that the online survey was taking place for 6 weeks between 7 March and 28 April 2023 21 separate emails were forwarded to key stakeholders advising that the survey was live and to offer in-person meetings to discuss and record any aspect of the Draft Masterplan stakeholders wished to make. The invitation yielded eight written responses, five face to face meetings, and eight stakeholders did not respond.
- 3.16 All the stakeholders who responded welcomed the production of the Draft Masterplan and endorsed the 'Vision' and high-level project direction as well as expressing interest in being involved as specific projects are approved to be taken forward in delivery. Some of the responses indicated that there is scope to improve capacity building within key stakeholders to enable them to be fully engaged in the delivery of the projects working toward 'George Street Connected'. Comments were also received in seeking a clearer more structured Masterplan, and that in welcoming the principles of the projects acknowledged that greater detail was needed for their implementation.
- 3.17 **Children and Young Persons' Engagement** - At the outset of the City Centre Masterplan (CCMP) refresh, and subsequent CCMP and Beach Development Framework, and as priority project progress children and young people have played a central role in project identification and development. Within and adjacent to the Draft Masterplan area the students of North-East Scotland College (NESCol) and Roberts Gordon's College are estimated to generate c.11,000 daily visits to the area, and there are 4 primary schools and 1 secondary within the wider area of George Street. The children and young person's engagement was envisaged to yield their perspectives on the George Street area to influence the Draft Masterplan, as well as adding to awareness

and learning of the built environment, and hopefully develop their future study topics and involvement in civic life.

- 3.18 An engagement programme with NESCol, Robert Gordons College and Skene Square and Sunnybank Primary Schools was developed on the theme of 'sense of place' – using open questions such as - what does it feel like to be in the area? what brings you to the area? what would hold your interests here? and, what improvements would you like to see made? Etc.
- 3.19 The students at NESCol and at Robert Gordon College undertook accompanied walks of the area and considered place-making and how specific places could be made better. Although apparently not hugely familiar with the area, the students from both institutions looked in detail at the constraints and opportunities associated with the four chosen locations and prioritised projects accordingly. A 'deep clean' featured highest on their priority list along with tree planting, as well as 'parklets' (being a popular idea in George Street), a lighting net and information points/wayfinding.
- 3.20 The primary school children also considered 'place' and utilised a happy/sad persona, 'Georgie', to help articulate how they felt about the specific locations and what those places could become. Some of the classes had accompanied walking tours whilst others were able to watch a virtual tour of the area. The priorities for the primary children, many of whom live in or near the Masterplan area, focused on more colour/art, planting and trees and better lighting and up-lighting to make the streets and spaces more attractive.
- 3.21 Outcomes from engagement with the children and young people include a stark observation that few currently use the George Street area to any great extent but recognise that the place has a feeling of vibrancy and that the proposed Vision captures this. When given specific areas to focus on the predominant request was for the area to be cleaner with aspirations for greater CCTV coverage, better street lighting and street-redesign with street trees greening and opportunities for play and recreation sought, the use of more colour in the area and better lighting. *"Georgie' did not like 'endless grey walls, weeds, parked cars, and uncomfortable seating, but did like fun shops, murals, trees, bike-stands and plants'.*
- 3.22 The engagement and consultation with children and young people has added greater diversity and broadened horizons to engagement. Their reactions and recommendations for place improvement have been incorporated and the findings of all the stakeholder groups generally concur. Feedback from NESCol and all the schools taking part was extremely positive and it is hoped that the children and young people felt included and know that their thoughts and opinions were heard to help shape the Masterplan. It is hoped that they benefited from project-based learning on their doorstep by bringing parts of their curriculum to life as well as encouraging their awareness, confidence, and importance in engaging with, and directing on matters, which impact on everyone.

Strategic Environmental Assessment - Environmental Report

- 3.23 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires public bodies to undertake a strategic environmental assessment when preparing plans which

are likely to have a significant environmental effect, either positive or negative upon delivery. A Screening Report, undertaken following Council's approval of the Draft Masterplan for consultation in December 2022 and hosted on the Scottish Government SEA Gateway informed the 'Consultation Authorities' of Historic Environment Scotland, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Scottish Water and Nature Scot on the intention to prepare an Environmental Report on the Draft Mini-Masterplan to determine the level of 'significant impact' and to give direction to the emerging proposals within the Finalised Draft Masterplan. The statutory consultees provided a positive review of the Environmental Report (Appendix 5 & 5a)

- 3.24 Public Notice on the Environmental Report - Following receipt of the Consultation Authorities responses, incorporated into the Environmental Report and Finalised Draft George Street Masterplan, a statutory four-week public notice was undertaken from 9th August – 10th September 2023 inviting expressions of opinion on the content of the Environmental Report hosted on Citizen Space. No responses were received and a Post Adoption Statement following approval of Finalised Draft Masterplan, as the George Street Masterplan, is to be prepared and issued to the Scottish Government Gateway informing the statutory consultees as to how their responses have shaped the Finalised Draft Masterplan.

Finalised Draft George Street Masterplan

- 3.25 Finalised Draft George Street Masterplan - As a result of the consultation findings the Draft Masterplan, which was arranged on the City Centre Masterplan themes of 'People', 'Economy' and 'Place', was re-organised with the focus on 'Place' as the basis to growing the local 'Economy' and therefore better support 'People' within an improved residential and mixed-use activity area. This foundation approach is in accordance with, and emphasises project delivery, to realise the Local Outcome Improvement Plan Vision '*Aberdeen is a place where all people can prosper*'.
- 3.26 In reflection and response to the engagement and consultation undertaken the Finalised Draft Masterplan has acknowledged and distilled the foundations of place-based analysis, maintained its **Vision**, and proposes a series of place based 'transformational projects' to realise the vision and create a more successful, sustainable, and distinctive George Street within the city centre. A greater emphasis, with more developed project details, that focus on specific locations, are presented with the ethos of 'accessibility for all'.

Monitoring

- 3.27 The established monitoring protocol for the City Centre and Beach Masterplans will be followed to ensure accountability and transparency as well as to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the strategies, projects and actions outlined within the Masterplan in delivery.
- 3.28 The Integrated Impact Assessment, drafted in tandem with the engagement programme responses, evaluates the principles advocated and the likely outcomes of delivering the projects within the Finalised Draft Masterplan, as well as reviewing the engagement and consultation methods, and inclusion of

the communities' findings, to shape the Masterplan. The Integrated Impact Assessment will continue to provide a monitoring framework to project delivery.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from approval of the Finalised Draft George Street Masterplan as the Masterplan for the area.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The George Street Masterplan, strategically allied to the City Centre and Beach Masterplans, provides the basis of all future decision making to and within the environment of the Masterplan area, and would be the Council's strategy for investment and change to signal confidence and commitment by approval of the 'transformational projects'.

5.2 The Masterplan provides a strategic direction, and as a material consideration, to enable projects to progress toward implementation, many of which will be subject to statutory consenting processes to ensure continuing stakeholder and interested party engagement as well as meeting local and national policy and standards.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 In accordance with the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 the content of the Draft Masterplan has given rise to the production of an Environmental Report which as identified and assessed the significant environmental impacts of the Draft Masterplan in so far as the strategic detail will allow. The conclusions from the national statutory consultees, see Section 3 above, are that the delivery of the Masterplan would give development direction and see significant positive environmental impacts to the Masterplan area when the projects re delivered. The potential benefits for the flora, fauna as well as human residential, recreational, and business needs, if the place opportunities are realised, are significant. All the consultees have indicated a willingness to be involved as project details are developed. The Environmental Report, and its non-technical summary are Appendix 5 and 5a).

7. RISK

The assessment of risk contained within the table below is considered to be consistent with the Council's Risk Appetite Statement.

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *Considering controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
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Strategic Risk	Not delivering the Masterplan and its projects	Full programme of works to be developed, funding approvals to be in place at key stages	H	Yes
Compliance	Experimental Traffic Regulation Order / Traffic Regulation Order challenges	Manage through ongoing engagement and communication programme	M	Yes
Operational	Sufficient capacity of resources within Councils teams and external providers to meet programme objectives	Development of the transformational projects programme Resource review ongoing and identification of support through the Project Management Officer	M	Yes
Financial	Budget pressures due to current market volatility and wider project delivery strategies	This will be more fully expressed in project Business Case evaluations.	H	Yes
Reputational	Establishing a foundation to make the identified changes and for project delivery in the area, following significant investment in the preparation of the Masterplan	Maintain Masterplan Vision as part of the LOIP delivery. Continue stakeholder engagement and agree project detail and implementation Clear and regular communications and reporting	H	Yes

Environment / Climate	<p>Air quality improvement</p> <p>Enabling greater active travel opportunities</p> <p>Balancing place and movement need and modes of travel</p> <p>Opportunities to establish local micro habitats for flora and fauna</p>	<p>Reduction in vehicular through routing</p> <p>Maintaining and augmenting public transport accessibility</p> <p>All streetscape projects founded on 'place greening' and better use balance</p> <p>Specifications with a 'local first' basis</p>	L	Yes
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8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
<p>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</p> <p><u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u></p>	<p>Council Delivery Plan 2023-24 - Creating the Masterplan accelerates the Council's 'journey of change' for the George Street area in response to the climate change crises, the cost-of-living crises, and the socio-economic impacts on the traditional 'high-street' supporting the sustainable neighbourhood.</p> <p>Masterplan preparation and delivery:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlocks community action by strengthening and rebalancing the relationship between local government and citizens – through the engagement programme. • Lead council and cross-sector partnerships with a focus on outcomes to work across borders and boundaries – the Masterplan provides the foundation of projects which will require partnership working. • Enables a functioning, trusted local and central government relationship to both understand the local context and translate ambitious national aspiration into effective local action for communities – in the delivery of the Masterplan's projects.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designs for people’s needs, by responding to the needs, expectations and wants of citizens – as a result of the engagement programme. • Tackles inequality and meet the needs of all citizens, recognising the diversity of communities and playing a proactive role in tackling inequality of outcome and embedding rights-based approaches – in the engagement programme and as projects develop.
<p><u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u></p>	
<p>Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes</p>	<p>A Prosperous Economy</p> <p>The Masterplan focuses on ‘place’ based investment to redress the needs of the area for the 21 Century as the foundation to grow the local ‘economy’ and better fulfil the area potential for its ‘people’. The place has a distinct identity functioning as a local neighbourhood entity within the city centre.</p> <p>The Masterplan does not directly refer to the Outcomes 1-3 (poverty, unemployment, upskilling) but would support creating a more attractive better-connected place setting the foundation for an improved economy.</p>
<p>Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes</p>	<p>The production of the Masterplan has engaged and consulted any interested person and organisation on its development to reflect the needs, ambitions, and place vision through a series of transformational projects.</p> <p>The Masterplan supports Outcome 7 Child Friendly City which supports all children to prosper and engage actively with their communities by 2026. This has its foundation in the children and young person’s engagement programme undertaken.</p> <p>Supports Outcomes 10-12 Adults – by open calls for involvement by any interested party to be involved in the initial consultation through to Masterplan development so that people can shape their immediate environments and be involved in delivering place change.</p>
<p>Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes</p>	<p>The Masterplan is written specifically with a current evaluation of all ‘place’ aspects within and affecting the study area and proposes six transformational projects that are considered crucial to the future of</p>

	<p>the 'place'. Delivery of the projects will address specific targets which include: Supports Outcome 14 Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by 42.5% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate Supports Outcome 15 38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as main mode of travel by 2026.</p> <p>The Masterplan recognises the current Climate Crises and advocates best sustainable practice in all the projects proposed within what is a built and brownfield urban environment.</p>
<p>Regional and City Strategies</p>	<p>The report supports the priorities in the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) investment in infrastructure, regenerating our city centre, unlock development potential, improve the deployment of low carbon transport, to enable Aberdeen to realise development opportunities in the City Centre Masterplan.</p> <p>The Masterplan supports the National, Regional and Local Transport Strategies, particularly the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy, which prioritises the needs of those walking, wheeling, and cycling above other road users, and the 4 pillars identified in the recent Regional Transport Strategy, Nestrans 2040: Equality, Climate, Prosperity and Wellbeing.</p> <p>The Masterplan also supports the Aberdeen Active Travel Plan and Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan, both of which seek to improve conditions for people walking and cycling in Aberdeen, particularly to, from and within the City Centre, through the provision of more and safer infrastructure. Fundamentally this is expressed with the intention of limiting through-routing traffic and proposing new streetscapes within the existing street sections.</p> <p>Measures to reduce unnecessary vehicle traffic in the City Centre will support the Air Quality Action Plan, Climate Change Plan, Net Zero Action Plan and Low Emission Zone by contributing to emissions reduction.</p>

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IIA Stage 1 and 2 Assessment accompanies this report.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 3 – Traffic Testing Report • Appendix 5 - Strategic Environmental Assessment- Environmental Report • Appendix 5a – SEA Environmental Report Non-Technical summary

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 City Growth and Resources Committee 12 November 2021 – Combined City and Beach Covering Report [Combined City and Beach Covering Report - Covering Report.pdf \(aberdeencity.gov.uk\)](#)

(Item 2.6.4 - Note the current position regarding George Street and continued uncertainty surrounding the future of the former John Lewis building and undertake public and stakeholder engagement in early 2022 and report back to this committee in June 2022.)

[Decisions 12th-Nov-2021 13.00 City Growth and Resources Committee.pdf \(aberdeencity.gov.uk\)](#)

- 10.2 Council 29 June 2022 – City Centre Masterplan Update Report - [CCMP Update Report to Council.pdf \(aberdeencity.gov.uk\)](#)

(Item 2.7 - Note the outcome of the recent engagement exercise on the future of George Street (Appendix E) and instruct the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to report back a Mini Masterplan for the George Street to Full Council in December 2022.)

[Decisions 29th-Jun-2022 10.30 Council.pdf \(aberdeencity.gov.uk\)](#)

- 10.3 Council 14 December 2022 – Draft George Street Mini Masterplan Report [George Street Mini Masterplan FINALREPORT.pdf \(aberdeencity.gov.uk\)](#)

(Item 2.1 - Approves the content of the Draft George Street Mini Masterplan and notes the engagement undertaken with stakeholders to date.)

(Item 2.4 - Instructs the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to report the outcomes of the public consultation on the Draft George Street Mini Masterplan back to Council by December 2023, including any recommended revisions to the Draft Mini Masterplan.)

[Decision - George Street Mini Masterplan - COM/22/291 \(aberdeencity.gov.uk\)](https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/decision-george-street-mini-masterplan-com/22/291)

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix 1: Consultation & Engagement Report
- 11.2 Appendix 2: Finalised Draft George Street Masterplan
- 11.3 Appendix 3: Traffic Testing Report
- 11.4 Appendix 4: Draft George Street Mini Masterplan 14 December 2022
- 11.5 Appendix 5 & 5a: SEA Environmental Report & Non-Technical Summary

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Nigel McDowell
Title	Senior Planner – Urban Design, Strategic Place Planning
Email Address	nmcdowell@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	01224 067734

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Finalised Draft George Street Masterplan

Consultation & Engagement Report

Sept 2023



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George Street Draft Masterplan Timeline

- In November 2021, as part of the City Centre and Beach Masterplan refresh, Aberdeen City Council instructed officers to undertake public engagement focusing on the area of George Street that is within the city centre boundary and to report findings to June 2022 Council.
- In February/March 2022 the Council **undertook public consultation** using an online Citizen Space questionnaire, as well as paper copies if required, seeking opinions on the Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) of the area. The survey received 297 responses to establish how the area functions on a day-to-day basis and how the local and surrounding community use and interact with George St.
- In June 2022, Council instructed a draft masterplan for the George St area be created and presented to December Council. During the second half of 2022 the draft George Street Masterplan was prepared with stakeholder input and presented to the December 2022 Council, which approved the draft masterplan for consultation in early 2023 and to report a finalised draft Masterplan to Council in December 2023.

In January 2023, an engagement plan was prepared for the George Street area and approved by the City Centre Masterplan (CCMP) Board, with scope of engagement:

- Seeking stakeholder and public comment on the content of the draft Masterplan.
- Checking that observations in the draft Masterplan resonate more widely – for example that the area currently doesn't encourage people to linger/streets are empty after 5pm.
- Seeking stakeholder and public assistance in the prioritisation of masterplan projects and identification of potential additional projects.
- Ensuring the Masterplan has genuine stakeholder and grass roots ownership.
- Identifying opportunities for specific projects to be championed and led by stakeholders and partner organisations.
- Ensuring a focus on engaging with children and young people including schools and college students.

This report:

- 1) Summarises the results of the on-line consultation and engagement that took place on ACC's Citizen Space for a 6-week period between 17th March until 28th April 2023, and records recommendations for revision.
- 2) Records the targeted stakeholder feedback and evaluation.
- 3) Records the activities and results of engaging with children and young people in and around the area with focused 'sense of place' workshops.
- 4) Lists the areas of revision to shape the draft masterplan in accordance with the consultation findings.
- 5) Summarises the considered Priority Projects from the finalised draft Masterplan.



On-street engagement with college students



Posters advertising consultation displayed in shops



Part 1

Consultation Methods

Executive Summary

Consultation Outcomes



In accordance with the approved engagement approach for CCMP projects, consultation was undertaken both in person and online using a variety of materials appropriate for different audiences.

Public Consultation

Public consultation was launched on 17th March 2023 and publicised by ACC’s communications team. In accordance with Council policy on consulting on draft masterplans, a 6-week consultation was undertaken on ACC Citizen Space with an online survey questionnaire which ran until 28th April 2023 with 102 responses received. Hard copies of the draft Masterplan were also available and were issued to groups such as George Street Community Council.

Stakeholder Engagement

11 key stakeholders were recontacted advising that the survey questionnaire was live and an offer to meet in person to have an in-depth discussion was made.

Children and Young People

At the outset it was agreed that Children and Young People should play a central role in the consultation. Within and adjacent to the study area the students of North East Scotland College (NESCol) and Roberts Gordon’s College are estimated to generate c.11,000 daily visits to the area, and there are 4 primary schools and 1 secondary within the vicinity of George Street.

Publicity

As well as press releases and social media coverage, posters were distributed to local premises to advertise the consultation. A copy of the poster is shown opposite, and the distribution map is in Appendix 1.



The George Street area is an important, diverse and vibrant neighbourhood within the city centre. A draft Mini Masterplan for area has been prepared by Aberdeen City Council. It proposes a range of regeneration projects to support the neighbourhood.



You have until 28th April to comment on the draft plan.

To read the mini masterplan and provide comments please scan the QR code opposite.

or access the Council’s consultation hub via <https://consultation.aberdeencity.gov.uk/>



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Press and Social Media

The Council’s communications team manages the issue of press releases and social media coverage. The Media release diary is below and an extract of some coverage opposite.

ACC Media release Diary

Date	Event	Comment
21 March	Media release	Notification of Citizen Space Survey live - Local media coverage including online and their extensive social media reach
21 March, 15 April, 22 April	Social media posts on different platforms	<p>Social Media Metrics</p> <p>Reach (total number of people who see the content) – 20,700</p> <p>Impressions (number of times the content is displayed) – 28,800</p> <p>Total clicks – (number of people who clicked on the link to the release/ consultation) 829</p>
20 September	Social media posts	Advertising the final engagement and consultation presentation evening

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Public consultation for draft George Street mini-masterplan starts

Tuesday 21 March 2023
 A public consultation to gather thoughts from residents, businesses, and visitors to George Street and nearby streets for a draft mini masterplan for the area has started.

Seven open-ended questions are being asked to help gather people’s thoughts, and local stakeholders are being contacted directly to take part in the consultation and on-going engagement.

It asks what the area is currently like to visit, live, work and shop in, and to know what changes people would like to see in any future plans for the area.

Aberdeen City Council Co-Leader Councillor Alex Nicoll said: “The six-week consultation is to be welcomed and I’d encourage people who live, work, shop, and visit the area to take part.

“We want people to bring forward proposals that will help promote development opportunities, reassess the place through their eyes, and promote George Street as a great neighbourhood where people want to be.”

The draft masterplan’s purpose is to present regeneration projects which support George Street as a ‘vibrant city centre community at the heart of reinvention’ and have been based on initial survey results and stakeholder engagement from last year.

The findings of the consultation will help the draft masterplan to be developed in detail before being presented to a council committee later this year.

People will be asked to consider that George Street is home to a diversity of communities and businesses in a bustling and lively part of the city centre yet, with the closure of John Lewis, the nearby Broadford Works remaining undeveloped, and the Bon Accord Shopping Centre being placed on the open market, there are increasing challenges in and around the area.

Creating a mini masterplan helps the George Street area identify its regeneration needs and helps to establish its connections into the city centre masterplan and beach area projects.

The city centre, new Aberdeen Market, Queen Street, and part of George Street projects are part of the City Centre Masterplan (CCMP), a regeneration blueprint which is transforming the city centre while conserving its proud heritage heritage.

Since it was approved in 2015, the CCMP has already delivered several achievements to date including completion of Provost Skene’s House, the completion of Aberdeen Art Gallery, the Music Hall, Marischal Square, and Broad Street. The regeneration of Union Terrace Gardens has provided a wheelchair-accessible multi-function space in the city centre park including a playpark for the first time.

The multi-million projects include streetscaping for Union Street and the creation of a new city market, and there is also a related masterplan to revitalise the beach area.

The public consultation for the George Street mini masterplan is available on the City Council’s website at [George Street Draft Mini-Masterplan - Consultation - Aberdeen City Council - Citizen Space](#) and runs until 28 April.

This is the summary of the collaborative engagement programme undertaken by ACC and streets-UK utilising a range of resources to provide a comprehensive opportunity for people to be involved and shape the outcomes of the Masterplan.

1) Citizen Space Questionnaire

From 17th March until 28th April **102** responses were received to the online questionnaire which posed questions at key stages through the draft Masterplan. The respondents were: Pupil/Student/Education (19), Resident (4), Local Authority Officer (1), NHSG (2), Police Officer (1), Prefer not to say (58), Professional / Business (14), Tertiary Education(3).The full responses are included in Appendix 3 and the evaluation is presented in Part 1 of this document. By comparison the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats questionnaire undertaken in February and March 2022 yielded 293 responses, which formed the baseline of evaluation to proceed to commission the Masterplan.

All of the questions posed generated a majority of support for the topics, though the re-evaluation of the vehicular movement in the study area, in order to reduce through-routing and create a more attractive environment, generated a 53% response in support. The concerns focused on balancing accessibility and the need to retain car access and car parking to serve the needs of the area. The draft Masterplan gives an overview on intentions rather than specifics and has since been revised to provide more detail on the propose vehicular routing and the need to balance user needs with more detail on street sections. The scenarios exploring options for Norco House generated a 80% support to encourage looking further at this important site, which was expressed as a tangible project and therefore possibly easier to envisage the options and their value to the area.

An important outcome for the Masterplan is to present clear project intentions representing 'best practice' and established on the thorough analysis and engagement undertaken.

2) Children and Young People

A programme of engagement has been undertaken with NESCol, Robert Gordons College and Skene Square and Sunnybank Primary Schools based on the theme of 'sense of place'. The objective has been to engage and encourage young people's interest in built environment matters as well as to provide their perspectives and feedback to influence the Masterplan.

The students at NESCol and Robert Gordons College undertook accompanied walks of the area and considered place-making and how specific locations could be made better. Although not hugely familiar with the area, the students from both institutions looked in detail at the constraints and opportunities associated with 4 locations and prioritised projects accordingly. A deep clean featured highest on their priority list along with tree planting. Parklets are also a popular idea at George Street and a lighting net and information points/wayfinding at Jopps Lane.

The primary school children also considered "place" and utilised a happy/sad persona, 'Georgie' to help articulate how they felt about the specific locations and what they *could* be like. Some of the classes had accompanied walking tours and the others were able to watch a virtual tour of the area. The priorities for the primary children, many of whom live in or near the Masterplan area, were mainly around more colour/art, planting and trees and better lighting and uplighting.

All participants very much enjoyed their involvement and deeper consideration of place-making and felt pleased that their opinions had been heard and were being taken seriously and included.

A separate session was held with Streetsport at Cruyff Court on 21 September.

3) Stakeholder Engagement

On 17th March 2023 an email was sent to 21 key stakeholders advising that the Citizen Space questionnaire on the content of the draft Masterplan was live for 6-weeks. The email also invited anyone who wished an in-person meeting to be taken through the draft Masterplan and to discuss the contents or their perspectives with the lead ACC Officer. Uptake on the offer to meet resulted 8 in-person meetings taken place, though others used the Citizen Space survey questionnaire. 8 key stakeholders did not respond, and it is assumed that they are content with the draft Masterplan.

Unanimously the stakeholder responses welcome the draft Masterplan and endorse the 'vision' and high-level project direction and would be interested in being involved as specific projects are taken forward in delivery.

Some of the responses indicate that there is scope to improve capacity building within key stakeholders to enable them to be fully engaged in the delivery of the Masterplan 'vision' and its projects in order to create a 'better connected George Street'. Nonetheless, it is a significant ask of anyone to take the time to be involved in reading through and articulating responses to the draft Masterplan and all consultation and engagement feedback was welcomed to shape the Masterplan going forward.

Further detail on stakeholder feedback is contained in Part 2 of this report and complete stakeholder responses and ACC replies are in the Appendix.

A stakeholder workshop to present and discuss the draft updated masterplan was held on 21st September which was attended by 19 participants representing a range of groups.

Working toward a Finalised Draft Masterplan

The Council approved the George Street draft Mini-Masterplan with an instruction for consultation and engagement to take place in early 2023. The following represent the revisions and additions to the draft Masterplan as a result of the engagement and consultation programme working toward a Finalised Draft Masterplan in October 2023:

1) Restructuring Content – To enable readers to focus on areas of interest to them as well as to coherently present the entire Masterplan.

2) 'Place' - A greater focus on the topic of 'Place' projects from which 'People' and 'Economy' are supported. Key project areas have been developed in detail to present clear opportunities for improvement.

3) Transport & Movement – Further testing, through the consultation period, to ensure that the principle of reducing traffic 'through routing' and creating opportunities within the streets of the study area through travel change provides a robust foundation for future project delivery.

4) Key 'Place' Projects – Inclusion of Harriet Street, the middle and southern end of George Street and Loch Street, including Norco House, NESCol and Bon Accord Centre for 6 transformational urban realm projects.

5) Partnership Working – The identification of significant opportunities for change should provide the foundation for wider collaboration and investment to deliver the Masterplan.

Priority Project Recommendations

As an outcome of the consultation and engagement programme the following are recommended as Priority Projects – those which are considered to have, and will lead to further, significant place impact and provide the foundation for delivery of the ‘Vision’ – ‘George Street Connected!’

1) Deep clean of the area – whether it be dog fouling, rusting street furniture, broken paving or litter the call for a ‘clean’ is to redress the sense of the area being ‘dirty, dull and grubby’.

2) Lighting strategy – the installation of a light net along George Street would at once emphasis the linear nature of the street, be a transformational project that signaled the heart of the area, imbued more of a sense of place and redressed concerns about light levels at night and security.

3) Norco House – The consultation response validated the importance of the site to the wider area and generated a strong and positive response to the scenarios proposed. The creation of a site planning brief would guide the uses and form of development so that the opportunities, and wider area requirements, can be met.

4) ETRO implementation – establishing a new vehicular routing system to reduce through traffic and enable the creation of a more accessible and attractive neighbourhood with urban realm opportunities.

5) Pedestrianising the central section of George St (between John St and St Andrew St) – extending the governance of the lower section of George Street and redesigning the urban realm.

6) Transformational Place projects - creating environments of George Street between John St and the Bon Accord Centre, Harriet Street and Loch Street that give the ‘wow’ factor and ‘set the scene’ for further change.

In addition to ‘place’ projects there are significant ‘people’ and ‘economy’ projects that could be implemented to support the George Street area going forward as a more ‘vibrant and connected neighbourhood at the heart of reinvention’.



Part 2

On-Line Public Consultation: Results & Analysis

Children and Young People Engagement: Results & Analysis

Stakeholder Engagement: Results & Analysis



Online Public Consultation & Analysis

ACC Online Survey

The Citizen Space consultation, taking place from the 17th March until the 28th April 2023, introduced the consultation by explaining that “By participating in this consultation on the George Street Draft Mini-Masterplan you are helping Aberdeen City Council determine what is essential to you and your communities in the George Street area. It is important that you are involved and aware of the projects proposed and that your opinions and needs shape the draft mini-masterplan to support the neighbourhood's future as a vibrant, attractive and connected part of the city centre.”

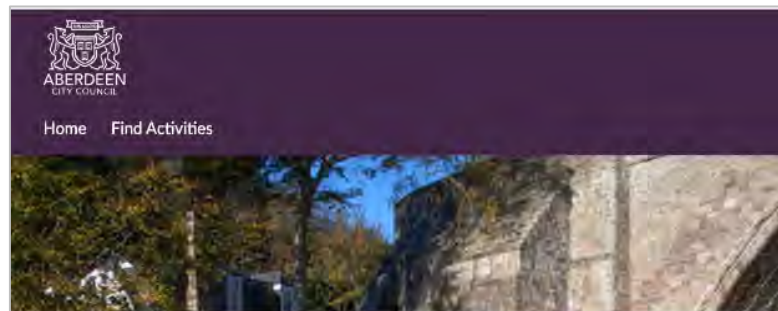
The draft Mini-Masterplan suggests a vision of 'George St Connected!' and provides a place-based analysis and proposes a range of regeneration projects to support the neighbourhood because the masterplan illustrates that the core of successful places is that they are people focused, have a diverse economy and are within attractive environments that work for everyone. - A vital aim of the city centre masterplan is to create the heart of Aberdeen as a destination and not a through route by re-thinking how places could be accessed and used, and this ethos is applied to the George Street area.

To help navigate the draft Masterplan the survey questionnaire presented specific questions relating to key sections of the draft, with page referencing, to enable participants to pace themselves and reflect on their evaluation and responses, as well as providing an opportunity to comment on any matters they wished to raise that many not be presented.

The information provided by the consultation responses, as well as the inclusive and iterative processes of master-planning consultation, should work to achieve a consensus amongst residents, businesses and interested parties in identifying and endorsing those opportunities for change and to provide a strong foundation for delivery through the Masterplan.

George Street Connected! The 'local' Neighbourhood: a vibrant and inclusive city centre community at the heart of reinvention.

Masterplan Vision Statement



George Street Draft Mini-Masterplan - Consultation

Overview

'George Street Connected!' - the George Street area is an important, diverse and vibrant neighbourhood within the city centre. To ensure that its communities are invested in, as well as connected to the delivery of the city centre masterplan and beach projects, Aberdeen City Council approved the George Street draft mini-masterplan in December 2022.

The draft mini-masterplan focuses on the wider George Street area within the city centre boundary - between Gallowgate and Charlotte Street, Spring Garden / Maberley Street and with the Bon Accord Centre to the south. However, immediate and wider influences around the area are also recognised and included.

The draft mini-masterplan puts forward a vision of 'George St Connected!', provides a place-based analysis and proposes a range of regeneration projects to support the neighbourhood because we believe

Citizen Space Online Consultation Portal Extract

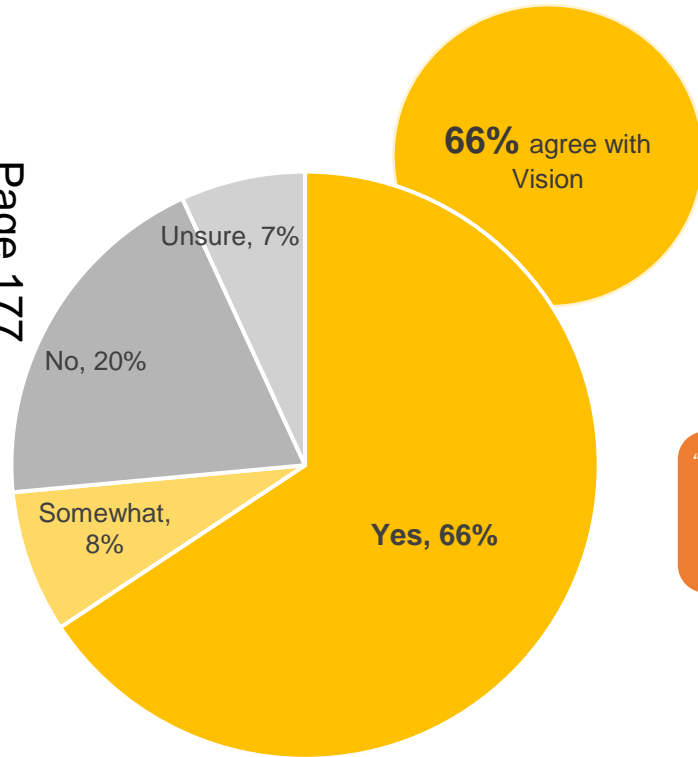
Question 1

The masterplan proposes - 'Vision' - 'George St Connected! - the local neighbourhood which is a vibrant and inclusive City Centre community at the heart of reinvention'

Do you agree with the Vision?

What are your thoughts on the 'Vision'?

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NB. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number

Key Themes / comments

Positive/ supportive

- "Like the aspects of cafes and outdoor seating"
- "Need to bring people into the space – have reason for doing so"
- "City will greatly benefit from the regeneration of this area – though important to deliver on each and all the social, cultural, economic and educational detailed objectives"
- "Pedestrianisation could really work / making it a quieter area"
- "Supporting accessibility / inclusivity is paramount to its success"

"I think it's a fantastic idea to regenerate the area. Focusing on young people would be my recommendation"

"I agree in full; the city would greatly benefit from improving George street"

"To pedestrianise and turn it into a quirky area could work really well for Aberdeen"

Negative / concerns

- Vision is unclear, too broad and vague. Document is complicated – lacks plain English
- Budget is of concern – how will this be funded
- "Crime and Anti-social behaviour can not be fixed by street lighting alone" – concerns over longer term management
- "Need to focus on young people and what will attract them into the area"
- "Restricting access will make the area less inclusive"

"The vision should be to improve the aesthetics, reputation and the economics of the George street area, and the vision should detail clearly how that can be done"

"It's a positive vision but I fail to see how this aligns with the current strategy of closing down existing cultural hubs such as Library and Leisure facilities"

"Not really as described. Many people work in the area, and they must be fully considered"

"Not sure, document is too complicated"

Summary of Q1 key themes and proposed action

Question	Main Themes	Summary	Proposed Masterplan Revision
<p>1. The masterplan proposes - 'Vision' - 'George St Connected! - the local neighbourhood - a vibrant and inclusive City Centre community at the heart of reinvention'.</p> <p><i>Do you agree with the Vision?</i></p> <p><i>What are your thoughts on the 'Vision'?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision sets a clear directive to forge connections and bring people back into the area. • Need to ensure all the social, cultural, economic and educational detailed objectives are delivered. • Accessibility and inclusivity is paramount to project delivery success. • Focus on young people required. • Budget and ongoing maintenance is of concern. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With 66% in agreement and a further 8% generally agree the conclusion is that the majority support the vision and its intent. • Concerns were raised around project detail, delivery and management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streamline the 'vision' into one sentence and avoid 'jargon' • Ensure project detail is clearly connected to the 'vision', is sufficient to envisage projects and generate support for their endorsement.

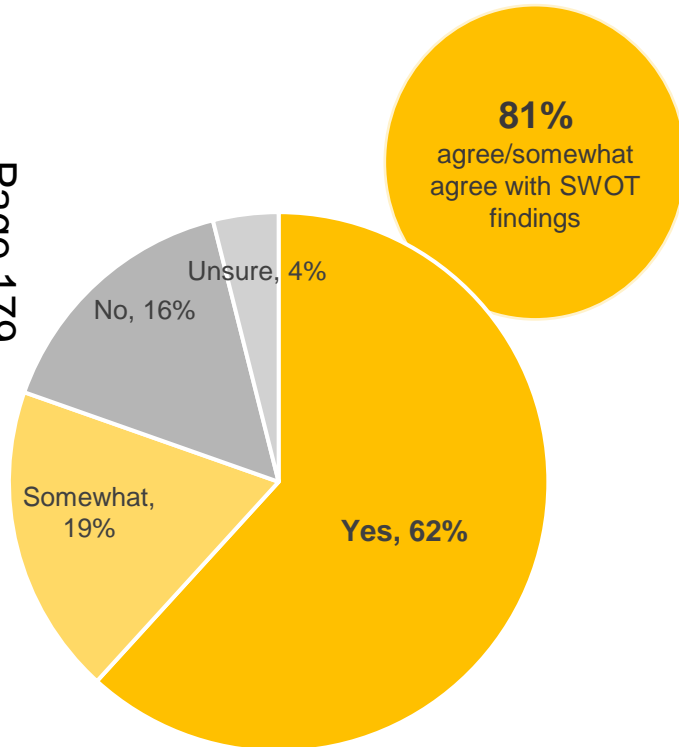
Question 2

Findings on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats (SWOT) of the area are provided (Page 30-31)

Do you agree with the findings?

If not, what would you change or add? - Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats of the area

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Key Themes - SWOT

Strengths

- Potential for creating an area for street food or socialising.
- If you can restrict traffic and attract the right type of business, the street can become a true hidden gem. And being a bit hidden away may turn a threat into a strength!

Opportunities

- The 'opportunity' to pedestrianize Harriet Street will make it harder to access the area / difficult for cars (therefore a weakness too). Access to and from RGC by car has to be preserved
- Encourage sense of community through the provision and promotion of spaces or activities that bring residents together.
- People's safety should be a priority by creating a better environment with Policing & security.
- I'd like and expect to see explicit mention of engaging young people as an opportunity.
- Demolition of Norco House could be used to turn the area into a more open green space, with paths, seats, fountains etc., to draw people into the area for recreation and well being, rather than purely on commercial activities
- Giving more space to pedestrians and cyclists and removing space for cars parking

Weaknesses

- Too much focus on pedestrian experience vs motorists
- Limited Parking / traffic congestion - people will go to retail parks, or a place with good independent shops and free parking
- Limited / poor disabled facilities and access planning for disabled people.
- Large student population in George Street but no planning for student life.
- No potential identified for creating an area for street food or socialising.
- George Street area is cut-off - This means that typically George Street must be a destination in itself.
- Proposed tenant mix
- No green space for dog owners, and enclosed areas for dogs to run around.

Threats

- Strengths do not seem to be realistic,
- Reduced occupancy of Marischal Square offices
- Bins are almost always full due to local businesses using them making the street feel messy and unclean
- Antisocial behaviour / drug users – ability to manage and police appropriately
- Threat of dying high street leading to companies not wanting to invest in these areas – in turn shops/businesses go out of business as people turn more to shopping online at big retailers

NB. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number

Summary of Q2 key themes and proposed action

Question	Main Themes	Summary	Proposed Masterplan Revision
<p>2. Findings on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats (SWOT) of the area are provided</p> <p><i>Do you agree with the findings? If not, what would you change or add?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With 81% agreeing/somewhat agreeing with SWOT findings its evident that people recognise that the proposals will support the wider vision to create a more connected space. • Creating more opportunities to bring people together seen as a real positive. • Will be important to engage across all demographic groups to ensure needs are met and area is accessible and inclusive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 62%, and with a further 19% generally agreeing, the SWOT analysis is supported. • The SWOT provides the basis to propose projects that are considered will make significant positive change to the area. • There are concerns regarding the 'dying high street', urban realm management, concerns around safety and the lack of social enterprise whilst the opportunities for neighbourhood improvement are rich and shared. • Balancing traffic movement and parking is a repeated issue, and Norco House is a site of keen interest as an opportunity for not only redevelopment but for green/social space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project descriptions developed to clarify and illustrate what is intended/possible. • Review of the proposed traffic management plan. • Further exploration of achievable designs for key places.

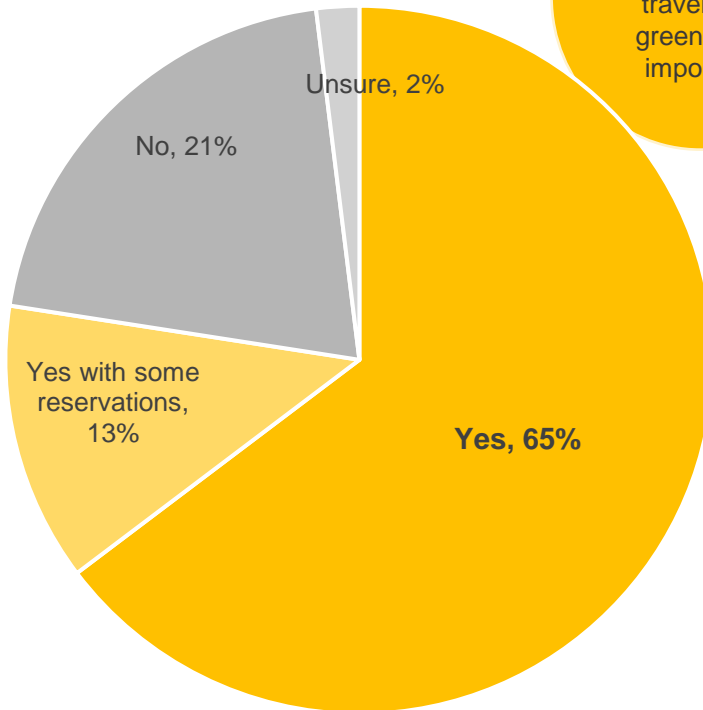
Question 3

Proposals include making key streets more attractive, promoting active travel and creating green spaces.

Do you agree with this?

Do you agree that proposing to make key streets more attractive for active travel and greening is important?

65% agree promoting active travel and greening is important



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NB. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number

Key Themes / comments

Positive / supportive

- “Some consultation with those who know about street plantings need to be consulted as there is evidence across the City of the wrong trees (pavement up lift and roots interfering with services)”
- “Community growing spaces e.g., in vacant buildings could be good, concern over them being vandalised and falling into disrepair and neglect when the interest level wears off”
- “Cafe culture on the pedestrian area and lighting would improve the area”
- “Segregation of users is important”
- “Existing businesses, schools and colleges need to be able to operate effectively”

Negative / concerns

- “Ongoing Maintenance is a concern”
- “Concern over anti-social behaviour in new green spaces”
- “Too much focus on pedestrian’s vs cars, improve road links first then pedestrian routes”
- “‘active travel’ and pedestrianization - this is unworkable where vast proportions of the population trying to be attracted to use the area live on the fringes of the city or rurally”
- “Considerations for elderly and disabled should be fully explored to make space as inclusive as possible”
- “Clear tactile demarcation of the pavement, particularly if the space is still being shared by bicycles/other wheeled vehicles is paramount for the safety of visually impaired people”
- “Budget a concern”
- “Concern re proposed traffic layout – implications re congestion elsewhere: cannot rely upon public transport”

Summary of Q3 key themes and proposed action

Question	Main Themes	Summary	Proposed Masterplan Revision
<p>3. Proposals include making key streets more attractive, promoting active travel and creating green spaces.</p> <p><i>Do you agree with this?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognised benefits of the Active Travel proposals but these need to be as inclusive as possible and could benefit from being supported by a wider active travel network to support access by the broader population of Aberdeen. Greening the City is great, but consultation required to understand the most suitable planting and installations for the streets. Existing businesses and schools need to be able to operate effectively – the focus/balance on pedestrian's vs cars should be further considered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 65% agree promoting active travel and greening is important with a further 12% agreeing with reservations. Its important that any changes support George St as a residential and business location. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further traffic modeling undertaken to better understand impacts of any traffic changes. Cross sections of streets prepared to better illustrate how potential changes to key streets could look.

Online Public Consultation & Analysis

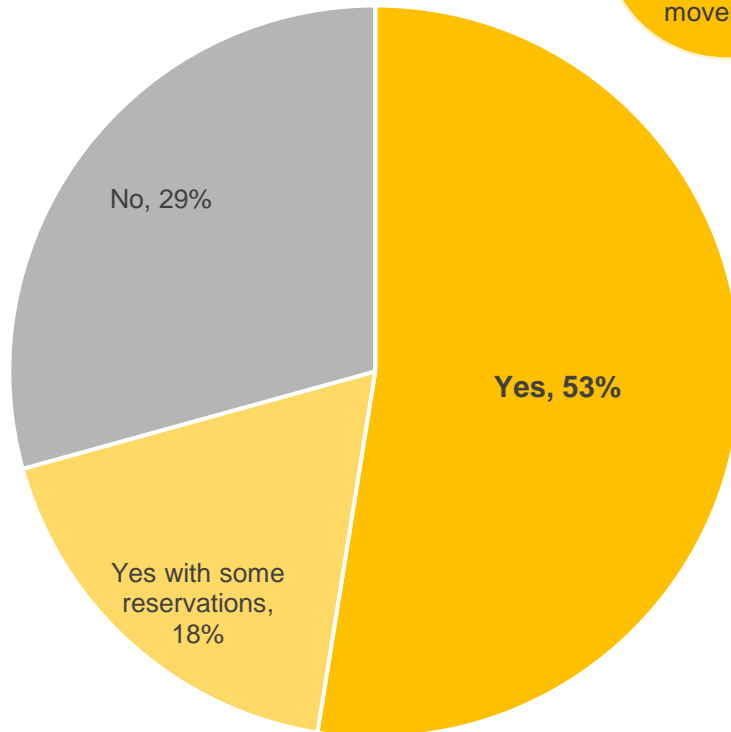
Question 4

The masterplan proposes changes to vehicular movement in the area to improve place quality.

Do you support trying to make these changes?

Do you support trying to scope out vehicular movement changes in the area

53%
support
changes to
vehicular
movement



Key Themes / comments

Positive / supportive

- Existing businesses, schools and colleges need to be able to operate effectively – suitable drop off and collection points for schools and key workers delivering services to public
- Maintain access for disabled parking / deliveries
- Safety for all users is important

Negative / concerns

- Concern re proposed traffic layout – implications re congestion elsewhere
- Too much focus on pedestrian's vs cars, improve road links first then pedestrian routes

NB. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number

Summary of Q4 key themes and proposed action

Question	Main Themes	Summary	Proposed Masterplan Revision
<p>Q4. The Masterplan proposes changes to vehicular movement in the area to improve place quality.</p> <p><i>Do you support trying to make these changes?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over 53% support the idea of changes to vehicular movement and access to the area – this needs to be balanced with ensuring existing businesses, schools and colleges can operate effectively. Need to assess impact on road congestion elsewhere. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The near 50/50 split in opinion is based on the recognition for change but that needs to be balanced against localised requirements. The vehicular movement plan, or concerns generated by what it is was thought to propose, was the single largest topic of concern in the consultation responses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The vehicle movement plan has been further tested to optimise a reduction in through routing, to make the George St area more of a destination, and to create space within the urban realm to be able to create more attractive streets. Traffic, that may have through routed, is better served by being on the priority routes surrounding the study area. Street sections have been developed to illustrate the possible changes to ‘place’ founded on improved accessibility and movement. The possibility of pedestrianising the central section of George Street between John Street and St Andrew Street, with time limited servicing in accordance with the wider city centre, is to be brought forward in the finalised draft masterplan. Proposals for Harriet Street, the direct link to Schoolhill and the city centre are to be illustrated.

Key Themes / comments

Positive / supportive

- *Creating a sense of identity is the most important if we provide a unique reason for people to want to come to the space they will come to.*
- *The regeneration projects are admirable and aspirational - who it is that supports these things to happen?*
- *Good to see lots of outside seating and more shops*
- *Improving leisure facilities and crime rates may encourage more people there in the evening.*
- *Colourful play areas for children, indoor paintball, indoor crazy golf like Golf Fang.*
- *Younger generations need to be considered - actively want to support local and independent business. / require something for them*
- *Make more of existing heritage e.g., University Student Union Building Murals*

Negative / concerns

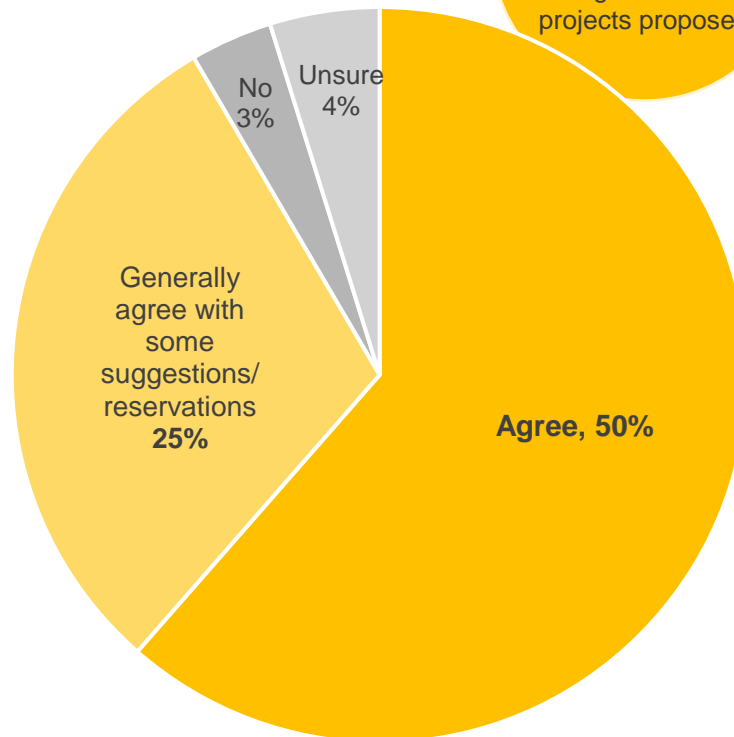
- *Lighting will not solve crime*
- *Too much focus on pedestrians and cyclists, more focus is needed for car access and parking, or people will not visit businesses - Reducing vehicle dominance is a risk to the area's businesses*
- *Budget for ongoing maintenance and upkeep of areas*
- *Budgets – start with simple easy improvements / quick wins!*

Question 5

A list of regeneration projects is proposed.
Are there any that you do not agree with, or are there projects you would like to see added?

Please identify any projects you do not support or add those that you think are missing

75% agree or generally agree with the regeneration projects proposed



NB. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number

Summary of Q5 key themes and proposed action

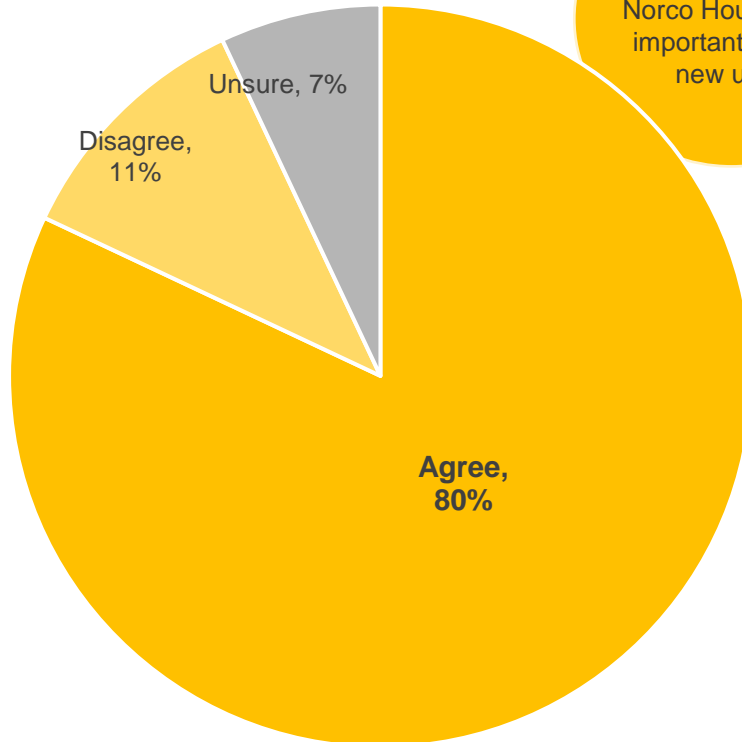
Question	Main Themes	Summary	Proposed Masterplan Revision
<p>Q5. A list of regeneration projects is proposed.</p> <p><i>Are there any that you do not agree with, or are there projects you would like to see added?</i></p> <p><i>Please identify any projects you do not support or add those that you think are missing</i></p>	<p>75% agreed / generally agreed outlines a real appetite for the regeneration project proposals; however, there are some reservations & suggestions for improving upon these such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring a sense of identity is created – creating a destination • Improving leisure facilities • Working on reduction of crime to encourage more evening visitors • Regeneration of empty properties for new leisure / recreational purposes / green space etc. • Ensuring the younger generations are considered • Making more of existing heritage 	<p>The list of projects within the topic of ‘people’, ‘place’ and ‘economy’ is extensive and endorsed by the consultation.</p> <p>Projects that are place specific/unique, and many with an outside focus, in order to bring sense of greater identity and individualism, as well as safety, is important.</p> <p>Introducing more colour, greening, a focus on younger people, as well as concerns on delivery budget are points well made.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project list has been revised to prioritise importance in delivery for short, medium and long-term projects to be supported by the Council and public and private delivery partners. • The addition of detail, including computer generated images for key location, should encourage greater confidence in place ‘vision’. • The Bon Accord Centre, which forms the southern boundary of the study area is to be referenced for ‘place’ opportunities and in relation to streetscape proposals for Loch Street.

Question 6

Norco House site, formerly John Lewis, is identified as an important site for new uses.

Do you agree that Norco House, formerly John Lewis, is an important site and if so, what uses should it have to support George Street?

80% agree
Norco House is an
important site for
new uses



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NB. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number

Key Themes / comments

Supportive

- Preference for it being retained and re-purposed - Ideas include
 - Cultural, entrepreneurial, community and mixed-use hub
 - Big Arcade / Pop up events / exhibition space
 - Big food court area for street food and other cuisines
 - Community maker space / pop up studios
 - Multi-function Centre, cinema, museum, art galleries, indoor bars and food stalls, indoor golf like – creating an indoor Camden market'esque' vibe.
- Youth offering is important

Negative / concerns

- "Not residential"
- "City should be full of attractive destinations and be easily accessible. The lack of consistent planning strategy over the past 20 years has created a divided City Centre"
- "How will spaces to be filled when there are SO many vacant premises already in the City Centre"
- "Ongoing maintenance of whatever happens a concern"

Summary of Q6 key themes and proposed action

Question	Main Themes	Summary	Proposed Masterplan Revision
<p>Q6. Norco House site, formerly John Lewis, is identified as an important site for new uses. (Page 55-63)</p> <p><i>Do you agree that Norco House, formerly John Lewis, is an important site?</i></p> <p><i>and if so, what uses should it have to support George Street?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80% of responses supported the idea of Norco House being retained and re-purposed - Ideas include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural, entrepreneurial, community and mixed-use hub Big Arcade / Pop up events / exhibition space Big food court area for street food and other cuisines Community maker space / pop up studios Multi-function Centre, cinema, museum, art galleries, indoor bars and food stalls, indoor golf like – creating an indoor ‘Camden market’ vibe. Youth offering is important 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Norco House was presented as a series of scenarios based on retention or complete redevelopment and was one of the tangible projects within the draft masterplan. The agreement that the site is important was strong, and it is clear that the scenarios prompted the imagination as to what uses and forms could be there to support the wider study area. The pre-cast concrete elevations, like or loathe, are a strongly distinctive part of the identity of the southern section of George Street supporting an easily recognisable ‘sense of place’. The site offers scope to create meaningful greenspace which could be found nowhere else within the study area as a requirement for quality 21st Century living. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The placement of the Norco House scenarios within the finalised draft is to be reconsidered given the identified importance of the site and its potential. The area of George St at Norco House, currently on the front cover of the draft Masterplan is to be presented as a key priority project for urban realm change embodying the key themes of the Masterplan. Further planning considerations for the site should follow as a result of the masterplan consultation.

Question 7 – Part 1

Please provide any further comments you wish to make on the draft mini-masterplan

The table below summarises the key themes that emerges from the further comments section.

Budget & Project Delivery

How will this be financed? / managing public expectations

Who will deliver on the 60 projects?

Potential to break down into smaller quick wins and longer-term projects which come together to deliver the broader vision.

Concern regarding money being spent when public facilities like libraries and swimming pools being closed?

Engaging with the younger, creative generations on what they would like to see in George Street / Aberdeen as a whole, it is them who will make or break the reputation of a city and Aberdeen is currently not well known for its reputation

Streetscape

More social attractive spaces - launch the 'aperitivo habit'

Nice fresh look with lots of cultures - street food / local food options and outdoor areas where you can sit outside in fresh air, socialise and see other people to dine, drink, etc. in the evenings / provide things to do.

Maintenance & Cleaning important

Management of anti-social behaviours (violence /crime)

New smaller / independent businesses (affordable rent)

Safety and community needs to be number one & area where adults, teens and kids can socialise together / family friendly

Pet Friendly

Other "anti-local-community" projects have ruined the city centre for generations to come. The business opportunities identified are potentially unsustainable when up against other business ventures.

Reflect heritage & history – creating character an aesthetic vibe

Greening important for biodiversity – potential to extend plans to derelict industrial areas – providing green space or hybrid residential / café spaces

Plans need to make it **clear whom it is looking to attract & where they will come from.**

Question 7 – Part 2

Please provide any further comments you wish to make on the draft mini-masterplan

The table below summarises the key themes that emerges from the further comments section.

Infrastructure

Much of the area currently is uninviting for pedestrians and cyclists

Improve Cycle infrastructure – segregated – review proposed route to avoid 'zig-zag' from Mounthooly/NESCOL

Improve access across Mounthooly roundabout

Improve road access & parking first

Impacts on wider traffic infrastructure (e.g., pushing all western traffic to Maberly Street/Spring Garden - This is a key route for getting to the Beach, Pittodrie, the College

Accessibility / inclusivity

Include for other smaller marginalised groups like disabled people, & charity organisations that support those marginalised groups

Incorporate community involvement e.g., smaller local community groups to look after green spaces plant life

Health and wellbeing to be given far more consideration and prominence in this assessment – how will benefits be delivered

Social environment may warrant more consideration in the plan - **ways to support & extend local relationships, social contact, supporting networks that exist** e.g., provision/improvement of informal spaces / supporting volunteering infrastructure

Children & Young People

Meaningful and inclusive engagement with Children and Young People (CYP) is central to masterplanning and a creative approach has been adopted to date to encourage broad participation and this approach has been continued with the Masterplan proposals.

The George Street area is home to the Aberdeen campus of North East of Scotland College (NESCol) (tertiary education) and the Robert Gordon College (nursery, primary and secondary education) as well as local primary schools, which means that a significant number of young people use the Masterplan area or transition through the area on a daily basis.

streets-UK have undertaken a series of activities with local primary school pupils, secondary school pupils, college students and a local outdoor sports hub to explore what place-making means to them, how they currently use the George Street area and how they feel about the proposals in the mini-Masterplan.

NESCol

As part of the NESCol Open Day for prospective students and their families to visit the campus on the 19th March 2023, NESCol agreed that a manned presentation display to illustrate the draft George Street Masterplan could be placed within the Campus building. The presentation displayed four pop-ups explaining the draft masterplan with QR coded postcards directed interested parties to the ACC Consultation Hub website to complete the Citizen Space questionnaire survey.

A workshop with 14 Level 5 Retail students was undertaken on 7th June with the discussion focusing on “George Street, a sense of place”, with students asked for a word or phrases that summed up the area. Responses included **‘kebabs’, ‘plenty of barbers’, ‘some cool shops’, ‘bit boring’, ‘needs more shops’, ‘old’, ‘dirty’, ‘cheap’, ‘busy’, and ‘smelly’**. The students said how little they currently use George St but unanimously agreed that the area is vibrant and inclusive and that the Vision from the draft Masterplan accurately captured that. An accompanied walk then took place establishing how the students felt about the existing streetscape and to consider this both in the context of place-making and retail. Back in class, the students used printed images of each of the locations to provide comments and suggestions on both the ‘Constraints’ and ‘Opportunities’ of each location as outlined on A1 boards as well as considering some precedent images of potential projects.



NESCol Student Workshop Material – highlighting constraints and opportunities of selected locations



NESCol Open Day March

Engagement with Children & Young People

NESCol (Continued)

The students voted for their priority projects for each location, having 3 votes each per location. The range of options varied slightly for each location, but as can be seen from the boards, common themes emerges namely a desire for a deep clean, improved street lighting, improved CCTV and, for George Street itself, more colour in the streetscape and carriageways/pavements.

In considering their priorities, the students appeared to take into consideration what could make the biggest difference in a short timescale and what might be affordable. *(These are shown in the table below and over the next page)*

	Spring Garden	
Theme	Project	Place your vote!
Appearance & character	Removal of street clutter	
	Deep clean of existing paving, street furniture and building façades	 1 st
	Street & pedestrian crossing colouring	
Enhanced Pedestrian Experience	Refurbish and restore existing street bins, bollards, cycle stands	
	Front door lighting for residential tenements	
	Create active uses and frontage	
	Signage and wayfinding strategy	
	Retrofitted rain gardens, SuDS and planting which filters out pollutants.	•
	Introduction of street tree planting	
	Carriageway redesign	 2 nd =
George St as a destination	Improved provision of street furniture and bin storage	
	Visitor and residential information points	
	Improved CCTV coverage	 2 nd =

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Spring Garden Project Votes

Engagement with Children & Young People

NESCol (Continued)

Jopp's Lane			
Theme	Project	Place your vote!	
Appearance & character	Removal of street clutter		
	Deep clean of existing paving, street furniture and building façades		1 st
	Street & pedestrian crossing colouring		
Enhanced Pedestrian Experience	Improvement to quality and consistency of shop front signage		
	Festoon lighting / lighting net		3 rd
	Create active uses and frontage		
	Signage and wayfinding strategy		
George St as a destination	Carriageway redesign		
	Visitor and residential information points - these could be pop up kiosks / interactive stands / live cycle counters / air quality readings etc.		
	Improved CCTV coverage		2 nd

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Jopps Lane Project Votes

Engagement with Children & Young People

NESCol (Continued)

George Street		Place your vote!	
Theme	Project		
Appearance & character	Removal of street clutter / Bin storage		
	Street & pedestrian crossing colouring		2 nd =
	Refurbish and restore existing street bins, bollards, cycle stands		
Enhanced Pedestrian Experience	Overhead and uplighting		
	Active uses and pop-ups		
	Signage and wayfaring		
	Street tree planting		
	Rain gardens		
	Grow spaces and play features		
George St as a destination	Street furniture and bin storage		
	Information points		
	CCTV		2 nd =
	Street lighting		1 st
Reduced vehicle dominance	Pop-up markets, events		
	PARKlets – temp or permanent use of spaces for social, play, hanging		
	Better cycle parking & infrastructure		

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Engagement with Children & Young People

Robert Gordon College

A workshop with Advanced Higher Geography students took place on 6th June 2023. Having agreed a programme in advance with the school, the activities were designed in the context of 'a sense of place'. College course themes such as 'human environment' and 'urban change' were included. The pupils' perceptions of the George Street area came from a position of very limited interaction when at school or in their own time. They described the existing 'sense of place' as 'dull', 'nothing of interest', 'run down' and 'dirty' but they did recognise potential for the kind of place it could be and what they could do there, and all agreed with the Masterplan 'Vision'.

An accompanied walk took place to St Andrew Street, Craigie Street and George Street and the pupils were encouraged to consider what they felt was good and bad about each street. The pupils were left with posters of the Constraint and Opportunities, precedent images and project voting sheets to review as part of their class work. At the end of June, having reviewed the Constraints and Opportunities in class, the students provided their votes on 3 priority projects per location (as at NESCol)

Due to the success of the session with the S6 class, an additional workshop was arranged for S3s on 22nd June. This followed a similar format; discussing what everybody's favourite place is and why, walking the locations and identifying shortcomings and then workshopping best solutions back in class with a vote.

As with NESCol, a deep clean featured highly across the projects along with tree planting. Parklets featured highly at George Street and a lighting net and information points/wayfinding at Jopps Lane.

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Craigie St (26 votes)	St Andrew St (30 votes)	George St (30 votes)	Jopps Lane (30 votes)
1 st Deep clean (8) 2 nd Street planting (5) 3 rd Rain gardens (4)	1 st Tree planting (9) 2 nd Deep clean (6) 3 rd Carriageway design (4) Uplighting (4)	1 st Parklets (8) 2 nd Tree planting (6) 3 rd Street furniture (4)	1 st Deep clean (11) 2 nd Lighting net (6) Information points (6)

"We have enjoyed 2 consultation workshops with Dave from streets-UK about the George Street Masterplan - one with older pupils who have just sat their Higher Geography and are continuing on with Geography, the other with younger S3 pupils as part of our Communities Project Week.

Dave was great with the pupils clearly explaining what the aims were and leading the pupils to 4 locations to gather viewpoints. We would love to continue to be involved in future consultations and workshops so thanks for helping set this up.

The pupils were really pleased to be included as they said "our voices actually count" and it is "real life Geography just like we learn about in class".

Dr Jenny Gray, Head of Geography, Robert Gordon College



School Site Visit to Craigie Street

Robert Gordon College (continued)

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CRAIGIE STREET		
Theme	Craigie Street Project	Place your vote!
Appearance & character	Removal of street clutter / Bin storage	
	Residential front door enhancements	
	Deep clean of existing paving, street furniture and building façades	
Enhanced Pedestrian Experience	Front door lighting for residential tenements	
	Signage and wayfinding strategy	
	Retrofitted rain gardens, SuDS and planting which filters out pollutants	
	Introduction of street tree planting	
	Provision of public spaces / residential grow spaces / play streets	
Carriageway redesign		
George St as a destination	Improved CCTV coverage	
Reduced vehicle dominance	More flexible use of on-street parking spaces - creating PARKlets which reclaim parking bays for socialising, play and dwell time.	

Craigie Street Project Votes

JOPPS LANE		
Theme	Project	Place your vote!
Appearance & character	Removal of street clutter	●
	Deep clean of existing paving, street furniture and building façades	😊😊😊😊★●●●●
	Street & pedestrian crossing colouring	
Enhanced Pedestrian Experience	Improvement to quality and consistency of shop front signage	
	Festoon lighting / lighting net	😊😊😊★★●
	Create active uses and frontage	😊★★●
George St as a destination	Signage and wayfinding strategy	
	Carriageway redesign	●
	Visitor and residential information points - these could be pop up kiosks / interactive stands / live cycle counters / air quality readings etc.	😊●😊😊😊●
	Improved CCTV coverage	

Jopps Lane Project Votes

Robert Gordon College (continued)

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GEORGE STREET		
Theme	Project	Place your vote!
Appearance & character	Removal of street clutter / Bin storage	
	Street & pedestrian crossing colouring	● ●
Enhanced Pedestrian Experience	Refurbish and restore existing street bins, bollards, cycle stands	★ 🌈
	Overhead and uplighting	
	Active uses and pop-ups	😊
	Signage and wayfinding	
George St as a destination	Street tree planting	😊 😊 ★ ★ ● ●
	Rain gardens	★
	Grow spaces and play features	😊 😊
	Street furniture and bin storage	😊 😊 ● ●
	Information points	😊
	CCTV	😊
Reduced vehicle dominance	Street lighting	★ 🌈
	Pop-up markets, events	●
	PARKlets – temp or permanent use of spaces for social, play, hanging	😊 😊 😊 😊 ★ ● ● 🌈
	Better cycle parking & infrastructure	

George Street Project Votes

Robert Gordon College (continued)

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ST. ANDREW STREET

Theme	Project	Place your vote!
Appearance & character	Removal of street clutter / Bin Storage	👎 🗳️ 😊 🔴
	Residential front door enhancements	
	Deep clean of existing paving, street furniture and building façades	👎 😊 🗳️ 🔴 🔴
	Street & pedestrian crossing colouring	👎
	Improvement to quality and consistency of shop front signage	
Enhanced Pedestrian Experience	Refurbish and restore existing street bins, bollards, cycle stands	
	Uplighting and feature lighting to illuminate our special buildings	😊 ☆ 🔴 🌍
	Create active uses and frontage	
	Signage and wayfinding strategy	
	Retrofitted rain gardens, SuDS and planting which filters out pollutants.	👎 🌍
Improved provision of street furniture and bin storage	Introduction of street tree planting	😊 🗳️ ☆ ☆ 🔴 🔴 🔴 🔴 🌍
	Carriageway redesign	😊 🗳️ ☆ 🔴
	Improved provision of street furniture and bin storage	

**GEORGE STREET MASTERPLAN
MASTERPLAN AREA**

St Andrew Street Project Votes



Primary Schools

Invitations were issued to Skene Square, Gilcomstoun, Sunnybank and Kittybrewster. Gilcomstoun and Kittybrewster were unable to participate, however sessions were completed for 4 P6 and P7 classes at Skene Square on 27th and 28th June and 3 P6/P7 classes at Sunnybank on 29th June. 200 pupils took part, many of whom live in or near the George Street Masterplan area.

These sessions explored what/where the pupils' favourite places are and why. This was sometimes places of excitement and fun such as holiday destinations or football stadiums but was more often places of safety, privacy and comfort such as their own bedrooms or their granny's house.

For those classes that were able to do a walkabout, the pupils made and coloured in a persona cut-out, 'Georgie', who was then able to be photographed in front of what they liked and didn't like about the locations. Georgie didn't like endless grey walls, weeds, litter, broken tiles and rainwater goods, parked cars, and uncomfy seating. Georgie did like fun shops, murals, trees, bike stands and hanging baskets.



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Skene Square Primary walking tour with Georgie



Engagement with Children & Young People

Primary Schools (continued)

Back in class, the children took inspiration from sets of precedent images, as well as their own experiences and imaginations, to make suggestions as to what projects would make the George Street area better for them. They provided ideas on stickies and some also completed colouring in of black and white images of the locations visited..



St Andrew Street



Jopps Lane



George Street



Craige Street

Primary Schools (continued)

A walkabout wasn't possible for two of the classes at Skene Square due to numbers, or any of the classes at Sunnybank Primary due to the distances involved. For these classes, Georgie had a back story of all the places he likes in the George Street area and where he visited on his walk. This was accompanied with a short video of a tour which identified some of the shops and favourite places as well as highlighting the constraints of the case study locations

You can watch the video tour by clicking here

The classes analysed the constraints and opportunities and then used their happy Georgie personas to chose the precedent



Class-based workshops use of Georgie persona to vote for projects

Primary Schools (continued)

The preferred projects were broadly similar for Craigie Street, Jopps Lane, St Andrew Street and George Street with only minor variations due to different existing uses.

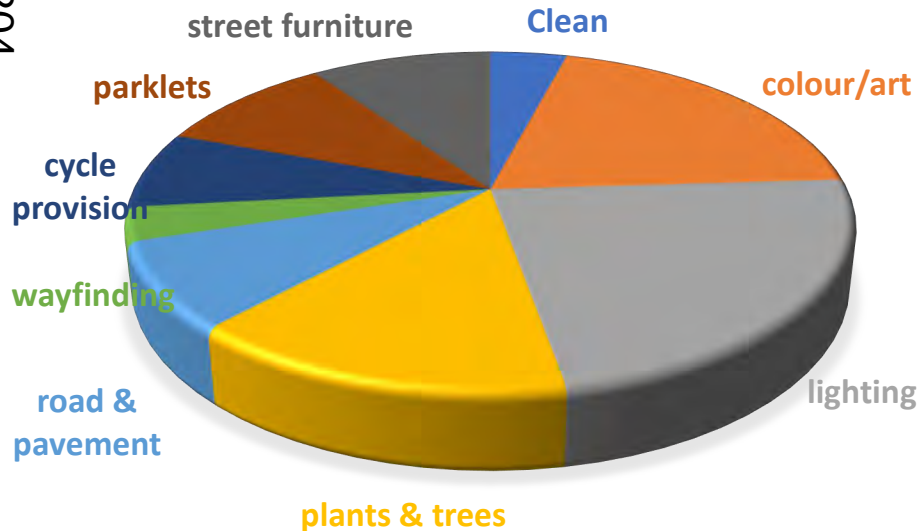
The broad feeling around **constraints** focused on locations being grey and boring, not enough greenery, dark and unsafe and nowhere to sit or play.

Not surprisingly, the main focus on **opportunities** to make these **better places** was around projects that would provide colour and art, attractive lighting and up-lighting and all forms of planters, trees and SUDS.

The next level of preferred projects included upkeep of carriageways and improved/wider pavements, new or improved street furniture, parklets to sit and play on and improved cycle provision.

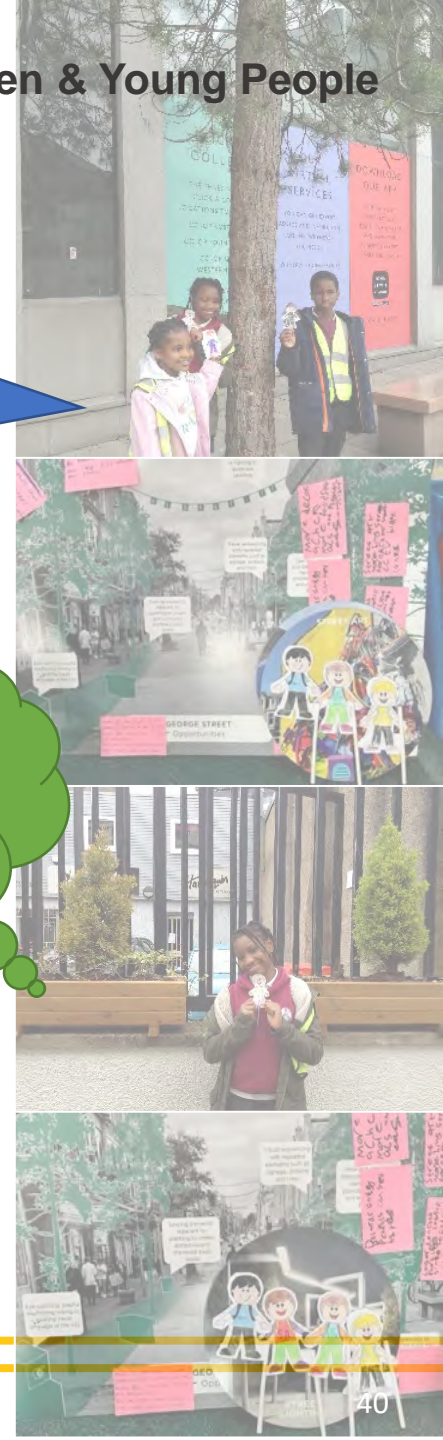
It is interesting to note that a deep clean did not feature as highly with the primary school pupils. This may be due to age, their greater familiarity with, and affection for, the area, not going on walkabout or a combination of all of the above.

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'more colour, more nature, more space'

'I want more street art and more colour to make it less depressing'



Primary Schools (continued)

All the pupils were left with a black and white image of the location they had focused on and here are some of their ideas for place improvement.



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Aberdeen Grammar

An invitation for S1/S2 pupils, some of whom will have participated in the wider City Centre and Beach engagement activities in P7, was issued to the Grammar but a date could not be agreed before the end of the summer term.

Engagement with Children & Young People

Wider Outcomes

Engagement with the children and young people in relation to the George Street draft mini-Masterplan has delivered various positive outcomes:

Inclusive engagement - Valuable reflections from a very wide cohort on “place” and the draft Masterplan and what the priority projects should be to move towards the vision, This will all feed into the evolution of the Masterplan.

Bringing curriculum to life – enabling pupils and students to benefit from project-based learning using places and themes that are familiar to them

Rights of the Child – supporting the rights of the child, particularly the rights to an opinion and to be heard.

Ongoing participation – participants suggested that their understanding of ‘place-making’, the planning process and of the benefits of taking part has increased. Several said that they would be interested in engaging more widely on the City Centre and Beach Masterplan.

Thank you! All of the team involved in engagement with the children and young people would like to thank them for their openness, enthusiasm, honesty and sense of fun. A huge thank you to all the staff and teachers who made the workshops possible.



Engagement with Children & Young People

Streetsport

Streetsport is the Denis Law Legacy Trust's flagship programme run in partnership with Robert Gordon University delivering free weekly sports and creative activity sessions for young people 5-nights a week, 50-weeks a year. The group at Cruyff Court is made up of typically hard to reach teenage boys from diverse backgrounds.

Following planning sessions in late June with staff and volunteers a consultation event took place on 19th September during a Tuesday night session. Most of the attendees come to play football and the session was therefore geared around this with a footie skills game, a quick survey and an energy drink to finish off! The young people could also do the survey on their own phone if they preferred.

14 boys completed the survey. The first question was answered with the feet – by dribbling the ball and passing it into the emoji bucket that best represents how they feel about George St.

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1

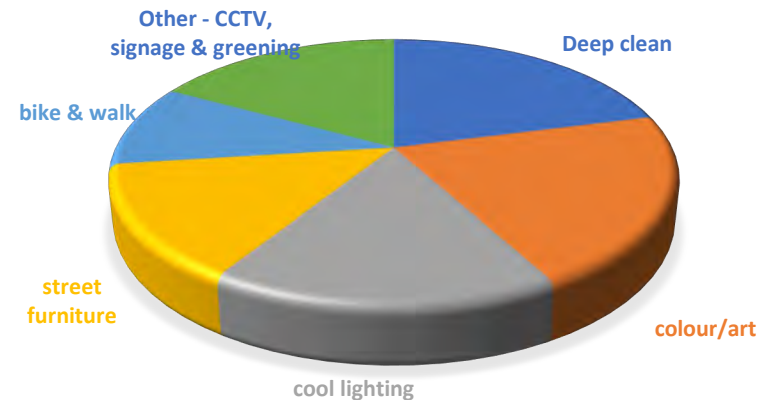
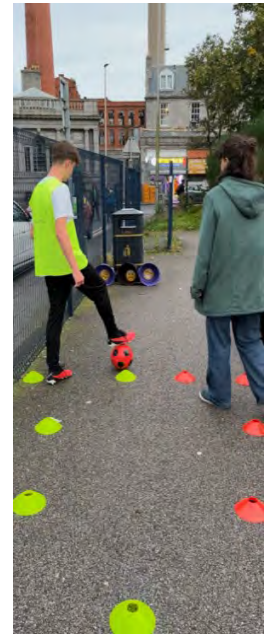


11



2

The Cruyff Court consultees were asked which 3 opportunities (out of 8) they would choose to improve the area. More **colour** and **art** and **deep clean** were most mentioned. **Colour** and **art** was also 1st in terms of prioritisation, 2nd was **more street furniture**, and 3rd **more active travel** in the area.



Stakeholder Engagement

On 17th March 2023 an email was forward to 21 key stakeholders stating that the Citizen Space questionnaire on the content of the draft masterplan was live for 6-weeks. The email also invited anyone who wished an in-person meeting to be taken through the draft masterplan and to discuss the contents or their perspectives with the lead ACC Officer. Uptake on the offer to meet in person was limited with 8 in-person meetings taken place though others used the Citizen Space survey questionnaire. 8 key stakeholders did not respond, and it is assumed that they are content with the draft masterplan.

Unanimously the stakeholder responses welcome the draft masterplan and endorse the 'vision' and high-level project direction and would be interested in being involved as specific projects are taken forward in delivery.

Some of the responses indicate that there is scope to improve capacity building within key stakeholders to enable them to be fully engaged in the delivery of the Masterplan 'vision' and its projects in order to create a 'better connected George Street'. Nonetheless, it is a significant ask of anyone to take the time to be involved in reading through and articulating responses to the draft Masterplan and all consultation and engagement feedback was welcomed to shape the Masterplan going forward.

Complete stakeholder response and ACC replies are in the Appendix.

A stakeholder meeting was held on 21st September to present and discuss the final draft masterplan with stakeholders.

Summary of written responses received

Respondent 1 - Disability Equity Partnership were guided through the draft Masterplan in January and February 2023 as a result of Council approval to consult on the draft.

DEP's response welcomes the draft as a formative response to area need, recognising that investment is needed for appropriate projects, is concerned that access to the area is not further reduced but improved and that good vehicular access is crucial. DEP note that the area feels dark and unsafe and as such welcomes proposals for a lighting scheme, considers that the urban realm of George Street is reasonable but that opportunities for improvement exist whilst the side streets are in poorer condition altogether. The opportunity to reduce street-clutter and improve way-findings is welcomed and that appropriate seating for rest-stops should be provided, and whilst welcoming street greening raise caution on placement and specifications. DEP considers that pedestrianization is being considered as a priority but should be balanced with necessary vehicular provision. DEP also consider that the masterplan as a document would benefit from the removal of clutter.

Respondent 2 – Robert Gordons College RGC have welcomed the draft Masterplan and state that its aims are vital to adding value to the heart of the city centre as a destination and not a through-route, as well as welcoming RGC's inclusion as a significant place influence and looks forward to knowing how the 'vision' extends into practical delivery. RGC welcomes the focus on improving the pedestrian experience and notes that the College continues to require vehicular access and servicing, wishes to promote 'park and stride' as well as seeking clarification and revision to an environmental improvement proposal that was set within the private grounds of the College campus.

Summary of written responses received – cont.

Respondent 4 – Aberdeen Cycle Forum

In response to the cycle route in the draft Masterplan ACF seek clarity on cycleway segregation being proposed or not, referencing future proposals be in accordance with Cycle By Design requirements with more direct routes, seeking greater local area permeability, requesting exploration of Harriet Street as a cycle contra-flow into the city centre, raising concern on the usage of Loch St by vehicles, requesting cycle infrastructure on NCR1 as well as better cycle parking provision. ACF look forward to knowing more about proposals as the Masterplan develops.

Respondent 5 – Aberdeen Inspired

Aberdeen Inspired stated that are 'content with the general thrust and look forward to engaging as things develop throughout the year.'

Respondent 7 – George Street Community Council

The Community Council is supportive of the draft masterplan, especially the measures to boost trade and encourage footfall on George Street. The training and well-being aspects are also considered to be encouraging. (With respect to the footfall there has been a local initiative to have a food related street market on the last Saturday of each month at the pedestrian end of George Street, which has arisen partially from interest in the Masterplan).

Respondent 8 – Greater George Street Traders Association

The GGSTA welcomed that they 'appear to be getting real interest' from Council in their attempts to revitalised and important part of the city centre which has decline to being 'something of a backwater'. The primary projects that GGSTA wish to see are better street lighting and extended CCTV coverage, to address general cleanliness concerns and consider that Broadford Works should have been taken into the study area and note that the vacant Norco House and the Bon Accord centre have a significant impact on the commercial success of the area. GGSTA call for early action to support the area in order for its business to continue successfully.

Respondent 13 – Bon Accord Centre Managers

Bon Accord Centre managers welcomed the creation of the draft Masterplan for the George Street area and the opportunity to discuss its contents prior to considering to complete the Citizen Space survey questionnaire. The managers explained that the Centre was recently under new ownership.

Respondent 20 – Aberdeen Academy of Performing Arts

AAPA responded with a detailed consideration of vehicular accessibility to the study area based upon the proposed vehicular movement plan. The plan has been subject to further testing to be able to reduce 'through-routing' within the area and improve the prospect of creating space for greening and improving the 'sense of place' of the area whilst balancing travel needs. The dialogue on the revisions to the draft masterplan should continue to achieve proposals that are endorsed by all.

Respondent 17 – Aberdeen Civic Society

Aberdeen Civic Society responded by requesting that consideration be given to the demolition of Norco House and its replacement with housing to a similar scale and detail of the nearby tenement buildings because commercial reuse was likely to be unsuccessful in proximity to the Bon Accord Centre, and that St Andrew St be redeveloped as a commercial high street. However, that arguments in favour of retaining the Norco House building are increasingly urgent. The Society also considered that the Masterplan area should have encompassed the entirety of the George Street area and with particular attention to the Denburn Road and the area around Loch Street adjacent to the multi-storey car park. In addition, encouragement was given to create a 'small urban park' as a 'green terminus' on George Street outside Norco House.

Respondent 22 – Residents of Loch Court Sheltered Housing

By invitation of the residents the ACC lead officer, on the 18th April 2023, gave a presentation discussion on the content of the draft Masterplan. The residents were fully engaged, had read and understood the draft and were eager to discuss the projects. In particular they expressed a strong desire to see action on project delivery and to feel more supported in their area needs and welcomed continual involvement in the process of working toward a finalised masterplan.

Stakeholder Forum Meeting 21st September 2023

All Stakeholders who had received an initial invitation to participate were invited to an early evening event held in the offices of North-East Sensory Services in John Street. An option to join by Teams was also available, and attendees are listed in the table opposite.

The meeting was facilitated by Fiona Robertson of streets-UK who summarised the consultation programme and feedback received, and the Finalised Draft Masterplan, taking into consideration the consultation responses, was presented by Nigel McDowell of Aberdeen City Council.

Following the presentations discussion took place on the following points:

Topic	Discussion
Ensuring the voice of older residents is heard.	Consultation was open to all as focussed meetings took place with Community Council and Loch St Residents Assoc which represents an older demographic.
Conflict between pedestrians and cyclists	Masterplan in delivery will balance 'place' and 'movement' needs to create an active travel friendly place.
Norco House – how will the new owners respond to the Masterplan?	The masterplan shows options for Norco House and its hoped will help assist dialogue about future uses.
Delivery – when does this begin?	The Finalised Draft Masterplan is to be presented to Council in October for approval and referred to the March 2024 budget process.

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Name	Organisation
Rachel Mearns Jennifer Magee	Aberdeen Academy of Performing Arts
Graham Donald	Aberdeen City Council
Matthew Williams	Aberdeen City Council (Art Gallery)
Julia Strickland	Aberdeen Civic Society
Gavin Clark	Aberdeen Cycle Forum
Roule Wood	Aberdeen Inspired
Dave McGrath	Aberdeen Multicultural Centre
Richard Slater	Aberdeen Society of Architects
Katrina Michie	DEP
Andy MacLeod Betty Simpson	George St Community Council
Alan McConnachie Kim McConnachie	Greater George St Traders Assoc
Robert Laird	NESCOL
Libby Hillhouse Frank Cross	North East Sensory Services
Lynne Kortland	Police Scotland
Jenny Gray	Robert Gordon's College
Andrew Lowden	Robert Gordons College

Stakeholder Engagement Diary

Feb 2023	Stakeholder	Details	Representing
14th	George Street Community Council	CCMP & George St update, and introduction	ACC – Nigel McDowell & Streets UK - Fiona Robertson
15th	ACC Masterplan Webinar	George St draft masterplan introduction	ACC – Nigel McDowell
13th - 20th	Disability Equity Partnership	Page by page review of content on draft MP	ACC- Nigel McDowell
March			
3rd	Aberdeen Inspired	Email re consultation & engagement	ACC – Nigel McDowell
3rd	ACC C/O Environmental & Protective Services	Email re consultation & engagement	ACC- Nigel McDowell
3rd	Robert Gordon's College	Email re consultation & engagement	ACC – Nigel McDowell
7th	NESCol -	Overview presentation & Streets UK engagement	ACC – Nigel McDowell & Streets UK – Dave Brown
9th	Accessible City Transportation Users Partnership (ACTUP)	Presentation on the draft masterplan and introducing consultation programme.	ACC – Nigel McDowell
19th	NESCol	Draft masterplan pop-ups and flyers at Open Day	Streets-Uk – Dave Brown
April			
	Stakeholder	Details	Representing
4th	Bon Accord Centre Managers	Presentation on the draft masterplan and discussion on steps to prepare finalised draft masterplan	ACC – Nigel McDowell
19th	Residents of Loch Court Sheltered Housing	Presentation of draft masterplan and discussion on all parts	ACC – Nigel McDowell
20th	Aberdeen Cycle Forum	Overview of draft masterplan and discussion on expectations	ACC – Nigel McDowell

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George Street Community Council supportive of Masterplan

Greater George Street Traders Association supportive and would like to see early implementation of animation

College students – current interaction with George St is limited. Supportive of the Vision and if some priority projects implemented could see themselves using George St more

Stakeholder Engagement Diary – cont.

June	Stakeholder	Details	Representing
6th	Robert Gordon College	'Sense of Place' and Masterplan walk and workshop for advanced Geography higher students	streets-UK – Dave Brown
7th	NESCol	'Sense of Place' and Masterplan walk and workshop for Level 5 retail students	streets-UK – Dave Brown & ACC – Alison Arrowsmith (Creative Learning)
22nd	Robert Gordon College	'Sense of Place' and Masterplan walk and workshop for S3 Geography students	streets-UK– Dave Brown
27 th & 28 th	Skene Square Primary School	'Sense of Place' and Masterplan walk and workshop for 2 x P6 classes and 2 x P7 classes	streets-UK – Dave Brown & Eve Martin
29th	Sunnybank Primary School	'Sense of Place' and Masterplan workshop with 'virtual tour' for 1 x P6 and 2 x P7 classes	streets-UK – Dave Brown & Eve Martin
July			
3rd	Aberdeen Multicultural Centre	Discussion of draft masterplan and discussion on areas of specific interest to AMCC	ACC Nigel McDowell & Streets UK - Fiona Robertson
3rd	New Owners for Bon Accord and Norco House	Further follow up email requesting meeting to discuss future plans	
Sept			
19th	Streetsport	Attended the weekly Streetsport session which attracts 12-19yo boys who wouldn't traditionally engage with a consultation	streets-UK Dave Brown and Flora Brown
21st	Stakeholder Forum	Invited all stakeholders who had received initial invite to engage to come together to discuss final draft masterplan.	ACC Nigel McDowell & Streets UK - Fiona Robertson

"Robert Gordon College pupils were really pleased to be included as "our voices actually count" and it is "real life Geography just like we learn about in class".

"The primary school pupils, many of whom live in or near the masterplan area, felt strongly about it becoming cleaner, greener, more colourful and more fun"

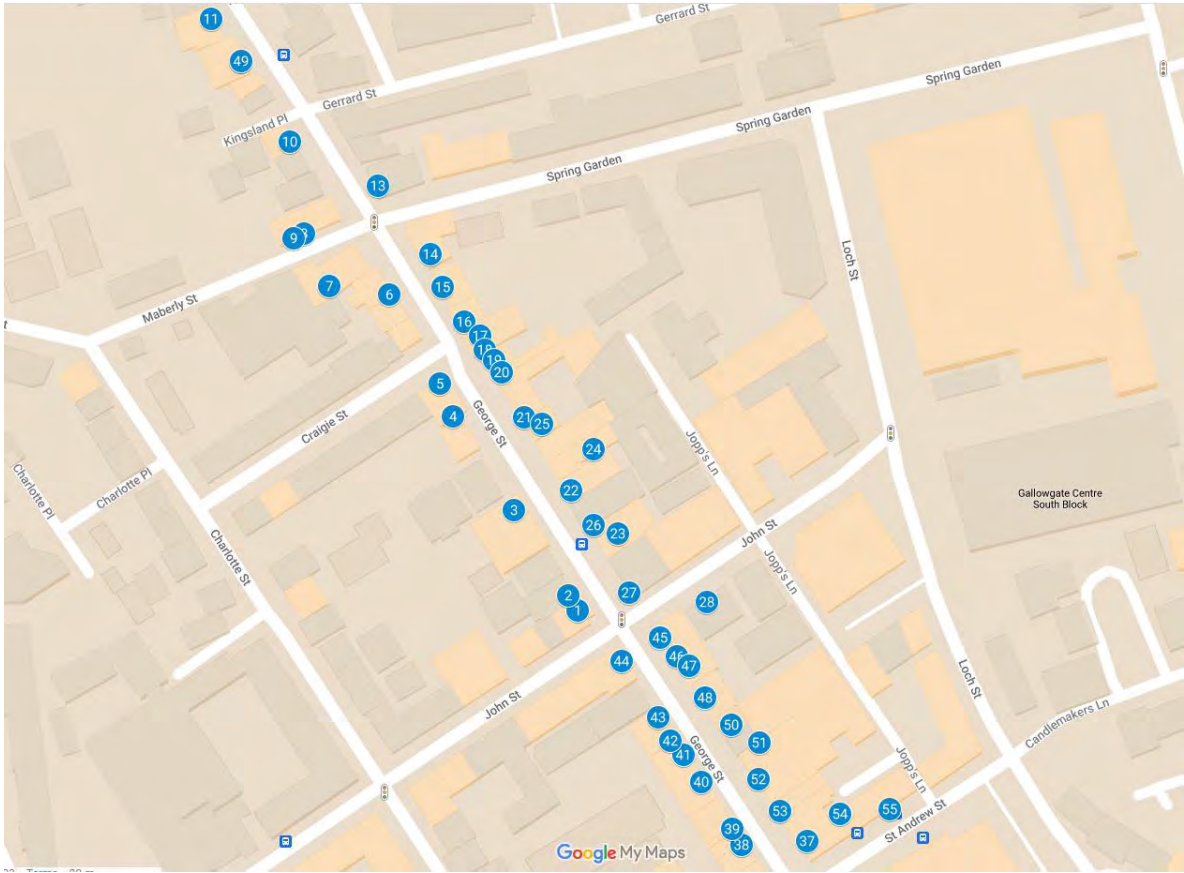


Appendices

City Centre Masterplan & Beach Approved Approach to Engagement

City Centre Masterplan Board approved the overarching City Centre and Beach Masterplan engagement strategy on 6th April 2022 which requires the undernoted steps when preparing engagement plans for individual projects.

1. Programme confirmed.
2. Engagement Objectives/Scope& Scale/Stakeholders/Messaging/Q&A agreed.
3. Transportation input re any transportation issues.
4. Ensure Equalities input to enable Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) and ensure any equalities recommendations are incorporated in engagement plan.
5. Ensure design team has planned/undertaken any technical engagement timeously.
6. Prepare engagement materials /agree wider PR with ACC comms.
7. Briefing to City Centre & Beach Masterplan Stakeholder Forum/onboarding key stakeholders as required (“pre-engagement” phase).
8. Deliver engagement (methodology will vary depending on the project and stage of approval/design it is at).
9. Update Stakeholder Forum/Stakeholders.
10. Wider Feedback.
11. Engagement Report & Summary.



Poster distribution map

Appendix 2 - Stakeholder Contact

	Stakeholder	Response
1	Disability Equity Partnership	Letter response received
2	Robert Gordons College	Email response, letter and survey completed In person engagement undertaken with pupils
3	ACC Communities Officer	Survey questionnaire completed
4	Aberdeen Cycle Forum	Letter response received
5	Aberdeen Inspired	Email response received
6	Grampian Cycle Partnership	No response
7	George Street Community Council	Email response received
8	Greater George Street Traders Association	Meeting to discuss draft masterplan arranged for 6/6/23. Email response received.
9	North East Sensory Services	Survey questionnaire completed
10	NHS Grampian Property	No response
11	ACC Locality Manager	No response
12	ACC Housing Officer	Forwarded to tenants
13	Bon Accord Centre Manager	Discussion on 7/4/23
14	North East of Scotland College	No response, though NESCol indicated their interest in being involved as the draft masterplan evolves into a finalised draft. Presence at open day and direct Direct 121 engagement workshops with students
15	ACC Aberdeen Art Gallery Management Team	No response, however one member did complete the online survey
16	ACC City Growth	No response
17	Aberdeen Civic Society	email of 16/8/23 received
18	Aberdeen Society of Architects	No response
19	NHS Grampian Public Health Practitioner	Survey questionnaire completed
20	Aberdeen Academy of Performing Arts	Letter response received
21	Police Scotland	No response
22	Loch Court Sheltered Housing	Presentation and discussion
23	Council Schools	In person sessions with Skene Square Primary 27 th & 28 th June Sunnybank Primary 29 th June Kittybrewster - email from ACC Creative Learning and Streets-UK follow up. Unable to participate. Gilcomstoun – email from ACC Creative Learning and Streets-UK follow up. No response Aberdeen Grammar (Secondary) Unable to participate.
24	Streetsport	Email from ACC Creative Learning and Streets-UK follow up. Engagement session planned September
25	Aberdeen Multicultural Centre	Meeting and discussion 3 July

Stakeholder Response and ACC Acknowledgement	
1	Disability Equity Partnership
Page 216	<p><i>Having looked at the document in some detail, the Disability Equity Partnership's observations are as follows:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ <i>DEP notes that this Mini Masterplan is in its infancy, and that there will be many changes as work on it progresses.</i> <p>ACC response –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The masterplan is a working draft to enable engagement on key 'place-based' themes for consultees to engage with and enable ACC to gauge appropriateness from consultee responses. There is work to be done and the consultation returns will shape and refine the content of the finalised draft masterplan, which will be shared with stakeholders as a finalising draft in the weeks ahead. It is important that the masterplan illustrates firm proposals and priorities that need little further testing but would be subject to detailed design for implementation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ DEP agrees that investment in the study area is needed and wanted and will welcome any and all appropriate interventions. <p>ACC response –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DEP's support for the preparation of the draft Masterplan is welcomed, and ACC appreciate the time taken to review and provide feedback. DEP's involvement in seeing a finalised draft masterplan prepared, and priority projects identified, is important for the George St area. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Private investment in the area is also welcome but brings challenges and uncertainty. Bon Accord centre is currently the focal point of the study area and as such can make or break any plans to reinvigorate and improve the area. From previous experience, we know that agreements with private investors are not always as they first appear (Bon Accord Centre was supposed to be open 24 hours to ensure ease of access to George Street from the City Centre, Breeder reneged on this agreement almost as soon as the doors opened) DEP are keen to make sure that access to the George Street study area is not further reduced.

ACC response –

- The finalised masterplan will present tangible projects, mostly on a place-based need, and organised in a recommended priority. Further endorsement will require partnership support from all with an interest in the area. However, from the current positioning of the draft masterplan I would envisage 'place' taking the lead in terms of a built environment focus and with the themes of 'economy' and 'people' central to the 'place' investment.

The Bon Accord Centre is too a stakeholder in the George Street, and it is important that the finalising draft masterplan references Bon Accord Centre. The building itself is partially within the masterplan study area.

- ❖ Good vehicular access (cars, taxis, and buses) will be vital if disabled people are going to be able to fully access, reside in, and enjoy the area. Parking for Blue Badge holders must be protected at all points along the space, ensuring that the 50m restriction is observed.

ACC response –

- Accessibility for all was one of the principles in bring forward the City Centre MP refresh, as well as the Beach DF and the creation of a masterplan for the area of George Street within the city centre boundary. Making a difference to the area requires understanding of how the area functions and can function and this has been presented in the draft masterplan, and subject to further revision and testing as we work toward a finalised draft masterplan.
- Balancing place and movement needs is crucial for the success of George St as a destination, a local neighbourhood and a place to call home. We are ensuring that the finalised draft masterplan has more brevity to explain and illustrate what is meant by 'accessible streets' so that the place potential and impacts proposed are balanced, in advance of 'place' projects being recommended and prioritised.
- Depending on specific projects detail, the finalised draft masterplan will be grounded in accessibility for all but with the observation we are working within an historic built environment and challenges will be fully explained/discussed.

- ❖ Currently, the area is quite dark. A combination of tall buildings, relatively narrow streets and poor street lighting makes the area feel unsafe, this is especially true for elderly and disabled people. The Mini Masterplan makes note of this and a good lighting scheme will make an immediate and useful improvement to the area as a whole.

ACC response –

- A lighting plan is likely to be recommended as the first priority project which is indeed crucial for place use and safety, 'sense of place' and simply a look-again 'wow' factor where appropriate.
- ❖ The paved areas on George Street proper are in reasonable condition, but their colour contrast is poor making the kerb line difficult to see. The surrounding streets in the study area however are in a state of considerable disrepair and there are still road surfaces with cobbles which makes crossing challenging for some disabled people. To ensure that these areas remain in good condition in the future. The Mini Masterplan document notes this and DEP will be interested to learn how this is going to be addressed and the plan for future maintenance.

ACC response –

- I have forwarded DEP's observations to the ACC Roads Maintenance Manager
- For the street detail design project delivery is to follow the Urban Realm Manual, as agreed. DEP are a key stakeholder in all [streetscape](#) works within the area and consensus in detail is important to successful projects, which will include a strategy for the historic urban realm.
- ❖ Street clutter is a major issue in the Study area. The majority of respondents to the consultation wanted the removal of clutter, and DEP wholeheartedly agrees. On George Street itself, this is mainly due to the footways being narrow and the volume of people using them. There are a significant number of food outlets in the study area, many of which use dispatch services to deliver to their customers. This adds to the congestion of the footways with bicycles and their riders often having to queue outside the restaurant/ takeaway whilst waiting for their order. DEP welcomes the desire to widen the footways to allow easier movement, however this must not come at the cost of other travel modes e.g., Bus, car, Taxi drop off etc.

ACC response -

- Decluttering streets is likely to be recommended as a priority project.
 - Any proposed street redesign must recognise the demands placed on the street use and how we plan for place/movement improvement reflected in dimensions, materials and detailing.
 - It is recognised that the footway width in certain parts of George St feels narrow by comparison to the demand placed upon it and footway width revision forms a significant part of individual analysis to be presented in the finalised draft masterplan.
 - As part of the place/movement considerations, and in accordance with city centre masterplan projects delivery, bus routes are to be shared with taxi and private hire use.
- ❖ The intention to improve signage and wayfinding is very much supported by DEP. The traditional tile street name signs are part of our heritage and should be preserved so as not to strip the area of character, but additional larger, clearer signage will be welcome. Colour contrast and font should be a major consideration when designing the new signage. Consistency is important so that people know where to look and what to look for across the city.

ACC response -

- DEP's request to improve street signage design and wayfinding, respecting the preservation of the historic street name tiles, is noted and this should be put forward as a priority project as a strategy, with implementation where we can to existing locations and as 'place' projects arise.
- ❖ The addition of seating to create rest stops is encouraged. Design of the seating should take into account that many elderly and disabled people need to have seating with armrests and a back so that they are supported when sitting and can get leverage when getting back up. DEP would also encourage the use of wood rather than stone or metal and these surfaces are very cold and can put people off using them or chilling to the bone those who need to take longer rest stops.
 - DEP's observations reflect the specification in the Urban Realm Manual and no seating would be implemented without stakeholder engagement on spec and location etc.
 - The provision of seating/rest stops is to be taken forward in proposed street re-design which requires change to be brought forward to the current vehicular movement in the area, - simply to make space in balancing need.

- ❖ Street greening is noted in the Mini Masterplan as an ambition for the study area. DEP would encourage this where possible however, the use of moveable planters and trees can cause difficulties. As noted previously, the streets in the area are narrow and dark. The addition of trees may well compound this as they will block light from reaching the pavement (and into people's homes by obstructing their windows), if planted into the ground could eventually cause disruption to the footpaths and roads, their roots could break through drains and cause blockages. If they are in planters, this further reduces the width of the footways and adds to the clutter people wanted to see removed. Planters have the added disadvantage of being used as bins for cigarette ends, burger wrappers and so on and their bases can trap rubbish and debris leading to unsightly mess. Anything which can be moved gives DEP cause for concern as it is important for some of those we represent to be able to learn and area and its features, if those features change is can cause confusion and distress.
 - DEP are welcoming the principle of greening and sounding notes of caution on location and detail. Street sections, as part of the proposed movement plan, have been worked up which will ultimately inform where street greening can happen, to what extent and how in detail. Currently 'greening' is an ambition to be brought forward by exploring service locations and need/demand benefits, however the area as a largely historic granite built neighbourhood would be improved by strategic greening giving seasonal interest, colour contrast and as connector areas for flora and fauna habitat.
- ❖ The Mini Masterplan makes much of pedestrian movement being prioritised. This is a laudable goal; however, DEP would remind those carrying out the work that not everyone is in the privileged position of being able to walk, or wheel themselves for any great distance and need to be able to get close to their end destination using a vehicle. The study area includes NESCol which supports many disabled students, and it is imperative that their access to their place of learning is not disrupted.
 - DEP's observations are shared and in developing the detail for any street proposal accessible needs must be met. The area's street pattern is historic, and it is unlikely that a 50m travel distance can be met between all accessible car parking spaces and destinations, however, you raise important considerations to be observed in planning for change. (Some of the responses to similar questions above provide further detail)

The Mini Masterplan document itself would benefit from the removal of clutter, there is much repetition and “filler” which could be removed to make sure that the salient points shine through and the intent is clear. Documents of this size are often themselves a barrier to communication as the effort involved in digesting them or translating them into an accessible format can put people off even trying.

ACC response -

- DEP’s observations are noted, it is vital that we bring forward a finalised masterplan that is not a barrier to engagement by being clear/legibility/accessibility in its presentation as well as in the projects that are to be justified/given context and proposed. A short Executive Summary may be prepared to complement the finalised draft masterplan, and mindful of this consideration.

In summation, DEP are broadly supportive of the George Street Mini Masterplan. Cleaning, lighting, improving signage, repairing and improving the existing infrastructure would go a long way to improving the area and this is something that is within Aberdeen City Councils power to do. Much of the contents of the Mini Masterplan are dependent on the goodwill and cooperation of private individuals and developers and this is not guaranteed.

ACC response -

- DEP’s commitment on time, energy, and enthusiasm to review the formative draft MP and be involved to help shape outcomes for the George St area is very much appreciated and I look forward to further engagement as we work towards presenting a finalised draft masterplan to Council for their consideration.
- The draft masterplan will be recommending project prioritisation and the foundation of those projects clearly expressed so that their intention and benefit to the George St area is understood and the foundation for collective/relevant implementation established.
- In terms of actions arising as a result of DEP’s evaluation are recorded above and if any are unclear or more information sought please do not hesitate to raise.

2

Robert Gordons College

I refer to the current consultation on the George Street Draft Mini-Masterplan, approved by the City Council in December 2022. On behalf of Robert Gordon's College (RGC), I wish to record the following views on particular aspects of the [mini-masterplan](#), in general and in particular regard to the interests of the College. These are primarily related to the maintenance of appropriate access to our facilities.

The [mini-masterplan](#) is welcomed as an important city centre regeneration initiative and amongst its vital aims, the value of creating the heart of Aberdeen as a destination and not a through route, is fully recognised. RGC is situated on the western periphery of the [mini-masterplan](#) area, but is recognised in the text as attracting considerable visitor numbers to the wider George Street area and, along with NESCOL and the Art Gallery, as an Area of Influence. In that regard, you'll no doubt be aware that the combined school pupil and staff population at RGC is approximately 2,000 people. In particular, I welcome recognition of RGC's prominence in the area and the acknowledged need to support its functions, as evidenced by the text in section 4.2, [namely](#):

- ["the Masterplan should seek to ensure that George Street both supports the functions of the college as well as capturing the potential benefits of such a significant number of people attending both institutions."](#)

I further note, in section 6.8.1, that the Masterplan Strategy states [that](#):

- ["the George Street corridor should extend east towards NESCOL and south west towards Robert Gordon's College, helping to integrate and support these existing educational institutions."](#)

This sentiment is very much welcomed by [RGC](#) and it will be important in further engagement and consultation to see how it translates, in practice, in the finalised draft masterplan.

Whilst supportive of the overall aspirations, RGC does have serious reservations on a particular aspect of the Public Realm Strategy, outlined in section 8.2 and expressed graphically in Figure 27 – Proposed Public Realm Strategy. Figure 27 shows a pink hatched area within the [north east](#) corner of the RGC boundary adjacent to St Andrew Street, denoted as "Opportunities to create public realm and landscape features within private land." This area is within RGC's rear gate and is vitally important for access and safe, contained operational space within RGC's boundaries. It is therefore unacceptable to RGC, for safety and operational reasons, to proceed with this proposal, which would not support the functions of the College, noted elsewhere as a principle of the [mini-masterplan](#). In addition, there is a practical difficulty in that the boundary wall and the rear gates have listed building status. The mini-masterplan concept of "Gateway space with strong public realm influence" is understood, but RGC will not support or co-operate in this particular public realm proposal.

The most significant aspects of the proposals are the implications for continued vehicular access to RGC's front and back gates. Section 8.9 of the [mini-masterplan](#) shows a proposed street hierarchy, with greater emphasis on pedestrian movement and active travel, in keeping with overall aspirations. Adjacent streets are understandably proposed to take a more pedestrian friendly form, still providing essential

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vehicular access. As far as I can determine from the relevant text and diagrams, particularly Figure 35 – Proposed Car Movement Plan, in Section 8.9 – Car Movements, all streets around RGC remain open for vehicular access. A one-way circulatory system is proposed to operate anti-clockwise from Denburn Viaduct through Schoolhill, Harriet Street, Crooked Lane, St Andrew Street and Blackfriars Street, back to Denburn Viaduct, which is designated as the Two Way Primary Street giving strategic access to the immediate area.

RGC is pleased to note that within the overall aspiration for improved pedestrian movement and connectivity, along with improved cycling opportunities, vehicular access is maintained at all points around its boundaries. However, apart from general access requirements, including emergency services access at our back gate at the junction of Crooked Lane and St Andrew Street, this gate is well used for pupil drop-off and pick-up. There may be implications for this continued use and an unintended increase in local traffic movements, particularly at our front gate on Schoolhill, due to the proposed one-way system. The proposed system may also inadvertently generate more vehicle trips around the one-way loop, whilst temporary stopping facilities are also quite limited, apart from a short section on the north side of St Andrew Street, opposite the Sandman Hotel. Potential temporary stopping areas are available on Charlotte Street, which would be accessed in a northbound direction from the one-way system and the reconfiguration of Blackfriars Street may also present increased opportunity for temporary parking, associated with pupil drop-off and pick-up. As a matter of principle, RGC is supportive of any opportunity to facilitate what may be termed “Park and Stride,” increasing the element of active travel for those pupils whose journey includes car travel. In further engagement and consultation, the crucial matter of vehicular access is of the utmost importance to RGC and it is one on which I look forward to further mutually beneficial discussions.

In summary, RGC is supportive of the mini-masterplan, but has serious reservations about a particular aspect of the public realm strategy which involves private land. It will not, therefore, support the public realm initiative, at the Crooked Lane/St Andrew Street junction, based on that premise. The other primary interest is the maintenance and exact nature of future vehicular access, and the implications for such access, arising from implementation of the proposed one-way traffic system.

We look forward to hearing from Aberdeen City Council regarding the next steps and to working collaboratively with ACC, and other stakeholders, to address and resolve these points and also to agree how RGC can best support the success of the Master plan outcomes.

Yours sincerely
ANDREW LOWDEN
Director of Finance

ACC response -

Andy Lowden RGC Director of Finance

Hi Andy

George Street Draft mini-masterplan – consultation

Thank you very much for taking the time to both send a letter and complete the on-line survey. RGC’s input is sought and very much appreciated, and your generous broad support and clear understanding of the vision is very much welcomed. I also note and appreciate your concern over Fig. 27 which illustrates part of the campus yard as urban greenspace.

As context to the process - the draft masterplan was approved by Council on the 14th December 2022 and required ‘early’ consultation in 2023 with a finalised draft to be presented back to Council in December 2023, if not before. As such no-one could revise the draft masterplan until consultation had taken place. However, I do regard the draft as formative and aspirational based on the survey findings of 2022 along with the analysis and engagement undertaken by OPEN and Streets UK as the external team.

The project referenced in Fig 27 will not be pursued in the finalised draft, and I am very conscious of the listed status of the walls and piers etc, and there is to be no imposition on RGC property, - though it might be that within the campus there are opportunities for future greening under RGCs volition as part of your own future campus plans.

I also note your observations on the aspiration to remodel traffic movement through the area. Modelling options have continued so that the finalised draft masterplan can propose revisions that remove and/or limit the ‘through’ route. The Councils approval of the city centre streetscape projects (Castlegate, Schoolhill, central Union St and the Market/Green area in December 2022) have directed the vehicular movement on Schoolhill to be two-way west of the Belmont St / Schoolhill junction and east bound only thereafter egressing the area via Harriet Street, and I hope traffic looping does not become a feature of the area with drop-off/collection places to be defined.

I am meeting the team tomorrow to review and evaluate feedback and agree next steps. Please be assured that RGCs continued involvement is sought as we bring forward a finalised draft masterplan with projects that are supported/endorsed and deliverable. All engagement findings and revision as a result will be reported to Council in 2023 and I will be back in-touch to progress future engagement.

I hope that this response addresses your concerns and look forward to meeting in person soon.

George St Mini-masterplan

Thank you for the recent opportunity to discuss the George St area proposals. Although we recognize that things are at an early stage it was nevertheless useful to have the opportunity to make our views known in relation to cycle access:

- The proposed route shown in the document is described as being “or road” but it is not clear if this means it would be segregated from traffic.
- The route is indirect and the ‘zig-zag’ nature of it means it has more junctions (hazard points) than a direct route would. As currently drawn there are 5 x 90 degree bends. Cycling by Design would suggest that a more direct route is preferred.
- As the route shown is away from main streets it does not necessarily serve all the destinations in the area. Rather than a single identified route we would prefer to see more of a local network offering far greater permeability.
- We cited Harriet St as an example of where a cycle contra-flow could usefully be created to give options and create connections e.g. from Loch St to Back Wynd.
- Those parts of Loch St which are accessible to traffic would benefit from a segregated cycle path to connect to the pedestrianized area.
- Pedestrianised areas such as Loch St are currently widely abused by traffic and there is no effective enforcement. Whatever measures are put in place, physical barriers or effective enforcement would seem a pre requisite.
- More and better quality cycle parking is needed. For example some existing cycle stands on Schoolhill and on St Andrews St are poorly sited and do not meet design standards.
- We note the routing of NCN and that the proposed route connects with that, however this means little in practice because the NCN route itself has no meaningful cycle infrastructure, other than signage.

We look forward to hearing more about the proposals as they develop. Aberdeen Cycle Forum.

Appendix 3 - Stakeholder Feedback

	<p>ACC response –</p> <p>Many thanks for taking the time to meet to discuss the project a few weeks ago and then to compile observations on behalf of AFC. Your observations have been forwarded onto the team considering the existing and proposed street sections, and when the street sections analysis is completed, I would propose to meet again to present and discuss the findings and proposals emerging – if that would be worthwhile.</p>
5	Aberdeen Inspired
	<p>We are content with the general thrust and look forward to engaging as things develop throughout the year.</p> <p>ACC response –</p> <p>Thank you for your response which is appreciated and always welcomed.</p>
7	George Street Community Council
Page 226	<p>The Community Council is supportive of the draft masterplan, especially the measures to boost trade and encourage footfall on George Street. The training and well being aspects are also encouraging.</p> <p>With respect to the footfall there has been a local initiative to have a food related street market on the last Saturday of each month at the pedestrian end of George Street, which has arisen partially from interest in the masterplan.</p> <p>ACC response –</p> <p>Response noted, and opportunity to attend future Community Council meetings.</p>
8	Greater George Street Traders Association
	<p>Observations from Stuart Milne, current Chairman GGSTA</p> <p>(Email 9th June 2023)</p> <p>Thank you for attending our evening meeting earlier this week. It was much appreciated.</p> <p>It is great that we appear to be gaining real interest from the Council in our attempts to revitalise historically, an important part of our City Centre which had a very proud heritage.</p> <p>In my lifetime it has declined from a very important and vibrant commercial hub into something of a back water for reasons we are all aware of.</p>

In an effort to turn the decline around, myself at Finnies the Jewellers were instrumental in establishing the Business Improvement District and ensured our business was within the foot print. This did not involve the whole length of George Street for the reason it is simply too long! My theory was though, whatever benefit we brought to our area of George Street there would be a collateral benefit to the rest. This has worked with flower and seasonal light displays brightening the area. Within the last 10 years, realising more needed to be done, myself and Dave McGrath established the GGSTA to address the express needs of the area:

1: Improve security of the area:

Better street lighting: sadly no improvement here after years of requesting.
Extend CCTV coverage operated by the police.
The latter has been approved and being rolled out.
Customers of Finnies have frequently said they did not feel safe in the area.

2: GGSTA:

During my chairmanship, I have held at least one general meeting a year, held at NESCOL, where all interested parties were invited to discuss needs and wants of all businesses in the area. Attendance has never been huge but one has to consider many businesses here are sole and small traders. Information includes a Facebook page which keeps interested parties informed and up dated.

One has to remember these activities are all non renumerative and additional to running their own businesses in very difficult times. Meetings are only held if necessary and strictly time controlled.

3: COVID:

During the pandemic, when many businesses were forced to close, the GGSTA established a "Neighbour" What's App group to assist with property security in George Street. This became a rapid communication system if any one became of any potential problems in the area which were rapidly reported throughout the neighbourhood.

4: Multicultural:

We did and do outreach to the Multicultural Society to involve them in our aspirations but unfortunately there has been no great contact with them. Dave McGrath I believe is well connected there but I am not aware of his role. Considering this group arrange the annual "Mela" in Westburn Park I believe the George Street area could gain greatly by embracing this event.

5: Cleanliness:

Visitors to the area will make up their minds very quickly in terms of quality and cleanliness if these are wanting.

Much street furniture is in poor condition:

Rusted metal casings

Cracked, uneven paving slabs

Weeds

Dog fouling

Gull fouling

Empty, unkempt shop units

Shop front design non conforming (we were advised at our meeting the Council does not police this as they should).

Shop Keepers should be encouraged to care for their patch.

The above are not huge costs and deserve urgent priority for civic pride if nothing else.

6: Empty Commercial Spaces:

Whilst we are aware these are not in the ownership of the Council, these spaces are critical to the long term benefit of George Street.

I'm aware the Broadfold Works is out with the area remit but it really should have been taken in. It can only be described as a blot on the landscape. Why it was excluded from this remit one wonders? Similarly the NORCO building, Bon Accord(including now St Nicholas) have a huge influence on the future business success of the area. M&S are making a decision as we write here concerning their units in Aberdeen and we fear the worst they may disappear from the centre of the City too.

The future of George Street is heavily reliant on the imminent decisions being made over these properties short term and one wonders how best the Council can be proactive in retaining or repurposing these large areas.

Finally, we are aware the George Street Mini Master Plan is a short to long term discussion document for the consideration of all. It is important though for the problems which are here and now to be addressed quickly to prevent a further decline in its fortunes.

There are many great, small businesses in the area with promises of great futures.

The Sandman Hotel, Finnies the Jewellers, NESCOL, Robert Gordon's College are examples of more extensive ones. Many then have a great confidence in its future including myself but it craves support from the rest of the City to ensure it thrives and retains the respect it earned in its past.

	<p>FAO Chairman GGSTA George St draft mini-masterplan A short email to thank you very much for taking the time to record your reflections on the needs of the George Street area to help shape the content of the finalised draft masterplan. I will report your reflections in full to Council to ensure that the finalised draft masterplan presents a clear vision and direction for the area through appropriate and proportionate projects for delivery. Thank you again for hosting a meeting of the GGSTA on the 6th June to enable our presentation on the current draft masterplan and to have a discussion on the key topics to shape future decision making.</p>
	<p>Aberdeen Civic Society</p>
<p>Page 229</p>	<p>The points Dominic wanted to make in relation to the George Street Masterplan were the following:</p> <p>He would like to see a return of the area immediately to the north of the Bon Accord Centre to residential development, with demolition of John Lewis building and replacement with new housing replicating the existing scale and frontage patterns on George Street. He felt commercial development was unlikely to succeed at that end of George Street because of the deadening effect of the rear of the Bon Accord Centre.</p> <p>The consultations have raised that the majority recognise the Norco House as an important site within the city and in particular to redressing commercial activity within the George St area. I have reduced the number of scenarios to 2 for the site, one is retention of the façade which Historic Environment Scotland have stated as of importance but did not follow through at that time for listing, the second scenario is for demolition and rebuild of the site with a mix of uses. I believe there is local market testing to be done to give more direction to this site. The wider area is devoid of greenspace and the site could provide a new park in part, and I am keen to explore the sites relationship with the pedestrianised area of George St and Loch St. The site is in private <u>ownership</u> but this should not be an impediment to encouraging forward thinking.</p> <p>He suggests that St Andrews Street should be developed as more commercial street (a little High Street).</p>

The majority of St Andrew St buildings would remain, and with vehicular movement changes being proposed to limit opportunity for through routing. Depending upon the future of the Norco House site mixed use would support existing and any proposed commercial activity.

He thought the Masterplan should encompass the entirety of George Street to Hutcheon Street and should also pay attention to the surrounding areas, particularly the Denburn Road and the area behind the Bon Accord Parking structure.

I inherited the project but the definition of the Masterplan study area is given as that part which is within the city centre boundary as recognised by the Local Development Plan. That noted, the areas of influence are mentioned and certainly appropriate redevelopment of Broadford Works per the consented scheme would bring many more 1000's of people into using the neighbourhood.

He likes the approach adopted by Urban Design Associates in their Downtown Norfolk Virginia Patternbook. Something like it could be helpful in addressing areas like George Street. I attach it at the end of this letter.

Thank you for the attachment, - at Council in October you will see a very different draft Masterplan from the one approved for consultation. One of the main differences was to look again at limiting through routing so that the area functions more as a destination, and that every street now has an existing and proposed street section illustrating place change to better balance street place and movement uses as well as activities as a forerunner to any comprehensive detailed plan being brought forward. This isn't dissimilar to the Guide you have sent. There is relatively little significant redevelopment opportunity within the area, most has consented schemes which haven't yet been realised, and each assessed on place merit.

I would add that the pedestrian area at the end of George Street outside John Lewis could perhaps become a small urban park planted with trees (in the ground, not planters) that would provide a green terminus approaching from multiple directions. I think the arguments in favour of retaining the John Lewis building become increasingly urgent, particularly in light of the current attention on the fate of the Shell building.

I agree that the pedestrianised section of George St between St Andrew Street and the Bon Accord Centre should be redeveloped into a more attractive place that has a wow factor, could be allied to the ground floor uses of Norco House and that the design principles extended into the section of George St to the John St junction. The finalised draft Masterplan illustrates these ambitions.

If any further conversations with ACS would be at all helpful please let us know.

Aberdeen Academy of Performing Arts
Response to the DRAFT George Street Masterplan

Background

My name is Rachel Mearns and I am the owner of Aberdeen Academy of Performing Arts and Aberdeen Acrobatic Gymnastics Club with both organisations operating from our premises at 43-47 Jopps Lane, AB251BX. Our building also houses an Approved SQA centre running a Full Time Performing Arts College offering HND / ATCL level training.

We bought the premises in December 2010 and have been operating classes from there since April 2011. We currently we have 16 full time college students and 420 other students across our dance and gymnastics classes. These classes are a mix of parent and toddler classes and classes where children come into the studio without parents.

I would like to make some strong representations for the George Street Masterplan, which will hopefully explain the nature of the area more and respond to the vehicular issues/suggestions that are currently suggested in the Draft plan.

The Masterplan is welcome news for an area that requires a change for the better as the area is run down, has daily antisocial behaviour and the street is often full of dog mess. It is now particularly dirty/smelly outside John Lewis.

Everyone wants the city to be 'a Destination and not a through road'.

I have analysed the plans and wish to make representations as a business owner with premises in Jopps Lane and as a parent of children attending Robert Gordons College.

Although the site of Robert Gordons College isn't directly on George Street, the changes proposed will have a knock-on effect not just to the functioning of the college for parents and students but will have a knock-on effect to the wider functioning of traffic in the city centre. Some of my concerns cross over each other.

Firstly, As a Business Owner

1. Accessibility

If the area is not easily accessible to all current business customers, the area will be in further decline and the likelihood of attracting new businesses to the area will also diminish.

Everyone wants the city to be 'a Destination and not a through road'. The longer someone spends in the city centre, the better for business owners as they will spend more money in those local businesses.

We often encourage parents of students who come to class to drop and visit the Bon Accord Centre with many going for a coffee to Costa or Greggs while their child is in our premises.

The majority of our families who come to class come by car.

Very few take public transport and those students that do take public transport are often late for class. Just last week 4 students from Westhill missed their Acting class as their bus didn't turn up and on a Tuesday night sometimes the bus to the city centre from Northfield is late or will drive by the children at the bus stop!

In 4.4 of the draft [plan](#) it speaks about 'Sustainable transport'.

We want to have a greener outlook for travel in the city centre, but this isn't practical for our customers when it's not actually possible to get somewhere on time in the city and therefore they miss their purpose for coming into the city. If our customers were to regularly rely on public transport, they would certainly switch to a dance school they could reach closer to home and not have to take a bus and miss the classes they have paid for. Or they could conceivably give up gymnastics/dance/drama altogether.

Nothing will change the habits of people who have cars and young children. Having the city centre in-accessible by car will have the opposite effect. In reality, people will look to do their shopping and attend services and classes out-with the city centre.

Page 31 section 8.9 of the draft plan notes the 'Out of Town Shopping Threat'. This is exactly why out of town shopping centres are now a desired space to shop in.

It is cheaper or even free to park with less stress in accessing the areas they need to get to. It is all academic thinking that by making the streets more pedestrian friendly or cycle friendly it would encourage people to cycle.

In Scotland with the wind, rain, snow, ice and cold temperatures, adults will not take their children on a bike to cycle to class. It is even tricky with children to get on a bus with a pram - have you ever done this in Aberdeen? You can only get 2 prams on the bus at time and sometimes I have been told I can't get on the bus as a result. Out of our 420 customers a week we have 2 that cycle to class and only cycle when the weather is fair.

There is also the additional cost associated with catching public transport for people 23-65 years old. Many of our adult customers and parents of students would need to pay for bus transport when they have a car at their front door.

Our customers come from the city and the shire –

- South of the City – Bervie, Portlethen and Newtonhill
- West of the City – Westhill, Echt, Banchory, Huntly
- North of the City – Peterhead and Fraserburgh.

It isn't unknown for our students to travel for 1 hour to come to classes.

On Street Parking is not discussed in any detail in the Masterplan and does not say if there will be removal of the on street parking. However, page 50 of the plan notes that 'parking spaces would be reclaimed so businesses could spill out on to the street'.

If that is the case, everyone would be forced to park in private car parks which currently has a minimum charge of £3.50 – this would increase the damage to the local economy. I know from speaking to our customers that they resent paying this amount of money to a private parking company just to come to our class. This on top of a class fee would, in these economic climates, mean that accessing our classes would be out of reach for some children. Already, due to the on-street parking costs we have lost customers as they can't afford to come. The good that our classes do for the development of children and moulding them into responsible citizens who, one day, will take the city forward would never be realised. The power of performing arts and sports on society can never be underestimated.

Has the council considered that the removal of on street parking will impact their revenue collected? It would push the money into a private investment company who own the shopping centres.

Our change of use application in 2010 cited that there was suitable on street parking in the area and that this supported our application for locating in Jopps Lane. The masterplan removes this point if the on-street parking in the area is removed.

At the opposite side on John Street there is an organisation called North East Sensory Services. They are very busy with patrons who have various disabilities, and they rely on vehicle access to get there. Would their access be impeded with all these changes?

2. Masterplan New Traffic Layout

I note that there are a lot of Local Access Roads.

There are no details about what this means apart from a reference to reduction in speed and that it will not impede vehicle access to the businesses.

I am taking it as a presumption that cars will still be able to drive down Jopps Lane and along St. Andrews Street? Are there going to be time restrictions on when cars can drive down the roads?

At this current time, there is too much of an uncertainty for what this 'Local Access Only' means for access and impact on the businesses and customers accessing premises cannot be fully understood.

Due to my long time in the area, I know the roads very well and know their traffic flows. Many times I have sat in a traffic Jam on Spring Garden and George Street and had to abandon my plans to drop my children home and just head back to my studio so that I am on time for my classes.

The effect of a change to the 1 Way system on John Street is summarised as follows.

2.1 Firstly – The Effect on traffic coming from the South of the City in particular from the new South College Street via the Denburn Underpass to Woolmanhill Roundabout. Due to John Street becoming a 1 way street in the opposite direction of the current flow.

2.1.1 Effect at Skene Square School

All traffic to access Jopps Lane or George Street and Nescol would now need to go to Skene Square School roundabout. This now would pose safety issues for that school.

There is no lollypop man for children crossing the road, quite often it is backed up from the lights at Hutcheon Street heading towards Berryden with cars and children crossing at the lights.

It is already a busy area with children trying to cross the road. This would be even more busy if every car, bus, lorry had to go via this roundabout. There would be increased traffic coming onto Maberly Street from 3 different city directions – South, West and North. Then all the traffic heading to George Street would need to then head into Maberly Street. This now poses further safety issues.

2.1.2 Effect on Maberly Street and junction with George Street

I would encourage the council officers to stand and watch or even drive round the area numerous times to get a sense of the traffic behaviour. I have stopped driving this street due to the nature of danger it poses. This street, as it heads towards George Street is unsuitable for Lorries or busses. There is on street parking on one side and to get 2 cars passing each other is tight. The road narrows as it gets towards the traffic lights. There is no Right turn Filter for traffic to turn right onto George Street. There is no space to even change the street to have a right-hand turn lane and a lane for straight on towards Spring Garden. If 1 car needs to turn right onto George Street then it will block the way until the cars coming over the intersection are clear. Currently approximately 1 or 2 cars can turn right for every time the light is green. Hence drivers go through on the red light. Imagine the traffic build up this will have at peak times.

With this new road layout all the Lorries and other traffic that wishes to access George Street, Jopps Lane, Nescol or even the Loch Street Carpark will need to travel down this road. I am not sure how Busses, Lorries and an increase in general traffic will manage this. Just yesterday I had a pedestrian step out in front of my car as I was driving through on a Green Light. I have seen accidents, near misses and pedestrians injured at these lights.

There is a Sainsburys on the corner of this junction where Maberly Street meets George Street. When they get deliveries via lorry the space is very tight to pass as it is.

2.1.3 Effect on George Street, Loch Street and Spring Garden

On the other side of the street due to Loch Street being 1 way travelling North, cars who wish to access George Street and the shops and Jopps Lane need to turn left at these same lights. That is increased traffic from both sides of the street (Maberly as highlighted above and now Spring Garden).

Often, especially between 3-4pm this area is very busy, queued with traffic and occasion grid locked along Spring Garden. The way the road plan is laid out in the Draft Masterplan with the 1 way circular system there is a potential for absolute gridlock and a situation where no cars can move.

This has not been thought through and no traffic study has clearly been done between 3-4pm in the afternoons and most certainly not on a rainy day either when traffic flow is much heavier in winter.

2.1.4 Why Reverse the Current One-Way System on John Street?

I can understand why we don't want a 'Rat Run' in the centre but by reversing the 1 way road in the opposite direction towards Charlotte Street and the Denburn roundabout the council will cause worse road problems.

- People and lorries use John Street for a specific reason.
- Maberly street is unsuitable for an increase in traffic flow and larger vehicle sizes.
- Spring Garden traffic is busy and anyone wanting to 'Rat Run' wants to avoid the chaos that is on Spring Garden already.

Many times I have sat in traffic 20 minutes while it is queued back from Mounthooly roundabout. This 1 way system to block off a 'John Street Rat Run' is not workable.

If you make this part of town have traffic issues people will not come to the area.

These measures will have the opposite effect and damage the area due to in-accessibility and traffic chaos. This then pushes people into looking for their goods and services out of the area and into an area which is convenient to get to which will usually result in 'Out of Town Shopping Threat' becoming a reality.

2.2 - Secondly, from a parent of 2 children who attend Robert Gordon's College (RGC)

Although slightly outside the George Street Zone RGC plays a very big part in the local community/economy. The children visit many of the local shops before, at lunch and afterschool. The plans presented in the Draft Masterplan do have a significant knock-on effect to how children access the school.

I have 2 children – one in RGC Nursery and one in Primary 6. Neither child can walk to school from our house, take public transport and due to their age, I cannot drop them in a side street to walk into school themselves.

The school already do their part towards sustainable transport in the city with the Bus service that they run for parents.

I would imagine a large number of children who attend the school travel from all over the North East Scotland. They are not local and within a 2 mile radius of the school so many won't be able to walk. I would presume the majority, if they don't use the bus service, would therefore come by car as parents drop off on the way to work.

Due to the ages of my children, I park on John Street and walk the children into the 'Back gate' at the school. Currently there is a deal with the owners of the Bon Accord centre for parents to park for 30 minutes. However, as you are aware, the centre has now been sold.

If this agreement is not renewed or disliked by the new owners, it adds another negative to the Masterplan.

Would the 'Local Access Only' roads at St. Andrews Street apply for parents being allowed to drive down to access the back gate of the school to drop children off?

Afterall, the children need to access the premises and in the draft document it says that vehicle access wouldn't be prevented for the local businesses.

If the current 'on street' parking in the area which is shaded as 'Local Access Only' was removed, it becomes a lot harder for the traffic to move in the centre. All traffic which currently goes to the back gate via John Street at the Woolmanhill roundabout then must travel along the front of HMT on Rosemount Viaduct and onto Schoolhill into the Loch Street carpark.

Many parents try not to be the 'blockage' at the front of Schoolhill in the morning and drop off at the back gate where there is less traffic and more space. There is a chance to park close by out of the way and walk their child into school safely. For all cars to go round the front of the school to drop off then congests the front of the school for other businesses to access their properties.

In this draft plan, Blackfriars Street becomes 1 way and then wraps the whole campus up in a '1 way system' circle – this could increase the potential for traffic jam hotspots.

The only way to access the Sandman hotel would be to travel onto Schoolhill as well.

- What would be the plans for busses to run in this area ?

A bus route here isn't possible unless the bus goes down the local access only streets. A bus would never be able to manoeuvre round the corner at the side of Boots. I have seen many a larger vehicle reverse and manoeuvre in order to turn the corner onto Crooked lane. On busy days in the winter the lane also has queues of traffic.

To have the only parking / access to the school with a vehicle at the front school gates may congest further streets around and push more traffic onto Rosemount at the lights or as previously mentioned onto George Street via Maberly Street and Skene Square roundabout.

A possible outcome for the 'Local Access Only' roads to prevent the bottle necks is have the roads accessible by parents dropping children off at school during the drop off and pick up times. However, this would not work if all traffic would have to go via Skene Square roundabout due to John Street being 1 way in the wrong direction.

Summary - Aberdeen – A Greener City ?

As stated in the masterplan the environmental impact of the city centre is something that needs to be improved with plans already in development with the LEZ coming into force soon.

However, these road layout plans will just cause congestion at the junction of George Street/Spring Garden/Maberly Street and therefore actually impact in the opposite way with people sitting in traffic longer and driving more miles.

The way everyone would have to drive to get through to where they need to be on Jopps Lane, George Street and Nescol from the South and West of the city would also increase their milage for their journey and therefore create more emissions.

In conclusion, while a plan to improve the area is welcome, there is no valid reason or logic in changing the direction of 1 way traffic on John Street from what it currently is now.

As you can see the change to road layout is the biggest concern and will without doubt cause the area to experience further demise and distress for those that work, travel to and live in the area. It is all caused by the current John Street layout being switched to a 1 way street in the opposite direction. If John Street were to remain the way it is now and some further consideration to the on-street parking arrangements, it would negate any of the problems that will arise. Should John Street change to the be opposite 1 way I fear the area will be complete chaos with vehicles and the masterplan would damage the area not enhance it.

When Aberdeen City Council decide to take the Masterplan to the next level I would be more than happy to meet, discuss or give my views at the next stage too. I would hate to lose my well-established business which I have built up over the last 17 years due to this draft plan.

The City now more than ever needs a lift if it is to stay alive for future generations.

I fear changing road layouts for the sake of it with no proper thought or study as evidence for change will damage businesses – just like the Spaces for People scheme that the council implemented during the pandemic.

As City Centre businesses in the George Street area, we want to be open for business and put the city centre back on the map and do not want to make it hard for people to access us. There needs to be a full consultation as to why people won't come into the city centre. It is not because of a road layout or pedestrianising a street.

The top answers are cost to park and lack of shops/things to come into the city for - they go hand in hand and have a knock-on effect to each other. Without cheaper parking, customers won't come. Without customers, shops and amenities won't locate to the city. This is a great opportunity for the council to consider this issue when the next stage of masterplan is drawn up.

Kind Regards

Rachel Mearns
Principal / Owner Aberdeen Academy of Performing Arts
Aberdeen Acrobatic Gymnastics Club
Former Principal Aberdeen College of Performing Arts

ACC response –

Thank you for your very detailed response to the George Street draft [mini-masterplan](#) as a business owner with over 400 students attending classes in your premises in Jopps Lane, and as parent with children attending Robert Gordon's College.

I note that you welcome the advent of a masterplan for the area as a place that 'requires change for the better' endorsing that the city centre should be a destination and not a through route. I have also enjoyed reading that your business successfully brings pupils and parents from a remarkable catchment across the city and shire.

To give a comprehensive response I have taken the opportunity to review and reply under each of the headings that you provided:

1) Accessibility

The majority of your concerns are with public transport use and efficiency across the city and shire, as well as anticipating the removal of on-street parking as the draft masterplan references 'accessible streets' and proposes revising vehicular movement through the area to prevent through routing – as an initial draft.

'Place' is of the key topics of the draft masterplan and greater clarification on what is meant by 'accessible streets' is certainly required. All the study area streets have different uses and needs and therefore balancing 'place' and 'movement' in order to be able to introduce 'greening' and create more of a 'destination' requires careful understanding. As well as businesses who do have trade from drop off and collection I am conscious that the upper floors of the majority of the buildings are tenement flats whose residents do need differing levels of accessibility, that accessible blue badge spacing is included within providing accessibility for all as well as to provide improved infrastructure to encourage cycling.

I agree that we need to drill into the detail and your caution on challenging current amenity and infrastructure is apt. The finalised draft masterplan emerging will go into much more evaluation and proposed detail on this following evaluation for further stakeholder engagement.

2) New Traffic Layout

The finalised draft masterplan is to be supported by a transportation assessment of current and proposed vehicular movement in the study area that can demonstrate betterment by removing through-routing traffic. The plans will be clearly illustrated with 'before' and 'after' so that each street movement is clearly described and can be understood.

- ***Skene Square School***

There are several ways for vehicles to access the study area and their impacts to the wider place and infrastructure needs will be further explored in the finalised draft masterplan. An emerging option is to remove private vehicular access from Denburn to John Street, whilst allowing bus/taxi/private hire in, and with all vehicles able to egress the area from George Street at that junction is likely to be one of the proposed movement changes. In terms of school safety I have raised your concerns with my Roads governance colleagues to consider further.

- ***Maberly Street / George St Junction***

I note your observations on driver behaviour, the various widths of the street and on-street parking etc and the connection to Spring Garden. The street width as built is unlikely to change, and varies across its length, but we will progress the detail of what can change for the positive. The Maberly Street / Spring Garden route forms the northern edge of the study area though the routing, further north, along Hutcheon St should be the primary route.

- ***George Street, Loch Street and Spring Garden***

Your concerns are shared. The emerging proposal for Loch Street would see no change to its current routing and we would look to its widths to know where the most significant 'place' changes can occur – which will be illustrated within the emerging draft masterplan.

- ***Why reverse the one-way system to John St?***

As above, as a key part of a finalised draft masterplan we are including a revised vehicular movement plan. John St is an important E/W route and I envisage improvements to the Loch Street junction but with vehicles coming off George Street able to proceed east toward NESCol and west out onto the Denburn direction.

- ***Parent of pupil at Robert Gordon College***

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I am aware that a few years ago RGC brought forward a School Travel Plan to address their extensive catchment by illustrating the travel options available as well as to seek a reduction to the number of private vehicles impacting on Schoolhill and surrounding streets, including private arrangements for short-term car parking in the vicinity. St Andrew Street is another important street in the study area for its E/W movement and the draft masterplan will again be proposing place and movement changes.

I am also conscious that the future use of the Norco House, formerly John Lewis, will hopefully see new uses that enliven the wider area and its accessibility requirements too must be factored into change.

RGC are a key stakeholder in our engagement and as a organisation of over 2000 people accessing the area weekday their need and influence too will be evaluated, and I note that the Blackfriars St entrance can be deployed to separate out the College's accessibility needs, and as such the emerging vehicular plan for Blackfriars St in the draft masterplan will be revised in the emerging draft masterplan.

3) Summary – a Greener City

The observations and concerns you raise are crucially based on the vehicular movement plan in the current draft masterplan, prepared as a basis for discussion. Your observations are noted and very much welcomed and in order to attain all that the draft masterplan is seeking, in essence, the vehicular movement plan has been subject to further evaluation in tandem as the public engagement took place and a revised plan, along with other revisions and clarifications, will form a fundamental part of the finalised draft masterplan.

I thank you for your time and commitment to providing such a comprehensive review of the current draft masterplan and I would look forward to meeting you as engagement continues in the weeks ahead. Our correspondence will form part of a report to Council on the process and outcomes of engagement and revision as a result

I assume you are affiliated to the Greater George Street Traders Association for collective awareness, and either way I will be in-touch on agreed next steps when the engagement and consultation returns are evaluated.

Aberdeen Multi-Cultural Centre

Please be prepared I speak as a I find and it's not always comfortable but shared in the spirit of genuinely wishing to contribute

Question 1

The masterplan proposes - 'Vision' - 'George St Connected! - the local neighbourhood which is a vibrant and inclusive City Centre community at the heart of reinvention' (Page 7)

Do you agree with the Vision?

What are your thoughts on the 'Vision'?

We are broadly in support of the vision. We were involved in an exercise to rebrand the area as an artisan quarter and involved NESCOL in the exercise back in 2019 or so.

ACC response – Positive

Question 2

Findings on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats (SWOT) of the area are provided (Page 30-31)

We are in broad agreement with the SWOT. Norco building is what it is which can and is being repurposed and will provide amenities for new start and SME businesses. There is also a plan emerging swiftly to create a destination centre which will show case the food and produce of over 100 local food, drinks, artisan producers and traders across the city and shire.

The main threat to this area is to be overlooked by the emerging initiative on Union Street. This may take organisational and funding precedence over this area.

Also the food and drinks initiative faces a risks of being ignored and perceived as being a threat to the International market. We do not believe the BHS/Green site can be an international market at least not the part on the green for very sound operational reasons. We have market research substantiating this.

ACC response – Positive

Do you agree with the findings?

If not, what would you change or add? - Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats of the area

Question 3

Proposals include making key streets more attractive, promoting active travel and creating green spaces. (Page 36-40)

Do you agree with this?

Do you agree that proposing to make key streets more attractive for active travel and greening is important?

One thing we cannot escape is the need for destination traffic. Through traffic we can reduce. If people, especially from out with the city wish to visit and make purchases public transport is just not up to the task. Getting purchases from the stores to public transport hubs is challenging. Extension of the LEZ threatens destination traffic.

ACC response – Positive and note the concern re public transport

Question 4

The masterplan proposes changes to vehicular movement in the area to improve place quality. (Pages 45-48)

Do you support trying to make these changes?

Do you support trying to scope out vehicular movement changes in the area

In principle yes, in practice LEVs are both a potential boon and drawback. It may challenge the very need for these. Cycle provision needs improving and the reduction in through traffic will assist greatly. Cycle provision needs to be segregated and escooters and large ebikes kept of them. I would ask that where ground marks show cycle route it also includes rollerblades and skates symbols encouraging these a commuter methods which are commonly used on the continent

ACC response – Positive and note the advice

Question 5

A list of regeneration projects is proposed. (Page 49-51)

Are there any that you do not agree with, or are there projects you would like to see added?

Please identify any projects you do not support or add those that you think are missing

I will neither disagree or agree to any. They all have merit but many risk falling into the rhetoric band. Someone, somewhere must do and fund these.

We must be sure that any other ideas tabled do not get excluded for not being on this list. Things like frontages are in the cost matrix of owners or renters. Above the shop line is in the gift of owners and tenants. These are very old properties with particularly complex architecture and massively varied state of repair. This skyline estate will be a very complex matter to resolve, more so if architectural uniformity is desired.

The area needs footfall and support for initiatives driving footfall. Should the city favour “future” possible projects over current in hand project this may suppress development opportunities.

ACC response – Positive with the advice noted.

Question 6

Norco House site, formerly John Lewis, is identified as an important site for new uses. (Page 55-63)

*Do you agree that Norco House, formerly John Lewis, is an important site?
and if so, what uses should it have to support George Street?*

On Norco house it's easy to make sweeping statements about this. This is now owned by EP Properties. We are in discussion with them. Whatever we may wish its their asset and they must be included in the dialogue. I have spoken with an architects who had massive ideas for this. Generally getting more people living in city centres is very sensible and spoken of for at least 30 years. Planning and building regs can conspire against this.

We have plans for Norco house and in discussions right now with the owners. However, we suspect ACC will not engage with us with any seriousness as they may perceive this as threat to their BHS site project and may actively conspire against it.

As one of the founders of George Street Traders Association ACC has never seriously engaged with us on any projects except the street market we did back in 2018.

ACC response – The observations are in accordance with the scenarios posed for Norco House and the consultation seeks opinion on those as redevelopment options. It is clear that Norco House is regarded as an important building/site.

Question 7

Please provide any further comments you wish to make on the draft mini-masterplan

For us, our experience with ACC officers in this realm is they only want to hear what they want to hear and engagement with them has been very very poor. They promise to follow up and we never hear from them. You may have new staff and they should be given an opportunity.

We have a 3 phase plan for the Norco House. ACC could be instrumental in helping drive this forward and their involvement would be welcomed. Will they take it seriously I personally have had way too many aborted projects with ACC over the past 20 years. I am quite prepared to ignore this track record and engage with ACC if it's with mutual enthusiasm. It has always felt like they know best and show passive aggression by ignoring things they do not like, or people they do not like.

ACC response – Noted, contact details have been shared with City Growth officers to make contact and to know more about the specific projects and to table what support ACC can provide.

Best regards
Dave McGrath BSc MBA



George Street Draft Masterplan
Extract from online Citizen Space Public Consultation Responses

The masterplan proposes a place 'Vision' - 'George St Connected! - the local neighbourhood which is a vibrant and inclusive city centre community at the heart of reinvention'.(Page 7)

Do you agree with the Vision? - What are your thoughts on the 'Vision'?

yes

Yes

I like the idea, the aspects of cafes and outdoor seating

Yes

Yes

No

I'm no fan of grandiose statements. Simply bring people into an area that often feels like a dead space. It's not currently a happy soace.

Not really, the vision for the area is optimistic without key aspects being resolved and it is not clear what is meant by an 'authentic neighbourhood'. The notion of pedestrianising is a woeful idea, on top of the restrictions on union street and nearby areas. It will surely kill off the area if traffic routes are taken away, plus create issues for traffic onto already over crowded alternative routes. One of the key issues for the city centre is to improve road access not reduce and this is one of the key priorities to be sorted for this to work. Too much focus on buzzword bingo with words like resilient, diverse and inclusive, this indicates lack of real comprehension, foresight and disconnection from the real world. Crime in the area is not going to be fixed with streetlights. It is a very poor area with a lot of unsavoury characters around at night time (drink/drugs). More policing is key (actual best bobbies and visible patrols) to reduce crime and doing something about poverty in the area. Also where is the money coming for all this?? Swimming pools and libraries being closed, roads an absolute disaster. These things need to be addressed as a priority way before any revamping works.

I agree, the city needs a vibrant inclusive and economic affluent area. The area under scrutiny is always damp and dark and has a dull feeling even when the sun is shining. Bright colours is needed.

I dont understand the vision. I dont live in the area - but I dont think its particularly vibrant at present, hopefully the vision is to make it vibrant

really as described. Many people work in the area and they must be fully considered.

I agree George Street needs revitalising and improving - yes. What specifically is "the vision"? There are two slogans/quotes on the "our vision" page, the first which says "The 'local' Neighbourhood: a vibrant and inclusive city centre community at the heart of reinvention." - is this the vision? Because the george street area is already multicultural and inclusive. Increasing the "vibrancy" is not talking in plain language which i feel you need to do. Or is the vision "George Street will become a place to form new connections; Social, Cultural, Economic and Educational. An authentic neighbourhood offering an evolution of George Street; a place for people to come together; with spaces that link activities, aspirations and ideas" - what does "an authentic neighbourhood" mean? "a place for people to come together; with spaces that link activities, aspirations and ideas" - a place for people to come together is great, linking aspirations and ideas in the sense of a city centre reinvention is pretty difficult to get your head around conceptually. The vision should be to improve the aesthetics, reputation and the economics of the george street area, and the vision should detail clearly how that can be done.

Yes

Yes

No

Yes

George street has felt more and more disconnected from union street and the rest of Aberdeen, so I agree with the vision

Yes

Yes

I think George street is as vibrant as a funeral

I have seen more vibrancy in the depths of a black hole

Make it vibrant of the colours of the dons!!! Mon ih dons

Absolutely.

Yes

Yes

Yes

I think it's a fantastic idea to regenerate the area. Focussing on young people would be my recommendation. George connects to the college, RGC, and is between town and Aberdeen university campus. It would be a great area to try and attract young people with diverse cafes, outdoor spaces, alternative shops, etc. keepUnion Street developments for the older market

The masterplan proposes a place 'Vision' - 'George St Connected! - the local neighbourhood which is a vibrant and inclusive city centre community at the heart of reinvention'.(Page 7)

Do you agree with the Vision? - What are your thoughts on the 'Vision'?

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Somewhat

Yes

I agree in full, the city would greatly benefit from improving George street

Yes

Yes

I agree

Yes

To pedestrianise and turn it into a quirky area could work really well for Aberdeen

Yes

Yes

It's a positive vision but i fail to see how this aligns with the current strategy of closing down existing cultural hubs such as Library and Leisure facilities

Don't know

No.

Yes

yes

No you are breaking laws implementing WEF plans on Scottish people. These 15 minutes cities are a failure from the start. They are prisons. There is NO climate change only geo engineering and HARRP

Yes

Yes

Yes

Not sure, document is to complicated

No

No I think it is such a waste of resources. Aiming to close off and restrict even more of the areas where we already struggle to attract successful, meaningful businesses. I think it's going to make the area far from inclusive.

No

NO WAY

Yes

Yes

Yes and it is important to deliver on each and all of the social, cultural, economic and educational detailed objectives

yes

Yes.

Yes

yes

Yes as long as this is properly delivered.

Yes

yes

Yes

some of it

Yes

Yes

Broadly, but not completely

No

No

No

some of it

Yes

Yes

Partially

The masterplan proposes a place 'Vision' - 'George St Connected! - the local neighbourhood which is a vibrant and inclusive city centre community at the heart of reinvention'.(Page 7)

Do you agree with the Vision? - What are your thoughts on the 'Vision'?

Yes

I am not sure that 'supporting residents into fair work' or 'move into economic opportunity' is what the council should be throwing money at here. Or any hair-brained 'green' schemes. The council should be chasing all of t by e private landlords who have let their properties fall into a state of disrepair and issuing notices forthwith. Then the council can give the place a deep clean.

No - too long and what do you mean by 'reinvention'? Why does Aberdeen define communities by a single street? Union St, George St, etc. What was George St named after? Is there a more inclusive identity - Union Square, Union Gardens, Union Street, Union Bridge all seem to have been named after a failed political union btwn GB and Ireland.

No

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes. Making it a quieter and safer area (less cars, low speed limits, trees, etc.) is a good idea.

Yes

Yes

Yes

Broadly I do

Yes

Yes

Yes, the College is supportive and looks forward to collaborating with Aberdeen City Council.

The vision looks appealing. Coming from a health and wellbeing perspective we particularly support the elements that prioritize active travel and greening, although perhaps the sustainable travel targets could be more ambitious? And we would like to have seen health and wellbeing being given far more consideration and prominence in this assessment (more on this below).

It is too broad and vague to be meaningful

Principal, yes we agree to the vision. However the implementation of some of the proposed activities will determine how successful it is in maintaining the connectivity and accessibility for people who are supported by NESS, whose main office is on the corner of John Street and Jopp's Lane.

We are broadly in support of the vision. We were involved in an exercise to rebrand the area as an artisan quarter and involved NESCOL in the exercise back in 2019 or so.

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George Street Draft Masterplan
Extract from online Citizen Space Public Consultation Responses

Findings on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats of the area are provided (Page 30-31) Do you agree with the findings? If not what would you change or add?

- Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats of the area

S – assumption students bring spending power. There is evidence some are using the Care Hub (Soup Kitchen) and or colleges (and University) supply of free food initiatives. W – I question the limited activities in the evening, what is exactly meant? There are shops still open in evening, bars, carry outs and off licenses. O – Re-activate low activity shops – which means ones that are closed (jargon), green urban- where and who maintains (I know the service that looks after green spaces already has limited staff to do what it does without more being added). Repeating what the author thinks there should be whilst they exist already; cultural diversity (Shops are diverse, we have Aberdeen Multi-cultural organisation in Spring gardens) and business network (GGSTA). More jargon – Public Realm Quality (?) T – reference to anti-social behaviour being encouraged if further disrepair continues. Police would highlight the area is no different to other areas in City. Creating a problem where one does not exist?

No

I agree with the weaknesses, it is a very grey, rundown and at times unpleasant street

Yes

Yes

No Broadford works need demolished and a green space added otherwise George St is functioning unlike large parts of the city. We don't need to spend more public funds and close library's etc

Agree

No. Strengths do not seem to be realistic, George street is nothing like what it used to be and does not appear to include its use as a connecting road. There are too many takeaways, charity shops and Eastern European shops. Good baker but more places are needed like what there used to be, eg sports shops, outdoors shops, bowling, arcades. John Lewis leaving is a huge blow. Also how do you know what the sense of community is by only consulting with 297 people of which most don't live there? Weaknesses too much focus on pedestrian experience vs motorists. Although pavement repairs would not be a bad thing, it is important to ensure the road is also well maintained for cars and buses as it is an important link. George street is not 'hidden' and bin accord centre does not need to be demolished. More should be done to encourage businesses and leisure facilities into bon accord centre and that will increase the demand for visitors to the area and this will also spill on to surrounding areas like George street. Urgent action is needed to attract businesses back to the city that have been lost. Demolishing broad fold works might be an option for some leisure facilities (cinema etc) and green spaces with public toilets and adequate parking. But be sure to ensure it is safe to visit at night and we'll be policed. The limited activity at night time is because the students from the college have gone home. Improve leisure in the area and policing to resolve. Bon accord centre is fine for pedestrian link, just make sure it is open 24/7 so that people have better access. Again too much focus on pedestrians vs cars. It's vital that good access and parking is available for drivers. Opportunities more retail is needed not less! A large department store should be encouraged into Norco house, the city desperately needs this since John Lewis and Debenhams left and soon to be M&S. bring back some of the shops and facilities that used to be there. Established businesses not just start ups that will come and go and then leave vacant units. Again wrong aspects on car use, the 'impact' of cars is one thing but you should be encouraging people to drive into the city, more access is needed with the other nearby roads closed or restricted. The city will continue to decline otherwise and not just George street. Threats seem to be mostly reiterating other aspects but demolishing buildings that are not used is not the problem, the problem is that businesses are leaving the city and this needs to be addressed and encourage businesses back. Take public ownership of Bon accord centre and that is two problems solved right there. Online and out of town shopping is a symptom of the state of the city retail not a cause. But this can be addressed with better business rates and other incentives. Crime is also an issue in the city, caused by poverty and deprivation in the area. Deal with that and improve policing and you deal with the problem.

demolish bonaccord centre & restore george st to its original purpose

To include up to and beyond Hutcheon St/George Street

Yes

Yes.

I agree with these findings, improving the pedestrian area and brightening it up perhaps with better lighting, seating areas and improved shop facings. The John Lewis building needs to be sorted as it is overbearing. Can it be sold of in sections, similar to larger cities and have food halls, art gallery, indoor crazy golf? Market stalls? FoodHallen in Amsterdam has a massive independent food hall, bars, galleries, cinema and shops, its a huge attraction.

n/a

No. Weaknesses should include poor disabled facilities and planning for disabled people. Large student population in George Street but no planning for student life. No green space for dog owners, and enclosed areas for dogs to run around.

Add as a threat - reduced occupancy of Marischal Square offices due to difficulties in workers travelling to the location (particularly from outside the city) and for those in the building who start work before buses are running. so have to drive

What the findings have said aren't wrong, however they are missing absolutely crucial points. You have NESCOL and RGU colleges within walking distance of the area in a broader sense two universities in Aberdeen with a large, youthful attendance - not once in the Findings have you mentioned anything of note in either the weaknesses or opportunities about the potential for creating an area for street food or socialising.

Yes

Yes

No Cars are not a threat .

Parking is always full, and in limited quantity. Most people park away from George Street and don't travel in. Bins are almost always full due to local businesses using them making the street feel messy and unclean. Agree with rest of findings

George Street feels hidden and separate from the rest of the city. It feels like there's no need for anyone to go since the closing of the John Lewis. Walking along is unpleasant, with on-street parking and a need for more green spaces. The fact that the area feels disconnected from union street and the rest of the city doesn't have to be an issue if the space provides unique opportunities and the people want to go, such as a museum or gallery opening up in Norco house to act as a focal point in the city

Findings on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats of the area are provided (Page 30-31) Do you agree with the findings? If not what would you change or add?

- Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats of the area

Yes

Yes

Spooky place gadj

No, I do not agree. My proposal is to expand Cadonas Amusement Park as far as George Street and make a Godzilla themed ride.

I would add a Luis Duk De Barros Lopes statue in the centre of George street.

Yes, I do agree.

Yes

I agree

Yes

A key issue would be lighting and cctv as George street side streets can be dark and intimidating.

Yes

yes

Yes

Yes

Concerns over drugs, alcohol and crime in the surrounding area. That it would become a "hang out". It may be connected but still remain separate from the city rather than integrated.

Yes

I agree, the danger of george street due to antisocial behaviour has been a large topic of concern

Yes

Yes

I agree. Please find a way to support the local businesses more as many are struggling

Yes especially agree with the comments regarding dog fouling and poor condition of the pavements. But I can also see huge potential in George Street. If you can restrict traffic and attract the right type of business, the street can become a true hidden gem. And being a bit

hidden away may not be a threat after all!

Head on the head.

Yes

Agree

Agree with some of the improvement proposals but concerned that opportunities may make it even harder to access the area. The exit route from RGC via Harriet street is already restrictive and difficult to navigate at peak times. It would appear the improvement proposals

to have predestrianising Harriet street and make it more difficult for cars. Access to and from RGC by car has to be preserved.

Don't know

Yes

Most but people's safety should be a priority by creating a better environment with Policing & security. Dangerous due to Loitering, poor hygiene, people on Bikes not following highway code.

yes

Do not change our rights to freedom of movement. You are breaking laws.

Yes, I agree with the weaknesses that George Street is not currently a comfortable place to walk around.

demolish bonaccord centre & restore george st to its original purpose

Yes

Couldn't follow the document as it's too complicated so don't know

No

No I don't fully agree with them.

No

NO

Somewhat. Key weakness is that George Street area is cut-off from the main city centre to the South (ie Schoolhill) with only two access routes (Harriet Street & the Shopping Centre). This means that typically George Street has to be a destination in itself.

Crime rates, anti-social behaviour figures/issues not mentioned.

The SWOT preparation has been consultative and I generally agree with the findings. I'd like and expect to see explicit mention of engaging young people as an opportunity. Without understanding the "loss of carbon" could the (suitably funded) demolition of Norco House not provide an opportunity for development aligned with the vision?

Yes

Yes, I agree with the findings. I also think the tennant mix is not really adequate for such a city centre location.

Yes

Findings on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats of the area are provided (Page 30-31) Do you agree with the findings? If not what would you change or add?

- Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats of the area

yes all relevant - might add a threat of dying high street leading to companies not wanting to invest in these areas and mean that other shops/businesses go out of business as people want to shop online at big retailers

I agree with the majority of it however to me george street is quite a dodgy area and you usually see quite a few drug users/dodgers especially around John Lewis area. This would need to be dealt with before encouraging footfall. There also needs to be more for the youth of today. They aren't interested in the economy or new businesses, they want somewhere lit and heated to congregate in. The city has a huge problem with youth annoyance at the minute (proven by police scotland stats) so this needs to be dealt with ASAP as all it is doing is creating division within the community.

Yes, it really does feel isolated from the city - when the Bon accord closes at 6, it feels really hard to get to George street although it's not. Doesn't make it a place to linger, which is a shame as there's so much potential

YES

I do agree, especially with the aesthetic weaknesses. The area is not very accessible by car or on foot although it is geographically positioned to be a hub of the city.

yes

Yes, although I would argue the demolition of Norco House could be used to turn the area into a more open green space, with paths, seats, fountains etc, to draw people into the area for recreation and well being, rather than purely on commercial activities

Agree with findings

Generally yes, but I have not had the time to drill down in detail

No

This area is diverse you going in and cleaning it up will price people out! Clean up union street and open union street back up to traffic ... there is more undercover police in this street than anywhere and they are not there for no reason

No

Don't limit car access. Shops unreachable for those with mobility issues. Is near impossible to get a blue badge- need to be very impaired. There are a lot of folk who don't qualify but cannot walk far

Yes

Mostly. Another weakness is poor access for people on bicycles but this is a city-wide problem.

Yes

Yes. I do. There would be more independent businesses there if free and plentiful parking was available in the area though, not green spaces. People can go to the parks for them. The only way we'll get people shopping in the centre again is cheap/free parking. Without that, people just go to retail parks, or a place with good independent shops and free parking, such as Inverurie.

My biggest issue with the SWOT analysis is that it fails to place sufficient weight on cultural rejuvenation through a new cultural quarter or creative industries cluster approach based linking Broadford Works to the city centre. The non linear pedestrian approach from Bon Accord Centre is a key problem. Lack of detail on catalysts for positive change other than public realm improvements.

No you've allowed to many shops offering same service eg hairdressers barbour's .

No

A mix of the tattie shops

Yes

I generally agree. Giving more space to pedestrians and cyclists and removing space for cars parking on the street is an opportunity. At the moment, the pavement is too narrow and George Street and surrounding streets make cyclists avoid this area. Furthermore, there are almost no place to lock a bike, so even visiting the area just to go to a shop or cafe is not appealing.

Yes

Yes

Yes, I would add to opportunities point 2 that not just through journeys but private parking, probably locks away large amount of opportunity in the area as only very few people parking takes a very large amount of public space. I can't imagine that any reasonable parking fee could recuperate the economic and social lost potential to the area.

I largely agree

Yes

Yes

No further comment.

Agree with your SWOT analysis. We would add under weaknesses: traffic congestion, limited parking availability and decline in retail activity. Add to opportunities: encourage sense of community through the provision and promotion of spaces or activities that bring residents together.

I agree that the potential loss of Norco House is a threat and with the opportunity presented by its retention and reuse. I also support the introduction of more urban greening, particularly street trees (was opposed to trees in planters)

We agree with all of the weaknesses identified. In terms of the Opportunities, we're not sure how important focusing on unifying shop frontages is – while from a design point of view I can understand the argument, there is also something to be said for the variety, which allows for the expression of the unique identity of each shop, and in some instances, may have been like that for some time. Having clear distinct windows helps visitors to identify one shop from the other. Tidying up pavements, removing clutter, improving the quality of the pavings and a deep clean seem more important, as well as improved lighting.

We are in broad agreement with the SWOT. Norco building is what it is which can and is being repurposed and will provide amenities for new start and SME businesses. There is also a plan emerging swiftly to create a destination centre which will show case the food and produce of over 100 local food, drinks, artisan producers and traders across the city and shire. The main threat to this area is to be overlooked by the emerging initiative on Union Street. This may take organisational and funding precedence over this area.



George Street Draft Masterplan
Extract from online Citizen Space Public Consultation Responses

Proposals include making key streets more attractive, promoting active travel and creating green spaces. (Page 36-40) Do you agree with this? - Do you agree that proposing to make key streets more attractive for active travel and greening is important?

In principle I think this is a good idea but some consultation with those who know about street plantings need to be consulted as there is evidence across the City of the wrong trees (pavement up lift and roots interfering with services. And again are there going to be funds for maintenance? There is also talk of creating bigger pavements and decluttering what is there but then replacing it with street cafes and performance space (another form of clutter?).

Yes

Yes, hopefully there will be a good bit of green space

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes. Pavements need to be wider and parking reduced.

Too much focus on pedestrians vs cars, improve road links first then pedestrian routes. It's already easy to get around the city on foot. It is getting more difficult by car and this needs to be sorted urgently. The master plan continues to seem unrealistic and disconnected from reality, at least without fixing some of the other key problems in the area. These things will not go away by trying to seep under the carpet and must underpin any future development. Green streets are fine, as long as it roads are maintained and trees/plants would be good. Community growing spaces eg in vacant buildings would be good, but likely to be vandalised and probably fall into disrepair and neglect when the interest level wears off. Closing roads to cars is a bad idea.

no

Yes

absolutely, yes.

Yes although so long as it is not just straight road closures without thinking about the knock on effect to pushing traffic onto other already busy roads. The road is congested with delivery drivers, perhaps a waiting area for them? Cafe culture on the pedestrian area and lighting could improve the area. It is a dark damp unwelcoming area. I always feel uneasy and unsafe after dark in this area.

No. As much as it would be great to encourage "active travel" and pedestrianisation. this is unworkable where vast proportions of the population trying to be attracted to use the area live on the fringes of the city or rurally. Car travel remains essential in a city like aberdeen where there is low population density

No this does not work for those travelling into the area to work, often before public transport is available.

25 Wellbrae Terrace

Yes

Yes

No. Active travel is discrimination, I am unable to participate, most of my family are unable to. Under what justification is "young fit healthy" a selection criteria ?

Gardens may become a space for anti social behaviour but may be good for the area as it currently feels rather gray and grim.

There needs to be a reason for people to come to George street, if there is a reason for people to come, the people will come. the upper half of the street, furthest from the bon accord centre is unpleasant to get to and isn't particularly pedestrian friendly having to cross busy roads. a leak of green space and lots of on street parking is an issue for the street as the pedestrian walk ways a quite small

Yes

Yes

Make codonas flumeys or make more whatur park

I think we should create more dark alleyways and also add my Godzilla ride.

I think that we should make the streets more attractive.

Yes, I do.

Yes

Yes

yes

Yes

Yes I do

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Proposals include making key streets more attractive, promoting active travel and creating green spaces. (Page 36-40) Do you agree with this? - Do you agree that proposing to make key streets more attractive for active travel and greening is important?

Yes definitely. I don't agree with taxis getting the monopoly. More flowerbeds. We used to be Britain in bloom. More cycle lanes separate from the road. Some derelict building are a scandal! They should be renovated or knocked down.

Yes

fully, I think green spaces and culturally diverse visuals and food, restaurants and street food, would help improve the perception and pedestrian traffic around and in george street

Yes

Of course although it would be nice to see that throughout the whole city rather than just a small part

Yes

I agree with building green spaces and encouraging walking in the area. Too many cars in Aberdeen, the city centre is small and walkable for most of us. Transportation for the elderly will still be needed of course but why so many cars in the city centre!?

Yes.

Yes

Yes

No i don't agree with the proposals. A strategy of making the streets more attractive would be good but i fail to see how already stretched local authority budgets can afforded this? Eliminating the random frontage by standardising frontage to be more tasteful and aesthetically pleasing would be a significant improvement alone.

Yes

No.

No. An aesthetic improvement only. Aberdeen is a short distance away from much better spaces

yes particularly the pedestrian area to loch St.

NO you have no right to refuse people the right to travel by car.

Yes

NO!

Yes

No waste of time!!

No

Can't think it promotes active travel. I think it will deter those who travel from further afield from coming to the already declining area. Before living in the city centre I travelled over thirty minutes to visit the city centre and have many friends who still continue to do this.

never if this was my options and it was this difficult to get near the centre I would not take the time to travel here (possibly what the actual aim is of these councillors)

No

No

ewhat

Yes

I agree with this, as long as important existing businesses, schools and colleges can still operate effectively. I endorse the positive objectives referencing working with NESCOL and RGC.

29 Ashwood Mews

Absolutely. all the proposals are well put and I'd like to see Norco House re-used instead of torn down.

Yes

yes however I would be concerned that widening pavements and planting greenery may make pedestrians have priority and so cars would not be allowed into this area which could divert people from coming and supporting local businesses altogether.

Yes I definitely think it needs a makeover. However would this include knocking buildings down? As quite a few buildings on George street are in need of repairs. As for the green space I think this is a good idea however there is already some green space but this could be linked with the beach improvements if they ever happen.

Yes

YES

Yes

yes

Yes

Yes

Need to consider access for car parking (eg Loch St car park). The proposed traffic layout is not that practicable for coming from the South or from the North Deeside Rd (eg for the 4,500 residents in Peterculter). We need to be careful not to deter people coming to the location. Unfortunately, we cannot rely upon a satisfactory public transport provision from a commercial company.

No

Green space so your looking to do traffic away from this area too! ...noooooooooo!

Yes

as above

Proposals include making key streets more attractive, promoting active travel and creating green spaces. (Page 36-40) Do you agree with this? - Do you agree that proposing to make key streets more attractive for active travel and greening is important?

Yes!!

100%

Yes

Yes

No. 'Active Travel' is a joke in Scotland. How much more money will be wasted on this nonsense. People don't want to arrive at their destination sweaty, windswept or wet unless they are a wierdo. People like cars because they are convenient. That won't change. Time to look perhaps at more charging facilities for when electric cars take over. And more parking.

Yes, but city needs a step change in cycling infrastructure and current cycle hire arrangements linking key nodes such as uni's, colleges and hospitals.

Do not predesterinis as it just makes town more unaccessable.

Yes

Give us shops that are decent

Yes

Yes, but the current planning really needs to send cyclists or allow them to go along the main corridors instead of left-right-straight-right-left and so on. It is very important to provide segregated infrastructure, to avoid confusion and give pedestrians and cyclists clear guidance. Otherwise, it would just lead to conflicts. Just look at other European cities how it is done and how well it works.

Yes

Very much

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes - But only 100 m actual cycle infra on George St itself, that's 10% of its length. It's the main street, also for cycling through & in/out north. Edinburgh Bicycle Co-op not happy?

Yes, provided adequate vehicular access is maintained for residents, business operation, including RGC.

Yes, I fully support the proposal to make key streets more attractive for active travel and greening. We would particularly advocate for protected cycle lanes (physical separation from cars) and benches for pedestrians in pleasant surroundings. We appreciate it may be difficult to find new spaces for greening in such a crowded locality, but street trees, grass verges and hanging baskets would go some way to improving the environment.

Yes, I agree in principal that streets could be made more attractive, with additional greening and could promote active travel, however we have some concerns about how this would be implemented. There is some mention of decorative crossings, and art on streets/pavements – while art and other types of cultural features would be welcomed, putting this onto pathways, pavements and road crossings could cause confusion. Traditional visual representations of pathways, pavements, roads and crossings must not be compromised. Doing so may cause a range of difficulties for people who may not clearly see the markings, or may not understand their meaning, as they look for more familiar and traditional markings to understand where the road is, where the crossing is and where it is safe to walk. Ensuring there is clear tactile demarcation of the pavement, particularly if the space is still being shared by bicycles/other wheeled vehicles is paramount for the safety of visually impaired people.

One thing we cannot escape is the need for destination traffic. Through traffic we can reduce. If people, especially from out with the city wish to visit and make purchases public transport is just not up to the task. Getting purchases from the stores to public transport hubs is challenging. Extension of the LEZ threatens destination traffic.



George Street Draft Masterplan
Extract from online Citizen Space Public Consultation Responses

The masterplan proposes changes to vehicular movement in the area to improve place quality. (Pages 45-48) Do you support trying to make these changes? - Do you support trying to scope out vehicular movement changes in the area I do support the reduction of traffic but this has to be measured against the nature of some of the business's in the area, predominantly carry outs where vehicle access is required by customers.

No
It would be nice to see some areas pedestrianised but still with good access to cars and buses on perimeters

Yes

No

No the roads already work

While maintains essential accessibility (disabled parking, deliveries), the area feels car dominated with an excess of street parking. It's very uncomfortable on foot or Bu bike.

Absolutely not, it is a ridiculous idea to further restrict vehicle movements in and around the city centre. Too much focus and priority os given to pedestrians and cyclists whereas the main issue just now is car access. Further restrictions will kill the city centre, more than it is already.

definitely not!

Only to a certain close to city centre area only as the buses still have to be available to drop off/ pick up passengers with sometimes heavy bags

Yes

No

No, by the looks of the map, you're moving traffic onto an already busy street which will make it busier and more congested. Also blocking off easy access to car parks will reduce people coming into the already struggling city centre. The council keep pushing public transport, but until there are some real public transport competition FirstGroup will have athe stronghold and set expensive fares and poor access routes. It takes almost 30 minutes to travel up King Street by bus which is unacceptable for a ten minute drive.

The best idea to improve the city centre and not just George Street is to remove parking charges where possible. Look at where the traffic hot spots are in Aberdeen, South Market Street (nr. Union Square), Kittybrewster (retail park), Beach Boulevard (retail park). It is often stated that shops are losing out to the internet - this is true, but there are still thousands of people seeking to go to shops, but they need to be able to access those shops, and with low population density Aberdeen is a city where residents will rely on private car for convenience. The Large council car parks - east north street and denburn should be free, on street parking should be free or vastly reduced in price to attract people to use the city centre. the more people in the city the more rates the council will be able to collect.

I agree that rat running should be tackled but good vehicular access us required for those who work in the area and deliveries.

In general but unlike other areas of the city there must be drop off points for taxis and blue badge holders

Absolutely not . You are excluding people from the city centre based on age and health. George Street is one area you haven't screwed up yet , it's still alive and is still visited and has shops worth visiting .

Might be worthwhile having some form of discount scheme for people parking in Bon Accord Car Park and using local shops in George Street

I fully support the pedestrianisation of the street, only cars that need to pass through should be allowed (car park access only) as well as one way streets

Yes

Yes, definitely

No

I think we should increase congestion as it will test societys pacience.

I would like the street to be double the width to ensure that massive buses nd that can go through.

I believe Charlotte St and Maberly St could benefit from being one way streets. They're too narrow for two way traffic and often traffic speed, on these streets.

Yes

Yes

yes

Yes

Yes

Yes,as long as the alternative routes for cars and pedestrians dont cause bottle necks or interference getting out or in of hte area and car parks as these are the safest two car parks in town in terms of lighting and security.

Yes

Yes

Yes if there were suitable drop off and collection points for accessing the school, but also accessing town in general if you wanted to be collected by car. I don't think you should be forced to take public transport options. The city should remain accessible to everyone. I agree with pedestrianised areas.

No

i believe pedestrianising george street would allow a greater social atmosphere and make it safer for younger children

No

The masterplan proposes changes to vehicular movement in the area to improve place quality. (Pages 45-48) Do you support trying to make these changes? - Do you support trying to scope out vehicular movement changes in the area
 Also see previous comment. Keeping cars out of the area is key. However, things like planning an active friendly street into a dead end street seems strange and all of George Street should be a direct corridor for cyclists, instead of sending them around all corners and turns (which might lead to more conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists, due to visibility). Also, there should not be busses on George Street anymore. They take a lot of space and the bus routes and stops can be around/near the area, to give everyone accessibility to come and leave as they wish, but getting busses off the central and lower part of George Street would be a huge improvement, generate so much more space and open more opportunities. This is normal in other cities, that these huge, noisy buses dont go through such areas, but stop around the area.

No , George st was one way during covid , awful more pollution with queues we have five vans and all use George street going to Dyce and Altens all time of the day, making a street one way causes gridlock somewhere else.

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes!

Yes, in principle. RGC has some concerns on the proposed one-way system around its premises.

We agree with the plan's promotion of pedestrian and sustainable movement to the top of the travel hierarchy, particularly the plans to relocate through-traffic. Safety for pedestrians and cyclists is key in encouraging people to use these modes of travel, so as much separation from vehicles as possible would be our preference.

Yes

This would be big change to the area, and we would foresee that it would need significant support to enforce changes. We agree with the principal of reducing cars, but have serious concerns about the suggestions of putting a cycle route down John Street, as this would go right past NESS's front door. This would go against the current direction of travel from what has been described, which could cause safety issues, particularly for visually impaired people who have been visiting us for years, and who are not used to this, but increasing the level of bicycles in that area would be unsafe for the visually impaired people who are coming in and out of NESS. People who are visually impaired cannot see bicycles clearly, particularly when they are moving fast, or erratically, which many cyclists do. When people are visiting NESS they are often at the earliest stages of learning to adapt to their visual impairment, and one negative experience could set someone's confidence back, as well as affecting their trust in NESS. Navigating busy streets with additional bicycles can also be difficult for people who are Deaf or hard of hearing, who would also be coming to John Street, as they may not hear them approach from behind and won't hear bells ring. Having additional bicycles round the John Street area could also increase the anxiety and reduce the confidence of the deaf people we support. We also have concerns that the direction of travel of the cycle routes seems to be against the current flow of traffic which is one way from George Street to Loch Street, and it isn't clear if traffic will be removed from John Street. NESS would need to maintain vehicular access – our staff use cars to visit our service users in their own homes, we also have a network of volunteers who pick up and taken home our elderly and frail volunteers, and both staff and service users use taxis to get to and from John Street because of their visual impairment. We would therefore be against losing vehicular access which we depend on. While we understand and recognise that changes to the bus routes would help reduce traffic on George Street, we would not want this to compromise the availability, connectivity and therefore use of public transport. For the visually impaired people that NESS support, they depend on bus routes, as they are no longer allowed to drive. Many of the people we support are also older adults, and may not be able to walk as far, therefore bus routes and bus stops must still enable them to reach the main places in the George Street area and not increase the distance they have to walk on foot. If bus stops and bus routes change, many would need support to relearn the routes and landmarks that help them to navigate independently and these will become much more difficult if there is further to walk than previously. We would also want to see the maintenance and possibly an increase to Disabled Parking Bays, at key points in the area, again to allow easy access to the main premises. Anticipating a busier, more vibrant neighbourhood also suggests that additional Disabled Parking should be being planned for.

In principle yes, in practice LEZs are both a potential boon and drawback. It may challenge the very need for these. Cycle provision needs improving and the reduction in through traffic will assist greatly. Cycle provision needs to be segregated and scooters and large ebikes kept of them. I would ask that where ground marks show cycle route it also includes rollerblades and skates symbols encouraging these a commuter methods which are commonly used on the continent



George Street Draft Masterplan

Extract from online Citizen Space Public Consultation Responses

A list of regeneration projects is proposed. (Page 49-51) Are there any that you do not agree with, or are there projects you would like to see added? - Please identify any projects you do not support or add those that you think are missing
I think the regeneration projects are admirable and aspirational but I wonder who it is that supports these things to happen. Also policy needs to be addressed to support start-ups, as it stands policies are prohibitive - mostly through various costs.

Nope

It would be good to see lots of outside seating and more shops

No

I would like to see all the seagulls in Aberdeen removed by force

More green space, insulation for homes private or council done across the board regardless of ownership

Agree

Partially, empty buildings need to be dealt with and reused as leisure or retail facilities or demolished for green spaces, parking and public toilets etc. parking spaces in the street are needed for people to visit local shops, these should not be taken away. More parking could be provided. Improving leisure facilities and crime may encourage more people there in the evening. Lighting will make the area look more attractive but will not deal with the crime, which is caused by poverty and deprivation in nearby areas, a lot of drug and alcohol problems are not solved by lights (that tend to fail 6 months after install going by other streets). Too much focus on pedestrians and cyclists, more focus is needed for car access and parking or people will not visit businesses. Yes more bins are needed but make sure they are emptied and not a feeding station for seagulls. Do more to control pests in the area like seagulls and rodents etc.

all

What about the old Hilton Hotel site? Houses are great but we also need play spaces and walks as well as shopsetc

Do not agree with further construction in the area. demolition of recent developments only way forward.

Yes

Colourful play area's for children, indoor paintball, indoor crazy golf similar to Golf Fang. Modern art galleries for local artists, more NuArt murals. Going after those who own empty delapidated units and make them accountable for their property.

issues

Reducing vehicle dominance is a risk to the area's businesses unless adequate access is allowed and public transports is greatly improved. e.g. park & choose facilities to have express buses into city centre and the buses operate extended hours.

The "Creating An identity, alive after 5pm" appears to touch on what i am getting at, and, "Alive after 5 & An Adaptable Neighbourhood" (which sound very similar i would add) mention encouraging "popups" etc. But again, where is the mention of a broader vision of outdoor eating, drinking and meeting areas. Everybody on the planet eats and drinks several times per day and capitalising on that in the mini masterplan area is crucial to increase footfall if you want to create a community environment. Chain restaurants, cafes or areas are not always the answer either, as younger generations actively want to support local and independent business.

Nothing to Add

All ok

Anything restricting travel is straight discrimination - we cannot all walk /cycle

Agree with all of them

Creating a sense of identity is the most important if we provide a unique reason for people to want to come to the space they will come to. There is minimal benefit to increasing the availability of shopping space when there are so many empty lots on union street. Having the area as a cultural hub would be the most beneficial, as it's close to the art gallery. Improving the facade of buildings could improve the visual feel of the area, and having more strict guidelines on the appearance of buildings may help, planting more trees along the street would break up the sense of the city and provide a unique feel

Make a feature of the rain with pavement poetry that only appears when the pavement is wet. Like in Boston - <https://www.cbsnews.com/boston/news/boston-hidden-sidewalk-poetry/>

Yes

I aint reading allat

I dont agree with any. Add my godzilla ride.

I would like to see more donor kebab shops

There are none that I do not agree with.

No

None

no

Trying to encourage new businesses might be difficult as it is some distance from union square. This is why I think it has to have a different vibe to a standard shopping area. Independent brands and business. Fun indoor/outdoor eateries. Activities to engage young people. Etc

No I agree with all

I don't know if i missed it on the list but the drainage needs to be sorted on george street. you can have outdoor social areas all you like but if it is uncomfortable to sit in due to the smell no one will use it.

I like them

I agree

A list of regeneration projects is proposed. (Page 49-51) Are there any that you do not agree with, or are there projects you would like to see added? - Please identify any projects you do not support or add those that you think are missing.
 Union street is an embarrassment. I intentionally now avoid it as it is so depressing. The windows on buildings, plants growing out of gutters, dirty granite. I don't feel safe on it with my two young children in certain patches.

Yes

I think maybe having a scheduled youth leader of sort to go to the football pitch once every so often would help reduce anti social behaviour and increase a sense of community

No

No

I very much agree with cleaning the streets more and also please encourage those with dogs to clean up after their pets. It feels like there are some undertones of something much more insidious and class rooted with the disregard for our streets and it's hygiene.

Shop front shutter art scheme is a great idea! There's nothing I massively disagree with.

Seems right

No

Agree

Agree with tackling vacant space and certain aspects of de-cluttering. Disagree with costly redesigning and creation projects. Keep the cost down and start with simple easy improvements. If i saw the authority could do that i may be inclined to support larger projects.

I think Bon Accord Centre should be demolished to make way for more open space in the centre. You do not need all this shopping centres in a small city like Aberdeen

Where is the funding from? Who pay for these changes?

No

Would be interested to know what the future of Bon Accord Shopping Centre is.

I DO NOT CONSENT to any changes

Yes i agree with projects

all

No

Don't know, document too long and too hard to follow

Disagree with all

I think the council needs to remove proposals for bike lanes and removing private transport to the city centre areas. Having cycle lanes in places will not suddenly make everyone travel there on bikes or foot. People need money to purchase luxuries like bikes (especially given the current cost of living crisis) and those who are inactive certainly won't take advantage of this.

Some

slightly

disagree

I endorse what appear to be a large number of aspirational projects. I'd like to see reference to the stakeholder groups envisaged to take each project forward, and specifically see which involve young people, whether of school or college age

I agree with the proposals. I'd like to see the beginning of George Street (from the intersection with Loch St to St Andrew Street) to become a focal city centre square instead of a pedestrian thoroughfare as it is now.

I hope the renovation to the broad fold works is done soon.

I do not agree with 'improved street appearance' as I think it is wrong to discourage cars out of the city when parking is already a clear issue and one aim is to encourage people into the city for businesses etc.

I agree with them all however as previously mentioned there needs to be something for the youth.

No they all sound really good, like the sound of all of them

YES

I would just like to add strong agreement to any 'greening' of space with more trees, green walls, etc.

area definitely needs better lighting, HArriet street is horrid at night when bon accord is closed and cannot be used a short cut. need to keep norco and other historical buildings. do not agree with area signage to announce the area - this does not improve anything and costs money which could be spent elsewhere

No

I

This needs to be determined by a more comprehensive market survey - most importantly to fully understand the reasons why people would want to visit George St.

No

Where are the food bank homeless places going as this will not be what you want on this street!

Yes

don't see the need to make all the shop fronts the same- is totally boring!!-

Make it cycle friendly, and accessibility by bus

I'd like to see a farmers' market on a regular basis and George Street seems like a good spot for one. But a market with fresh produce of the kind you see in the south of France.

First point should be demolishing the Bon accord centre's and connect George Street to Union street

Yes

Some of them are good. But you won't get businesses in until there are decent parking facilities.

1. Broadford Works Creative Industries Village - Residential on this site would be a huge wasted opportunity. Instead ACC should investigate bringing together existing regional cultural partners with new projects to build a more resilient cultural offer. For example, relocate BBC Scotland to Broadford, uni arts schools, music and museum collections, a relocated arts centre alongside specialist live/work artist studio space (look at Barratt Homes' Galleria scheme in London with ACME Studios), business start up space? 2. New Aberdeen Central Library Hub - bringing together library services with advice and other services all under one roof in a higher footfall location.

No you don't listen to residents anyway

No

A list of regeneration projects is proposed. (Page 49-51) Are there any that you do not agree with, or are there projects you would like to see added? - Please identify any projects you do not support or add those that you think are missing

Decent shops

N/A

no opinion

no

I agree

Agree with all

A project which I would like to see added is the restoration and and public access to, the nationally important murals in the former University Student Union building at the corner of Upperkirkgate & Gallowgate. These were painted by the renowned Scottish artist Robert Sivell (1888-1958) assisted by his student Alberto Morocco who also became a highly celebrated artist. Created between 1938 & 1953, the wall paintings depict "The Journey of Life from Creation to Death". The paintings are regarded as the most important 20th century murals in Scotland. However, they are not as well-known as they should be as only students & university staff had access to them during Student Union days & nobody has had access since the Student Union closed. The paintings are an important part of local & national cultural heritage. They are currently listed as being "At Risk" and their restoration with public access would be a great cultural asset & much-needed visitor attraction to the George Street area. George Street area.

The former Student Union Building is imposing but not fully utilised.

Very unfortunate that site on (corner) John Street W behind Lumsden Security is outside study boundary. Great spot for affordable housing and a park?

No further comment.

Good aspirations.

The green walls I have seen do not seem as effective and sustainable as ordinary street trees; The proposal to activate alleys and backstreets might offer the possibility for creating green pathways as alternative routes.

Dec cluttering of the street would make a big difference to being able to navigate safely, particularly for visually impaired people, however in decluttering it is also important to remember that some things may act as wayfinders, so it is important to consider these in this context. As mentioned, decorating pavements and crossing would potentially make them unsafe for visually impaired people, but also lots of others who would not recognise or understand what non-traditional markings meant. Art and culture mustn't be on pavements, and there would plenty of scope to have art and culture at other levels in the streetscape. Art installations, events and pop ups would bring George Street to life, however, they must take place in pre-defined spaces, to ensure that George Street is still easy to navigate. Pop ups, events, or play in spaces that are not clearly defined could disorientate visually impaired people as well as create obstacles and trip hazards. Good communication about events will also be essential to make sure people are aware of changes in the environment. Improved lighting could make a difference highlighting architecture, spaces and increasing safety in the George Street area. Lighting should be evenly distributed and should not create patches of light or shadows, as these can create the perception of obstacles, causing confusion and disorientation and compromise safety for visually impaired people, as well as other people in the community. More greening would be welcome, and would brighten up George Street significantly, however it needs to be carefully positioned and planned so that it does not create any obstacles in the main walkways, and the space it occupies needs to be clearly identifiable, both visually and with tactile elements so that visually impaired people can identify where they are. Using good colour contrast on the street furniture e.g. brighter or lighter colour against a dark background or darker colours against a lighter background, would help create visual interest while also making them more identifiable to people who are visually impaired. It would also be important in any projects that its own accessibility is considered, so that everyone can access the businesses/pop ups/events, including people who are visually impaired, Deaf or hard of hearing. They are part of the community, and often find that the way things are designed or organised means they don't have full and equitable access. It is important that we are well established within the community area, making sure community events around about are fully accessible and inclusive should be considered at the outset of any developments.

I will neither disagree or agree to any. They all have merit but many risk falling into the rhetoric band. Someone, somewhere must do and fund these. We must be sure that any other ideas tabled do not get excluded for not being on this list. Things like frontages are in the cost matrix of owners or renters. Above the shop line is in the gift of owners and tenants. These are very old properties with particularly complex architecture and massively varied state of repair. This skyline estate will be a very complex matter to resolve, more so if architectural uniformity is desired. The area needs footfall and support for initiatives driving footfall. Should the city favour "future" possible projects over current in hand project this may suppress development opportunities.



George Street Draft Masterplan

Extract from online Citizen Space Public Consultation Responses

Norco House site, formerly John Lewis, is identified as an important site for new uses. (Page 55-63) Do you agree, and if so what uses would you like to have to support George St? - Do you agree that Norco House, formerly John Lewis, is an important site, and if so what uses should it have to support George Street?

Norco House could be utilised for a number of things; the floor space and design does not lend itself to residential but could be a place for start up units, community space's, performance space etc...

Yes

It is a large building, there is a real lack of shops so I would prefer to see it become a department store, like the former John Lewis rather than an arty exhibition area

Big Arcade or big food court area for street food and other cuisines

I want a go cart track as there is no place for that near here and it's a good economic investment to give people a reason to come back to the city

It's too big to use by one owner

The day of the large Dept store is gone. I'd knock the brute down. Retain retail along G st but revert to residential on other ground floor faces focusing on those that require good accessibility.

It needs to be returned to its former use as a large department store. If not John Lewis someone else as the city has little other option. If you really want to discourage online shopping and shopping g to other cities then this is needed to encourage people into town, along with good roads and more parking. An alternative use could be a cinema but only if large department stores can be encouraged back into the city.

indoor market stalls

It is a very large space but very prominent so careful thought has to be put in place for that sight- and again not just housing- when used for Covid jabs and being a pensioner it is expensive to pay for car parking there

Scenario 1 is the best option. retain original norco house. demolish everything round and create public spaces.

Yes.

Use it for a multi function centre, cinema, museum, art galleries, indoor bars and food stalls, indoor golf like Golf Fang. An indoor Camden market-esque vibe. Indoor skatepark for the children so they have somewhere to go that is safe and get them out of hanging around in McDonalds.

no idea, but then im not an urban planner. I have been a resident of Aberdeen for over 30 years and its tragic how poor the whole of the city centre has become. The city should be full of attractive destinations and be easily accessible. The lack of consistent planning

strategy over the past 20 years has created a divided city centre, with a thriving shopping centre (which can be accessed as it has an on site car park) taking all visitors away from all the other parts of the city which are more challenging to reach. To reinvigorate the rest of the city (Union Street, George Street, etc) parking in these areas should be free, this additional footfall will bring new traders and revitalise these areas.

Scenario 3

Don't know

Scenario 1 is probably best, with modifications, as the site is so large it could be used for so many uses. Additionally, most cities now view their brutalist architecture as something special and of the time, the John Lewis building should be celebrated in Aberdeen also. Scenario 2 residential, is unthinkable in this vision in my opinion. You have a prime city centre area with the ability to be renovated and the idea that more residential units is what it could be used for is not sensible, necessary or have any sort of vision.

I agree. I would like it to be a new museum there. With the floor floors in the building maybe different floors could be used for multiple purposes.

Demolished and used for something like a farmers markets community use

None

Community maker space on one of the floors will allow local residents access to skills they may not have time or money from. Something like a local library for tools or sewing materials

It was highly disappointing to see the national history museum plans fall through. Opening a branch of another gallery will give people a reason to come to George street other than just for shopping, which would reduce the risk of online shopping and shops being empty. We don't need another shopping centre so need to Bon Accord. Similar to the V&A in Dundee. We could see the TATE open a branch in Aberdeen (their first in Scotland) similar to their Liverpool or St Ives sites. This could also be used to host events like the Tate Liverpool hosting the Turner prize in 2007, which was an overture to Liverpool's being the European Capital of Culture 2008. It a unique building with alot of potential if fully cleaned and restored

Affordable housing / Community groups / pop up art and theatre

Yes

nah

Yes, I do agree. This is where i plan the new godzilla ride to be. Its going to be an indoor RMC coaster with spine tingling inversions!!! (50 Lopty lops)!!!

Turn the former John Lewis building into a 24 hour nightclub as it currently serves no purpose.

I loved the idea of rooftop open public space, with the building being used for entrepreneurs, small start up businesses etc.

Pop up events, exhibitions, start up space for new local businesses

Yes, parks shops and other commercial and/or nature reserved areas

Retained and repurposed to cultural, entrepreneurial, community and mixed use hub adjacent to a new civic space in the City.

It would be crazy not to use the building if possible. Multi-use, indoor activities etc

Yes John Lewis is a massive miss. I think we should get little quality independent shops. ie cafes, bookshops

roof top space is a bonus(whatever the height), multipurpose use of the areas also a bonus for too long the city has its eggs in one basket and it makes it difficult to fill the areas if anything happens to one sector. also maker spaces, gives the public an insight to the work that goes into making something and therefore they understand the value of bespoke or small batch, and increase on buying local.

Yes i do.

I agree and I feel that it could be used for an active place.

Possibly a cinema or food options? Or a big playpark like in London's shopping centre at the power station. If I am to spend money in town I will be accompanied with my children and they need somewhere to go as a break.

Norco House site, formerly John Lewis, is identified as an important site for new uses. (Page 55-63) Do you agree, and if so what uses would you like to have to support George St? - Do you agree that Norco House, formerly John Lewis, is an important site, and if so what uses should it have to support George Street?

I only agree with scenario 1; absolutely no residential use.

I agree but not sure

Yes

Bring back John Lewis! Everyone misses it and would love to show there, or could be decided as a separate kind of mini shopping mall, connected to Bon Accord (main building)

I agree. I think it should be turned into a complex for the youth as I feel like they have less spaces to socialise and have turned to public disturbance. Please also consider offering a new independent cinemahouse to replace the loss of Belmont, which was an amazing place for people of all ages and circumstances. Another idea could be to create a safe space for the homeless people around our area.

Scenario 1 please. Do not make it fully residential.

I like the ideas. I think all could work and appear to make use of the building.

Yes

Scenario 1 - most important aspect is retail occupants. There cant be empty spaces/shopfront - same goes for whole area.

The local authority should be ashamed of itself for this contradiction. Had they worked better with John Lewis and other retailers there would be less empty space. Large European cities have this type of building fully utilised, local Authority policies have driven retail away from this area and Union street. Don't waste money on road modification, green spaces etc, use it to incentivise opening up business.

Yes, but I feel it should be knocked down

What can be better than the John Lewis?

It could be demolished

Yes, a repurposing to create an arts centre or mixed use.

I DO NOT CONSENT

I think we should have another department store here or spaces for pop up shops.

indoor market stalls

Yes, maybe a community centre? Or an museum of sort. Something for the public to engage and use to encourage people to the area.

Don't know as document too hard to follow but companies should be instructed into this building. Only worth while doing this if you don't restrict access like you are planning

No

I disagree, it's a terrific space but how does the council expect these spaces to be filled when there are SO many vacant premises already in the city centre.

demolish it

It really a nice looking building and Bon Accord centre is past it's sell by date. Demolish both to make new more greener area

I support Option 3. Whilst Options 1 and 2 appear more exciting, the retail reality is that John Lewis shut and the Bon Accord Centre and George St shops are struggling

It should be demolished. It should never have been given planning permission in the first place. The impact on the environment is the cost of that past mistake.

I like all proposals, but personally prefer the Scenario 1 - Renovation and Rationalisation - with the illustrative layout on page 56.

could be used by small independent traders to sell goods.

yes, I think Norco House would be perfect for some kind of youth hub where kids/teens can go and meet their friends to chat and play games without causing trouble and being followed around by security guards who don't trust them. I also think this could be a great space

for college end of year displays or even for gym type studios which could be rented out to yoga, pilates, strength training etc classes.

It's an eyesore, knock it down. Never heard of Norco House John Lewis just looks grim and dim and gives the street a gloomy aesthetic.

Yes I agree

YES

I do not have strong opinions

yes it should be retained and re-purposed. developers keep wanting more and more cinemas in aberdeen so it could be a cinema! (but i think we have enough)

Consider moving the City Council into Norco House, to create additional daytime footfall. Marischal College could then be used for more leisure and visitor attraction purposes i.e a museum of NE History and culture, similar to Kelvingrove in Glasgow

I support Scenario 1 for Norco House - it would make leisure more accessible for people in the north of Aberdeen city who rely on public transport and find it difficult to get to the beach or union square for cinemas etc. I think you need to provide facilities for people who are on a lower income. I do not support building more housing in the city centre - there is far too much already

Anything that would provide a reason for people to visit George St.

No

Make it in to a homeless shelter

No

Swimming pool? or library?

Perhaps big soft play for kids of various ages. Sports complex complex. Upcycle shops like they have in Sweden shops, local people making things like dresses, jewellery etc

I want John Lewis back :(

Use for public toilets, rooftop space and pop up shop events mostly in the winter months

Supermarket

No, I don't agree. Norco House and the Bon Accord Centre should be demolished, and George Street linked to Schoolhill once more. Traffic should be able to flow freely and there should be parking.

NORCO site could help provide a new central library, advice (housing, into work, money, etc) in a visible and accessible ground floor location with higher footfall, potential with extra space for NESCOL on upper floors. The existing building should have extension removed if retained to provide more open space or could be demolished to provide a mixed use scheme with some residential helping to pay for a new library/advice/learning hub.

Norco House site, formerly John Lewis, is identified as an important site for new uses. (Page 55-63) Do you agree, and if so what uses would you like to have to support George St? - Do you agree that Norco House, formerly John Lewis, is an important site, and if so what uses should it have to support George Street?

Open it up as a mini market for local businesses. At reduced rate.

A multi cultural center to welcom everyone to our city and have a bit of warmth home and put in contact with help resources

Why

Aberdeen lacks a museum, the building or part could be used for this purpose.

There are good ideas, but I do not feel that I can contribute much. Some space can be used for a creative space, give start-ups an option to try things in an open office space, little workshops, kitchen, whatever, meeting rooms, etc.

Maybe offices , this would bring much needed staff to use the many shops/ cafe/sandwich bars

Yes, it seems crucial to deal with this large area. It needs to be a draw for people, either with a private sector use or removal of the building to create green space.

Not necessarily, it would be a shame to demolish the building and build another building, but if no use for the space can be found, I think a creatively used open space, could have a better impact in an otherwise closed off feeling area.

I agree that ideally Norco House should be retained despite its unpopularity. Its design limits possibilities (lack of windows for example makes residential use difficult) but it is well-suited for retail purposes.

Beneficial to increase residential opportunities, community space as well as space for employment opportunities.

Yes, indoor market, cultural centre, artists space

Cultural if possible but difficult to see an obvious practical use for such a specific layout and scale.

We're unsure on the needs of the area to offer informed comment on this. The number of empty shops on Union Street suggests that more retail space may not be needed at this time.

I agree it is an important site. I support the idea of mixed use with residential above commercial and possibly institutional (healthcare, academic)

Norco House is a significant landmark in Aberdeen, and if repurposed could really revitalise George Street. It seems that there is a hint at trying to create George Street as a place of artists/crafters/small independent retailers, and having the space to host some of these would be great. There also isn't really a nice coffee shop or place for lunch in George Street, so having something like that to replace John Lewis coffee shop would be nice, but sticking to the crafty/slightly alternative idea, rather than the large national retailer or caterer – we've got enough of those in Aberdeen. Opening up the space at the back to create a small park would also enhance the place. Again, all developments must be made fully accessible and inclusive to meet the varying needs of the local community.

For us, our experience with ACC officers in this realm is they only want to hear what they want to hear and engagement with them has been very very poor. They promise to follow up and we never hear from them. You may have new staff and they should be given an opportunity. We have a 3 phase plan for the Norco House. ACC could be instrumental in helping drive this forward and their involvement would be welcomed. Will they take it seriously I personally have had way too many aborted projects with ACC over the past 20 years. I am quite prepared to ignore this track record and engage with ACC if it's with mutual enthusiasm. It has always felt like they know best and show passive aggression by ignoring things they do not like, or people they do not like.



George Street Draft Masterplan
Extract from online Citizen Space Public Consultation Responses

Please provide any further comments you wish to make on the draft mini-masterplan. - Please provide any further comments

There are lots of ideas that potentially could make George St a destination rather than a thorough fayre. My question would be who will deliver on the 60 (ish) projects? I note ACC is against several but wonder if a project manager needs to oversee with support from a community network made up of partners, business's and residents to oversee?

Nope I am fine

Pet friendly

Would like a nice fresh look with lots of cultures foods and things to do

I think George street should have more big name food brands and less fashion and beauty shops as they take up the whole street. It also needs cleaned like the rest of the city

Don't overspend. CCTV lighting makes sense as does demolishing Broadford works but seriously the area is managing

Cycle infrastructure esp so called National Cycle Route is woeful to awful. Let's actually have some segregated infrastructure that's cars can't park in. And sort out access across Mounthooley roundabout. It's awful. The rule for bikes is that their routes need to be continuous and more direct that vehicle routes. If necessary, send the cars underground.

Most of it seems unrealistic and not enough focus on the real issues in the area and across the city. Improve road access and parking first. But why is money being spent on this but then public facilities like libraries and swimming pools being closed? The approach is disjointed and lacks proper prioritisation and consistency.

use money this survey costs towards bucksburn pool

A lot of the shops are very similar so some new small businesses would be good with affordable rent for them

DO NOT BUILD THE NEW MARKET AT THE GREEN.

Much of the area feels uninviting for pedestrians - the access yard for Bon-Accord centre at Harriet Street & Crooked Lane for one. Cars parking/waiting on double yellow lines or double parking is a constant bugbear when cycling in this area along with parking/double parking close to junctions - it doesn't feel inviting or safe. Cycle accessibility is sensible but why make the designated route zig-zag from Mounthooley/NESCOL and not straight down George Street?

Open to your people, and not just push your own out of date agendas. So many cities have vibrant urban projects like Dundee, Manchester, London, Glasgow. Ours seems to cater to those who don't even venture into the city centre past lunch time.

The plan should include other smaller marginalised groups like disabled people, charity organisations that support those marginalised groups. Possible also incorporate more community involvement like getting smaller local community groups to look after green spaces plant life.

doesn't make it clear who they want to attract into the area and where they will come from. It obviously needs to include residents but who else and where will they come from and get there. Plan needs to consider that many working in the area do not work 9-5

What I have seen time and time again in any city when I think of "vibrancy" when I get shown around by the locals is street food / local food options and outdoor areas where you can sit outside in fresh air, socialise and see other people to dine, drink, etc in the evenings. Usually combined with art, green spaces, independent shops and an inviting atmosphere. Of course being outdoors is not possible at all times of the year in Aberdeen, however having been in many cold cities in Europe this is not considered the issue in as many places as it is here. The city need to start engaging with the younger, creative generations as to what it is they would like to see in George Street / Aberdeen as a whole, as it is them who will make or break the reputation of a city and Aberdeen is currently not well known for its reputation. The city have done well in the past with things such as outdoor markets (i.e. Thistle street Saturday market, no longer operating for some reason but always well attended) outdoor events with street food (Aberdeen Inspired summer nights at The Green, again I don't know why these were stopped) which had a positive impact of improving civic pride and not giving people the excuse of saying "there's nothing to do" or talking negatively about the city. George Street will be well placed to benefit from this. Considering instances such as The Bikeyard just up the road from George Street no longer being allowed to operate in the old Ecosse Motorcycles building, despite superb attendance and a clear desire for it to exist. How exactly does something like that fit with the community you are claiming to want to create? There needs to be a switch from always placating existing businesses with their own individual agendas or allowing individuals who will never benefit the city from objecting to plans and allowing fresh new ideas and opportunities to go ahead. The council must be bold, headstrong and set up working groups with the people who will actually help improve the reputation of the city - those aren't the same people as the ones complaining about the lack of parking in the city centre. There needs to be a big push to help encourage local businesses to concentrate in the same area so you can go from one shop to the next. Leave Union Square to the chains and brands and keep George Street independent.

None

None

Stop equating restricting people's ability to travel in the city with improvement , it's improvement for one section of people , it is complete isolation for the rest

None

The council will inevitably need help finding a single commercial occupant for the Norco House site, and John Lewis left for their reasons. The building is exciting architecturally and would be a fantastic fit for a big-name gallery or museum, such as the first Tate Scotland, or a Design museum similar to that seen in London. It would provide a valid reason for people to come to Aberdeen outside of just exploring the city

None

Pedestrianised

knock down shmorge syreet

Also could you add a volcano to the area as it looks radical! (Mount vesuivius or Everest)

More donor kebaby shops please

Please provide any further comments you wish to make on the draft mini-masterplan. - Please provide any further comments

It's good. I also think the shops along George Street need to be more varied.

I think overall idea is great as we need to encourage more people into this area and improve it but I am concerned about the practicality of encouraging people into the area but not allowing access for cars and taking away parking. Even if cars are travelling through this area they may still see something which catches their eye so they then stop or they come back later.

n/a

Very happy this is being talking about, I agree wholeheartedly with it

CAN WE ROUTE MORE BUSES DOWN BLACKFRIAR STREET INSTEAD OF VIA BROADSTREET, ITS QUICKER FOR THE BUS ROUTES 19 BEST EXAMPLE OF A 10MIN JOURNEY TRAVEL SAVING.

The area is central to the city. I would also like to see this plan extended to the derelict factory and industrial areas that take up a huge amount of space in the heart of the city. These spaces could be cleared for green space or hybrid residential/cafe space which would extend the city centre which is currently cut off by the bon accord centre.

not sure how Broadfold works features in this - it has been in redevelopment now for over 2 decades and not a single piece of work has been done, if anything the owner seems to be wanting it to fall down then they do not have to restore it

Hopefully something will happen and improve the area.

This survey is not particularly easy/user friendly to use. Boxes for text should be "bigger" so that you can see what you are typing, rather than it being a long line not good survey design!

One element that is, understandably, missing is how this will be financed - and to also identify what the alternative options are (eg staged development) should insufficient finance become available when desired. We should also manage the public expectations (ie risk of 'disengagement' should any of the proposals not come to fruition). Probably most importantly, we need to explain to the public what the financial implications are and whether this would reduce the amount of money available for public services (eg nice George St, but it would have been better to keep the libraries and swimming pools open).

Stop wasting money on 'Masterplans' and use the money to keep Bucksburn swimming pool and the libraries open. The council do not care about the people of Aberdeen and I will never vote SNP again!

Open up union street to traffic

No thank

Knock down bon accord centre and move those shops into union street or George st to help liven them up. Aberdeen shopping is just not worth coming into town for- and I only live in Rosemount. Would rather get train to Edinburgh

Have local people creating and selling goods

Please, please put in lots of trees and gardens. Aberdeen needs way more trees. Maybe also homes for wildlife like bird nesting boxes and hedgehog homes. Could we also help the gulls? People hate them but they don't realise they're in decline. We could create a culture where life is cherished and nurtured.

The plans for the area should be redone with the Bon accord centre removed

Keep of roofs, cleanliness, reduce disorderly behaviour

Is mostly nonsense. Especially the bits about 'Active Transport'. They are a joke in the North East of Scotland! 😞

Great to have this consultation, but need to break the masterplan down into smaller quick wins and longer term projects which come together to deliver the broader vision. Doesn't feel like the sparks for regeneration are clear enough yet, and public realm improvements on their own will not do it.

You should be concentrating on the residents of Aberdeen. Eg Bucksburn swimming pool. Libraries not who you can attract to the city.

I think this should be like Camden market, little china etc that London has we are renowned for being a welcoming city to all let's show it visually that we are and always will be

The council don't listen to the public so it's a waste of time

There's lots of heritage and history from the area, the design plans could reflect this to create character and an aesthetic vibe.

Forcing all businesses to have a standardised front sign could actually kill some of the atmosphere. It should not turn out to be looking like a shopping mall, dull and boring. The variety of different sizes of the signs and random designs does not have to be a bad thing. Of course, there could be restriction of covering too much of the buildings, but every sign in the same basic cut, material or even design would be boring and "too much". A place like George Street would be good to be tidy where it matters (litter on the street, overflowing bins, etc.) but not with the shop signs, so I do not think that overregulation of this matter is needed.

We have been based at 266 George street now for 27 years the only time life was grim was during the covid when George street was one way this only created more pollution.

Please try to bring as much green space in as possible, and prioritise pedestrians. This could be my route into town on foot, but at the moment it is a bit grim.

No further comments

Overall I support the plan & wish to draw attention to the need to restore the Student Union murals and provide public access as part of city-centre regeneration.

Planners will no doubt consider the preservation of the nationally important Sivell murals in the former Student Union on Upperkirkgate

Great if set into action plan=enabled.

RGC is keen to work with ACC and other stakeholders in support of successful Masterplan outcomes.

Please provide any further comments you wish to make on the draft mini-masterplan. - Please provide any further comments

We would like to have seen health and wellbeing given far more consideration and prominence in this assessment. In future we'd strongly advocate that these local development planning opportunities incorporate far more meaningful health impact assessments. Of the 16 mentions of "health" in the document: - three related to council aims for healthy life expectancy and healthier lives for those with long term conditions - five express general aspirations for health; - there is a single mention (in the planning guidance sections) each for health and transport, health and green/blue spaces, health and air quality, and the need for a "healthy economy"; - in the land use section opportunities to create "health and beauty shops" was mentioned; - finally, as an area for action, there were two mentions of, and 1 specific action relating to, redesigning residential streets. This action is the only action with a specific mention of health in appendix 2. Admittedly, other actions assume health will be a co-benefit of actions. I think there is the potential for many health benefits associated with the scope of the development - but this plan does not actually suggest how these will be conceived or delivered. Whilst not part of the consultation, I looked at the SEA. I quote the assessment of population and health impacts from the non-technical summary: "The overall effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan on population and health are generally positive because the new development will provide for access to retail/recreational/leisure facilities, improved infrastructure and potential new employment and economic opportunities. However, traffic from new development and other polluting uses could have a negative effect on air quality which may have a negative effect on human health. The draft George Street Mini Masterplan includes Design Principles try to limit this effect through sustainable transport options. The process of creating and delivering masterplan projects creates optimism, certainty, investment, etc and when founded in community engagement should give greater place enjoyment, a sustainable place and a liveable place." This seems to provide a slanted view of the evidence - where the economic and leisure opportunities "will" have a positive effect on health, whilst traffic based air pollution only "may" have a negative effect and this will be mitigated by sustainable transport "options". Lastly, the social environment may warrant more consideration in the plan - ways to support and extend local relationships, social contact and support networks that exist in the area. E.g through the provision/improvement of informal spaces or supporting the volunteering infrastructure.

I support the generally positive descriptions of George St contained in the plan. The Bon Accord centre and its ancillary spaces remain the greatest obstacle to overall improvement but the proposals to invest in the basics of maintaining what is already there and introducing trees seem very worthwhile



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George Street Masterplan Finalised Draft



11th October 2023



Optimised Environments
 86 Princess Street | Manchester | M1 6NG
 t 0161 696 7550
 Optimised Environments Ltd. Registered in Scotland SC359690.
 Registered address: Quartermile Two | 2 Lister Square | Edinburgh | EH3 9GL
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View along George Street
 looking towards Aberdeen
 City Centre

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Appendix 1 - Projects Influenced by Consultation Feedback

Appendix 2 - Planning Context

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1. Introduction & Context For Change

1. Introduction & Context For Change

Role Of The Masterplan

This Masterplan has been prepared on behalf of Aberdeen City Council by Optimised Environments Ltd., with support from Streets UK and Systra.

The purpose of the Masterplan is to establish a clear Vision, supporting objectives and set of development principles. Founded on engagement and endorsement by the communities of the George Street area, the Masterplan is to stimulate and support the delivery of incremental, transformational change by securing a range of economic (economy), social (people) and environmental (place) benefits.

Delivery of the Masterplan will help to ensure that George Street builds upon the successful and vibrant community by supporting and identifying areas for positive change and investment within the city centre boundary.

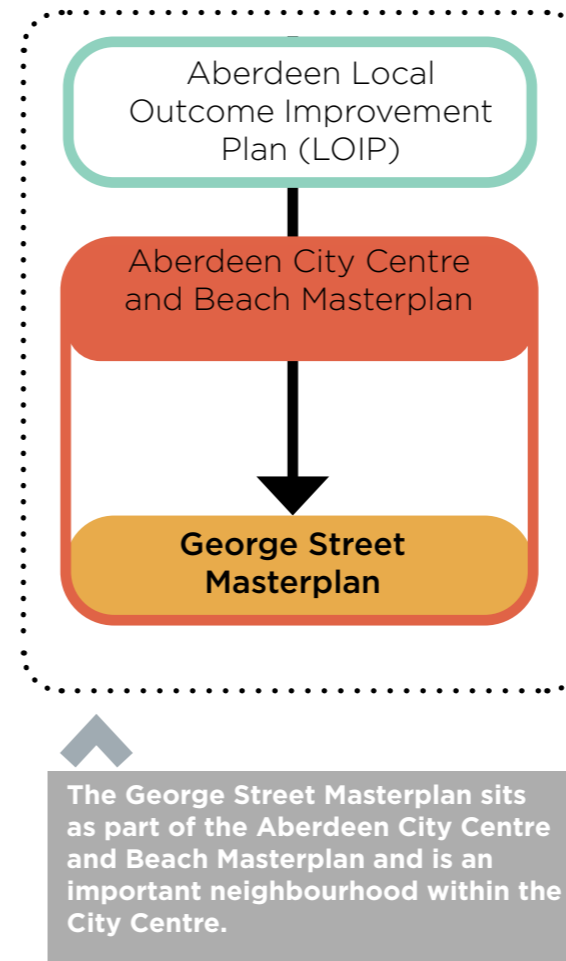
The overall objective of the Masterplan for the George Street area is to support the longer term success of the neighbourhood as the Council's Strategy for Change.

This Masterplan forms part of a wider City Centre and Beach Masterplan which will be regularly reviewed to ensure Aberdeen City Council's strategy remains up to date and relevant, with a clear focus on delivery.

The proposals put forward in this Masterplan build upon, support and encourage activity that is already taking place on the ground. They vary from the small to the large-scale, from quick wins to long-term aims for growth. It includes recommendations that range from public realm enhancements to business support, from wayfinding interventions to meanwhile uses in underused premises.

The George Street Masterplan has been designed as a public tool to be used by local residents, community groups, public authorities and other stakeholders to take ownership and co-deliver projects. It is hoped that complementary projects can also be considered for the wider George Street neighbourhood.

The potential projects have been developed based on feedback from the community and local stakeholders and in combination they form a holistic strategy and Vision for George Street.



View north along George Street with Norco House to the right

Welcome to George Street

Located to the north of the city centre, George Street is a historic urban neighbourhood which has retained its distinctive character. Today it is a bustling neighbourhood, where a variety of independent retail businesses sit amongst residential tenements, education institutions and leisure uses, all set out within a historic street grid.

The neighbourhood's look and feel is characterised by a number of attractive historic buildings, an example of brutalist architecture and the vibrant and vivid art murals scattered across the area and wider city as part of the NuArt festival.

History

The neighbourhood grew as part of Aberdeen's outward growth from Union Street and by 1828 much of the southern part of the neighbourhood was established. The area was historically directly connected to Aberdeen's city centre, Union Street and the harbour. Its tramway which ran parallel to King Street, formed a direct link between the city centre and fringe market areas such as Kittybrewster. As a result of its proximity to the city centre and the variety of people and amenities needed to support Aberdeen's growth, the neighbourhood developed as a dense urban area comprising of Candle & Soap Works, Public Baths, Foundries and terraced streets of worker's housing.

Although much of that historic street network and built form remains today, there have been some significant changes to its historic character.

Built during 1966-1970 along George Street, Norco House was built for the Northern Co-operative Society. This brutalist, ziggurat (stepped) 4 storey building presents a striking contrast to the smaller scaled, traditional stone buildings.

Both the George Street and Loch Street connection to Union Street was severed in c.1990-1995 with the development of the Bon Accord Centre which dramatically impacted upon people's ability to access Union Street directly.

George Street Today

The neighbourhood today continues as a mixed use, urban high street. The granite tenement buildings remain with local retail shops at the ground floor, complemented by flatted residential dwellings on the upper floors.

George Street continues to play an important role within the wider city centre in terms of residential accommodation. The neighbourhood offers people the opportunity to access more affordable and attainable residential accommodation within a city centre setting.

The retail offer across the neighbourhood is focused along George Street and has historically been split into two. To the south along George Street the Bon Accord Centre and former John Lewis has attracted larger retailers such as Blacks, Magnet Kitchens and Greggs. To the north of George Street, the majority of retail units comprise of a variety of local, independent health and beauty shops, takeaways and repair shops, creating a vitality to the area and which drive most of the day time activity in the area.

North East Scotland College (NESCOL) within the neighbourhood and Robert Gordon's College to the south west are important local institutions that interact with George Street.

With that said, there are a number of challenges that the George Street area faces that may impact the future prosperity of the neighbourhood unless addressed. These include:

- Norco House remains vacant but in a prime location within the neighbourhood
- Broadford Works remains undeveloped and could be a catalyst for further development within the area
- High Streets are struggling across the UK and George Street is no different, where appropriate, financial support and investment would be welcome

- The George Street neighbourhood needs to strengthen its pull to visitors promote the creation of destination points
- The area is dominated by vehicles and in the midst of the Climate Crisis, the area should consider more sustainable modes of transport and active travel routes.

It is hoped that the George Street Masterplan will provide solutions to these challenges and revitalise the wider neighbourhood.

The collection of images below give a sense of the variety, history and present day character of the neighbourhood, both along George Street and across the area's historic streets.

The collage of site photos convey the variety of environments across the Masterplan area



Extent of George Street Masterplan

The area identified for the Masterplan is outlined opposite in red. The George Street neighbourhood is located towards the northern boundary of the City Centre & Beach Masterplan area. George Street itself runs North to South, forming a once historic key route between the city centre core and areas to the North of the city.

The area is defined to the south by the Bon Accord Centre, which severs the historic connection to the City Centre. It is bounded to the south west by Robert Gordon College, to the east and northeast by Gallowgate and North East Scotland College (NESCOL), and to the north by Spring Garden.

The focus of the Masterplan is primarily within the study area, however, in order for wider benefits to be leveraged from investment within the George Street area, the Masterplan must acknowledge and respond to opportunities beyond its boundaries, understanding the influence of planned investment / development.

With a thriving business economy, Aberdeen is in a prime location spatially and economically for future development. Further information on the strategic context can be found within the Aberdeen City Centre and Beach Masterplans.



Figure 1 - George Street in Context

Collaboration

The Masterplan has been developed alongside engagement with statutory stakeholders, community stakeholders and any interested party. Each of the key observations have been recorded, reviewed and integrated as the Masterplan has been developed.

The following have influenced the direction of the Masterplan. Other events and specific engagement has been carried out to support the Masterplan, which are summarised in the Engagement Document:

- Public consultation held in February 2022
- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental report April and August 2023
- Public consultation held in March and April 2023

The following pages provides a brief summary of the key findings of each of the above engagement processes.

SEA Environmental Report

Under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 a SEA was considered to be required for George Street, which was carried out alongside the initial drafting of the George Street Masterplan.

The SEA process seeks to ensure that the Masterplan, once delivered, contributes positively to a high level of environmental protection across the study area and ensure that any potential significant effects are identified and alternatives explored and evaluated, where necessary, before the Masterplan is adopted.

The SEA process began in October 2022 and since then has been undertaken in parallel with the development of the draft George Street Masterplan with interaction between the SEA team and the George Street Masterplan team.

The SEA identifies 9 topics which the draft Masterplan was evaluated against. The key findings and recommendations from the SEA are set out below as a summary, with the full SEA Environmental Report appended to the Masterplan.

- 1. Biodiversity (Flora & Fauna)** - positive effects on Flora & Fauna as biodiversity is considered and promoted through several Masterplan projects. Some potential impact and options associated with future demolition of Norco House
- 2. Population & Health** - positive effects on population and health due to improved access to facilities and infrastructure. Managed vehicular traffic, sustainable transport improvements and active travel promotion combine to promote healthier lifestyles.
- 3. Water** - mixed effects on water resources. Provision of SUDS promotes biodiversity net gain. The area experiences some localised flooding associated with combined sewers. A Flood and Drainage Impact Assessment will be required prior to development.

- 4. Soil** - proposed use of SUDS and public realm improvements can help to filter out any potential historic contaminants associated with previous uses on the site.
- 5. Air** - positive effects on air quality within the Masterplan area. Design principles promote active travel and reducing vehicular travel through the Masterplan area. The Masterplan area sits to the north of the City Centre Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and Low Emissions Zone (LEZ), and the promotion of sustainable travel aims to assist meeting City Centre air quality targets and LEZ objectives.
- 6. Climatic Factors** - positive due to pathways and actions towards Net Zero and climate resilient assets.
- 7. Cultural Heritage** - positive effects on cultural heritage. The redevelopment of Norco House (two options explored) has a mixed effect. Historic assets will be protected and enhanced, improving people's awareness and appreciation of the area's historic culture
- 8. Landscape / Streetscape** - the overall impacts on streetscape are important, principally focused around the redevelopment of Norco House and the potential impact of redevelopment on the site. The provision of new public spaces and landscape features associated with the Norco House options which bring benefits. The use of rain gardens, SUDS, green walls and bioretention verges will have a positive landscape impact.
- 9. Material assets** - the overall impact is mixed as no specific proposals were cited in the draft Masterplan. Development scenarios may involve demolition which increases waste, however proposed re-use of land / buildings has positive effects.

The George Street Masterplan has the potential to provide significant overall positive effects. The Norco House development scenarios could also be considered positive from an SEA perspective given their potential to be high quality solutions. Where there are mixed effects there are opportunities which could be positive if the process to development and intervention are comprehensively undertaken.

The increasing climate change and biodiversity crisis has influenced the Masterplan and it actively seeks to respond to the current challenges. A combination of enhancement and mitigation measures will be incorporated into the Environmental Report. Further detail would include tree planting, mini-habitats, street greening, edible and sensory plants to enhance long-term biodiversity in the area.

In accordance with the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, Section 16 Consultation Procedures, a Notice advertising that the Draft Environmental Report, and associated non-technical summary, was placed in the Aberdeen Evening Express newspaper on Wednesday 8th August.

The Notice advised that for a period of four weeks, between 9th August and 10th September 2023 the documents would be hosted online using the Aberdeen City Council CitizenSpace webpage and interested party opinion was sought on the content of the Draft Environmental Report. The Environmental Report illustrates what are considered to be 'significant' environmental impacts to the environment of the masterplan area, or the mitigation measures considered necessary, should the recommended projects be implemented. The consultation did not generate any responses.

Sustainability Assessment

Sustainability is a broad and all encompassing concept but when successfully incorporated as part of any project, regardless of scale and context, it will harness and secure the future success of that project. One approach to understanding its application and relevance to George Street can broadly consist of the following five capitals (established by Forum for the Future), which include:

- **Manufactured Capital - provision of goods and services to meet human needs;**
- **Natural Capital - use of renewable materials / energy, ecological diversity, environmental capacity;**
- **Financial Capital - generating income and financially sustainable;**
- **Social Capital - community diversity, community governance and inclusivity and engagement; and**
- **Human Capital - improved quality of life, well-being, knowledge and skills as well as protecting minority interests.**

The social, economic and environmental sustainability of George Street is paramount to the Masterplan and the Transformational Projects identified help to deliver its Vision and place objectives.

The Masterplan sets out a Vision which aims to promote local enterprise, encourage social mobility and respond to the climate change crisis through environmental improvements. The balance and delivery of these will have various positive impacts for the neighbourhood as a whole.

The Masterplan sets out a best practicable sustainable solution (which is subject to further detail design testing) to meeting the objectives set out within the strategy. This would be evaluated through a Sustainability Assessment.

The Sustainability Assessment would help to define what success for George Street looks like and to ensure opportunities are being harnessed. It would apply a process which is designed to measure the impact of social, environmental and economic interventions and where the balance or emphasis across each should lie to deliver the most impactful and long term positive change for the neighbourhood.

The assessment would also recognise that any specific project has a mixture of advantages and disadvantages. As a result, the most favourable option is that which provides the most overall benefit with the fewest down sides. Understanding what is the most favourable option will be assessed against a set of agreed and weighted criteria.

Inclusive Design

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, which provides the legal framework protecting people with disabilities from discrimination, Aberdeen City Council requires an inclusive approach in the development of masterplans and in project delivery. It is important that the internal and external environments meet the highest levels of accessible and inclusive design, and the Masterplan starts with the simple premise that **inclusion**, rather than just **accessibility**, is embedded in the design process from the outset.

Impactful inclusive design is about people, it is about considering a range of abilities, age groups and community background. It reflects the different faiths, disabilities & hidden conditions, genders and addresses important issues that affect a neurodiverse population. People should be able to make effective, independent choices about how they use George Street without experiencing undue effort or separation and be able to participate equally in the activities the area offers. **True inclusive design benefits all of us**, it aims to remove barriers from the environment that impact not only people with protected characteristics, but others such as families with children, people carrying heavy baggage, pregnant women, people with temporary injuries and older people.

No matter how physically accessible a space is, without clear and robust management and operational policy mechanisms, the accessibility of the buildings and spaces will be compromised and over time, and diminish. Therefore, sufficiently robust provision, criterion and practices must be established by the building management and end user operators, this will include the development of Active Management Plans.

An inclusive design approach:

- **puts people at the heart of the design process**
- **acknowledges human diversity and difference**
- **offers dignity, autonomy, choice and spontaneity**
- **provides for flexibility in use**
- **provides buildings and environments convenient, safe and enjoyable for everyone to use**
- **goes beyond just meeting minimum standards or legislative requirements, and;**
- **recognises everyone benefits from improved accessibility.**

What George Street Wants

Public consultation February 2022

In February 2022 Aberdeen City Council undertook an initial online consultation to understand local stakeholder and communities views and aspirations for the George Street area.

The following provides a brief summary of that feedback which has directly informed the need for the Masterplan and the potential projects within it.

Key messages

- Majority of 293 responses received were from people who did not live in the neighbourhood; however most of those who did comment did travel into or through the area. This means comments were based on first hand experiences of the place although not based on experiences as a resident
- Most travelled into the area for retail and leisure
- 447 comments mentioned the area's strengths with location being its greatest strength followed by its accessibility and diversity
- However around 700 comments highlighted the areas weaknesses, with poor maintenance being the most commented followed by poor condition of public realm and poor accessibility
- Similarly, over 700 comments suggested aspirations for change focused namely on economic growth, improving the public realm and improved maintenance
- Focusing on public realm improvements in particular, there was strong support for interventions such as:
 - Better cycling facilities
 - More green spaces
 - More generous pedestrian spaces
 - Introducing more colour to the streetscape
 - Creating a more welcoming street ambience
 - Updating the streetscape
 - Improve the cleanliness of the area
 - Clean and maintain building façades and;
 - Better manage traffic movement through the area.

"...I think because some of the shops leading from Union Square to George Street are closed it doesn't flow well, therefore you either don't go or feel it's a separate trip..."

"A way of making the shop signs and displays have a more heritage feel to it would be good. A limit to the size of signage might also help..."

"It seems a bit isolated. The Bon Accord Centre blocks the free flow of people to explore George Street. It almost as if the Bon Accord Centre is a final destination when coming from the south side with not much beyond it."

"I'd like to see the streets cleaner and a better quality of shops on George street."

Consultation Feedback Quotes

"More recreational space, and green areas. It needs to be a more diverse area, so not just about retail."

"I think it would be an excellent street to encourage smaller independent shops to open rather than all the 'chain' shops. It could be made into a friendly welcoming street if some of the shop frontages were refurbished. At the moment it feels a bit run down which is a shame... There could be quite a variety of goods sold there as well as a baker and a grocer. All independent..."

"Increase connectivity from adjoining streets for the students and pedestrians walking towards the college, Schoolhill and Union Street."

"I look forward to seeing a positive change in the area that further develops the community feeling and diversity that is already there."

SWOT Analysis

The following SWOT is a combination of influences from feedback from the consultation exercises and conclusions from spatial analysis. The SWOT analysis has helped shape the Masterplan detailed in the following sections.



Strengths

1. Its location on the northern fringe of the City Centre, within a short walking distance of local amenities, the retail core and Marschial College
2. The NuArt festival includes Jopp's Lane and other areas of George Street, displaying an annual programme of murals, helping draw people into the area and add colour and vibrancy to the streetscape
3. Along with its listed buildings, there are buildings of character and interest that add a strong identity and townscape character to George Street
4. Strong links via bus to the immediate city centre as well as north to existing residential communities along George Street
5. Range of independent shops and businesses which play an important role in providing tertiary services for locals as well as the wider city. Includes some higher end and well regarded businesses including Finnies the family jewellers
6. A significant residential community who call George Street home who can support local services and amenities
7. Two of the city's major educational institutions in NESCOL and Robert Gordon's College, who between them attract a significant number of users to the area, and recognise the role of children and young people
8. Strong sense of local community and entrepreneurial, self starter spirit. Several successful organisations in and around the area including the George Street Community Council and Greater George Street Traders Association



Weaknesses

1. Loch Street is wide and dominated by vehicles, creating separation between both Colleges and the core of George Street
2. Quality of the built form adjacent to NESCOL, industrial low storey units, is of a lower quality than the intact historic core and creates a visual disjoint
3. Arrival points to George Street area are poorly defined in some locations, namely on approach from Maberley Street, John Street, Spring Garden and Harriet Street. The experience along many of these connections for pedestrians is poor
4. The northern elevation of the Bon Accord Centre is a dominant, imposing and dead frontage. It reads as the rear of the building and parts are dominated by servicing areas
5. Harriet Street and Crooked Lane has poor quality urban form. Inactive façades, surface car parking and run down / vacant units to the rear create a poor quality experience and encourages anti-social behaviour
6. Limited wayfinding across the area and George Street is hidden from the rest of the city to the south (by the Bon Accord Centre) and from the west (by dominant highways infrastructure)
7. Quite a lot of street clutter and untidiness which weakens the aesthetic and townscape quality of the place; limited bin storage, over grown planting, seagull and dog fouling
8. Little to no basic necessities available such as accessible public toilets, information stands, water fountains or shading etc
9. Poor quality and distressed public realm materials and street furniture throughout the Masterplan area
10. Area has limited activity in the evenings and therefore can feel unsafe and uninviting. NESCOL evening classes are the exception which are offered throughout term time



Opportunities

1. Form better defined routes in and out of the neighbourhood to avoid relying on pedestrian access via the Bon Accord Centre and Harriet Street
2. Reduce the impact of private car through journeys and create more space for pedestrians, cyclists and other modes of transport and active travel
3. Develop a cohesive approach to character of the public realm - through shop frontage, wayfinding and street materiality
4. Re-activate areas of low activity both short and longer term to address issues of vacancy early
5. Improved environmental maintenance and facilities across the area to tackle issues that impact on the day to day experiences of residents and businesses
6. Norco House invites opinion and interest, a recognisable piece of Aberdeen's social history which could be brought back to life as part of a mixed use development
7. Better promotion of George Street businesses
8. Creation of more dwell spaces across the neighbourhood
9. Introduce more urban greening to what is a hard environment through new projects
10. Further encourage start ups and independent retailers and businesses into the area and support those already there
11. Explore opportunities to encourage more residential accommodation into the area by offering a new form of residential offer
12. Engaging with young people through the Masterplan development process
13. Diversify the anchor of the neighbourhood, away from traditional retail to more mixed use, experiential and potentially cultural based offers
14. Develop stronger programme links to surrounding, well established institutions



Threats

1. The George Street area remains visually hidden from the main pedestrian thoroughfares and areas of public realm investment planned across the wider City Centre and Beach Masterplan. Risk of the area becoming further detached (physically and psychologically) from the rest of the City if public realm is not addressed at the edges of the Masterplan area
2. The Bon Accord Centre and Norco House have recently changed ownership and the area could be at risk of further decline if no action is taken or the market fails to engage
3. Threat of demolition of Norco House if a suitable use isn't found and loss of embedded carbon
4. Threat of other areas in the city centre having a stronger and more inclusive presence than George Street and taking opportunity away
5. Threat of online and out of town shopping having a stronger appeal to some of the larger brand stores within the neighbourhood
6. Older and ageing populations being isolated due to poor service provision and public realm quality
7. Aging buildings can require more maintenance and may fall into disrepair if vacant for long periods of time
8. If the public realm falls into further disrepair, anti social behaviour will be encouraged in these areas and lower daily footfall

Public Consultation April 2023

A draft version of the Masterplan was presented to the Council in December 2022 with a decision to undertake a 6-week public consultation in 2023.

This period of public consultation, which ran alongside ongoing stakeholder engagement, focused on the Draft Masterplan Vision, Strategy and proposed projects.

- 102 responses in total with broad support for the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis, Vision, projects, movement and regeneration areas
- Responses ranges from 50% to 80% support for the variety of proposals identified in the Masterplan

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The table summarises the main feedback points from the Consultation under each of the questions asked.

This consultation was undertaken alongside wider engagement with stakeholders representatives and groups. More detail on the full consultation and their responses can be found in **Consultation Report**.

	Questions / Themes					
	Do you agree with the Vision	Do you agree with SWOT findings	Do you support making streets more attractive and creating greener spaces	Do you support changes to vehicular movement to improve place quality?	Do you agree with the list of projects and are any missing?	Is Norco House an important site for new uses?
% in agreement	65%	61%	65%	65%	50% plus (24% somewhat agree)	80%
Positive messages	- Pedestrianisation could really work - supporting accessibility and inclusivity - will bring people into the place - support cafés and outdoor seating	- Potential to create area for street food or socialising - possibility of becoming a true hidden gem by restricting traffic - spaces and activities that bring people together - Create new green space through demolition of Norco House - Giving more space to pedestrians and cyclists whilst removing spaces for parked cars	-Support community grow spaces - Support tree planting but needs to be done properly - Support cafe culture and increased lighting - Segregation of users is important - Existing businesses, schools and colleges need to be able to operate	-safety for all users important - existing businesses, schools and colleges need to be able to operate effectively - maintaining access for accessible parking	-creating sense of identity important to create reason to come - good to see outside seating and eating - more leisure uses and reducing crime may improve evening economy -more colourful play areas for children and activities e.g indoor golf - making more of existing heritage - considering younger generations and having independent businesses that meet their needs	-Preference for Norco House to be retained and re-purposed - ideas include Cultural & Community Mixed Use Hub Exhibition / Arcade Space Food Court Community maker space / pop up studios Multi-functional centre for cinema, museum, galleries, bars and food halls - an indoor Camden Market style location -creating a youth offer
% who disagree	20%	16%	21%	21%	3%	11%
Issues or concerns	- Vision is unclear - budget and funding concerns - Crime cannot be solved by street lighting alone - focus on young people - restricting access will make the area less inclusive	- too much focus on pedestrians - limit parking or create congestion will push people away - poor accessible facilities - no planning for student life -no green spaces for dog owners	- maintenance concerns - anti-social behaviour in new spaces -more consideration for elderly and disabled - budget concerns - concerns around traffic layout amends resulting in congestion elsewhere	- concern over proposed traffic layout - pushing congestion elsewhere - improve road links first then pedestrian routes	- lighting alone will not solve crime - more focus needed on car access and parking or people will not visit - maintenance budget - delivery budget. Start with easy improvements / quick wins	- Concerns of residential use -Concerns over oversupply of space in Norco House when there are already vacant shops -Ongoing maintenance of the building

Table 1 - Summary of April 2023 public consultation responses

Potential Projects Suggested Through Consultation Responses

Both the public consultation exercises in February 2022 and April 2023 have identified a number of potential projects that the people of George Street would like to see within the Masterplan area.

These were analysed and evaluated to help inform the development of the Masterplan. Those interventions identified by the public and stakeholders that could potentially be identified under the remit of the Masterplan (both by public and private sector) are set out below;

Potential place projects

- **Enhance and modernise the streetscape** - this could include enhancements to the public realm, de-cluttering and provide improved pavements, places to dwell and spaces to host street events
- **Addressing vacant properties** - helping to reactivate the area and reduce perceptions of decline / dereliction
- **Introduce space / facilities to help support temporary and meanwhile uses** - helping to bring more activity and animation to the area. This type of intervention could include pop up events, temporary road closures, temporary seating, planting features, signage and wayfinding. The space created would also allow businesses to expand out into the street to host events
- **Improving the pedestrian experience** - this could include enhanced materials, low level lighting, wayfinding, pedestrian prioritisation measures, better managed and potentially reduced street parking as well as planned cycle lanes and safe cycle storage to encourage more cyclists into the area
- **Improve safety and lower crime rates in the area** - such as more CCTV, better street lighting and greater levels of activity (through different uses and types of spaces) to improve the sense of safety both during day and evening
- **Introduce more public space & public facilities through demolition** - a more radical suggestion raised was to demolish both the Bon Accord Centre and Norco House and to replace with public facilities, public space, green space
- **Norco House** - retaining the current building and converting it to a mixed use leisure and cultural destination for the area and wider city. Elements of community uses could be included as well

Potential people and economy projects

- **Creation of a brand identity** - to promote and recognise the area and promote visits to George Street. A place and online based campaign that promotes the Masterplan area to a wider audience
- **Expanding events** - working with the council, local community groups and stakeholders to expand the city centre events programme to include the George Street area
- **Help to facilitate local communities** - feedback suggests the existing community is strong and well connected, however a coordination group could be set up to help local residents focus energy and effort
- **Ongoing inclusion and collaboration** - particularly with local residents and stakeholders throughout the design and decision making process
- **Attracting start-ups** - creating the right environment to encourage local entrepreneurs to set up in the area

Precedent image: Playful interventions on a quiet street and a dead frontage bring animation to the street



Credit: Smith and Lewarne

2. George Street - The Place

2. George Street - The Place

Understanding the characteristics of a place is part of the process in developing the Masterplan. This understanding of 'place' and its features allows opportunities for change and enhancement to be explored.

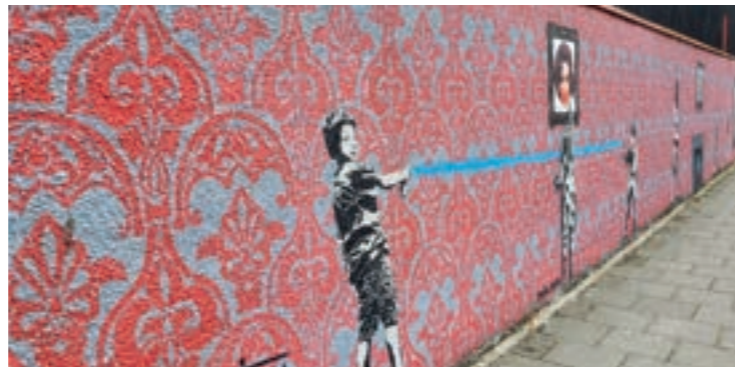
The most pertinent influences affecting the Masterplan area are:

- 1. Areas of influence** - understanding the surrounding areas where people work, live or visit in large numbers who interact with and which could bring footfall to the neighbourhood;
- 2. Activity and vibrancy** - understanding where areas are busy and active and where others suffer from inactivity, and consequently issues around anti-social behaviour and decline;
- 3. Local character** - a review of the local buildings, materials and features to understand which areas are most characterful;
- 4. Land uses** - a review of existing land-uses within the neighbourhood and understanding the mix and location of uses;
- 5. Legibility** - understanding how easy an area is to get to and navigate around;
- 6. Access and movement** - understanding the movement and flow of pedestrians, cyclists, buses and cars across the area;
- 7. Public realm quality** - a review of the quality of the public realm and its capacity to support change
- 8. Existing green spaces** - understanding what provision of public space exists in and around the area and how easy it is to get to them
- 9. Typical street sections** - a review of the existing physical features of each of the streets within the Masterplan area.

Additional place analysis that has informed the Masterplan can be found in **Appendix 2 and 3.**



An area of influence - Marischal College & Square



Vibrancy - NuArt Festival street art adding colour to otherwise blank walls



Distinct local character - variety of architecture and materials creating a character to George Street



Public realm quality - varying quality and materials along a key pedestrianised part of George Street

1 Areas Of Influence

George Street sits to the northern fringes of a dynamic part of Aberdeen City Centre.

To the south lies a number of leisure, retail and cultural destinations and established city quarters. It sits next to the retail core of the City and is a short distance to Union Street and the recently refurbished Union Terrace Gardens. The cultural and leisure areas of Belmont Quarter, Merchants Quarter and Ship Row are within a short walk and some of which are undergoing phased regeneration programmes.

Immediately adjacent to the study area are a number of significant civic and education institutions which form important destinations within the city, generating large numbers of footfall and which could further influence the future role of the Masterplan.

Importantly, the study area is also surrounded by existing residential neighbourhoods to the north, with several existing residential communities located northwards, along and near to the George Street corridor towards Kittybrewster.

The future role of the George Street study area must look to respond to these surrounding influences and to help support emerging regeneration priorities whilst supporting those existing residential, civic and educational communities that currently exist.

There are 7 immediate areas of influence which will directly influence and shape the future character, identity and role of George Street. These are:

Broadford Works - a proposed new residential and mixed use community to the north of the study area (estimated around 890 new homes). When delivered, Broadford Works will influence George Street with its future residents making use of its local amenities and pedestrian/ cycle through journeys to the City Centre.

North East Scotland College (NESCOL) - a significant stakeholder within the Masterplan boundary. It is home to a student population studying and living within the area. The Masterplan should look to support the needs of the students and visitors to the College and ensure it facilitates improved connections and access to the College. Students will also likely pass through the study area to access outdoor, retail and leisure destinations to the south and therefore the role of streets, activity and spaces will be important.

Robert Gordon's College & Art Gallery - one of Aberdeen's most prestigious education institutions and the Art Gallery being an important cultural asset. Both have an indirect physical connection through to George Street which could be improved. The large number of daily visitors presents an opportunity for George Street to improve links and attract more visits and trips into the area by foot and bike.

Both NESCOL and Robert Gordon's College have the potential to see a significant amount of students, staff and parents use their facilities both in the daytime and evening. The Masterplan should seek to support the functions of the college as well as capturing the potential benefits of such a significant number of people attending both institutions.

Marischal College - an important civic and cultural destination within the city, located immediately east of the study area. It presents a significant influence both physically (townscape quality and distinctiveness) as well as creating potential footfall, as the location of Aberdeen City Council and other Public Sector bodies. Improved legibility and links into George Street to this area should be explored.

George Street - the historic corridor characterised by traditional granite buildings and active ground floor uses is itself a key influence on the rest of the study area. The main onward connection to Union Street is via a private connection through the Bon Accord Centre. The extent of influence of George Street is currently contained to its corridor but in the future it could expand activity both within the neighbourhood and towards the City Centre.

Bon Accord Centre - a significant influence and is one of the primary shopping destinations within the city centre. The Bon Accord Centre is located along the historic alignment of George Street, stopping up the direct connection to Union Street and now forms a private connection through to Upperkirkgate. The relationship of the building with George Street in terms of impact on pedestrian movement, activity and visual impact have potential to improve the overall experience of the neighbourhood.

Norco House - Northern Co-operative Society's Norco House (most recently occupied by John Lewis) was built in 1966-70 for the (now-defunct) Northern Co-operative Society. The building is an example of brutalist, modernist architecture and intended to be a showpiece within the city's architectural make-up. During the Covid-19 pandemic it operated as a temporary NHS vaccination centre. The building is a distinctive local landmark and has significant potential both as a retained building and redevelopment site to transform the southern end of George Street.

-  George Street Masterplan boundary
 -  Infrastructure restricting east-west pedestrian movement
 -  Local destinations driving footfall
 -  Union Street Terrace Gardens
- Key Areas of Influence:**
-  **Broadford Works** - a proposed residential-led mixed use site within walking distance to George Street & Upperkirkgate (via Bon Accord Centre)
 -  **North East Scotland College (NESCOL)** - significant student population within the Masterplan
 -  **Robert Gordon's College** - educational institution with potential to better connect to George Street
 -  **Marischal College** - important civic location with potential to encourage more visits to George Street
 -  **George Street** - the spine of the neighbourhood that influences the scale and level of vibrancy and activity across the Masterplan
 -  **Bon Accord Centre** - a significant influence on the -masterplan with regard to visual, experience and movement into and out of the Masterplan area.
 -  **Norco House** - distinctive, brutalist building which has potential to be a key destination point within George Street through re-purposing or redevelopment.

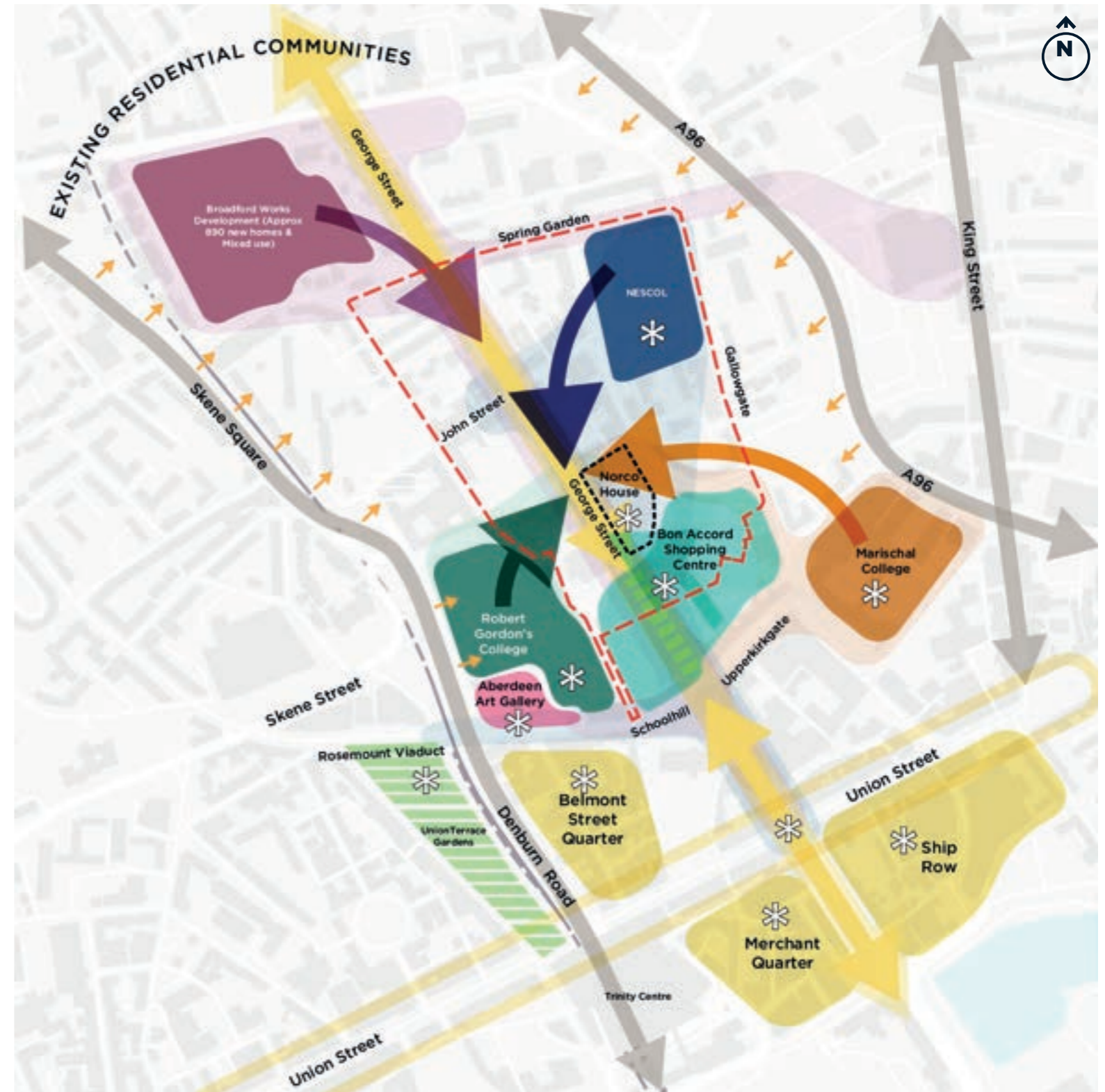


Figure 2 - Areas of Influence within and surrounding George Street

2 Activity And Vibrancy

Activity and vibrancy are important features of a safe and welcoming urban environment. The levels of activity along streets can help promote passive surveillance, which in turn can help make places feel safer and more inviting, encouraging more people to visit and dwell. The level of activity and vibrancy will also depend upon the types of uses and their design relationship with the street. Some intentionally promote activity, whilst others create dead frontages which can cause a lack of passive surveillance and sense of safety.

The plan adjacent illustrates areas where frontages with high and low activity are located. It illustrates where certain areas experience greater levels of activity / or have higher levels of 'eyes on street' making them feel safer and more inviting. Conversely it also highlights areas where buildings have few / no window or door openings creating unanimated and dead frontages.

George Street and the immediate junctions with John Street and St. Andrew Street are where the greatest amount of ground floor activity is focused, facilitating the highest concentration of street activity and a sense of passive surveillance.

Craigie Street and Charlotte Street experience some degree of passive surveillance given their residential character. Front doors and property windows overlook the street and create some degree of passive surveillance.

In contrast, streets such as Spring Garden, Loch Street and the southern end of Charlotte Street have lesser amount of active frontages and building windows / doors at street level. This creates a noticeable reduction in building activity and sense of 'coming & going'. Buildings being predominantly residential, built as enclosed, inward facing apartment blocks, with only a few communal entrances.

Towards the south of George Street, particularly along Loch Street, Harriet Street and around Norco House, building frontage activity and passive surveillance is extremely low or absent due to vacant properties and dead frontages.

What this means:

- Streets with low or no active frontages negatively impact upon perceptions of 'place', often making them feel unsafe and unwelcoming. This discourages visitors or encourages people to use alternative routes through;
- Future proposals should respond to the levels of activity along each street. For example providing more space for activity along George Street to maintain and increase activity.
- Future interventions should also address areas of low activity by introducing improvements to further increase levels of activity to reduce anti-social behaviour and poor legibility.



Active ground floor uses creates 'eyes on street'



Dead frontages and no passive surveillance

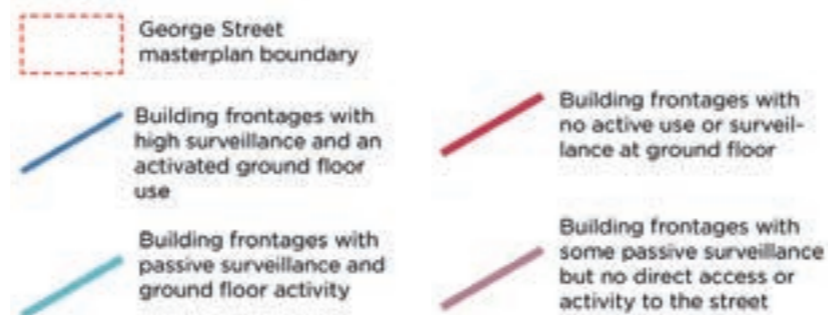







Figure 3 - Areas with high and low levels of street passive surveillance

3 Local Character

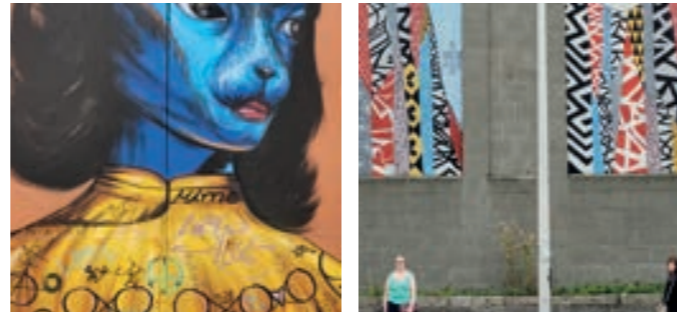
The Masterplan area has a varied mix of built form character which combine to create an overall impression of place and identity. The plan adjacent broadly identifies five broad areas that can be grouped or characterised based upon their built form characteristics.

-  Victorian or older grey granite buildings with distinct facade and roofing detail and expressions that create a pleasant and attractive townscape;
-  Areas with predominantly grey granite / rendered façades and which have a lesser degree of architectural detailing and character
-  Brutalist / geometric larger massing forms
-  Former industrial sites add character through their intact chimneys and built form scale
-  Buildings with a lack of facade detail or expression creating poor quality edges to the street

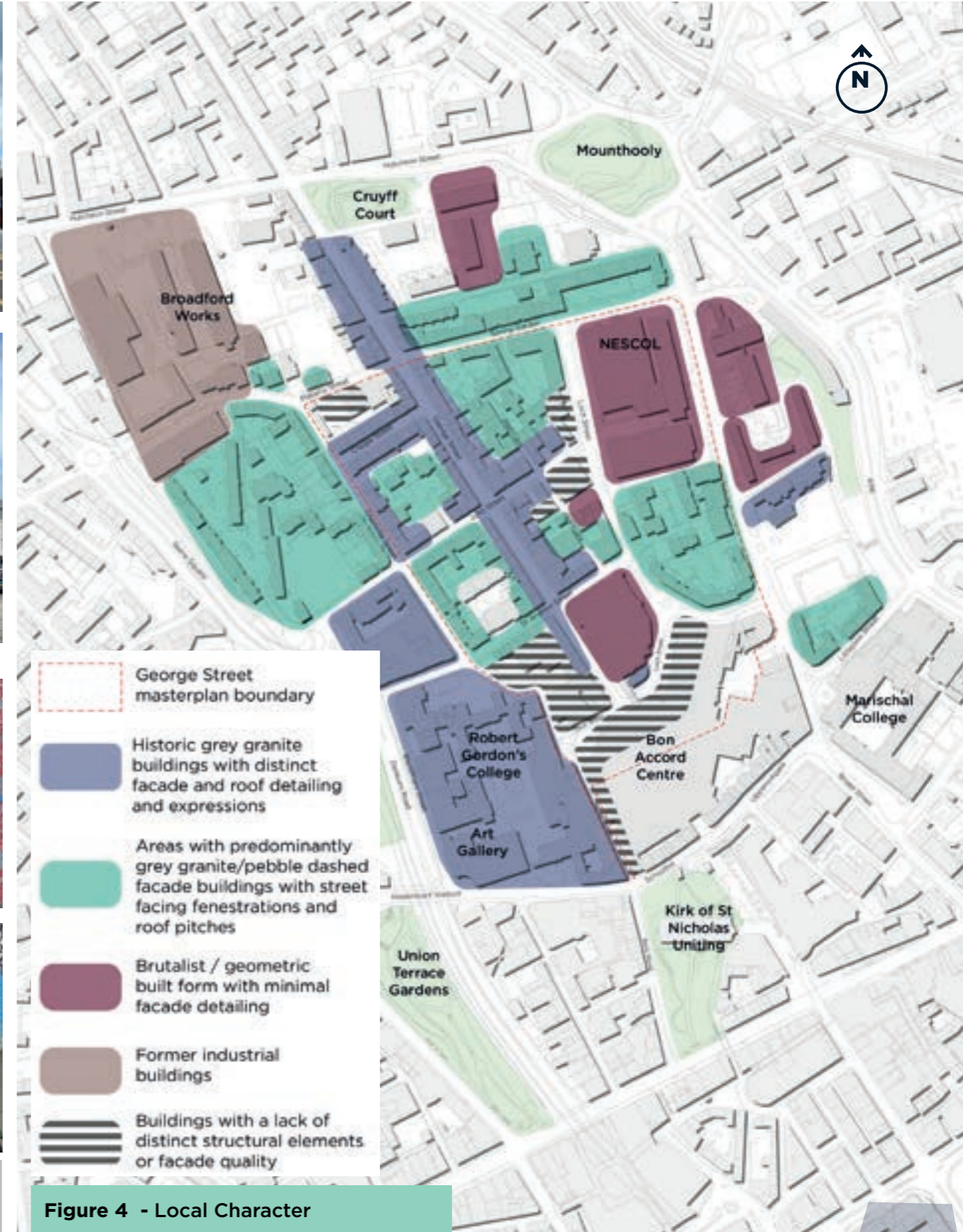
In addition to the built form of the area, there are also pockets of colour and vibrancy such as spray painted wall murals as part of the NuArt festival. These bring colour and interest that contrasts to the granite grey consistency of the area.



Variety of positive and negative character of George Street



Burst of colour as part of NuArt mural festival adds contrast to the Masterplan area and could be further expanded.



What this means:

- George Street's character should be reinforced through public realm improvements
- Improvements to areas with intact historic features should look to enhance and celebrate
- Areas of weak character should be focused on using a variety of interventions to reduce their negative impact.
- Street art successfully animates & adds colour contrast in areas with poorer quality townscape which should be further encouraged.

4 Land Uses

George Street within the Masterplan area is predominately a mixed-use urban high street. It is comprised of primarily granite tenement buildings with small local retail shops at ground floor, complemented by residential units on the upper floors.

This retail offer is dominated by a variety of independent health and beauty shops, hairdressers, takeaways, cafes and repair shops, creating a vitality to the area.

Despite its bustling communities, there are a number of vacant units to the south of the George Street corridor. There are also vacant units along George Street and within the Bon Accord Centre, however, some of the vacant units are being used for interim uses and/or being brought to market, presenting an evolving context of change.

At the time of writing, the Norco House site which had been predominantly vacant since the closure of John Lewis, has been purchased by the new owners of the Bon Accord Centre.

Residential

George Street plays an important role within the wider city centre, offering people the opportunity to access more affordable residential accommodation within the city centre. It provides a sustainable and well connected urban neighbourhood to allow those who choose to live there access to Aberdeen's city centre amenities.

The area has struggled in recent years to secure new residential growth, partly linked to lack of development sites within the Masterplan area, however there are residential development sites identified immediately beyond which could increase the choice of residential accommodation around George Street.

Retail

The retail market on George Street has historically been split in two, with more national retail sitting south of St. Andrew Street, and local business sitting to the north. The presence of the former John Lewis adjacent to the Bon Accord Centre attracted national retailers such as Santander, Blacks, Magnet Kitchens and Greggs occupying larger units at the south end of the street. These created and benefited from increased footfall brought by the department store.

George Street also has a well regarded local business in Finnies, the Jewellers, which attracts city centre visitors and those further afield along George Street.

However, lower George Street's retail market dynamic has been impacted by the closure of John Lewis. The Bon Accord Centre also has a current planning application for expansion however at the time of writing the Bon Accord Centre has recently changed ownership.

In contrast, the retail market to the north of George Street comprises smaller, local and independent retail units offering lower value everyday items to the market, serving the people that live there. These include local takeaways, beauticians and cafés.

Education

The presence of NESCOL within the study area and Robert Gordon's College to the south west are important local institutions that interact with the Masterplan area. Their student populations frequently travel to their respective colleges and this presents an opportunity to capture daily trips. Both college's curriculum will drive and influence the future uses within George Street and the Masterplan should look to ensure the ability to support and respond.

Existing and Emerging Business

Across the George Street neighbourhood, there are several organisations such as George Street Community Council and the Greater George Street Traders Association, that are operating in the area with each having their own distinctive role. However, it is apparent through local studies that each lacks a knowledge of what the other is doing and how they could support each-other. There lies the possibility to create a Community Network where groups, organisations and individuals would be asked to share ideas and take forward some actions that had come from the event and further consultations that exist for the area.

What this means:

- Improvements to the public realm and streetscape could help local businesses to expand and promote themselves
- Identify and tackle voids or vacant units to reduce the impact on negative perceptions of the place
- Proposals should help education institutions better physically connect with the area as well as consider localised projects to address issues around anti-social behaviour and improving the experience to stay for longer.
- A coordinated approach by businesses and residents in the area will help create an identity for George Street that can be promoted online and on the ground.



Mix of vacant and trading ground floor uses creates disjointed levels of activity



Existing signage on George Street

5 Legibility

The historic grid layout in the heart of George Street is intact, with many of its streets exhibiting a number of features and characteristics which provide design cues and influences for people as they move through. However, the edges of the study area are impacted and interrupted by larger, vehicle dominated roads and infrastructure. Some of these features help to give a sense of place and character;

- The historic grid helps orientation north - south along George Street as well as east-west
- Long range views and vistas along grid of streets within the study area towards larger imposing buildings / structures beyond help legibility within the study area
- Legibility breaks down further east towards A96 and along Loch Street and Harriet Street
- A number of attractive & prominent architectural features on street corners help reinforce local points of activity / focus
- Larger vehicle dominated points of arrival e.g Mounthooly roundabout create compromised pedestrian desire lines in and out of the Masterplan area, and
- Internal courtyards of residential courts prevent pedestrian permeability and through movement.



Architectural features create interesting long range views whilst the wayfinding experience at street level is often mixed

What this means:

- The approaches to the George Street area Masterplan for pedestrians are vehicle dominated and unclear
- This means clear and well co-ordinated signage, wayfinding and altering the current street layout may be required to help people to easily understand where to go and to ensure that they can do so comfortably.

- ↗ Views towards areas of interest / building features of interest
- Buildings with features of interest
- Places that have a clear sense of centre
- ↖ Long range views north of George Street
- ▬ Entrance streets to George Street with poor legibility, wayfinding and vehicle dominance



Figure 5 - Legibility

6 Access and Movement

City Centre Movement

Aberdeen City Centre is accessible using a variety of modes and routes. The rail station provides access for local towns to the northwest and south of the city, for commuter and retail purposes, as well as more strategic access to Dyce Airport and longer-distance trips to Inverness, Edinburgh and beyond. The city centre is well served by a network of bus routes, providing radial access to and from adjacent towns and residential areas, as well as key land-uses including Robert Gordon and Aberdeen Universities, hospitals including Aberdeen Royal Infirmary and Aberdeen Harbours.

George Street

The George Street Masterplan area is a walkable neighbourhood with a number of pedestrian routes linking to surrounding neighbourhoods and city centre. It is also well connected by bus to the wider city centre.

George Street is a multi-functional street with pedestrianised access to the Bon Accord Centre to the south and all vehicle movements in each direction to the north of St. Andrew Street. It serves local bus routes, has pedestrian activity on both sides and also contains some advisory cycle priority measures along its length. In addition, the combination of on-street resident permit and short-stay pay and display parking serving the mixed residential and commercial frontages along George Street ensure that the competition for the available streetspace is significant.

Pedestrian And Cycle Accessibility

The cycle network is limited to the designated National Cycle Network Route 1 which runs along Gallowgate, on the edge of the Masterplan area connecting Loch Street to Upperkirkgate and across to Union Terrace Gardens.

There are 3 main pedestrian choices for access southwards into the City Centre. There is limited direct access to Schoolhill / Upperkirkgate, which is a private connection through the Bon Accord Centre.

Harriet Street provides access for pedestrians but the quality of the experience and the provision of footway space is poor due to the narrow street and dead frontages along it.

Loch Street / Berry Street also provide pedestrian access towards Marischal College but again the quality of the experience could be improved due to dead frontages along the Bon Accord Centre and streets designed to accommodate vehicles.

Public Transport

St. Andrew Street, John Street, George Street, Loch Street and Gallowgate are streets which service the local bus routes in the area. These are important for access and connections to Aberdeen's Bus Station which acts as a travel hub for the city centre, as well as connections to further afield, beyond the city centre. John Street is one way in the eastbound direction from Charlotte street to Loch Street, while St. Andrew Street is not entirely one way westbound, with general traffic able to travel eastbound to the junction with George Street.

Vehicle Movement Function

Streets within the study area have a wide range of functions, varying from those with greater number of vehicular traffic volumes to those that are much quieter and function as local access streets. The plan adjacent highlights the significance and function of streets within the study area; Primary, Secondary and Tertiary routes. Arrows also denote which of these routes are one way.

What this means:

- Some streets have the capacity to be reconfigured to allow for more pedestrian and public realm space
- There are safety concerns around pedestrian/cyclist conflicts with cars, and local air quality
- The CC & BMP Vision for access and movement is to make the city centre a **place to go to and not through.** George Street Masterplan will identify projects that support this wider objective
- Future projects to will promote pedestrianised zones and vehicle restricted areas



Figure 6 - Local Access (All Modes)



7 Public Realm Quality

The quality of public realm within George Street is varied and is predominantly medium or low quality across the Masterplan area.

There are some examples of recent improvements to the quality of public realm materials (for instance, along the northern side of George Street), but these tend to be isolated and sit as part of low-medium quality streets.

Ongoing improvements across the wider area

Beyond the Masterplan area, there are a number of locations which have undergone recent public realm improvements. These spaces have a higher quality of materials and signage and which provide an interface to some streets within the Masterplan area - for example the improved public realm along Back Wynd contrasts to that of Harriet Street immediately opposite. At present, because of the lower quality of materials, George Street feels cut off and disjointed. There is an opportunity to further expand upon recent city-wide improvements into George Street to create more seamless journeys and experiences into and out of the Masterplan area and to create vehicle hierarchy within George Street.

What this means:

- Enhancing the quality of materials in the public realm will create inviting and safe environments that are accessible by all users and where people are encouraged to visit and dwell.
- Additional seating elements are required across the George Street area to improve accessibility and to create areas for dwell space.
- Bin storage is a problem across the entire area and negatively impacts visual quality of the streetscape.



Medium quality materials

Elements of high quality spaces including street furniture and trees, but with a dominance of lower-quality materials and/or damaged materials.

- Vehicles are prioritised within the streetscape.
- The public realm is accessible to all users and feels safe at certain points.

Low quality materials

The streetscape is lacking in both high quality materials and street furniture.

- Vehicles are prioritised within the streetscape.
- The public realm is not accessible to all users and does not feel safe.

Damaged and dated

There are a number of public realm materials and street furniture that are damaged, or in decline that would benefit from being replaced. There are also areas of outdated street furniture and each with a different aesthetic. All of these issues add to an overall negative impression of place and disjointed appearance.



Figure 7 - Public Realm Review

8 Green Space

There is a lack of accessible and functional green space within the George Street area. Existing street trees within the public realm are either struggling, or have died.

There is an opportunity to incorporate functional green space to soften the surrounding hardscape and perform a number of valuable functions. These might include well-being benefits, nature-interactions, and stormwater management.

There are existing areas of greenspace within walking distance of the study area however the quality of the pedestrian journey to and from these spaces is often uncomfortable, due to conflict with vehicles or narrow pedestrian footways or more difficult to navigate. A summary of these issues is set out below;

- **Route from Union Terrace Gardens:** Cuts through Harriet Street which feels unsafe due to the lack of surveillance and pedestrian blind spots.
- **Route from Churchyard:** Most straightforward route involves cutting through the shopping centre demonstrating lack of connectivity to George Street.
- **Route from Pocket park / Cruyff Court:** Main route is along vehicular dominated streets.



Accessible green space

Accessible green spaces are currently located outside of the George Street area. Notable nearby green spaces include Cruyff Court set within a small pocket park, Union Terrace Gardens and the churchyard on Schoolhill. There is a need for more accessible public green spaces within the George Street area, as these currently fall outside of the Masterplan area.

Non-functional green space

Whilst there are 'green' spaces within the George Street area, these tend to exist as grass verges adjacent to roads, or are set behind a boundary adjacent to residential property. There is a clear need to enhance existing green spaces so that they perform an environmental, social, and aesthetic function.

Established trees

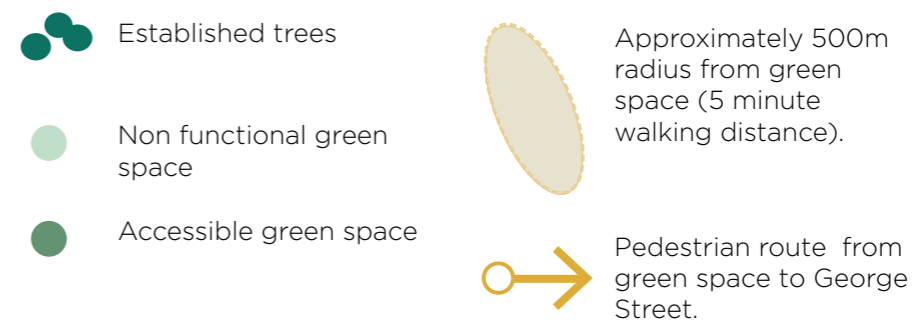
Established trees in George Street are mostly located along main vehicular roads or within residential courtyards. There is an opportunity to incorporate tree planting within the public realm to perform a number of social and environmental functions.

What this means:

- Although there are accessible green spaces within a 5 minute walk of George Street, the routes to these spaces are of a low quality for pedestrian experience and safety.
- Existing accessible green spaces are also limited in the types of functions they perform and users they attract. Additional green spaces which serve a wider range of users are required.



Figure 8 - Proximity to existing green spaces



9 Typical Street Sections

George Street's street grid arrangement of streets has its own character. They are home to a variety of independent businesses, national retailers and residential tenements.

Streets are typically dominated by vehicles meaning road widths are wide and pedestrian footways and cycle provision are compromised. This encourages more journeys by car than by foot or bike. The majority of streets within the Masterplan area are composed of historic buildings on both sides, creating an often narrow street section which also adds pressure to street function.

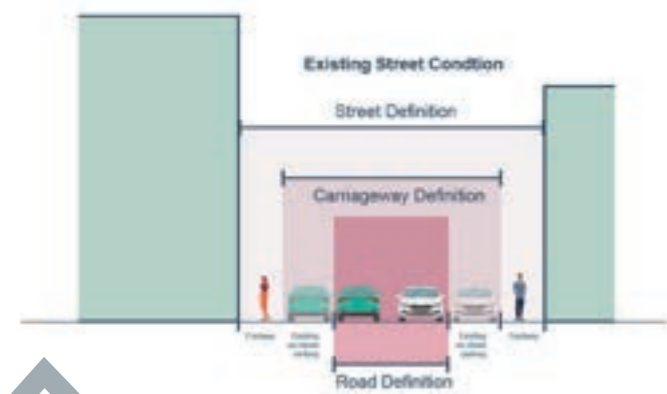
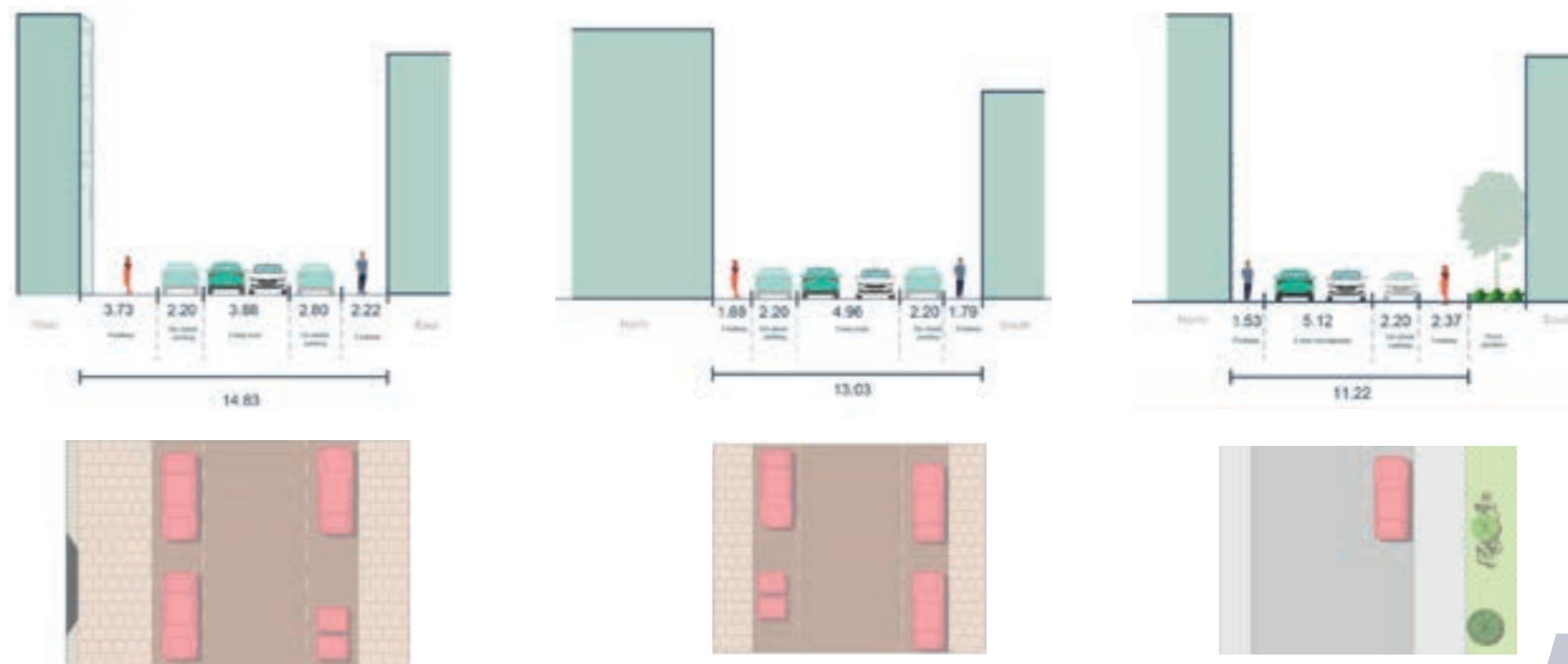
The following section details the existing street profiles for each street within the Masterplan area. By understanding their physical features we are able to understand the potential to reconfigure to meet the aspirations of the Masterplan. The sections shown are a typical street section and more detail will follow in the transformational projects section.

Typical Existing Street Characteristics	Street Name		
	A - Charlotte Street	B - Craigie Street	C - Spring Garden
Street Design			
Carriageway width	8.88m	9.36m	7.32m
Road width	3.88m	4.96m	5.12m
Footpath width	3.75m / 2.22m	1.88m / 1.79m	1.53m / 2.37m
On Street parking?	Y	Y	Y
Loading bay requirement on-street?	N	N	N
Bus route and stops	N	N	N
Materiality			
Carriageway	Granite setts	Granite setts	Hot rolled asphalt
Footway	Slabs	Paving slabs	Hot rolled asphalt
Streetscape			
Predominant fronting building use	Residential	Residential	Residential
Refuse storage on street?	Y	Y	N
Street planting?	N	N	Limited to boundary planting within property boundary
Street furniture?	N	N	N

Table 2 - Existing Street Design



Figure 9 - Section Reference



The image above defines the extents of the street, carriageway and road.

Street Design: includes everything captured between two facing building fronts.

Carriageway: includes the road, on-street parking, tree planting, bike storage, cycle lane where relevant, bin storage and planting strips and the footways concern areas used only for pedestrian movement.

Road: only the width of the space for moving vehicles.

Typical Existing Street Characteristics	Street Name			
	D - George Street	E - Loch Street	F - John Street	G - St. Andrew Street
Street Design				
Carriageway width	9.86m	9.30m	9.57m	7.67m
Road width	5.46m	7.10m	5.17m	5.48m
Footpath width	2.20m / 2.17m	1.60m / 1.95m	2.33m / 1.53m	2.69m / 2.86m
On Street parking?	Y	Y	Y	N
Loading bay requirement on-street?	Y	N	Y	Y
Bus route and stops	Y	N	Y	Y
Materiality				
Carriageway	Hot rolled asphalt / setts	Hot rolled asphalt	Hot rolled asphalt	Hot rolled asphalt
Footway	Hot rolled asphalt / setts	Hot rolled asphalt	Hot rolled asphalt	Hot rolled asphalt
Streetscape				
Predominant fronting building use	Ground floor commercial / retail / residential front doors	Commercial / education / residential	Commercial / retail	Commercial / retail
Refuse storage on street?	Y	N	Y	Y
Street planting?	Y	Y	N	N
Street furniture?	Y	N	N	N

Table 2 (contd) - Existing Street Design

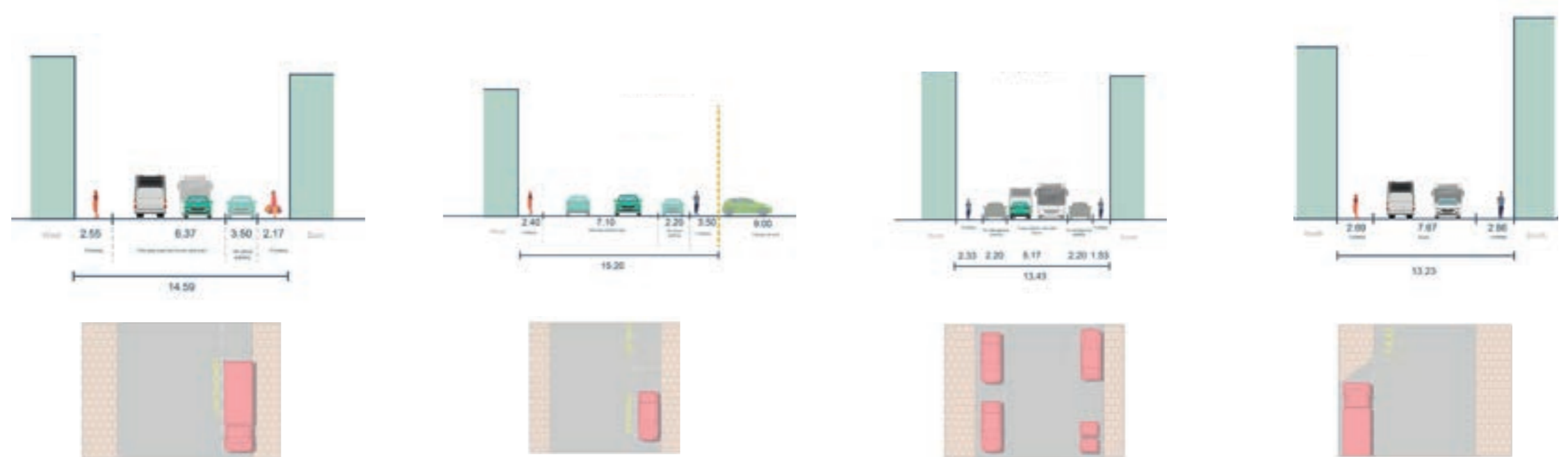


Figure 10 - Section Reference

Typical Existing Street Characteristics	Street Name		
	H - Berry Street	I - Harriet Street	J - Jopp's Lane
Street Design			
Carriageway width	11.96m	4.24m	4.40m
Road width	5.75m/4.73m	4.24m	4.40m
Footpath width	2.16m / 4.75m	1.16m / 1.66m	1m / 0.89m
On Street parking?	N	N	N
Loading bay requirement on-street?	N	N	N
Bus route and stops	Y	N	N
Materiality			
Carriageway	Hot rolled asphalt	Hot rolled asphalt	Hot rolled asphalt
Footway	Paving slabs	Hot rolled asphalt	Hot rolled asphalt
Streetscape			
Predominant fronting building use	Commercial	Commercial	Commercial
Refuse storage on street?	N	N	Y
Street planting?	Y	N	N
Street furniture?	N	N	N

Table 2 (contd) - Existing Street Design

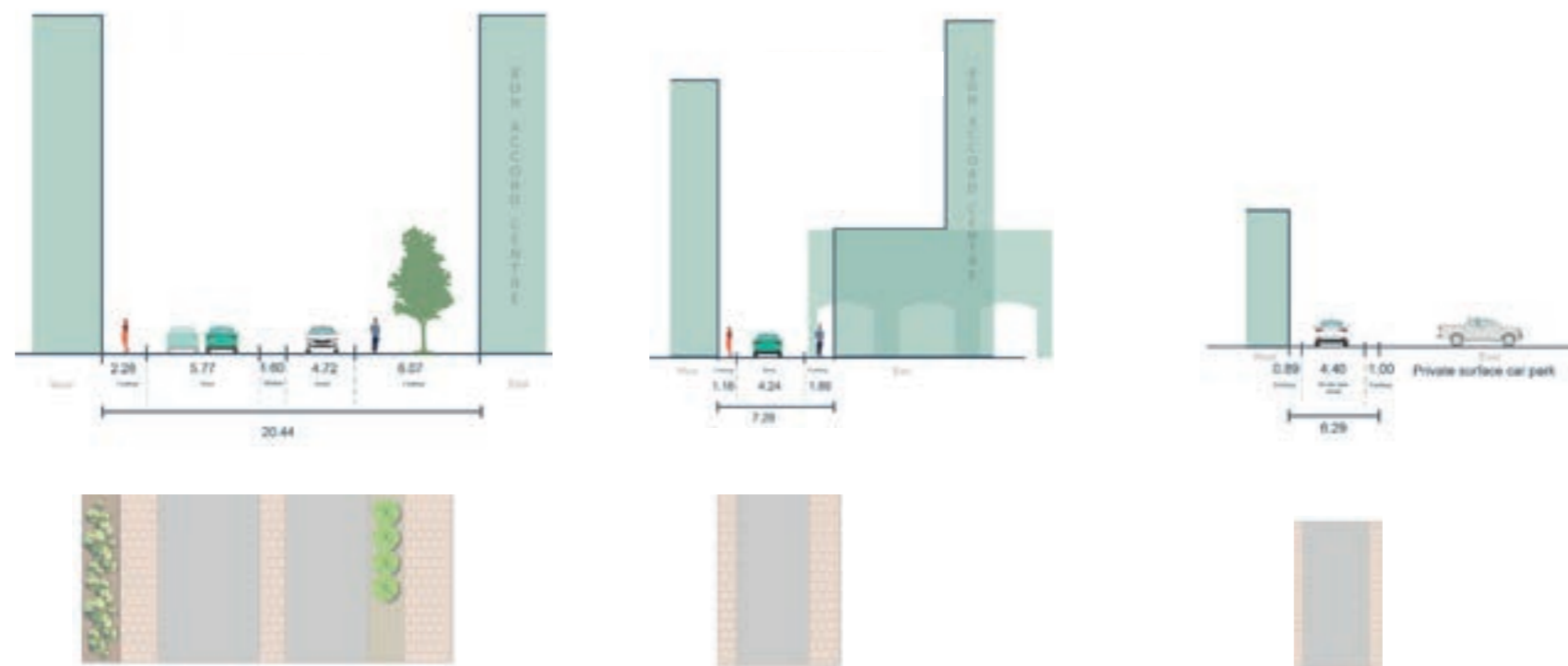


Figure 11 - Section Reference

3. The Masterplan

3. The Masterplan

The Masterplan is informed by a clear Vision and objectives, which respond to the stakeholder feedback and engagement.

It identifies a series of transformational projects that will help to deliver the Vision and our understanding of the place.

Vision & Objectives

George Street is supported to be a place to form new connections; Social, Cultural, Economic and Educational. An authentic well-connected neighbourhood with a strong sense of communities and a better sense of place, enabling people to come together and enjoy their neighbourhood.

The Masterplan seeks to capture the potential of the area's physical characteristics, its diverse community and the future needs of the area to allow it to thrive. We will do this by focusing on 'place' and supporting 'people' and 'economy':

- **Embracing the difference** - highlighting the quirks & celebrate the variety of George Street
- **Building its reputation** - encouraging people to discover the area
- **Creating new reasons to come to the area** through transformational projects and addressing areas of decline
- **Unlocking big changes through incremental interventions.** Using meanwhile uses / pop ups and short term/trial interventions to experiment with ideas
- **Fixing the edges** and enhancing the arrival
- **Demanding more from the streets** - inviting more pedestrian activity but managing vehicular movement
- **Creating a greener form of urbanism** & a more liveable environment.

A visual representation of the Masterplan Vision, capturing some of the elements that can come together to help deliver the Vision's ambitions



Vision:
George Street Connected!
The 'local' Neighbourhood: a vibrant, creative and inclusive city centre community at the heart of reinvention.

Masterplan objectives

1 George Street as a destination

A hidden gem within the City with the potential to further define its cultural offer and identity. The Masterplan will support interventions that add to the burgeoning scene for arts, crafts and independents across the City as well as establishing Norco House as a potential future mixed use destination. The area can continue to be a distinctive and greater cultural part of the city.

2 Establishing a distinctive character for George Street

Creating a colourful street aesthetic with a co-ordinated palette of quality materials, planting, wayfinding and street furniture distinctive to George Street.

3 A sustainable city centre neighbourhood

Creating an enhanced, greener, nature rich street-scape environment, through SUDS features, new landscape & planted spaces, greening & pollinator friendly features and new tree planting as well as promoting safe, sustainable movement. Improving infrastructure to support sustainable city centre residential living.

4 Adapting streets

Making the streets within the Masterplan work harder, reclaiming spaces, where possible, to prioritise people, creating more spill out space for local businesses, create more dwell space for residents and manage traffic movements through the neighbourhood.

5 Finding space

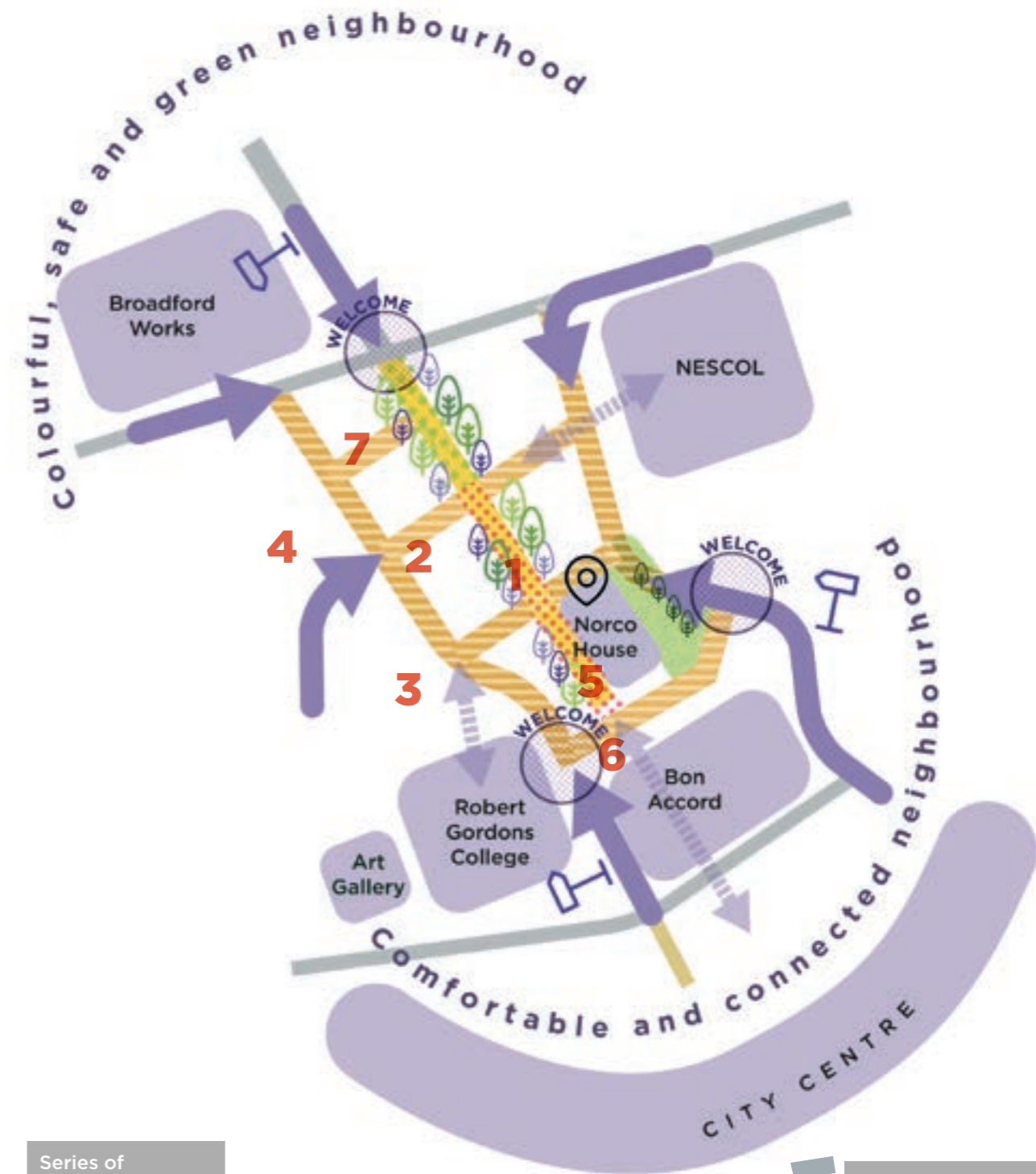
Creating a new neighbourhood space that encourages community and individual well-being, opportunities for social interaction and relaxation.

6 Promoting activity and improving experience

Tackling areas of inactivity through a programme of events and activation - from short to long term. Allowing space for pop-up events / installations and temporary uses to activate vacant spaces and help reduce anti-social behaviour.

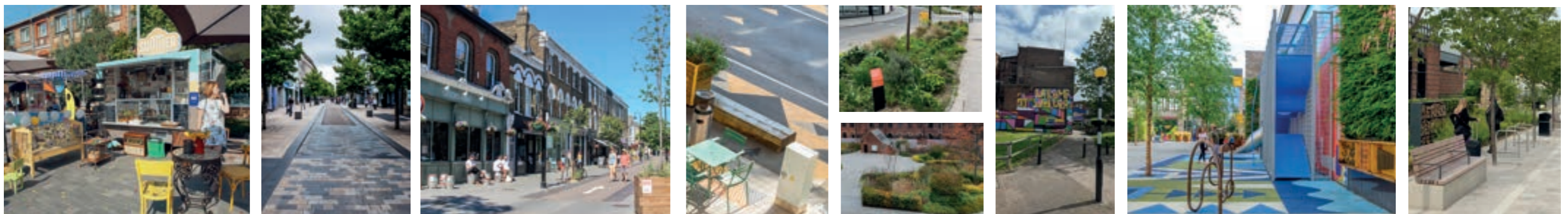
7 Supporting existing communities & businesses to thrive

The Masterplan will retain the existing economic heart of the neighbourhood and look to help it grow and thrive by improving links into the area and the interfaces with its surrounding influence areas e.g Bon Accord Centre, Bradford Works etc, encouraging the re-use of vacant buildings and identifying areas for potential future development to attract more investment into the area.



Series of precedent images illustrating the type of projects.

Illustrative concept plan showing how the Masterplan objectives could be met



The George Street Masterplan

- George Street masterplan boundary
- Places, streets & spaces**
- Existing road network
- Streets transformed for people with service access only for vehicles
- Streets to be enhanced
- Improved National Cycle Network route
- Improved links between NESCOL & Robert Gordon's College to George Street
- Existing pedestrian links
- Potential New Public Space
- Improved junctions through public realm and pedestrian crossing upgrades
- Landmarks & buildings**
- Existing Buildings
- Opportunity to create a landmark destination as part of retained Norco House
- ✳ Opportunity for key building as part of future re-development
- Improvements to existing shop frontages
- Potential to create new development frontages that address the street
- Potential to animate street through active ground floor uses
- Opportunity to improve the Bon Accord Centre's entrance
- Activate & animate dead frontages
- Opportunity to reconfigure and enhance edges of NESCOL campus
- Land uses**
- Potential redevelopment opportunity areas
- Development opportunity sites beyond the masterplan boundary



Figure 12 - The George Street Masterplan

The Masterplan

The Masterplan proposes physical changes to improve opportunities for active travel, for greener more sustainable environments, introduce changes that support the vibrancy and vitality of the neighbourhood whilst improving connections with the city centre.

George Street is, however, a complex existing urban environment and the scope of physical change must be carefully managed and delivered alongside the existing requirements of local businesses and residents as well as being sensitive to its existing context.

However, a clear step-change in the quality and function of the environment, to support the vitality of existing businesses, residents and the communities of George Street is needed. The uplift in place quality will also support longer term redevelopment opportunities when they become available and help to tackle the issues raised by local people around anti-social behaviour, underutilised spaces and neglect.

The Masterplan will be used as a tool going forward to co-ordinate and prioritise key projects (both short & long term) and areas of focus for the neighbourhood. The Council has a clear ambition for the area and it will seek to both deliver and support projects alongside existing stakeholders and those seeking to take forward future development. Delivery of the Masterplan will require a co-ordinated and a collaborative approach across public and private sector organisations.

There are 3 components to the Masterplan that combine to deliver on its Vision and objectives.

Places, Streets and Spaces

- Streets that connect to existing green spaces beyond the Masterplan boundary such as Cruyff Court and Union Terrace Gardens will be improved to better facilitate active travel;
- The Masterplan area will become an active travel friendly neighbourhood throughout, promoting safer and more equitable sustainable journeys;
- Reconfiguring current street function and traffic direction to better manage traffic flows through the area and creating greater opportunities for active travel;
- Opportunity to create a new public, flexible space for the neighbourhood focused around Norco House / St. Andrew St / Loch Street and Berry Street. The space currently used for existing road infrastructure around Berry Street / Loch St could be reduced and given over to public space, as part of a co-ordinated, Masterplan wide updated street network. There is opportunity for a public space here to be further expanded if potential future proposals on the Norco House site explore an integrated public space. Both capable of creating new spaces where there are currently none; and
- Creating improved arrival gateways into the George Street neighbourhood and within key areas within the Masterplan, through public realm enhancements, such as clear directional and welcome signage, improved crossings at key junctions and, carriageway amendments/ revision to width.

Landmarks & Buildings

- The Masterplan supports a landmark building for George Street through re-working of the original 1966 Norco House building. It could be brought back to active use through re-purposing and re-development, creating a distinctive landmark destination.
- Quality shop front improvements along George Street can create a more co-ordinated townscape that still retains the individual character of shops whilst also creating a degree of consistency to reduce the disjointed appearance along certain units. This will also involve clearing other redundant clutter such as satellite dishes and unnecessary street signage;
- The north elevation of the Bon Accord Centre and multi storey car park (MSCP) are a key interface with the neighbourhood and should be enhanced. Interventions should look to visually screen / animate the building, improve pedestrian entrances and animate / activate Loch Street.
- There is also the opportunity to introduce a better balance between car parking and available green / multi-functional space within the NESCOL site and creating new connections through the site, offering more space to students and visitors as well as enhancing the environment along Loch Street.

Land Uses

- George Street is a compact, historic environment and there are potential areas within the Masterplan that could be brought forward for re-purposing or re-development. These locations currently comprise low quality built form, inefficient use of space and vacant buildings.
- A longer term opportunity area exists to the west of George Street, between St. Andrew Street and the Bon Accord Centre. The Council has no direct land ownership in this area however the Masterplan supports opportunities to see the area improved through mixed use and residential redevelopment of vacant buildings and underutilised parcels of land;
- The Masterplan will support longer term, redevelopment around Loch Street (adjacent to the NESCOL) and the Spring Garden Charlotte Street area, should the market come forward with proposals. There is potential to improve the quality of the built form and public realm environment around the college and opportunity sites can help to achieve this. This could involve short term improvements to existing buildings, or longer term re-development should opportunities become available.

Places, Streets & Spaces - public realm

The consistency and quality of the public realm across the Masterplan are vital to the ongoing vitality of the neighbourhood. All the streets across George Street will have an important role in fulfilling the Masterplan Vision and objectives.

The streets are one of the main areas of influence and opportunity for change within the historic grid network of George Street and will provide a better balance between accessibility of vehicles and active travel.

There are things that all streets should look to achieve that is focused around people and which includes;

- Creating greener streets;
- Character;
- Environment;
- Sense of place; and
- Improving signage and identity.

The Masterplan proposes the improvement of streets so that they provide an enhanced public realm function. This section describes the various roles that each street within the Masterplan will play in doing so, creating higher quality environments for people to enjoy.

Creating greener streets

One of the key aspirations for all of the streets for the Masterplan is to increase the provision of green infrastructure and biodiversity gains through a variety of interventions. An evolution from grey to green, creating green infrastructure. The climate change and biodiversity loss crises are inextricably linked and one cannot be addressed without tackling the other.

Establishing a strong network of green streets will help connect to wider open space assets including Union Terrace Gardens, St Nicolas Gardens and the wider City Centre streetscape projects.

The suitability of each intervention will be determined though more detailed design testing but could consist of a combination of new features including;

- New tree planting
- Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) such as rain gardens
- Retrofit features to existing structures, for example green wall features along existing dead frontages
- Mini habitats (for example bee/bug boxes, living roofs, hibernacula and nest boxes)
- Street greening features such as shrub planting, wild-flowers, edibles and sensory planting; and
- Green and living walls and roofscapes.

The projects can be delivered both in the short term and long term and could consist of modest to more fundamental approaches which could include carriageway re-configuration. There will need to be balance between achieving green infrastructure within the existing street sections and the impact on movement patterns across the Masterplan and wider area.



An example of how green infrastructure can be implemented within existing streets.

Bringing colour and character

Streets across the Masterplan will facilitate opportunities to introduce elements of colour to enrich the character of the area, creating a unique sense of place. A co-ordinated colour palette for the neighbourhood will allow for both continuity and colour variation across each street depending upon location and activity levels. George Street itself could become the recognisable centrepiece, showcasing character, through colour.

Combinations of colour features could include;

- Co-ordinated vibrant street furniture
- Updated and improved material palette
- Introducing bold graphics and colour bursts to spill out spaces and buildings
- Extension to the NuArt street art festival further into areas of George Street
- Bringing in bespoke lighting to areas and buildings to help illuminate.

The introduction of colour and contrast must be carefully balanced, to ensure the needs and requirements of different user groups are fully considered. As the Masterplan moves forward, the needs of those with sensory and neurodiverse sensitivities will continue to be consulted, to help further refine and develop opportunities for colour within the streetscape.

Using more signage & interpretation

Developing a co-ordinated signage and wayfinding strategy can help to further identify George Street as a distinctive place within the city centre and improve its links with its neighbouring parts of the city. Welcome and directional signage at entry points to the neighbourhood can define arrival points and create more visibility. Interpretative and information signage can help to inform people of the place and its local features.

Examples of how new features such as planting, signage, materials, seating and colourful installations can add colour and vibrancy to existing street settings



Examples of how a variety of changes can enliven streets, from material changes, biodiversity planting to playful ways of bringing colour to the street



Each street within the Masterplan will have an important role to play in providing enhanced public realm provision whilst also ensuring its proposed movement functions. Each street can fall broadly into the following typologies in terms of their public realm role;

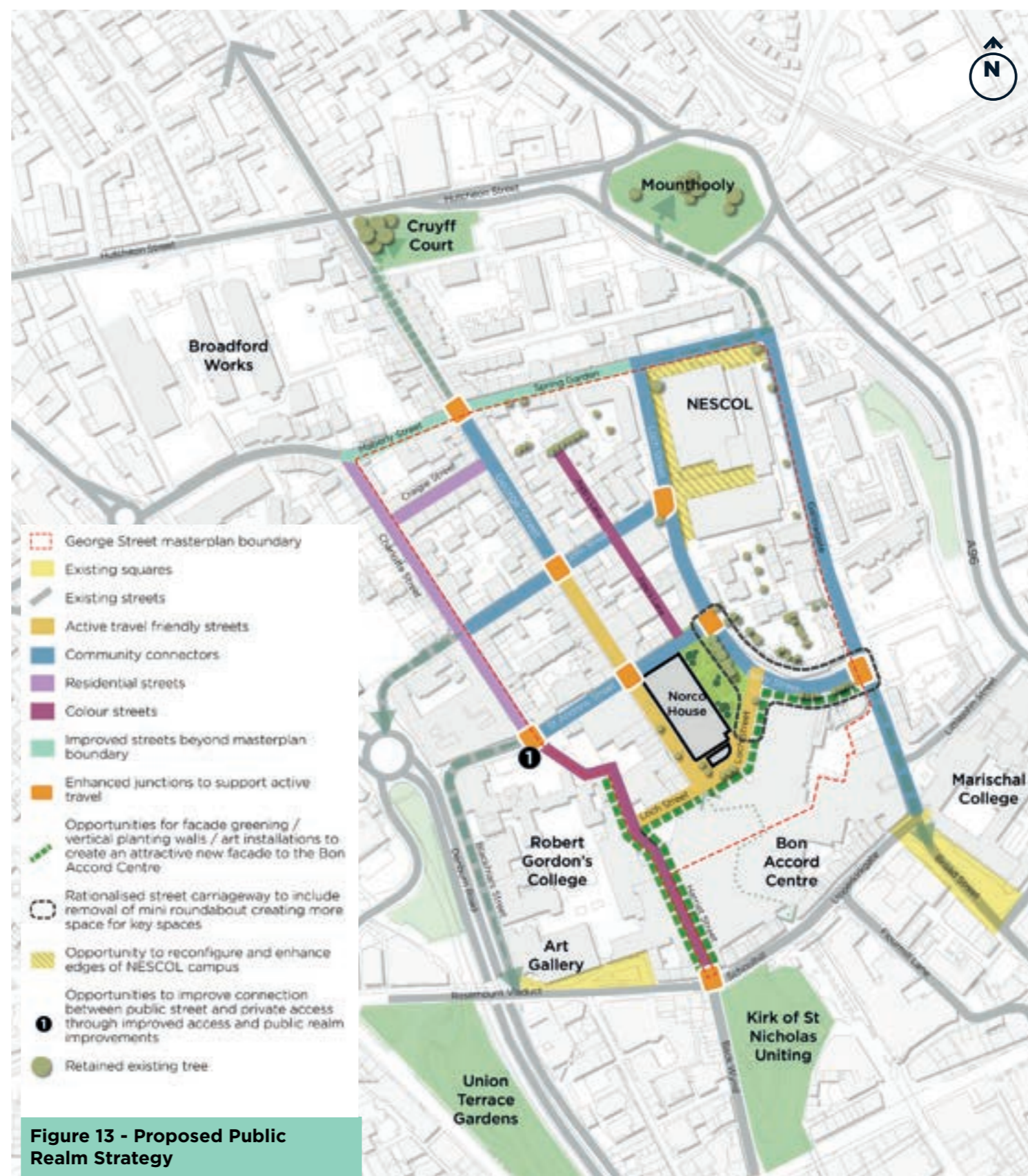
Streets transformed for pedestrians - will promote active travel improvements that is suitable to the existing context and that create a significant amount of space for people within the street section. They will allow people to move and dwell along the distinctive and neighbourhood defining George Street corridor. Creating more space will also support space for outdoor seating, bio-retention verges and/or rain gardens with pollinator friendly perennial planting, semi-mature tree planting of pollution-tolerant species.

Interventions could be lower cost and initially more modest which may initially begin as temporary installations. Examples include: parklets, flexible market spaces / exhibition space, multi-purpose moveable planters and street furniture, and/or playful artworks and road markings.

Community connectors - important streets that provide onward movements to neighbouring areas and as a result public realm interventions must work to support all modes of travel. Improvements will include an increase in pedestrian space, with cycling accommodated via a combination of segregated lanes and on-road cycling, depending on the unique characteristics and requirements of each street. Some of these streets will see reconfiguration to create improved footway provision, a mixture of semi-mature tree planting with below ground soil cells and/ or standard trees in large planters (either on both or single side of the street), accessible rain gardens with sensory pollinator planting and planted green verges adjacent to roads.

Residential streets - quieter streets with predominantly residential properties along them and which will be enhanced to improve the quality of life for residents. These streets will see improved footways, traffic calming, opportunities for informal play, screened bin storage areas, tree planting, integrated timber bench seating, grow spaces and planters and colourful and sensory perennial planting.

Colour streets - those streets that are narrow and may not be able to accommodate the same level of soft landscape features as others but can still be transformed. Public realm interventions along Colour Streets will include green walls, colourful planters, building up lighters, lighting nets and seating.



Places, Streets & Spaces- movement and access

A primary focus of the Masterplan is to ensure that people travel **‘to’** George Street and **‘not through’**. To achieve this, streets must offer a better balance between experience, connectivity and functionality.

The street hierarchy, informed by the Urban Realm Design Guide 2021, will inform future public realm design and movement function detailed in later sections. It will ensure that all streets across the neighbourhood promote active and sustainable movement, in accordance with National policy.

Street Hierarchy

The existing streets are identified, as part of the Masterplan strategy, into the following three categories:

Primary Streets - have a significant influence over the area in terms of visual impact, modal offering and built status. George Street, and St. Andrew Street have been categorised as primary routes, given their significant role, or potential, in active and sustainable travel modes and ‘place’ quality.

These streets are framed by larger buildings and businesses, creating a busier environment than secondary and tertiary streets and will carry a variety of users. They also convey a greater ‘sense of place’.

Secondary Streets - provide routes for vehicles across the area as well as active travel, but are not defined by the same levels of landuse activity. Spring Garden, Loch Street, Maberley Street and John Street are identified as secondary streets due to their function, carriageway narrowing and surrounding built character.

Tertiary Streets - are quieter in nature by comparison, to secondary and primary streets. Across George Street, tertiary routes are profiled by their narrower street width and quieter levels of vehicular and pedestrian activity. Jopp’s Lane, Harriet Street, Craigie Street and Charlotte Street as well as lower sections of Loch Street have been categorised as tertiary streets as they are more enclosed. These streets offer points of intrigue off busier routes, but will require environmental improvements to ensure they are transformed into pleasant, walkable streets.

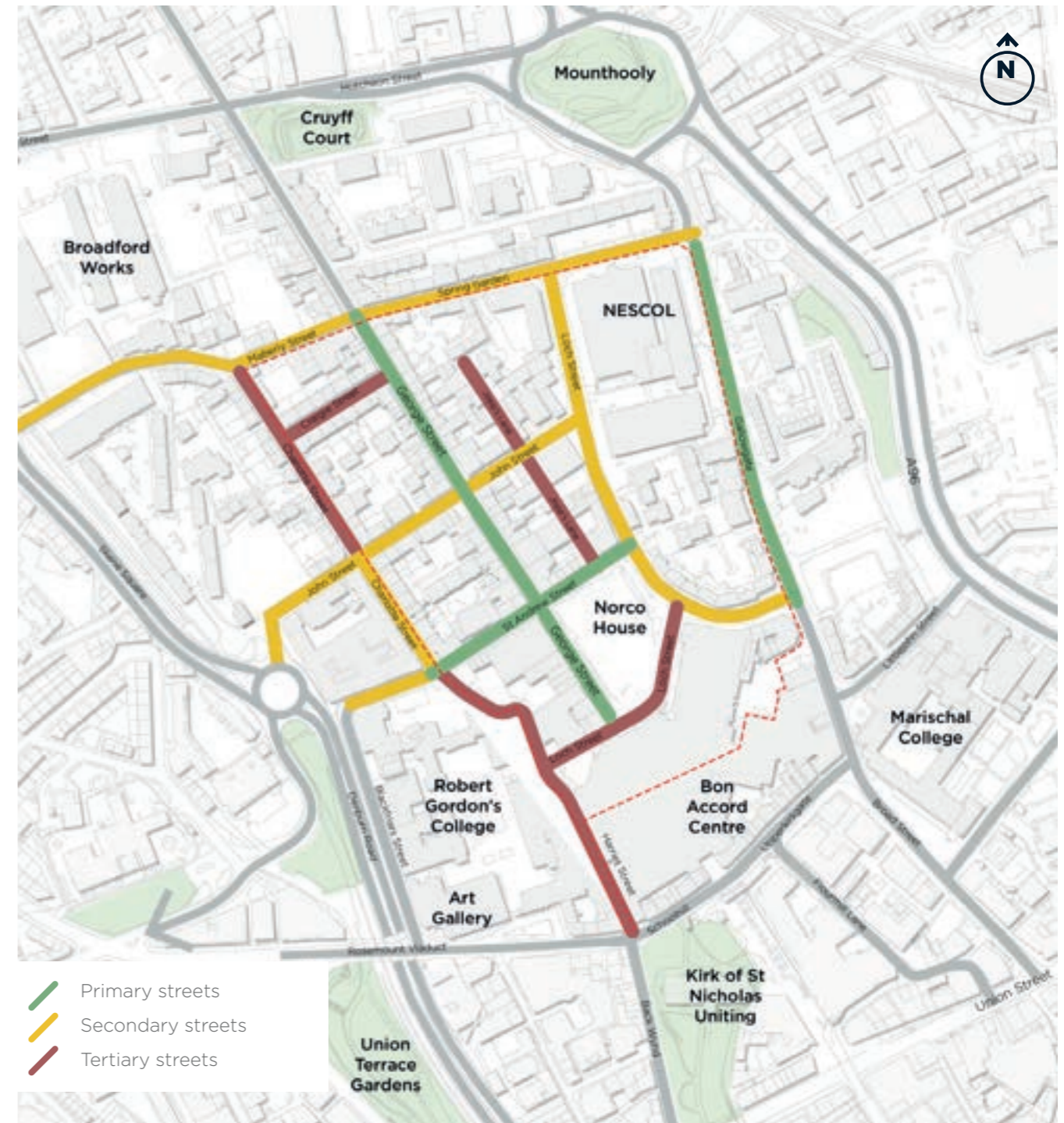
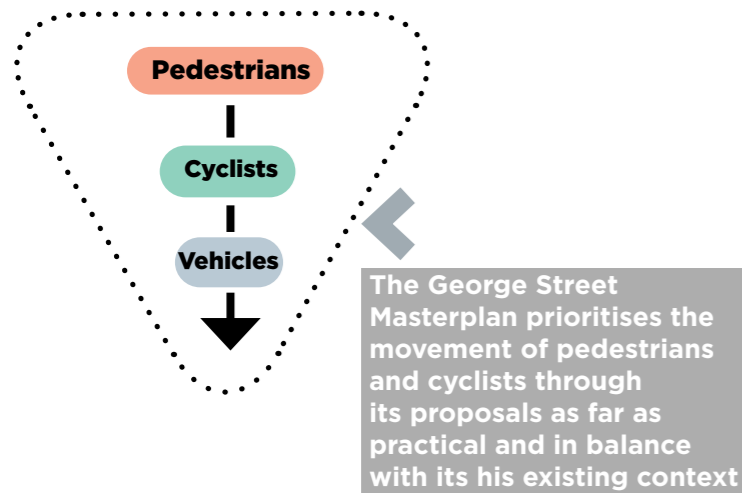


Figure 14 - Proposed Street Hierarchy

Cycle Accessibility

All streets across the Masterplan area should promote active and sustainable travel. The extent of cyclist specific infrastructure that can be achieved must also be considered in balance with the Vision and objectives of the Masterplan and, as an appropriate response to the historic street grid and structure of the environment. The proposed improvements to the Masterplan street network will include traffic management measures to help reduce the volume and speed of traffic through the area, allowing the majority of streets to be conducive to on-road cycling, per Cycling by Design. Where speeds and flows may limit the level of service that on-road cycling would provide, segregated facilities are proposed.

Currently there are no formally segregated cycle routes through the area. The Masterplan aims to improve cycle accessibility by:

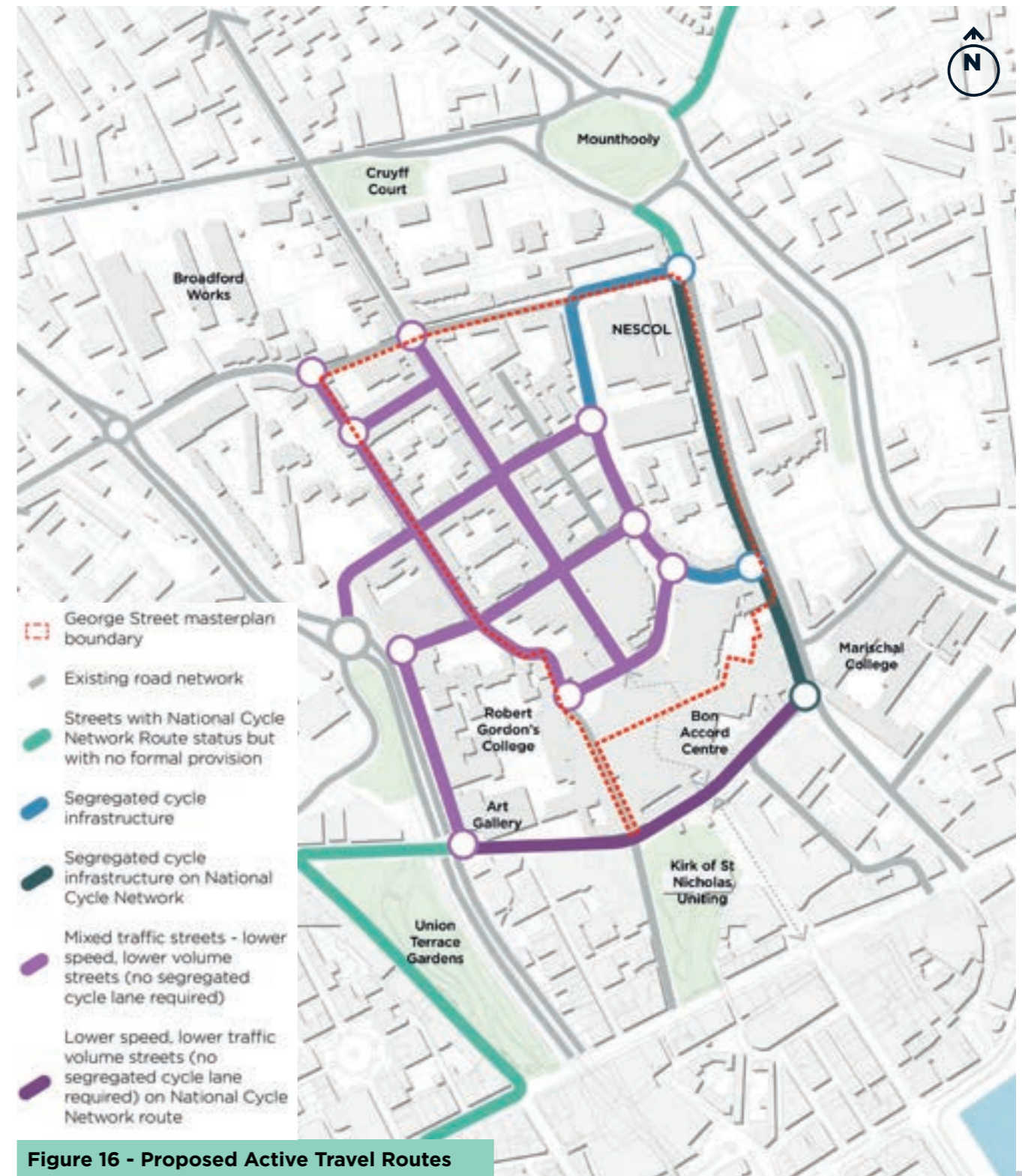
- providing a segregated cycle lane along Gallowgate emphasising the NCN route and its connection into the recently lined Upperkirkgate and Schoolhill;
- providing a segregated cycle lane to part of Spring Garden and Loch St, allowing for segregated cycle access between the NCN Route along Gallowgate and NESCOL, which is a destination generating cycle trips. This would consist of a 2.0m wide segregated cycle lane both east and westbound between the junction with Gallowgate and the junction with Loch Street;
- the remaining streets will be cycle friendly by creating safer and accessible 'mixed streets' across the Masterplan.

Mixed Streets

These streets will offer a 'medium level of service' (term used to describe criteria within Cycling By Design) and will require no additional lining within the carriageway. The proposed designs for each, which consist of a reduction in lane widths and traffic calming measures, will support cyclists to feel comfortable taking up a more positive position within the lane as part of a 20mph, low speed urban environment. In terms of providing a basis behind the decisions taken, Cycling by Design suggests that a Design Review is carried out.

Each street will also look to include cycle parking facilities, cycle delivery loading / unloading and repair points to allow users to carry out any repairs to their bikes.

The ultimate design of segregated routes and mixed traffic streets will be dependent upon more detailed traffic analysis and street design. It will also be designed in line with Cycling by Design 2021 (or subsequent) guidance and the Urban Realm Manual.



Vehicular Movements

Managing vehicle access across the Masterplan area can lead to:

- an improvement in local air quality;
- reduced vehicular conflict for public transport and active modes of travel; and
- create more space within the street for better facilities for public transport, pedestrians, cyclists and spill out space for local businesses.

Each of these combine to create a stronger sense of neighbourhood and, in order to achieve this, a number of changes to the function and direction of traffic along certain streets is proposed.

Proposed Areas of Change

The main principle for managing vehicular access within George Street is to prioritise access to those who need to enter or exit the neighbourhood (e.g local residents, patrons to local businesses). This principle is complementary to the Council's Roads Hierarchy and City Centre and Beach Masterplan requirements of a place as a destination (a place to travel to) but not a through route.

Robust traffic modelling work has been undertaken to test the extent of through routing across the Masterplan and the proposed changes tested, in order to provide wider benefit to the area and facilitate the ability of the street network to provide more active travel and activity as well as transform the function of George Street itself.

The proposed vehicle movement strategy for the Masterplan is detailed in **figure 19** (overleaf). The following points below (A - G) explain proposed changes to existing vehicle flows across the Masterplan street network and are highlighted in **figure 18**;



Figure 17 - current direction of vehicle flows

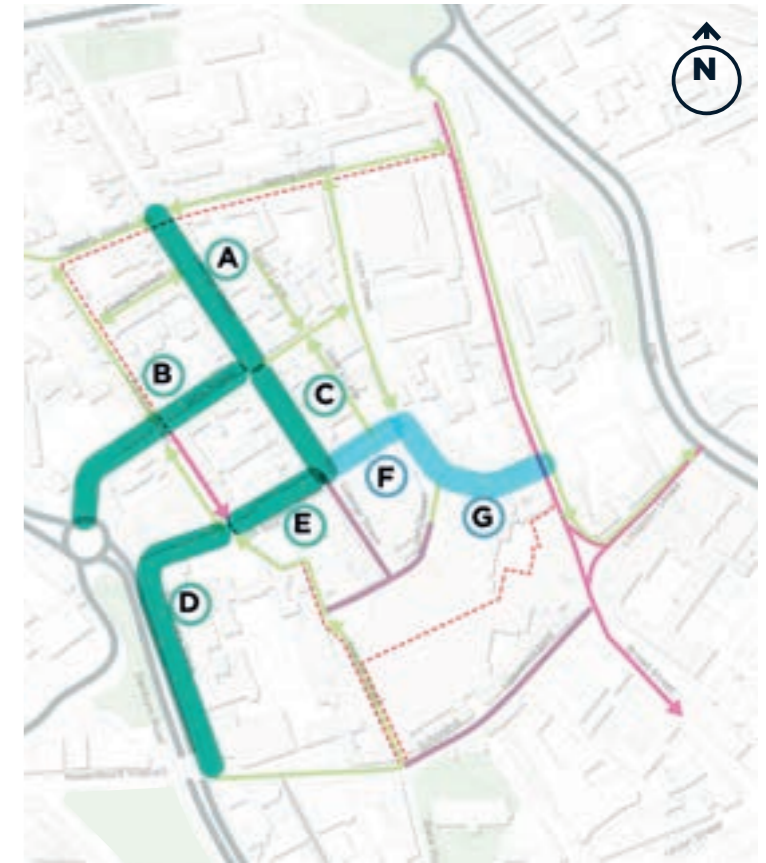


Figure 18 - Streets within the Masterplan where a change to the traffic flow is proposed

Phase 1

- A.** George Street south-bound to John Street for general traffic with north-bound bus route
- B.** John Street to become one-way west bound from George Street to general traffic with no general traffic entering from Denburn.
- C.** The section of George Street between John Street and St. Andrew Street is to be a service access only route, removing both bus routing and general traffic movement. This will allow for a greater focus on pedestrian and cycle focused movement, promoting active travel in the heart of the neighbourhood and creating a new sense of place.
- D.** Blackfriars Street to be come one-way south bound to general traffic and two-way for bus and taxi east and north-bound
- E.** In the initial stages of development, St. Andrew Street would become one way west bound from George Street to Blackfriars Street for general traffic, whereas bus and taxi routing will remain two way.

Phase 2

- F.** St. Andrew Street would introduce restrictions to private car traffic (potentially via provision of a bus gate / or signage) between Charlotte Street and Loch Street junctions further reducing the dominance of general traffic movement across the neighbourhood.
- G.** Phase 2 would also restrict general vehicle movement between Loch and Berry Street at the St. Andrew Street junction (potentially via provision of a bus gate / or signage). General vehicle access on Berry Street would be allowed for access to the Bon Accord Centre car parking only and service access.

Proposed Vehicular Movements

The proposed vehicular movement network across George Street comprises:

1. Two Way Streets

Streets that allow for vehicle movements in both directions. They are located to the edges of the neighbourhood and they provide easy access to the surrounding strategic routes.

2. One Way Streets

These streets provide access along sections of George Street, John Street, Jopp's Lane and along Harriet Street. Vehicles are directed back onto two way streets. Their one way movements through routing and create a lower car environment around the George Street, John Street, St. Andrew Street core of the neighbourhood.

3. Pedestrian Priority / Service Access Streets

Streets open to vehicle access and which allow local users and patrons access to the neighbourhood. These streets will be enhanced to promote greater pedestrian and active travel movements and designed in a manner which manages traffic speeds.

4. Car Park Access Only

Berry Street must remain accessible to vehicles to allow access to the Bon Accord Centre multi storey car park (MSCP). It will provide access from Gallowgate and Loch Street and egress from the MSCP onto Berry Street.

5. Bus Servicing

Phase 1 of the vehicular strategy looks to work with the existing bus routes as far as possible. The only alteration to existing routing would be along the section of George Street between John Street and St. Andrew Street, where there are currently no bus stops. Removal of bus movement from this short section will allow for more active travel and spill out space to create a different environment.

Phase 2 of the strategy would take a more radical approach, reducing the St. Andrew Street carriageway, between Charlotte Street and Jopp's Lane to bus access only. The lower section of Loch Street to Berry Street would also reduce to bus access only too. Cars entering St. Andrew Street would be redirected northbound on Jopp's Lane to continue their journey. This bus priority could be managed through restriction for example bus gates or appropriate signage, subject to further detailed design following implementation of Phase 1.

Impacts on through routing

A detailed traffic modelling exercise has been undertaken to understand the movement strategy impacts and benefits. The results of the modelling have demonstrated that the proposed measures would introduce changes that help deliver the Masterplan ambitions through:

- Traffic management proposals that reduce opportunities for through-traffic in the area (circa 21% reduction in through-trips across the day) while maintaining and, in some cases, enhancing accessibility for all modes;
- Displacing traffic from local roads in the core of the study area onto streets at the top of the revised Aberdeen Roads Hierarchy which are of a standard and a capacity appropriate for higher volumes of traffic, while minimising the overall impacts on the network as a whole; and
- Balancing the accessibility requirements across different modes.

The modelling has demonstrate that the proposals can deliver significant positive change through reduced traffic flows on key streets that are central to the Masterplan objectives and priority projects.



Figure 19 - Proposed Phase 1 movement flows

4. Transformational Projects

4. Transformational Projects

◀ Transformational Project Summaries

Delivering change

Transformational projects are those areas of focused intervention within the Masterplan that can crystallise the Vision and consultation findings into tangible actions / projects that can be taken forward and developed further.

There are 6 transformational 'place' projects identified in the Masterplan which are centred around physical change and regeneration:

- Enhancing and modernising the streetscape including enhancements to the public realm, de-cluttering and improved footways, places to dwell and spaces to host street events
- Improve safety and crime rates in the area, through enhancements to the public safety such as more CCTV, better street lighting and greater levels of activity (through different uses and types of spaces) to improve the sense of safety both during day and evening, creating an identity through lighting emphasising 'place'
- Introducing space to support meanwhile uses and street greening, to introduce more activity and animation to the area with temporary seating, planting features, signage and wayfinding
- Improve the pedestrian experience through enhanced materials, lighting, wayfinding, pedestrian prioritisation measures and managed streets that encourage active travel and discourage through-routing
- To make more of the Bon Accord Centre and Norco House area of the Masterplan, to create more activity and community space

In addition there are also opportunities for local communities and stakeholders to contribute to, influence and assist in the future delivery of these projects. Community and stakeholder group capacity building will play an essential role in both helping to shape these projects as they move forward and to ensure that projects are supported and informed by local residents, businesses and institutions within the Masterplan, as the main custodians and users of the George Street neighbourhood.



Transformational Project 1

Norco Place

This section sets out potential, illustrative future proposals for Norco House and its surrounding area which could become more widely recognised as 'Norco Place'. It explores two potential development scenarios each with a different approach to future development use and provision of space to provide for the wider area.

These scenarios are not ranked in order of preference but explore the art of the possible whilst also demonstrating how each work with the principles established within the Masterplan. It is hoped that these help to re-frame the potential of the building and identify new potential design responses, uses and public realm opportunities which re-establish the area as an important city wide anchor and diverse neighbourhood.

Scale of change for Norco House

One of the scenarios assumes the retention of the Norco House building, retaining the striking and distinctive brutalist form of the building and its distinctive elevations. This option works to reactivate the building and assumes that the current floorplate and column grid remain in situ.

There may be potential to retain the brutalist exterior of the building but strip back the interior floor plates to offer a greater degree of flexibility

and accommodation of uses. This would require further design testing and development and would be subject to more detailed surveys. Historic Environment Scotland have previously been asked to consider this structure for listing. Following their assessment it was found that the surviving two principal elevations (to George Street and to St. Andrew Street) met the criteria of special architectural or historic interest. However, the decision was not to list the building because of ongoing development proposals.

Each scenario also considers a variety of potential future land uses. Options that focus on the retention of the Norco House building are focused on a mixed use offer, providing opportunity for cultural, leisure and community uses given the depth and design characteristics of the building in its current form. The option contributes to the economic sustainability of the neighbourhood accommodating a variety of people and will be diverse in its property type, avoiding mono-type development.

A Retrofit First approach To Norco House

Retention of Norco House allows for a retrofit first approach in response to resource pressures and more sustainable approaches to the re-use and adaptation of city centre environments. Retrofit can minimise the carbon produced through demolition, landfill and extraction of new materials for new development.

Historic Environment Scotland's (HES) National policy 2023 'Our Place, Our Future' provides three priorities 1) Delivering the transition to net zero, 2) Empowering resilient and inclusive communities and places and 3) Building a wellbeing economy, which emphasise that maintenance, reuse and adaptation of our historic environment can make an important contribution in preventing waste and reducing carbon emissions.

Norco House in particular is a building with high embedded carbon due to its concrete construction. Demolition of this building, the removal and processing of the waste and the redevelopment of the site would produce more carbon emissions.

When looking at design options for the retrofit of Norco House these are some of the main challenges that would need to be addressed:

- Deep floor plan presents issues with the

amount of daylight that can penetrate the building, hence the suggestion to retain the original building;

- Concrete facade with minimal windows;
- Inactive frontages at ground floor; and
- Internal and external condition of the building has not been surveyed.

Yet the building also has positive qualities that will allow it to be successfully refurbished:

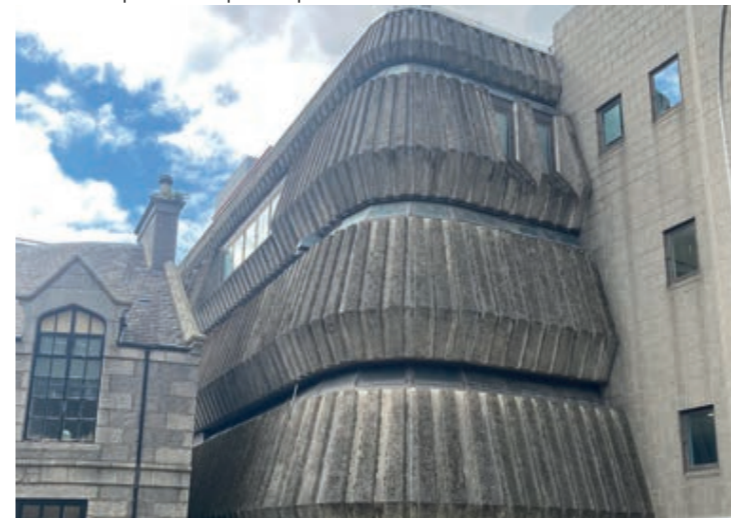
- It has a regular and widely-spaced structural grid allowing for internal efficiencies;
- Generous floor-to-ceiling heights;
- Potential for high live retail floor loadings allowing for additional floors to be added.

There is potential to totally re-imagine the future use of Norco House, diversifying its offer to the area and wider City. The retrofit and reactivation of this building being a statement of success and an example of how the challenges of reducing, reusing and recycling existing assets in innovative ways can be achieved.

The scenarios shown are indicative and would be subject to further design development, detailed assessments of the building conditions, viability testing and collaboration with the building owner.



Figure 20 - Location of Norco House



Norco House in its current state

Scenario 1 - Renovation, rationalisation and re-use

This scenario explores the potential to demolish the later Norco House extension, retaining and refurbishing the distinctive 1960s Norco House.

The demolition makes way for a new 'Norco Place' urban civic space. A new glazed facade to the east of the building allows a greater amount of natural light into the building whilst providing an animated new, mixed use address onto the square.

Historic Environment Scotland welcome the consideration given in the assessment around the future of Norco House, with the George Street and St. Andrew Street elevations recognised as an environment asset and of townscape character / interest, and that the loss of the building, specifically its noteworthy two elevations, would constitute a 'negative effect to the cultural heritage of the area'.

Development Approach:

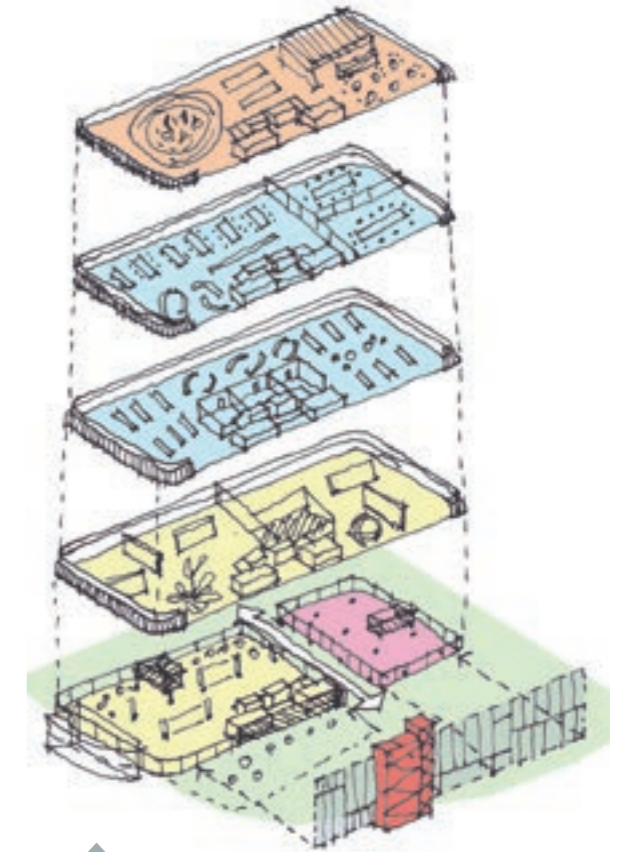
1. Norco House 1980's extension demolished;
2. Retained and refurbished Norco House to accommodate new ground floor and upper floor uses;
3. Demolition of the extension allows for more natural light to infiltrate the floor plan and allow for more flexibility of use;
4. A new pocket park, Norco Place, providing new residential and public amenity along St. Andrew Street and Loch Street. There is potential for this to become a sculpture park, outdoor exhibition space or more flexible uses civic space;
5. Appropriate new uses west of George Street could comprise of ground floor retail, food and beverage and commercial spaces with residential above activating currently quiet and uninviting sections of Loch Street and Crooked Lane;
6. Existing road infrastructure along Loch Street re-designed to create larger pedestrian space and pocket park;



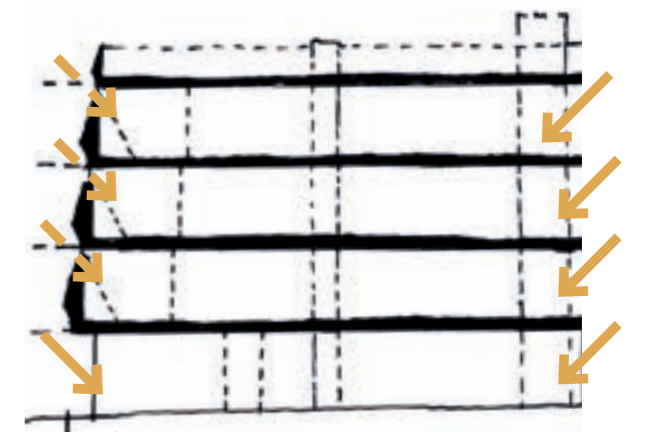
7. Alteration to elevation of Bon Accord Centre along Loch Street with potential for food and beverage units facing onto Norco Place at the ground floor.
8. Facade improvements above could include green walls, re-cladding, feature lighting or murals/ art work to bring colour to the structure;
9. St. Andrew Street streetscape improvements integrated with Norco Place
10. Sub station retained on Crooked Lane who's relocation is feasible;

- Existing buildings
- Retained buildings
- Proposed new development
- Refurbished / re-purposed
- Enhanced public realm
- Pocket Park

Illustrative layout showing how Norco House could be retained and brought back to life next to a new civic space



Flexible structure and column spacing allows for many different uses throughout the building.



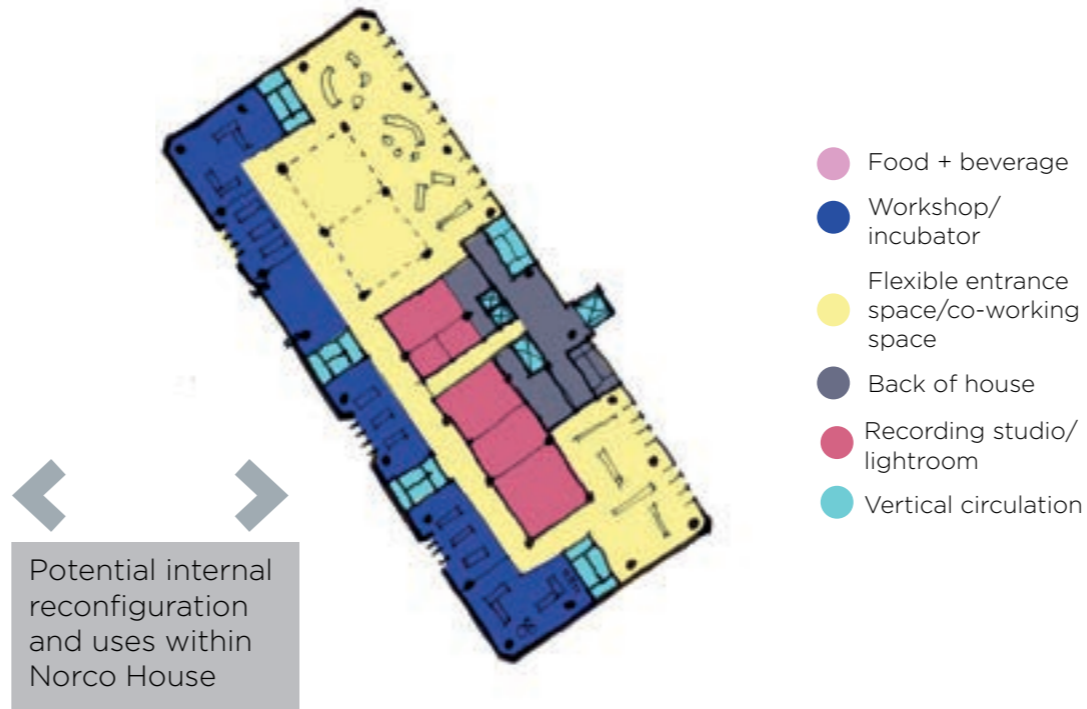
Demolition of 1980s extension allows for more natural light deeper into the plan. More natural light will allow for a greater flexibility in use.

Scenario 1 - Norco House potential uses



Ground floor plan

The proposed ground floor looks to accommodate a number of different occupants and users. The open plan and large span between columns allows for the plan to be split up for different functions. The central yellow area is accessed from George Street and provides access to the lift core to the uses above. The areas in light pink could accommodate food and beverage operators bringing day and evening activity to George Street. The dark blue spaces could be flexible workshop spaces for the community, entrepreneurs and start ups. Areas around the lift core and stair cores can act as back of house storage and plant for the different occupiers.



Potential internal reconfiguration and uses within Norco House

Typical upper floor plans

The upper floors separate the uses based upon the amount of natural light that penetrates into the floorplan. The existing facade to George Street has mostly clerestory glazing. These locations could be occupied by focused workspaces or incubator workshops that don't require large amounts of natural light and views. The middle of the plan, with the lowest levels of natural light, could accommodate recording studios, photographic light rooms, storage and plant rooms. The new glazed east facing facade could accommodate open plan co-working spaces, meeting rooms and cultural functions (e.g galleries / exhibitions) etc.

There are four lift cores in the existing building and this allows the building to be let out to multiple operators on different levels of the building. For example, the external lift onto the park could provide exclusive access to the activities on the roof, including roof top cinema, urban allotments or community performance space.



Examples of how an existing building elevation can be screened and enhanced with bold and contemporary materials



The Pompidou Centre in Paris has a distinctive building facade that looks onto a public space, creating interest and activity



The existing footings and columns of Norco House could be revealed, creating a flowing connection between building and external space

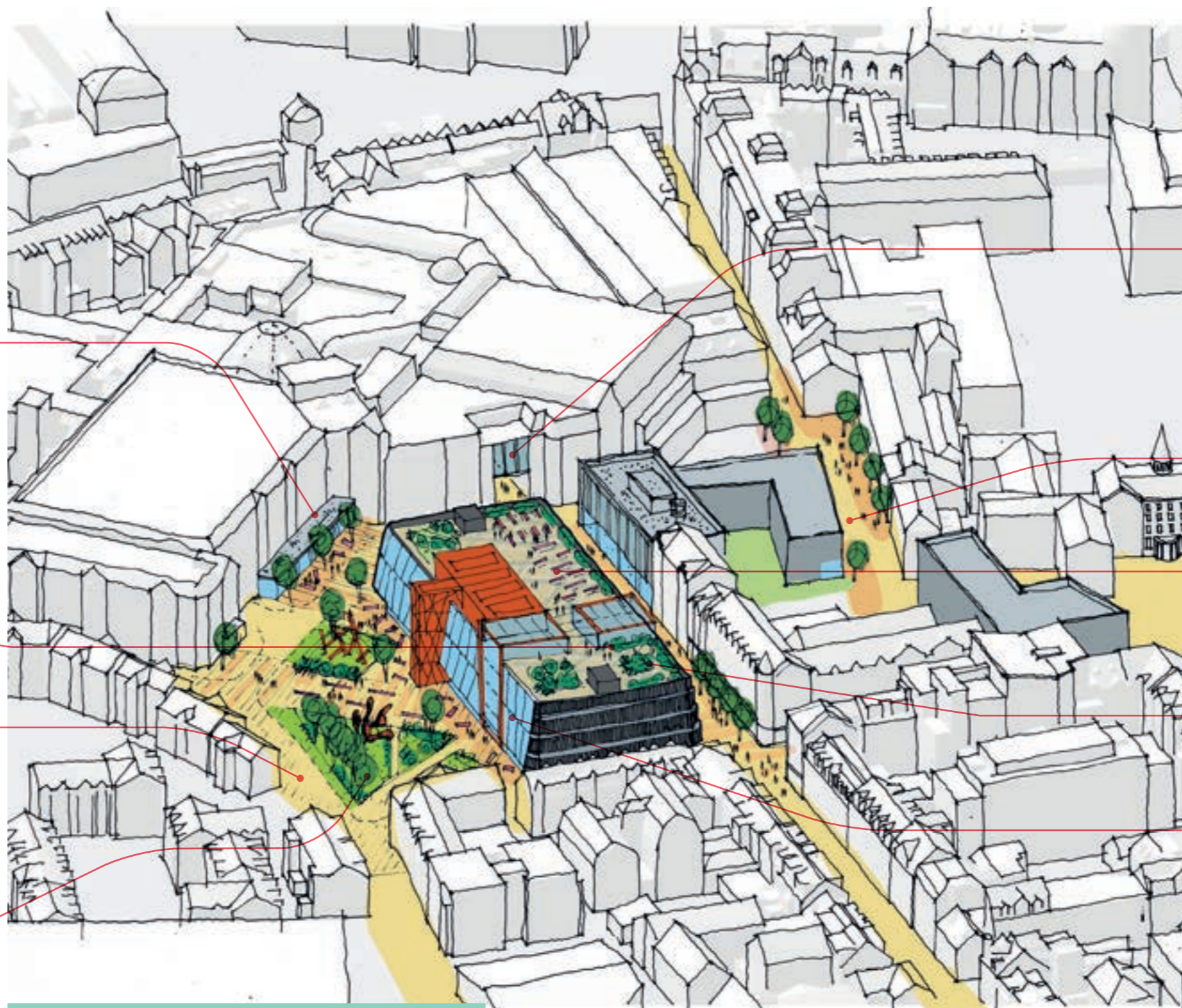
Scenario 1 - Renovation, rationalisation and re-use

Alteration of Bon Accord Centre's elevation to provide single storey cafe/restaurant/bar units to create animation onto Loch Street

Atrium cut into the existing Norco House structure to provide natural light to illuminate the link between Norco Place and George Street

Existing road infrastructure along Loch Street narrowed to create larger pedestrian space and pocket park. Park could include high quality, indigenous planting that supports a nature rich variety of habitats and pollinator friendly planting.

Norco Place: Ground floor uses from the refurbished Norco House spill out onto the new park and create animation. Potential for sculpture park and external exhibitions



Facade alteration to Bon Accord Centre to allow for better visibility into the shopping centre

Infill mixed use development. Potential for commercial/retail on the ground floor and residential above

New street trees and public realm improvements to Crooked Lane

Roof top public space

Infill mixed use development. Potential for commercial/retail on the ground floor and residential above

Making the most of roof space for solar collection, rainwater collection and sedum roofs

New glazed facade to Norco House onto the Loch Street pocket park. Glazing will allow for more natural daylight into the deep floor plan

What If!

Norco House was re-imagined as a cultural, entrepreneurial, community and mixed use hub adjacent to a new civic space in the City.

Figure 21 Indicative sketch view of Scenario 1

Scenario 2 - A Mixed Use Community

This scenario considers the full demolition of Norco House and the Norco House Extension to allow for a new mixed-use development to occupy its place.

The proposal is a mid-rise, mixed-use development accommodating residential, ground floor retail, commercial, food and beverage uses.

A new pocket park sits on the corner of George Street and St. Andrew Street to offer community focused dwell space and that is framed by ground floor active uses. This approach shifts the sense of centre towards the core of the study area and addresses the issues along Loch Street and the interface with the Bon Accord Centre.

As any future proposals were developed, any potential adverse effects on landscape/townscape characteristics should be mitigated through carefully and appropriately designed and sited development which is sympathetic with the existing character of the George Street area.

Development Approach:

1. Demolition of Norco House and its extension to create new residential led neighbourhood of scale along the southern extent of George Street.
2. Assumes residential development across all floors but could facilitate some non-residential uses on ground floor along George Street to animate the surrounding streets and public realm;
3. Combination of 3-5 storey buildings in locations which create new gateway features as well as respecting the established ridge and shoulder heights of historic buildings along St. Andrew Street;
4. New east - west connection from George Street to Loch Street;
5. Internalised, private green space and residential parking enclosed with residential development and former Soup Kitchen forming part of the setting of the space.
6. Alteration to elevation of the Bon Accord Centre along Loch Street with potential for single storey cafe/restaurant/bar units;
7. Service area entrance to north west corner of the Bon Accord Centre re-located to enter / exit onto Harriet Street



Illustrative layout showing how, if Norco House was demolished, the site could be redeveloped.

- Existing buildings
- Retained buildings
- Proposed new development
- Refurbished / re-purposed
- Enhanced public realm

New build mixed-use development. Potential for retail, commercial, food and beverage on the ground floor. Residential accommodation above.

Alteration to elevation of the Bon Accord Centre along Loch Street with potential for single storey cafe/restaurant/bar unit

Active frontage onto George Street Square

Existing road infrastructure along Loch Street narrowed to create larger pedestrian space and pocket park



Facade alteration to Bon Accord Centre to allow for better visibility into the shopping centre

Visual screening of the Bon Accord Centre Service area and car park ramp

New street trees and public realm improvements to Crooked Lane

Front doors onto Crooked Lane to provide overlooking

Infill mixed use development. Potential for commercial/retail on the ground floor and residential above.

George Street Square - Public realm pocket park at the corner of George Street and St. Andrew Street. Active frontages onto the space to animate it.



What If!

A variety of residential housing typologies within a mixed use development could be created along George Street.

Figure 22 - Indicative sketch view of Scenario 2

Transformational Project 2

Illumination

Lighting will be used across the public realm to reduce anti-social behaviour, create more welcoming environments and showcase built form character, encouraging more people to visit and use the area in the evening by creating a positive experience. The Masterplan focuses on creating a destination and using lighting for both safety and wayfinding in the following ways;

1. Lighting is responsive to the Urban Realm Design Guide, in a cohesive matte-black, improved as wall mounted lighting, to reduce visual clutter;
2. Along wider street sections, wall mounted lighting may be suitable and to illuminate cycle provision;
3. Introduce a key distinctive light installation along the length of George Street to establish the corridor as the neighbourhood spine. This could include light nets, banner lighting and centenary lighting, subject to further design development;
4. Lighting banners / illuminated signage used at entry points to the Masterplan area from George Street, Harriet Street and Loch Street to denote arrival to the area;
5. In key public spaces there will be bespoke artistic lighting interventions which help create a bespoke identity and sense of arrival to the space;
6. Explore potential bespoke wall mounted lighting which is bold and bright at the entrance to Jopp's Lane and Harriet Street to both identify these as key pedestrian routes of interest as well as a means of inviting people to travel along them; and
7. Lighting used to illuminate buildings of interest across the Masterplan including listed buildings and heritage buildings of interest. Norco House could be illuminated along its ground floor with temporary, changeable light installations as part of an activation strategy for the building.

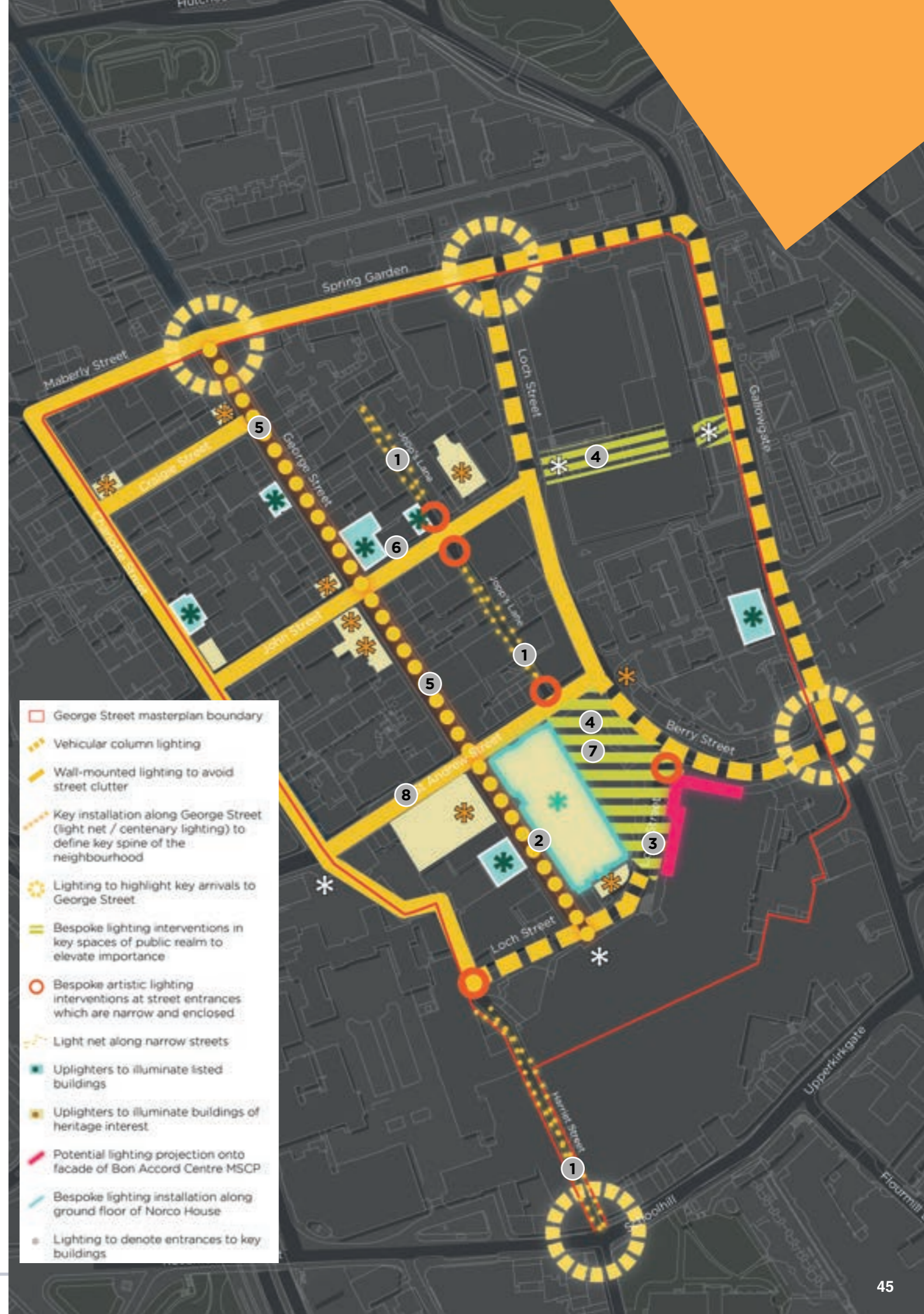
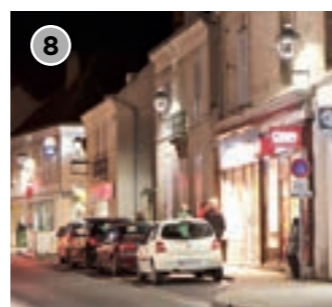
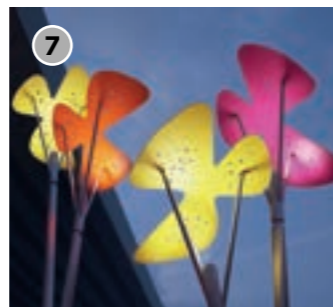
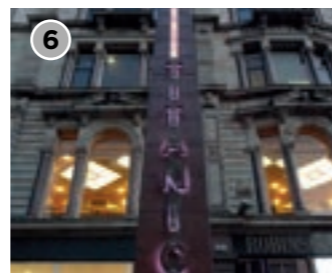
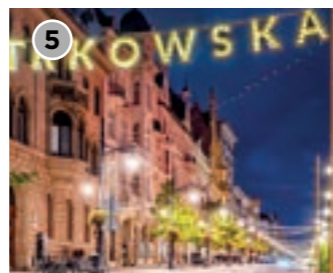
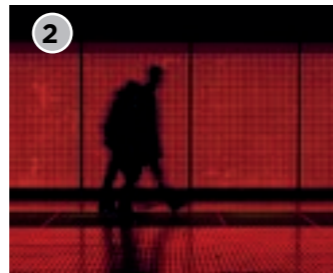


Figure 23 - Proposed Illumination Strategy Plan

Transformational Project 3

Streetscape Improvements

The existing street network presents a significant opportunity to redefine the character and vitality of George Street. This will contribute to achieving the overall objectives of the Masterplan and deliver a step change in the quality, sustainability and functionality of the neighbourhood - to support the wellbeing of existing residents, businesses and students within the George Street area.

This section sets out projects for each of the streets listed below which include opportunities for carriageway reconfiguration, increased amounts of street greening, signage, lighting, active travel and dwell space.

The projects identified for the streets below, in order of impact;

- Page 316
- George Street (between St. Andrew Street and Bon Accord Centre)
 - George Street (between St. Andrew Street and John Street)
 - Harriet Street
 - Gallowgate
 - George Street (between John Street to Spring Garden)
 - Craigie Street
 - Loch Street
 - Berry Street through to Gallowgate
 - St. Andrew Street
 - John Street
 - Charlotte Street
 - Jopp's Lane
 - Spring Garden

Although these are illustrative proposals and subject to further design development, testing and consultation, they are intended to provide inspiration for what could be achieved as part of a holistic approach to 'place' across the Masterplan.

In developing streetscape proposals consideration of context and materials to complement the existing desirable place characteristics are guided by the place and movement evaluation as well as space uses, and with material specification from the draft Aberdeen Urban Realm Manual.

The design projects identified in this section have been supported by more detailed traffic modelling to understand the impact of the proposed changes and to ensure that any change or impact experienced is understood. As a result of the proposals, both within and surrounding the Masterplan, are known, reasonably expected and within tolerance to wider movement function across the city.

Approach to car parking

Each design looks to improve the quality of parking provision across the Masterplan. As a design objective through the next stages of design testing, street design should look to try and retain the current number of car parking spaces across the Masterplan, where possible.

Approach to Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDS)

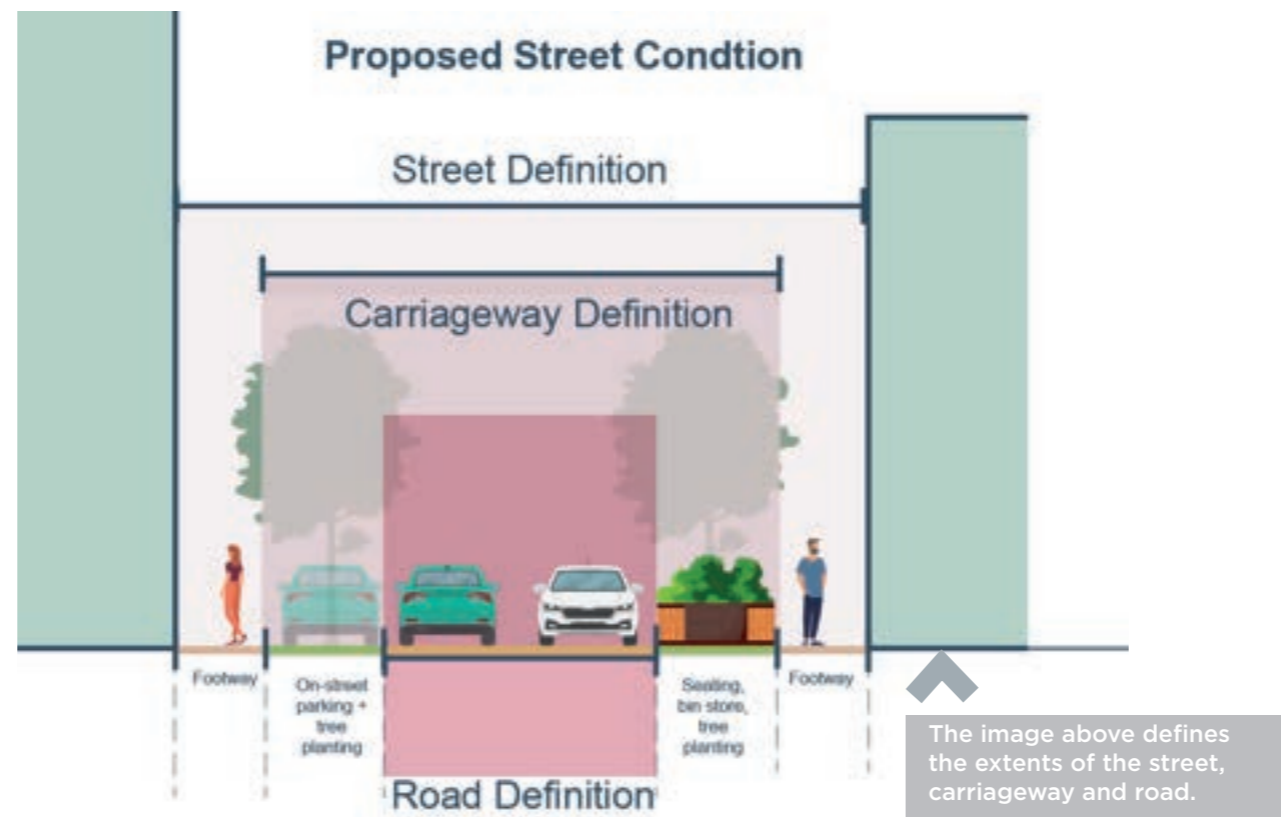
Whilst the historic and built nature of the Masterplan area may limit opportunities for SuDS in some locations, the streetscape improvements look to address surface water drainage and

stormwater issues and provide wider benefits for the community and nature. Measures including rain gardens, planters, pocket park spaces and tree planting can combine as part of SuDS approach. It will be important for the SuDS and natural flood solutions to be incorporated into the design development from the outset and allow public access once implemented.

Approach to cycling

Alongside environmental improvements to the streetscape, traffic management measures help reduce the volume and speed of traffic through the Masterplan area, making the majority of streets conducive to on-road cycling, as per 'Cycling by Design'. These are identified in the Masterplan as 'mixed streets' and where speeds and flows may limit the level of cycle accessibility, segregated facilities are proposed.

Changes in lane widths will enable cyclists to feel comfortable taking up a more positive position within the carriageway.



Approach to tree planting across the Masterplan

Street greening is a key aspiration of the Masterplan and street trees will play a fundamental role in achieving this. Where possible, street tree planting is proposed across most streets. At this stage, the current ground conditions and utility servicing are unknown and will require further investigation as designs progress. However, the implementation of new tree planting should look to work with any utility constraints. A preferred hierarchy of tree provision within the streetscape is proposed as suggestions to work around utility constraints.

1. Trees in softscape



Trees within open, unrestricted ground, as far possible, as this is best for tree growth and provides the optimum conditions for healthy tree growth.

2. Trees within underground root systems



As a result of utilities or poor quality soil, root barriers and high volume soil cells may be required to protect adjacent utility services from tree root growth and support healthy growth.

3. Trees in containers above ground



Trees planted in large, moveable containers within the public realm. Can ensure trees feature as part of the streetscape, particularly along narrow streets which lack space and/or flexibility.



Trees in moveable containers can ensure trees feature in the streetscape.

George Street (St. Andrew Street to Loch Street)

George Street will be an instantly recognisable, vibrant and colourful street that prioritises pedestrian movement and dwell space with activity spilling out from local shops, the Bon Accord Centre and the new Norco Place.

A variety of street tree planting types create contrast to the existing buildings, provide shade and shelter and help to delineate the extents of the service access.

The street is treated as one continuous pedestrian space, with a narrow 3m service strip for intermittent service access for deliveries / drop off.

George Street is the gateway to the neighbourhood from the Bon Accord Centre's northern exit and it will celebrate your arrival to the neighbourhood. Contemporary street furniture which is bold, bright and co-ordinated with signage and eye-catching super graphics help to create character and impact to the street.

Information points, signage, lighting and flexible space for temporary or pop-up events will create a more vibrant, safer and enjoyable space more of the time and change perceptions of the place.



Figure 24 - Existing street section

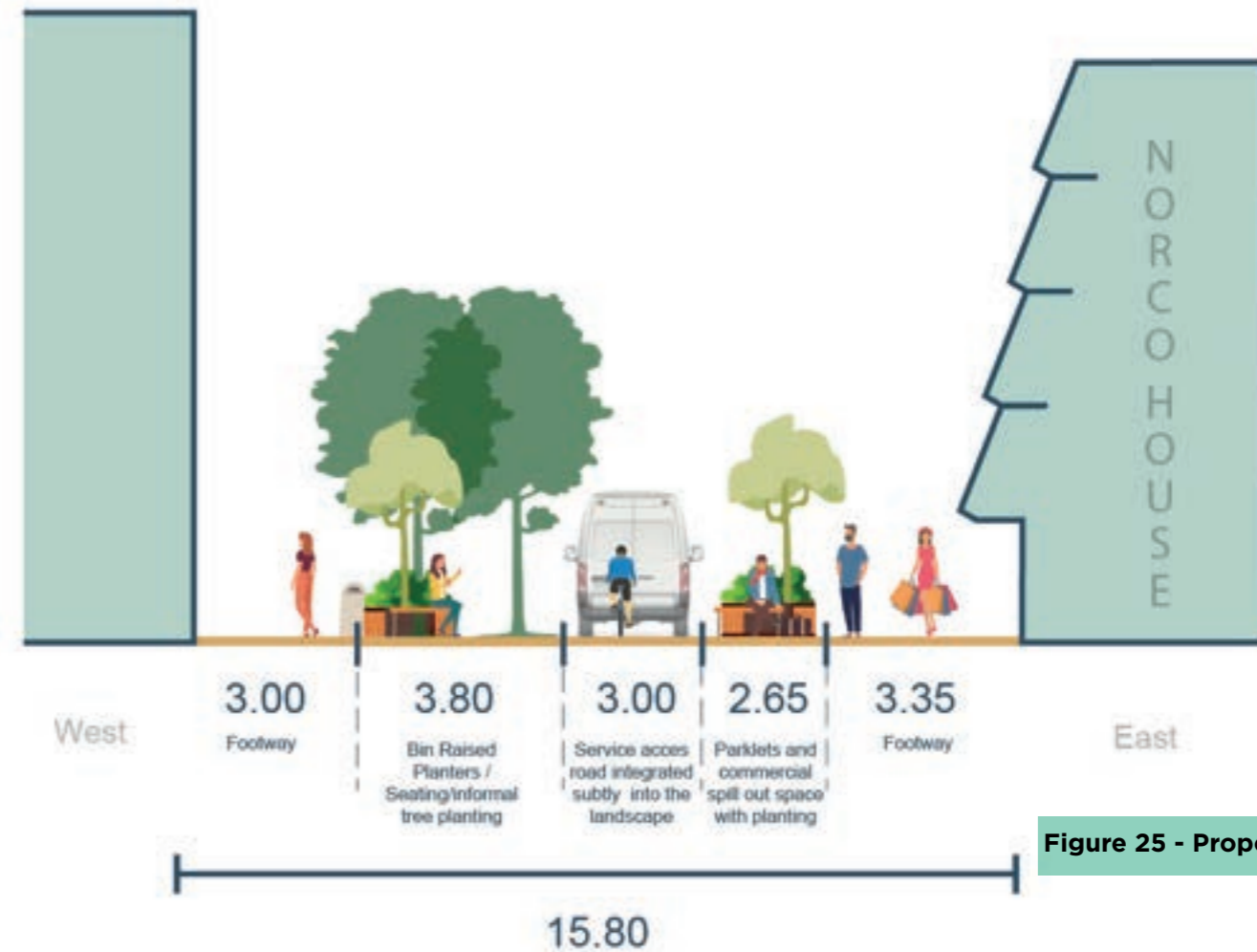


Figure 25 - Proposed street section

George Street		
Primary Street		
	Current Design	Proposed Illustrative Design
Street Design		
Typical service access road width	8.50 m	Decreased to 3m
Footpath width	3.50m / 3.80m	Increased to 6.8m / 6m (variable)
On Street parking	N	N
Loading bays	Y	Y
Materiality		
Carriageway	Setts	Granite, tonal setts
Footway	Paving slabs	Granite, tonal setts
Streetscape		
Refuse storage	Y	Y
Street planting	Y	Y - tree planting and rain gardens
Street furniture	Y	Y - various types of fixed and moveable

Table 3 - George Street Details

George Street (St. Andrew Street to Loch Street)



Carriageways can be narrowed to allow for tree planting

George Street has the potential to become an instantly recognisable streetscape, from Spring Garden to the Bon Accord Centre. The role of colour, street planting, street furniture, lighting and signage can create a continuous and animated journey through the neighbourhood.

The George Street corridor should read as the set piece streetscape through the neighbourhood, with consistent elements and streetscape features. However there are also opportunities to introduce local features and spaces along sections of George Street, depending upon the levels of activity and uses that will need to make best use of the transformed streetscape.



Weaving colour and patterns into the streetscape can create points of interest throughout the neighbourhood

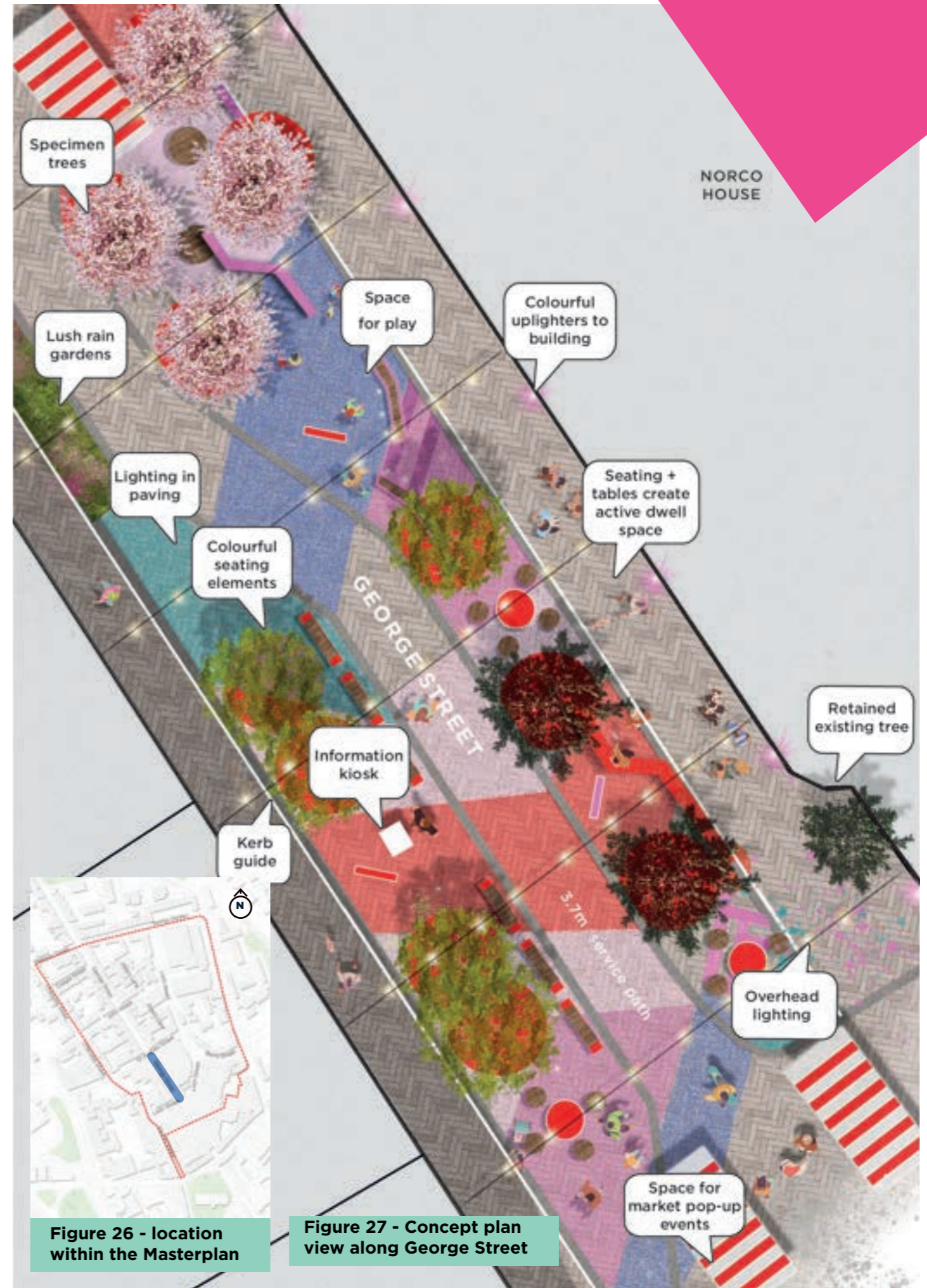


Figure 26 - location within the Masterplan

Figure 27 - Concept plan view along George Street

George Street Projects (St. Andrew Street to Loch Street)

The following projects have been identified for George Street which will contribute to securing the 'Place' objectives of the Masterplan.

Ref:	Project	Description
Appearance and Character		
1	Removal of clutter	Improvements to streetscape focused on removal of redundant satellite dishes, street signage and temporary signage to reveal built character
2	Residential front door enhancements	Working with local residents to enhance their front doors onto George St - painted, restored, highlighted through public realm materials
3	Deep clean of existing paving, street furniture and building façades	Interim works whilst longer term streetscape enhancements are developed
4	Street & pedestrian crossing colouring	Focused on junction with St. Andrew St to connect with pedestrianised section of George Street as well as John St Junction. Colouring could also be focused around the entrance points to the Bon Accord Centre and Norco House
5	Improvement to quality and consistency of shop front signage	Working with local businesses to enhance and co-ordinate shop front signage to create degree of consistency whilst still allowing for individual branding.
6	Bin storage	On-street bin storage is required on-street, provide shelters for screening
7	Refurbish and restore existing street bins, bollards, cycle stands	Interim works whilst longer term streetscape enhancements are developed
Enhanced Place Experience		
8	Overhead lighting	Located along George Street from St. Andrew Street to Bon Accord Centre, running across the street to illuminate
9	Front door lighting for residential tenements	Working with local residents to enhance their front doors onto George St
10	Uplighting and feature lighting to illuminate our special buildings	Norco House (both external uplighting and internal ground floor window lighting) as well as on listed buildings
11	Create active uses and frontage	Temporary uses within derelict buildings - specific buildings to be identified / kept under review. Create space for pop up events / markets
12	Signage and wayfinding strategy	Co-ordinated as part of wider neighbourhood signage palette and style and should be located around Bon Accord Centre entrance / exit as well as around St. Andrew Street junction. Information totems provided informing of upcoming events within the neighbourhood.
13	Install rain gardens, SuDS and planting which filters out pollutants	Raised planters & rain gardens define service access route and provide attractive integrated seating options.
14	Street tree planting	Variety of street tree types which add colour and definition to George Street. Street trees will add character and softness to the hard landscape proposals.
15	Public spaces / residential grow spaces / play streets	Introduction of adventure and informal play features as part of the public realm. Play spaces should be well defined and separated from service access route.
16	Carriageway redesign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrowing vehicle carriageway Junction radii tightening at junction with St. Andrew St Crossing build-outs at St. Andrew St junction Visual demarcation of service access route with small paving block setts
17	Street furniture and bin storage	New street furniture and bins.

Project Ref:	Project	Description
George Street as a Destination		
18	Visitor and residential information points	These could be pop up kiosks / interactive stands / live cycle counters / air quality readings etc
19	Provision of basic services.	Explore opportunity to introduce public toilets within Lower George Street
20	Improved CCTV coverage	At suitable locations e.g north of Bon Accord Centre and along Loch Street to Berry and Harriet Street
21	Encourage meanwhile uses such as pop ups, street closures, parklets etc to improve activity	Space identified for pop up markets / events / performances. Could be linked to future use of Norco House or events within Bon Accord Centre.
22	Improved street lighting	Using a variety of lighting options to illuminate the street, Overhead lighting, building up lighters, under seating lighting and wall mounted / street column lighting combined.
Reducing Vehicle Dominance		
23	More flexible use of on-street parking spaces - creating PARKlets which reclaim parking bays for socialising, play and dwell time. Create a PARK(ing) Day which could bring a festival of parklets to the area.	Spaces to be identified with local businesses. Interventions could be permanent or temporary depending upon approach. Opportunity to link with future community events / festivals etc
24	Quality of cycle parking and infrastructure	Cycle parking provision should be provided around Bon Accord Centre and other significant uses

Table 4 - George Street Projects

George Street (John Street to St. Andrew Street)

This section of George Street is to be transformed into a vibrant and bustling street that is redesigned to provide more space for people. It will visually and functionally connect with the southernmost section of George Street, redefining the function of the street, creating a new linear destination for visitors and the community.

Identified as a primary street and 'community connector' in the Masterplan, it will be reconfigured to expand the space available for pedestrians, active travel and for spill out space for local businesses. Vehicle access will be restricted to, time limited, service access only. There are opportunities to introduce new street trees, planting beds, comfortable dwell spaces, lighting and signage, all of which subtly combines to create a comfortable and distinctive destination. Service vehicle traffic is guided along the street through traffic calming and street furniture measures.

Urban parklets, pop-up commercial spaces and spaces to pause will redefine this section of George Street, encouraging discovery but also allowing time to appreciate the historic character and the vibrancy of local businesses.

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George Street (John Street to Andrew Street)		
Primary Street		
	Current Design	Proposed Illustrative Design
Street Design		
Typical carriageway width	9.86m	Decreased to c8.6m
Typical road width	6.37m	Decreased to c3m
Footpath width	2.55m / 2.17m	Increased 5.8m either side of access road
On Street parking	Y - circa 11 spaces	N
Loading bays	Y	Y
Bus route and stops	Y	N
Materiality		
Carriageway	Hot rolled asphalt	Granite tonal setts
Footway	Hot rolled asphalt	Dark grey Whinstone slabs
Streetscape		
Refuse storage	Y	Y
Street planting	N	Y - parklets, rain gardens & tree planting
Street furniture	N	Y - New street lighting, seating, bins, signage, cycle parking

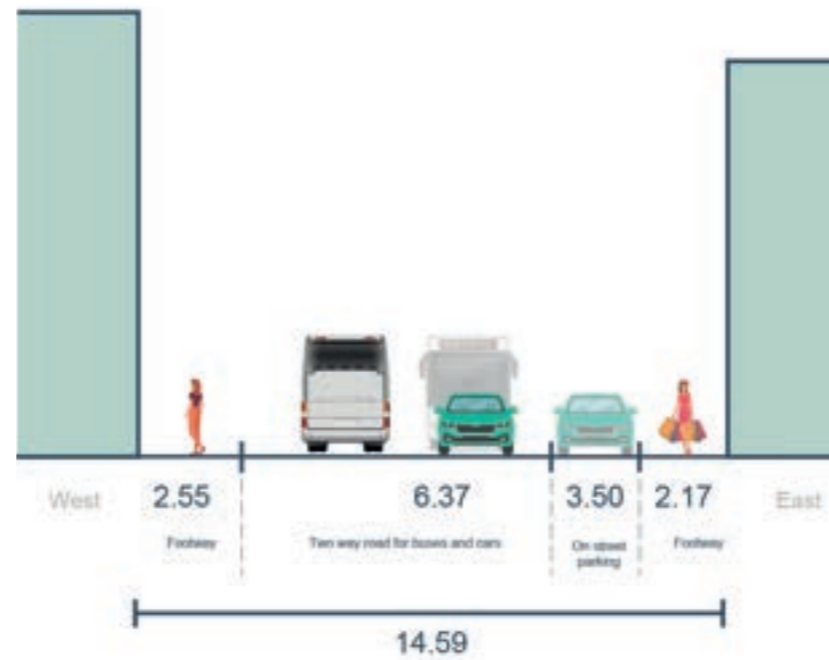


Figure 28 - Existing street section



Figure 29 - Proposed street section

Table 5 - George Street Details



Figure 31 - Concept plan view along George Street

Figure 30 - Location within the Masterplan

George Street Projects (John Street to St. Andrew Street)

The following projects have been identified for George Street which will contribute to securing the 'Place' objectives of the Masterplan.

Ref:	Project	Description
	Appearance and Character	
1	Removal of clutter	Improvements to streetscape focused on removal of redundant satellite dishes, street signage and temporary signage to reveal built character
2	Residential front door enhancements	Working with local residents to enhance their front doors onto George St - painted, restored, highlighted through public realm materials
3	Deep clean of existing paving, street furniture and building façades	Interim works whilst longer term streetscape enhancements are developed
4	Street & pedestrian crossing colouring	Included along full length of this section of George Street as well as at both John St and St. Andrew Street junctions. Colouring to be determined but could be bold bright and distinctive to George Street. Creating a visual impact that create interest and distinction - instagramable
5	Improvement to quality and consistency of shop front signage	Working with local businesses to enhance and co-ordinate shop front signage to create degree of consistency
6	Bin storage	Where on-street bin storage is required on-street, provide shelters for screening. Could include green roofs
7	Refurbish and restore existing street bins, bollards, cycle stands	Interim works whilst longer term streetscape enhancements are developed
	Enhanced Place Experience	
8	Festoon lighting / lighting net	Introduce new feature lighting along this section of George Street which could include a light net, festoon / centenary lighting as well as distinct up-stand lighters as part of the street furniture palette
9	Front door lighting for residential tenements	Working with local residents to enhance their front doors onto George St
10	Up-lighting and feature lighting to illuminate our special buildings	See lighting strategy - lighting interventions (up-lighters) to key historic / culturally significant buildings
11	Create active uses and frontage	Temporary uses within derelict buildings - specific buildings to be identified / kept under review
12	Signage and wayfinding strategy	Co-ordinated signage palette and types along George St . Design to be determined but could include current and historic information about the area as well as wayfinding.
13	Install rain gardens, SuDS and planting which filters out pollutants	Should look to introduce SuDS as far as possible to soften urban environment, bring colour and well-being opportunities
14	Introduction of street tree planting	New tree planting should be included in this section of George St, as per the tree hierarchy described earlier in this section
15	Public spaces	Introduction of play street features within the street section - temporary and permanent. Trim trails and puzzle play could work well here
16	Carriageway redesign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrowing vehicle carriageway to service access only Footway widening on both sides of street Junction radii tightening at junction with John Street & St. Andrew Street Crossing build outs at all junctions New palette of materials along all of George Street Uniform materiality along street with insets to depict service access Supergraphics to be included
17	Street furniture and bin storage	Introduce bold, colourful and contemporary new street furniture as part of the visual identity of the place. Should encourage individual and groups to sit, relax and pause comfortably.



An example image of a possible way that restricting private vehicle movement through George Street will prioritise space for pedestrians

Table 6 - George Street Projects



Figure 32 - Illustrative concept view of George Street

Harriet Street

Harriet Street is the main 24/7 connection from the heart of the city centre to George Street and experiences high levels of traffic through movements in a north bound direction. It is also a well used pedestrian route.

The street retains its northbound vehicle movement, with a reduced road width. This allows for more space to be given over to pedestrian movement along the eastern side of the carriageway and for more comfortable and safer pedestrian journeys. The junction with Schoolhill is historically narrow, creating a constrained junction for active travel. The proposed street section assumes cycle access along the carriageway as part of a 'mixed street'

The introduction of a lighting net will illuminate the street in the evenings and create a striking route through to the George Street area. Other interventions such as vertical greening along dead frontages, murals / artworks and better signage and wayfinding markers at the entrances to the street and along it will help people more easily navigate through towards George Street or the city centre.

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Harriet Street		
Tertiary Street		
	Current Design	Proposed Illustrative Design
Street Design		
Typical carriageway width	4.24m	Decreased to c3.80m
Typical road width	4.24m	Decreased to c3.80m
Footpath width	1.16m / 1.66m	Resized to 3m on eastern side
On Street parking	N	N
Loading bays	N	N
Bus route and stops	N	N
Designated cycle route	N	N - cycle friendly street
Materiality		
Carriageway	Hot rolled asphalt	Granite tonal setts
Footway	Hot rolled asphalt	Dark grey Whinstone slabs
Streetscape		
Refuse storage	N	N
Street planting	N	Y - localised vertical greening
Street furniture	N	Y - Improved street lighting

Table 7 - Harriet Street Details

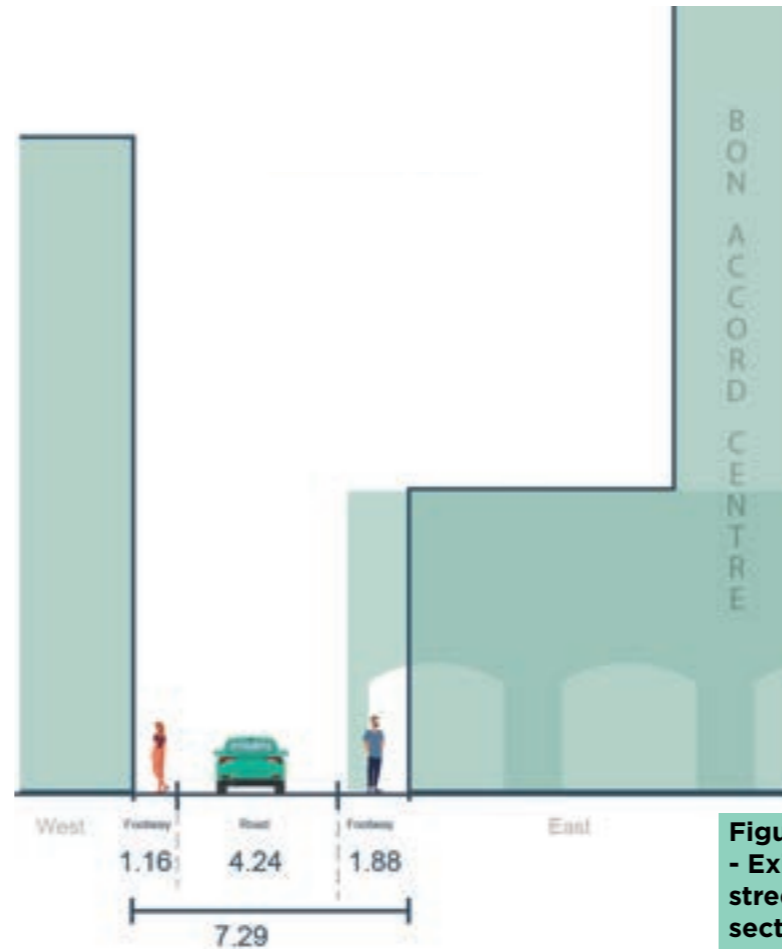


Figure 33 - Existing street section

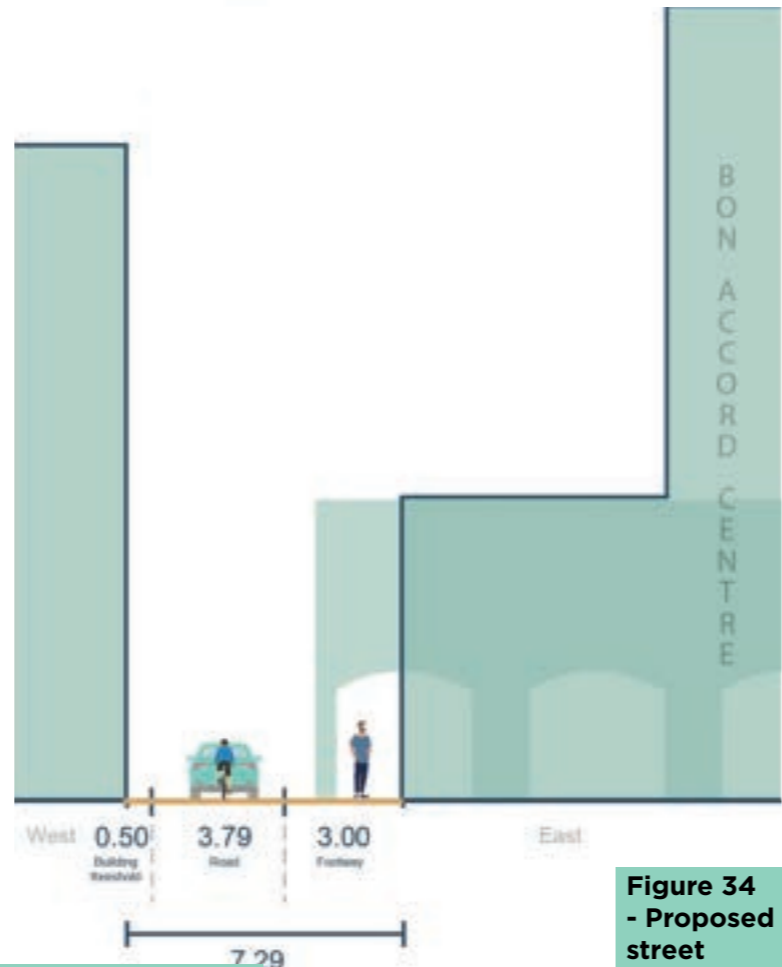


Figure 34 - Proposed street section

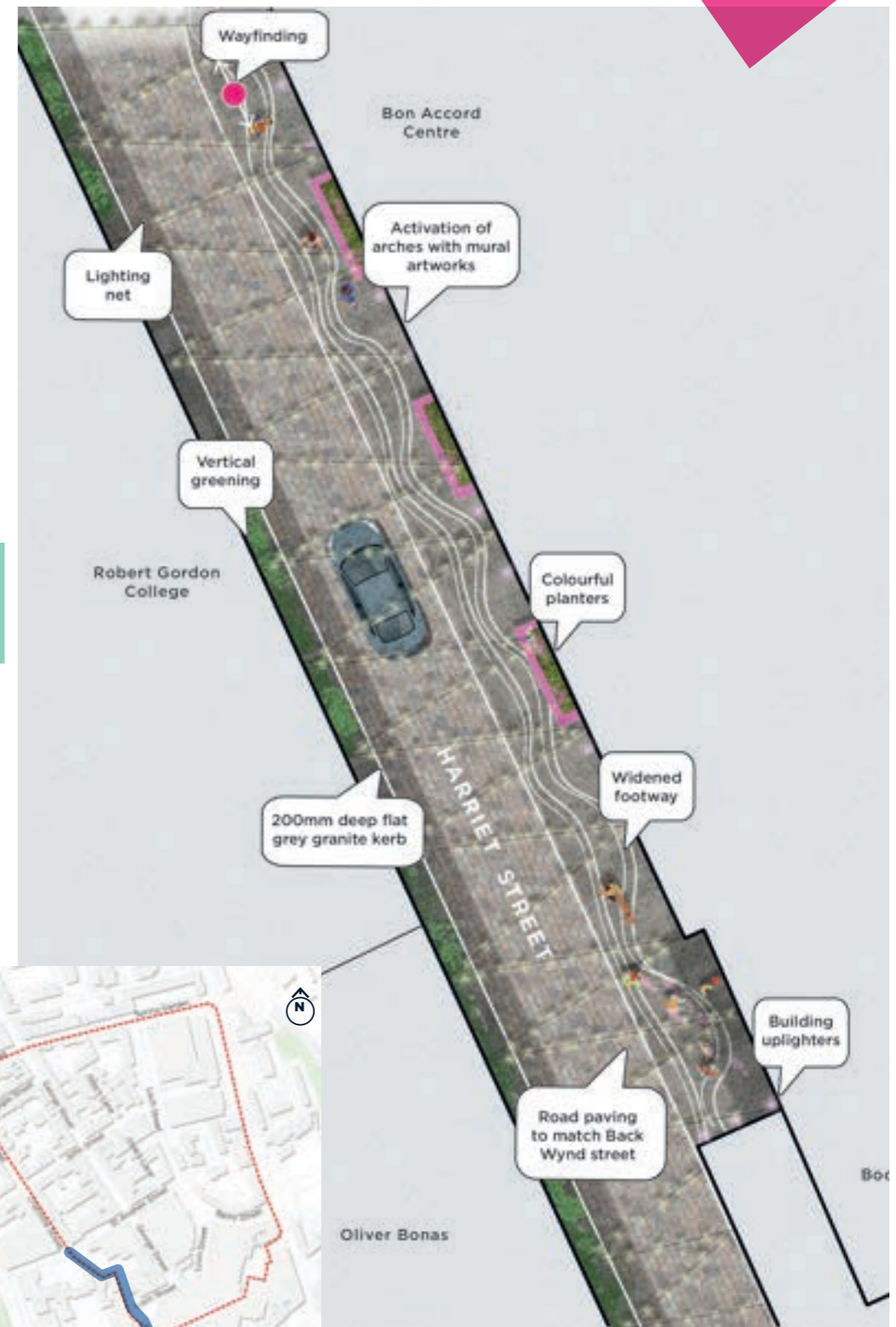


Figure 36 - Concept plan view along Harriet Street

Figure 35 - Location within the Masterplan

Harriet Street Projects

The following projects have been identified for Harriet Street which will contribute to securing the 'Place' objectives of the Masterplan.

Project Ref:	Project	Description
Appearance and Character		
1	Deep clean of existing paving, street furniture and building façades	Interim works whilst longer term streetscape enhancements are developed
2	Street & pedestrian crossing colouring	Bold colouring limited to walls, however material changes at crossings will include tonal changes. Materiality should reflect that at Back Wynd.
3	Visual screening across poor quality environments	Introduce green walls, artist installations, colour and lighting to hide or screen any visually unsightly parts of the street
Enhanced Place Experience		
4	Festoon lighting / lighting net	Localised to length between Schoolhill and Crooked Lane
5	Uplighting and feature lighting to illuminate our special buildings	Uplighting where appropriate along Bon Accord Centre.
6	Signage and wayfinding strategy	Co-ordinated signage palette and types along Harriet Street. Works in combination with festoon signage already in place.
7	Carriageway redesign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrowing vehicle carriageway Footway widening on eastern side of street New palette of materials
8	Improved provision of street furniture and bin storage	Introduce seating along Harriet Street to provide opportunities for rest and relaxation
George Street as a Destination		
9	Improved CCTV coverage	At suitable locations e.g Schoolhill junction and Loch Street junction.

Table 8 - Harriet Street Projects



Playful lighting schemes can brighten narrow lane ways



Figure 37 - Illustrative concept view along Harriet Street

George Street (Spring Garden to John Street)

This northernmost section of George Street within the Masterplan will continue to function as the neighbourhood's vibrant and diverse local 'high' street, becoming significantly enhanced, creating a more sustainable, inviting and people focused place that better manages traffic movement along it. Carriageway reconfiguration will provide more pedestrian and spill out space, will formalise parking spaces and will both physically and visually narrow the carriageway. Additions of colour and signage will help to create a welcoming and distinctive arrival to the neighbourhood from the north.

General private vehicle traffic along this primary, community connector street is allowed to travel southbound only, with bus movements allowed in both directions.

George Street (Spring Garden to John Street)		
Primary Street		
	Current Design	Proposed Illustrative Design
Street Design		
Typical carriageway width	10.15m	Decreased to 9.91m
Typical road width	7.15m	Increased to 6.2m
Footpath width	2.37m / 2.19m	Increased to 2.4m
On Street parking	Y - circa 15 spaces	Y
Loading bays	Y	Y
Bus route and stops	Y	Y
Materiality		
Carriageway	Hot rolled asphalt	Hot rolled asphalt
Footway	Hot rolled asphalt	Dark grey Whinstone slabs
Streetscape		
Refuse storage	Y	Y
Street planting	N	Y - parklets, rain gardens & tree planting
Street furniture	N	Y - New street lighting, seating, bins, signage, cycle parking

Table 9 - George Street Details



Figure 38 - Existing street section



Figure 39 - Proposed street section



Figure 41 - Concept plan view along George Street



Figure 40 - Location within the Masterplan

George Street Projects (Spring Garden to John Street)

The following projects have been identified for George Street which will contribute to securing the 'Place' objectives of the Masterplan.

Ref:	Project	Description
Appearance and Character		
1	Removal of clutter	Improvements to streetscape focused on removal of redundant satellite dishes, street signage and temporary signage to reveal built character
2	Residential front door enhancements	Working with local residents to enhance their front doors onto George St - painted, restored, highlighted through public realm materials
3	Deep clean of existing paving, street furniture and building façades	Interim works whilst longer term streetscape enhancements are developed
4	Street & pedestrian crossing colouring	Focused on junction with John Street to connect with redesigned middle part of George Street as well as at Spring Garden junction
5	Improvement to quality and consistency of shop front signage	Working with local businesses to enhance and co-ordinate shop front signage to create degree of consistency
6	Bin storage	On-street bin storage is required on-street, provide shelters for screening. Could include green roofs
7	Refurbish and restore existing street bins, bollards, cycle stands	Interim works whilst longer term streetscape enhancements are developed
Enhanced Place Experience		
8	Festoon lighting / lighting net	Introduce new feature lighting along this section of George Street which could include a light net, festoon / centenary lighting as well as distinct up-stand lighters as part of the street furniture palette
9	Front door lighting for residential tenements	Working with local residents to enhance their front doors onto George St
10	Up-lighting and feature lighting to illuminate our special buildings	See Lighting Strategy - lighting interventions (up-lighters) to key historic / culturally significant buildings
11	Create active uses and frontage	Temporary uses within derelict buildings - specific buildings to be identified / kept under review
12	Signage and wayfinding strategy	Co-ordinated signage palette and types along George St foot-ways. Signage design should be consistent with that along the southern sections of George Street towards the City Centre
13	Install rain gardens, SuDS and planting which filters out pollutants	Should look to introduce SuDS as far as possible to soften urban environment, bring colour and well-being opportunities
14	Street tree planting	New tree planting should be included in this section of George St, as per the tree hierarchy described earlier in this section
15	Carriageway redesign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrowing vehicle carriageway Footway widening on both sides of street Junction radii tightening at junction with John Street, Spring Garden & Craigie Street Crossing build-outs at all junctions Formalised parking bays on east side of street New palette of materials Potential to include temporary parklet spaces within parking areas for events to allow for more activity and dwell time
16	Street furniture and bin storage	Introduce bold, colourful and contemporary new street furniture as part of the visual identity of the place. Bin storage to be integrated through screening / improve storage



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Table 10 - George Street Projects

Craigie Street

Craigie Street is a tertiary street that has a considerably different aesthetic and function to the primary routes through the area. It is a low flow, low traffic street which presents opportunities to introduce interventions that benefit residents along it.

The key focus of transformation on this street is to slow traffic passing through, to add colour and soft landscape features to the streetscape and enhancing the environment for local residents through dwell / grow and play spaces. This change in character and better management of through traffic and on-street parking will create a people focused street for local residents..

The introduction of planting will visually narrow the carriageway and define seating areas and dwell space for local residents.

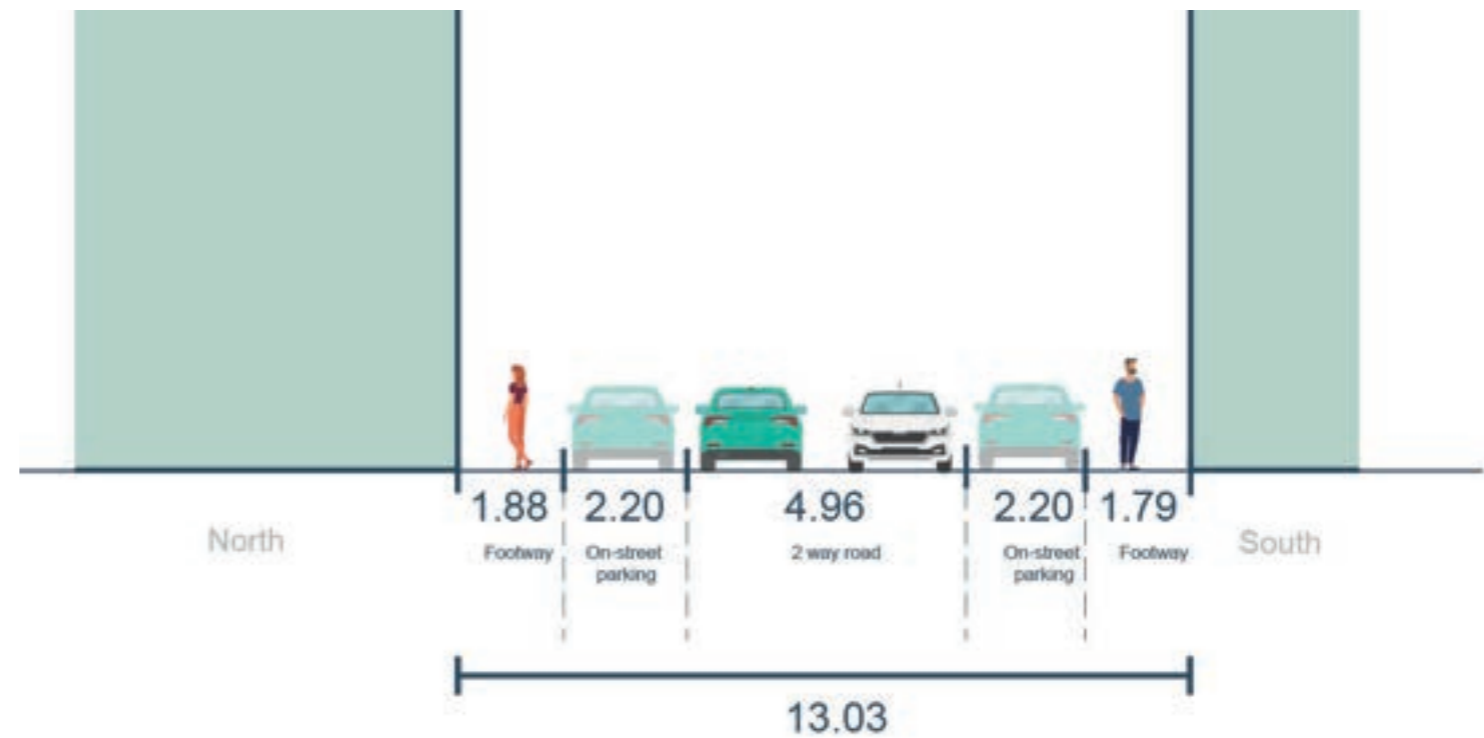


Figure 42 - Existing street section

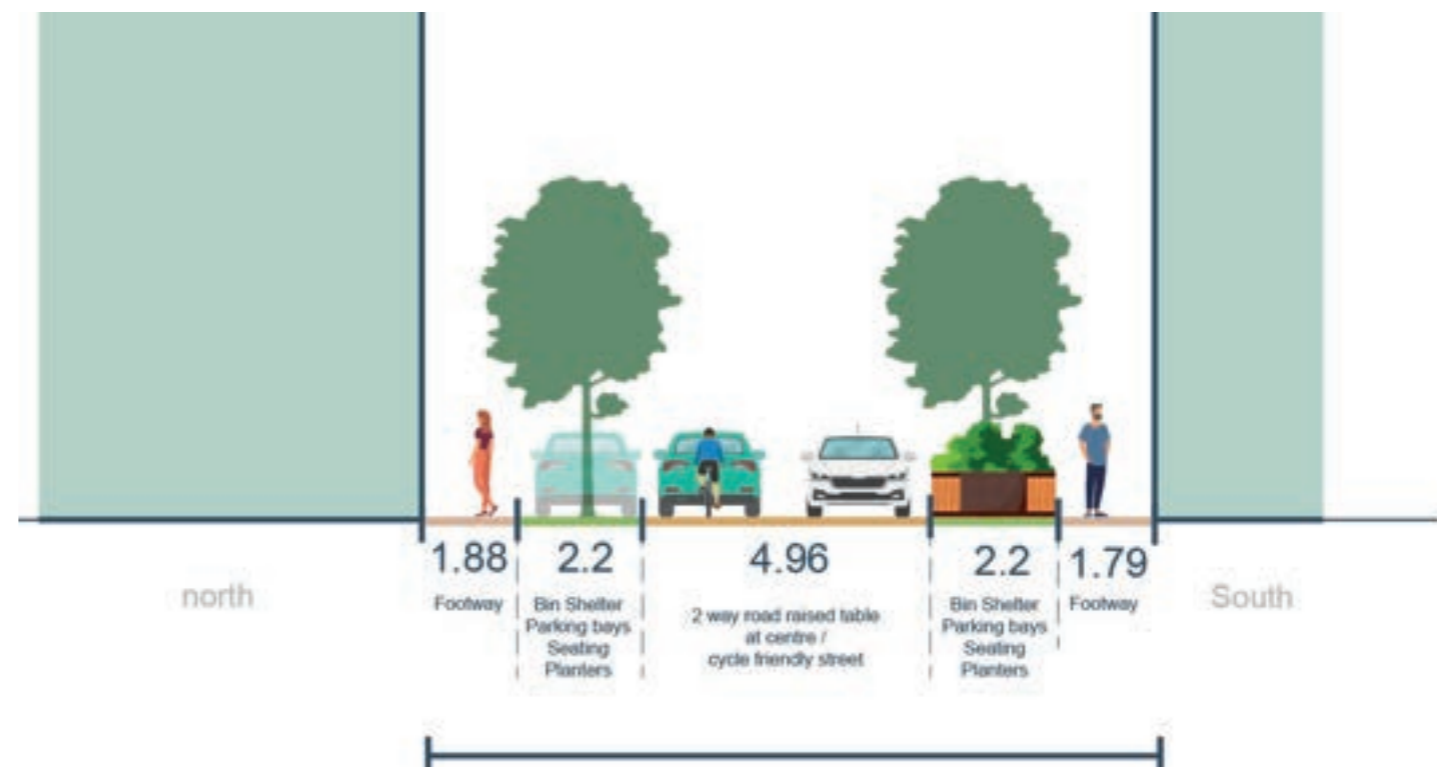


Figure 43 - Proposed street section

Craigie Street		
Tertiary Street		
	Current Design	Proposed Illustrative Design
Street Design		
Typical Carriageway width	c9.4m	c9.4m
Typical Road width	c5.0m	c5.0m
Footpath width	c1.9m / c1.8m	c1.9m / c1.8m
On street parking	Yes circa 22 bays	Formalised parking bays with footway build outs.
Loading bays	N	N
Bus route and stops	N	N
Materiality		
Carriageway	Granite setts	Granite setts
Footway	Paving slabs	Black Granite Slab / Dark grey Whinstone Slab
Streetscape		
Refuse storage	Y	Y
Street planting	N	Y - intermittently on both sides of carriageway
Street furniture	N	Y - raised planters & seating

Table 11 - Craigie Street Details

Craigie Street Projects

The following projects have been identified for Craigie Street which will contribute to securing the 'Place' objectives of the Masterplan.

Ref:	Project	Description
Appearance and Character		
1	Removal of clutter	Improvements to streetscape focused on removal of redundant satellite dishes, street signage and temporary signage to reveal built character
2	Residential front door enhancements	Working with local residents to enhance their front doors onto Craigie Street - painted, restored, highlighted through public realm materials & lighting
3	Deep clean of existing paving, street furniture and building façades	Interim works whilst longer term streetscape enhancements are developed
4	Bin storage	Where on-street bin storage is required on-street, provide shelters or visual screening
Enhanced Place Experience		
5	Front door lighting for residential tenements	Working with local residents to provide wall mounted front door lighting to improve safety
6	Signage and wayfinding strategy	Co-ordinated welcome signage palette and types, located at the entrances to Craigie Street
7	Install rain gardens, SuDS and planting which filters out pollutants.	Raised planters and build outs with sensory and pollinator friendly planting / food production within the carriageway
8	Introduction of street tree planting	Flowering street trees or fruit trees provided within the carriageway to help define parking spaces / dwell areas
9	Provision of public spaces / residential grow spaces / play streets	Introduction of play features to encourage local community interaction and active lifestyles
10	Carriageway redesign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual narrowing of vehicle carriageway Footway widening on both sides of street Junction radii tightening at junction with George Street & Craigie Street Planter build outs slow traffic movement Formalised parking bays on both sides of street
George Street As A Destination		
11	Improved CCTV coverage	At suitable locations e.g junction with George Street
Reducing Vehicle Dominance		
12	More flexible use of on-street parking spaces - creating PARKlets which reclaim parking bays for socialising, play and dwell time.	Spaces to be identified with local residents. Interventions could be permanent or temporary depending upon approach. Opportunity to link with future community events / festivals etc across the area.

Figure 44 - Concept plan of potential projects along Craigie Street

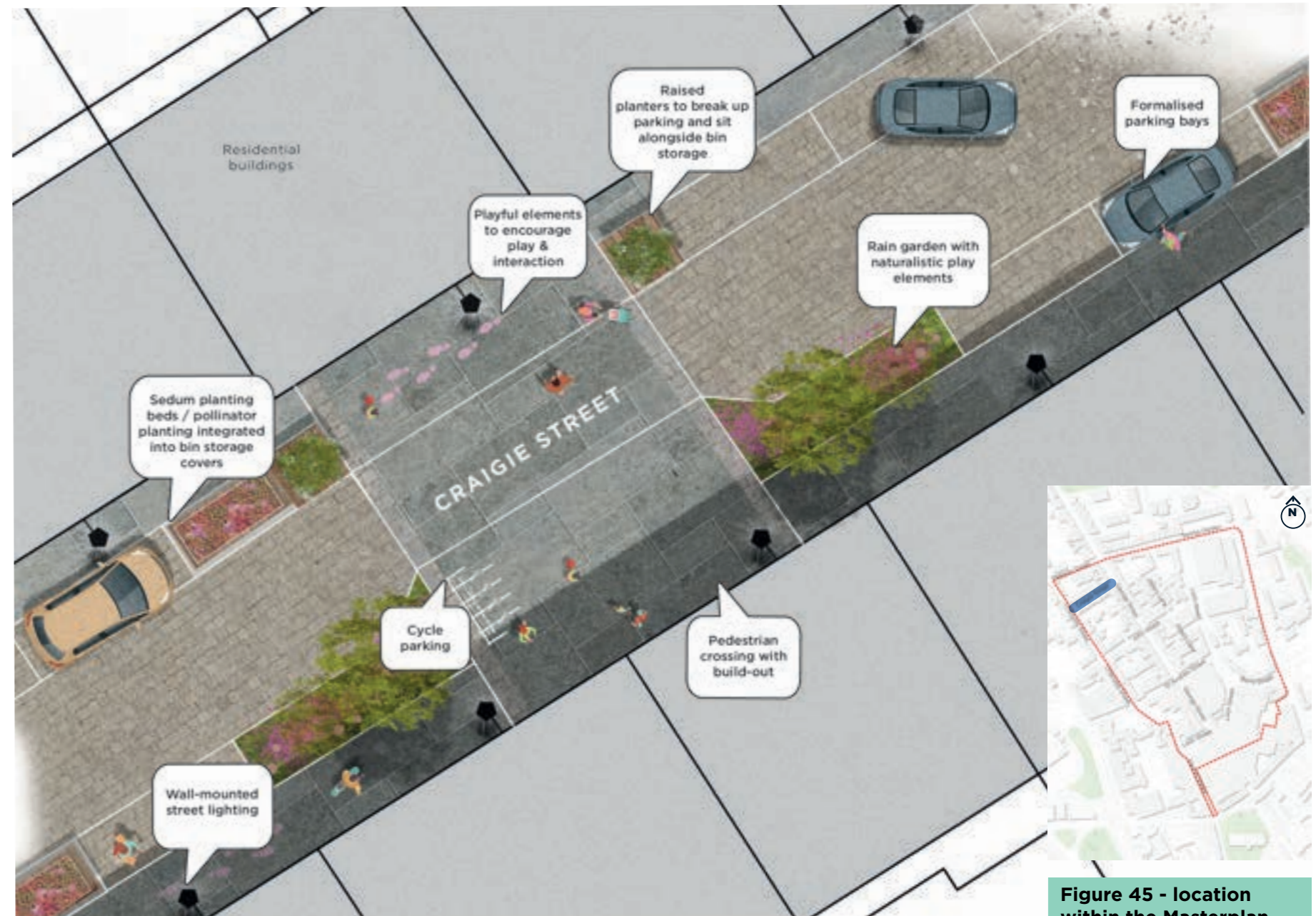


Figure 45 - location within the Masterplan

Table 12 - Craigie Street Projects

Loch Street

Loch Street is a wide street connecting Spring Garden to Berry Street in a north south direction. Its width, although not consistent along it, allows for sufficient on street parking; however it is notably dominated by vehicle movement and has limited street planting and furniture which diffuses any positive sense of place or character.

The currently wide street section will be reconfigured to provide improved active travel links to and from NESCOL. At its northernmost end, the carriageway can accommodate segregated cycle lanes in northbound and south bound directions until the street section narrows at the junction with John Street. The segregated cycle lanes continue onto the eastern end of John Street and onto the improved NCN Route along Gallowgate.

Immediately adjacent to NESCOL, there is an opportunity to introduce break out spaces, cycle storage and tree planting, providing a more user friendly space for visitors and students to the College.

Interventions in this section of the street mean a loss of on-street car parking but this could be accommodated elsewhere within the street network or could be explored further south along Loch Street. It should be noted that further south, the existing parking bays would be retained and improved.

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Loch Street		
Secondary Street		
	Current Design	Proposed Illustrative Design
Street Design		
Typical carriageway width	9.30m	Increased to 9.60m (to include cycle lane provision)
Typical road width	7.10m	Decreased to 5.60m
Footpath width	2.40m / 3.50m	Decreased to 1.80m / 2.00m
On Street parking	Y - circa 17 spaces + 2 accessible spaces	Y - In part where street width allows. Accessible spaces retained
Loading bays	N	N
Bus route and stops	N	N
Materiality		
Carriageway	Hot rolled asphalt	Hot rolled asphalt
Footway	Hot rolled asphalt	Dark grey Whinstone slabs
Streetscape		
Refuse storage	Y	Y
Street planting	N	Y - adjacent to college as part of breakout space
Street furniture	N	Y - New street lighting, seating, bins, signage, cycle parking

Table 13 - Loch Street Details

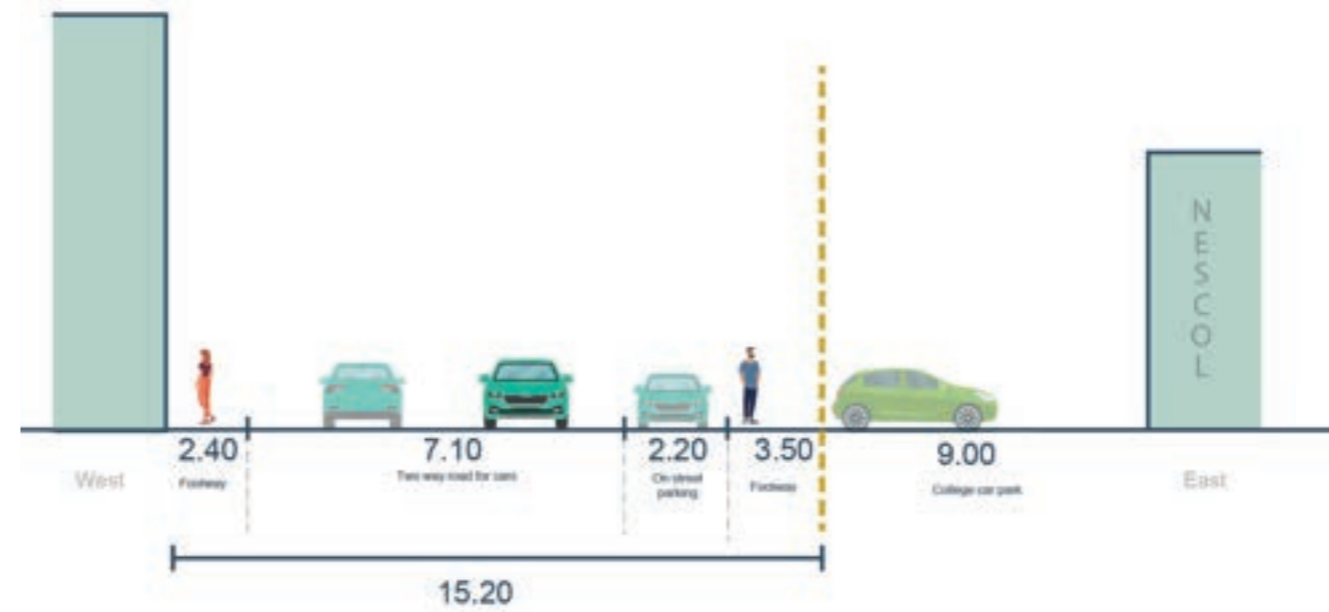


Figure 46 - Existing street section

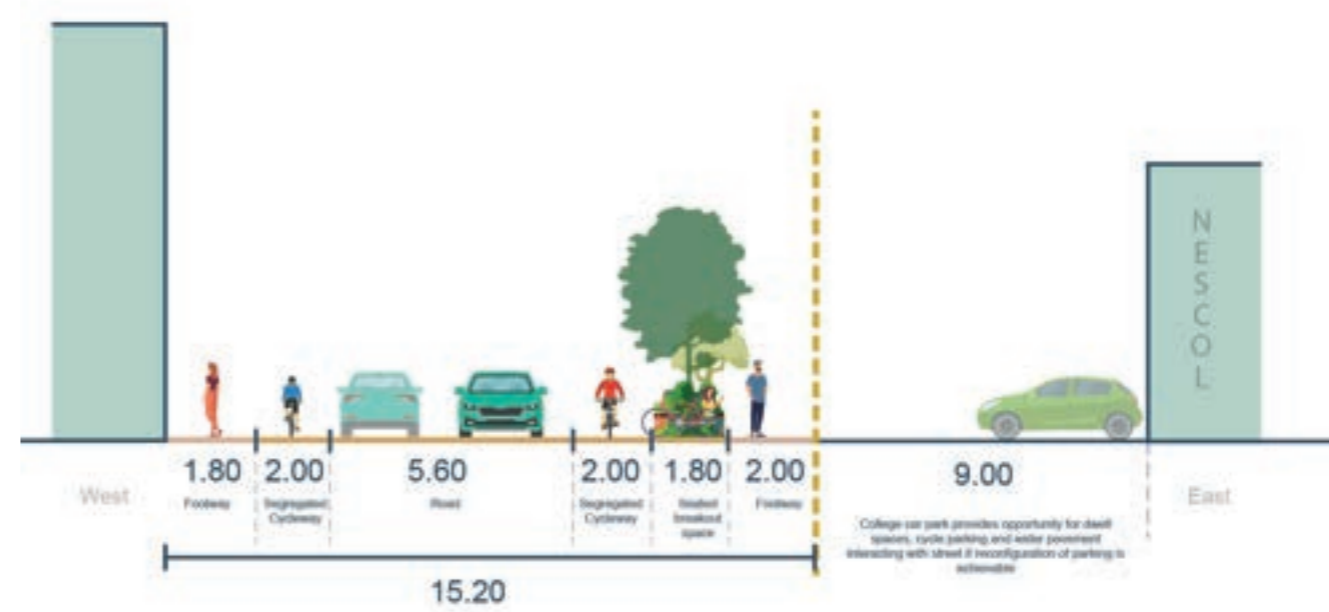


Figure 47 - Proposed street section

Loch Street Projects

The following projects have been identified for Loch Street which will contribute to securing the Place Objectives of the Masterplan.

Ref:	Project	Description
Appearance and Character		
1	Removal of clutter	Improvements to streetscape focused on removal of redundant street signage and temporary signage to reveal built character
2	Deep clean of existing paving, street furniture and building façades	Interim works whilst longer term streetscape enhancements are developed
3	Street & pedestrian crossing colouring	Focused on junction with John Street to connect with redesigned middle part of George Street as well as at Spring Garden junction
4	Visual screening across poor quality environments	Boundary of NESCOL to be activated with seating and planters, visually connecting NESCOL into George Street
5	Bin storage	Where commercial on-street bin storage is required on-street, provide shelters for screening. Could include green roofs
6	Refurbish and restore existing street bins, bollards, cycle stands	Interim works whilst longer term streetscape enhancements are developed
Enhanced Place Experience		
7	Enhanced street lighting	Introduce additional lighting along Loch Street, particularly at NESCOL, which could include distinct vehicular column lighting and wall mounted lighting as part of the street furniture palette
8	Up-lighting and feature lighting to illuminate our special buildings	See lighting strategy - lighting interventions (vehicular column lighting and wall mounted lighting).
9	Create active uses and frontage	Temporary uses within vacant buildings - specific buildings to be identified / kept under review
10	Signage and wayfinding strategy	Co-ordinated signage palette and types along Loch St foot-ways. Signage design should be consistent with that throughout the neighbourhood towards the City Centre
11	Introduction of street tree planting	New tree planting should be included along Loch St, to enhance the streetscape and visually narrow the carriageway
12	Carriageway redesign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrowing vehicle carriageway Pavement build-outs where possible Retention of on street parking where possible New palette of materials 2m cycle lane either side of carriageway Cycle parking outside NESCOL
13	Provision of street furniture and bin storage	Introduce bold, colourful and contemporary new street furniture as part of the visual identity of the place. Bin storage to be integrated through screening / improve storage

Table 14 - Loch Street Projects



Figure 48 - Location within the Masterplan

Figure 49 - Concept plan view along Loch Street

Berry Street

A key part of the street network, Berry Street will continue to perform a number of functional roles as well as providing an enhanced new visual and active travel connection into George Street from Gallowgate. This section of Berry Street provides an open, public link into the Masterplan area and onwards towards Loch Street, George Street and St. Andrew Street. It can become a positive, welcoming street that invites pedestrian and active travel through movement but limits vehicular movements.

The existing street section is wide and infrastructure dominated. There is an opportunity to reconfigure the street width and current roundabout to an arrangement that frees up land that could be a new pocket park, linked to 'Norco Place' (**Transformational Project 1**). Tightening of the street carriageways would allow for more tree planting, wider footway provision, resident and visitor seating and more SUDs and wildflower planting accommodated.

Access to the Bon Accord Shopping Centre MSCP is required and this would still be achieved via access along a suitable access route for entry which also provides service access onto Loch Street. Egress from the MSCP would be via Berry Street, with the central median removed to allow right turns. The final design approach is to be determined, but the illustrative plan below sets out a potential response to the opportunity along Berry Street. Bus, taxi and private hire movements would continue in both directions along Berry Street onto Gallowgate.



Figure 50 - Existing street section



Figure 51 - Proposed street section

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Berry Street		
Secondary Street		
	Current Design	Proposed Illustrative Design
Street Design		
Typical carriageway width	12.09m (including central reservation)	Increased to 12.44m (to include rain gardens and cycle lane)
Typical road width	5.77m / 4.72m	Increased to 6.5m
Footpath width	2.28m / 6.07m	Decreased to 2m / /Decreased to 4.50m
On Street parking	N	N
Loading bays	Y	Y
Bus route and stops	Y	Y - east bound onto Gallowgate
Designated cycle route	N	Y - 2 way from Gallowgate to Loch Street
Materiality		
Carriageway	Hot rolled asphalt	Granite tonal setts
Footway	Hot rolled asphalt	Dark grey Whinstone slabs
Streetscape		
Refuse storage	Y	Y
Street planting	Y	Y - Retain existing trees and introduce new street planting
Street furniture	N	Y - New street lighting, informal and formal seating, bins, gateway signage onto Gallowgate, cycle parking

Table 15 - Berry Street Details



Figure 53 - Concept plan view along Berry Street

The above concept plan illustrates how new public space could be created through the rationalisation of street infrastructure and reducing the dominance of vehicle movements through this area. It assumes that future proposals for Norco House propose removal of the 1980s extension, which will allow for further expansion of this space, as illustrated in **Transformational Project 1**.

Figure 52 - Location within the Masterplan



Berry Street Projects

The following projects have been identified for Berry Street which will contribute to securing the 'Place' objectives of the Masterplan.

Ref:	Project	Description
Appearance and Character		
1	Removal of clutter	Improvements to streetscape focused on removal of redundant street signage and temporary signage to reveal built character
2	Deep clean of existing paving, street furniture and building façades	Interim works whilst longer term streetscape enhancements are developed
3	Street & pedestrian crossing colouring	Included at the junction of Loch Street, St. Andrew Street and Berry Street, and including area of new public realm surrounding Norco House. Colouring to be determined but could be bold bright and distinctive to the neighbourhood. Creating a visual impact that creates interest and distinction - instagramable
4	Bin storage	Public use bins will be provided within the public realm and pocket park
5	Refurbish and restore existing street bins, bollards, cycle stands	Interim works whilst longer term streetscape enhancements are developed
Enhanced Place Experience		
6	Up-lighting and feature lighting to illuminate our special buildings	Introduce bespoke lighting within the public realm at Berry Street Norco House which could include distinct up-stand lighters as part of the street furniture palette. See lighting strategy - lighting interventions (up-lighters) to key historic / culturally significant buildings
7	Create active uses and frontage	Temporary uses within derelict buildings - specific buildings to be identified / kept under review. Vertical greening could also be applied to screen car parks and blank façades.
8	Signage and wayfinding strategy	Co-ordinated signage palette and types along Berry Street, connecting back to George Street and the City Centre. Design to be determined but could include current and historic information about the area as well as wayfinding.
9	Install rain gardens, SuDS and planting which filters out pollutants.	Should look to introduce SuDS as far as possible to soften urban environment, bring colour and well-being opportunities
10	Introduction of street tree planting	New tree planting should be included in Berry Street.
11	Public spaces	Introduction of furniture and amenities which allow people to dwell in the area and interact with its offer.
12	Carriageway redesign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion of 3m 2-way cycle lane from Gallowgate to Loch Street Car park exit to be right turn only towards Gallowgate Junction radii tightening at Berry Street to Gallowgate New palette of materials along all of Berry Street to Loch street Uniform materiality along street with insets to depict service access Supergraphics to be included Rain gardens and street planting included
13	Street furniture and bin storage	Introduce bold, colourful and contemporary new street furniture as part of the visual identity of the place. Should encourage individual and groups to sit, relax and pause comfortably.

Table 16 - Berry Street Projects



Seating included within public spaces will encourage people to sit and dwell



Rain gardens and planting will create and frame dwell spaces



Bringing colour from the street onto buildings can shape the space and create a visual identity

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St. Andrew Street (George Street to Loch Street)

St. Andrew Street is a central street within the Masterplan and is an important primary street connection that provides links from Loch Street through to Blackfriars Street.

This section of St. Andrew Street will provide two way bus services as well as west bound private car journeys. The carriageway is widened to comfortably allow for 'mixed streets' and cyclist accessibility along them.

Carriageway reconfiguration will provide street tree planting along the southern side of the street along Norco House, creating a tree lined street to compliment the environment surrounding Norco House and the proposed new public space along Loch Street.

Rain gardens, formalised parking bays and material upgrades will help to transform the quality of the streetscape and create opportunities for landscape features. New bus shelters will be set into the carriageway to create more comfortable pedestrian routes.

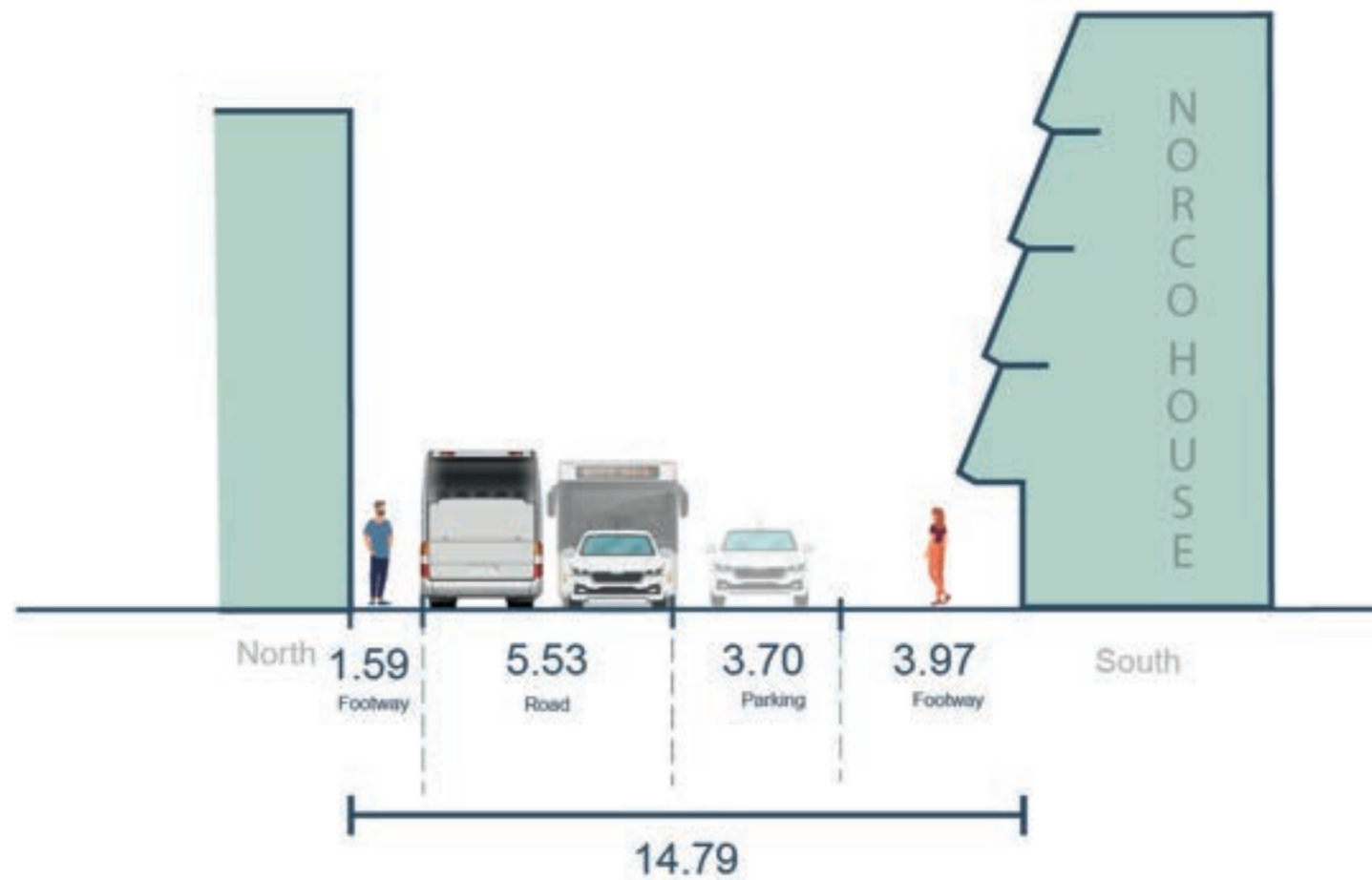


Figure 54 - Existing street section

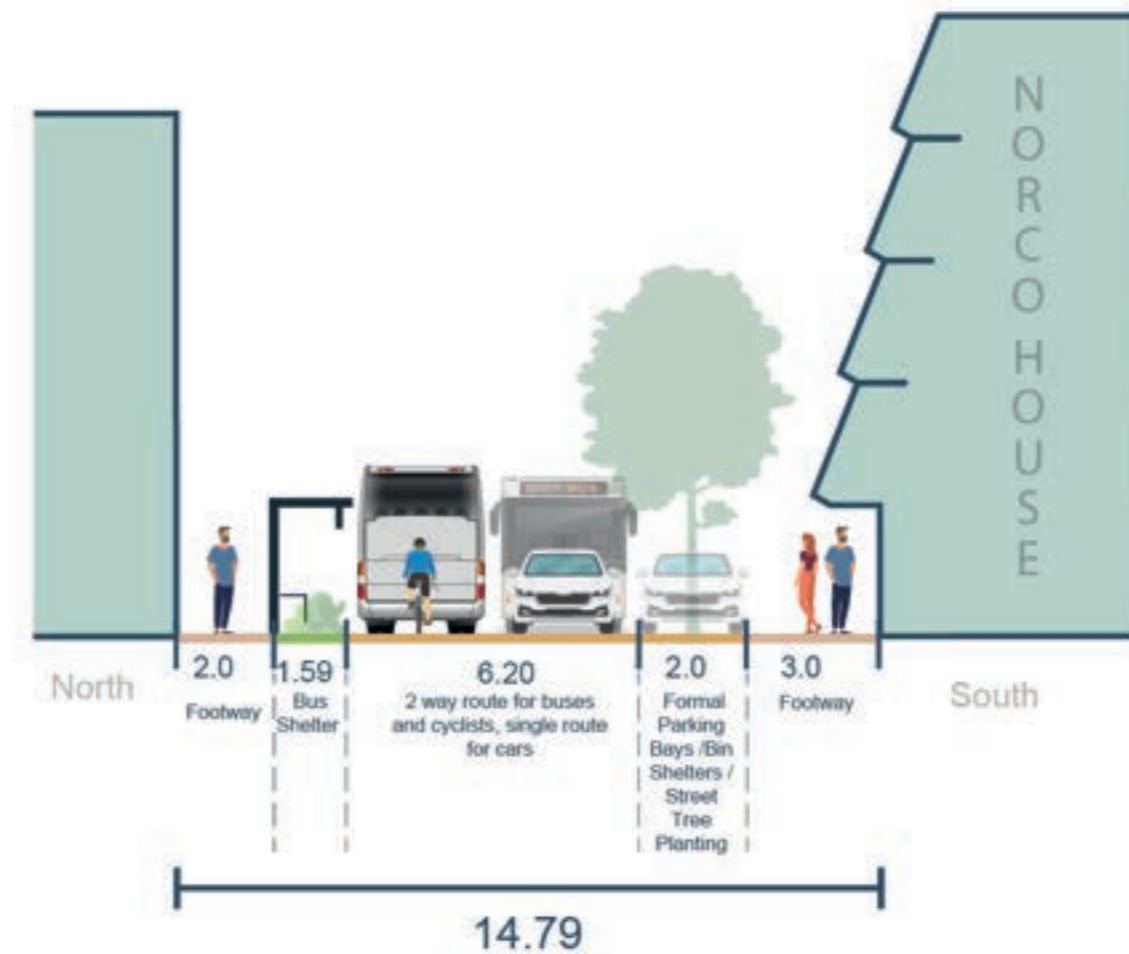


Figure 55 - Proposed street section

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St. Andrew Street (George Street to Loch Street)		
Primary Street		
	Current Design	Proposed Illustrative Design
Street Design		
Typical carriageway width	9.23	Increased to c9.8m (to include street planting, bus shelters and parking)
Typical road width	5.53m	Increased to 6.2m
Footpath width	1.59m / 3.97m	Increased to 2m / decreased to 3m
On Street parking	N / 2 accessible spaces	Retain existing number of accessible spaces
Loading bays	N	N
Bus route and stops	Y	Y
Materiality		
Carriageway	Hot rolled asphalt	Hot rolled asphalt
Footway	Paving slabs	Dark grey Whinstone slabs
Streetscape		
Refuse storage	Y	Y
Street planting	Y	Y - on both sides of carriageway
Street furniture	Y	Y - within footway provision

Table 17 - St. Andrew Street Details

St. Andrew Street (George Street to Blackfriars Street)

The character of the western section of St. Andrew Street changes to a mixed use commercial area of the Masterplan. St. Andrew Street is still an important primary street connection that provides links from Loch Street through to Blackfriars Street.

This section of St. Andrew Street will provide two way bus services as well as west bound private car journeys. The carriageway is widened to comfortably allow for 'mixed streets' and cyclist accessibility along them.

Carriageway reconfiguration will provide street tree planting along the southern side of the street. Combined with pockets of seating and new shrub planting it will create more visual screening to the street and improve the setting for existing business.

Rain gardens provide opportunities to bring more colour through perennial planting and sustainable urban drainage features to better manage surface water run-off. Combined with enhanced materials the streetscape will be significantly improved.

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St. Andrew Street (George Street to Blackfriars)		
Primary Street		
	Current Design	Proposed Illustrative Design
Street Design		
Typical carriageway width	7.67m	Increased to 8.7m (to include rain gardens and street planting)
Typical road width	7.67m	Decreased to 6.2m
Footpath width	2.69m / 2.86m	Decreased to 2m / decreased to 2.5m
On Street parking	N	N
Loading bays	Y	Y
Bus route and stops	Y	Y
Materiality		
Carriageway	Hot rolled asphalt	Hot rolled asphalt
Footway	Slabs	Dark grey Whinstone slabs
Streetscape		
Refuse storage	Y	Y
Street planting	Y	Y - on both sides of carriageway
Street furniture	Y	Y - within footway provision

Table 18 - St. Andrew Street Details



Figure 56 - Existing street section

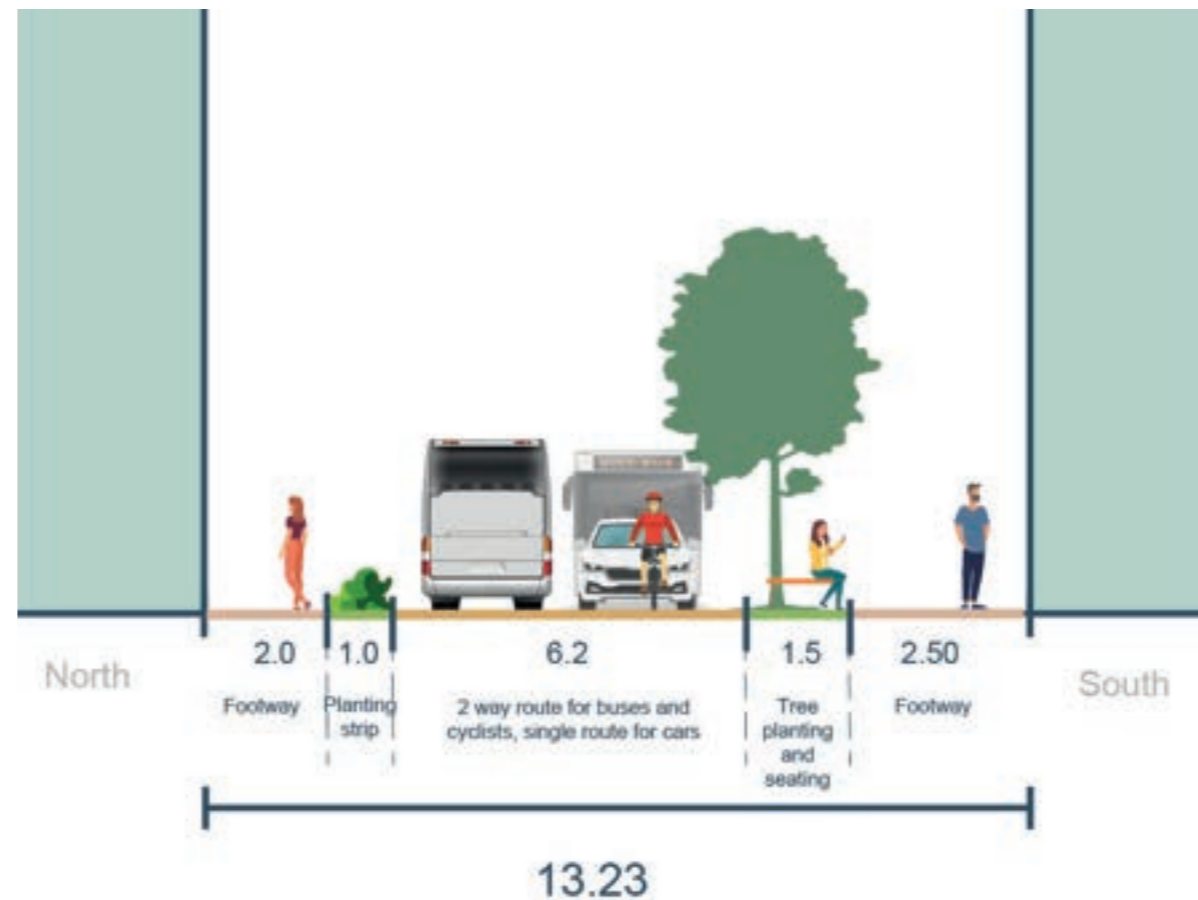


Figure 57 - Proposed street section

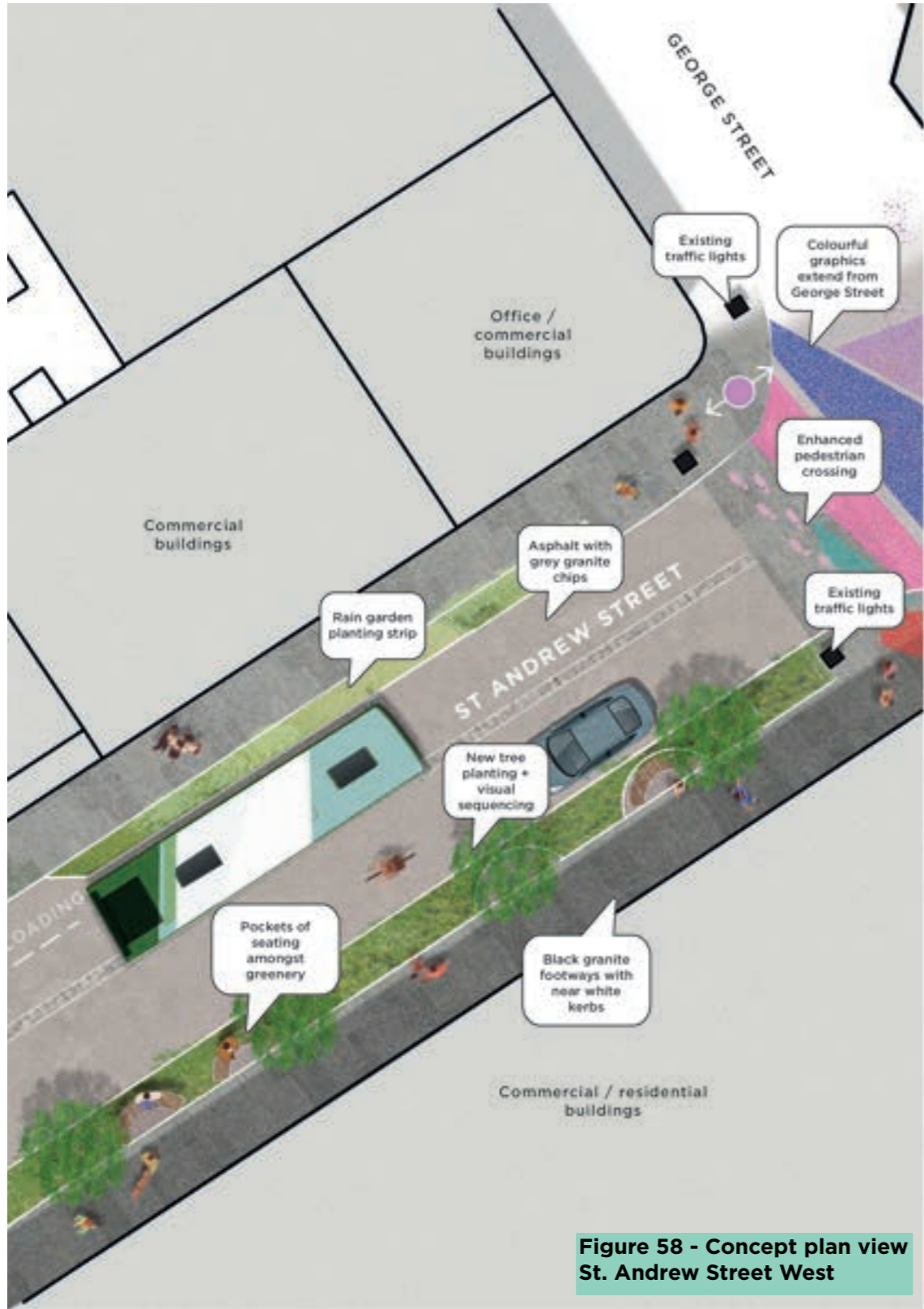


Figure 58 - Concept plan view St. Andrew Street West



Figure 59 - Location within the Masterplan



Figure 60 - Location within the Masterplan

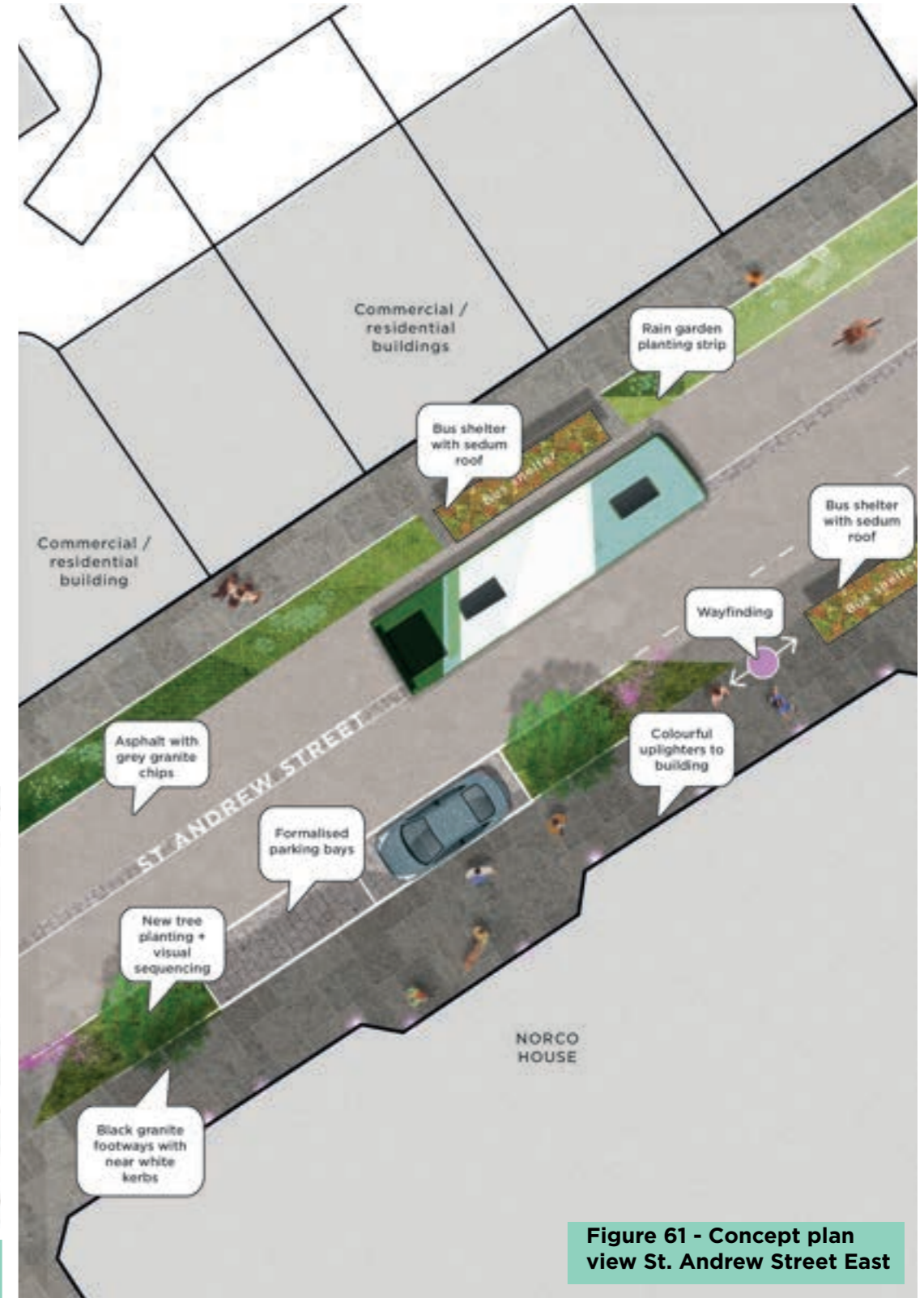


Figure 61 - Concept plan view St. Andrew Street East

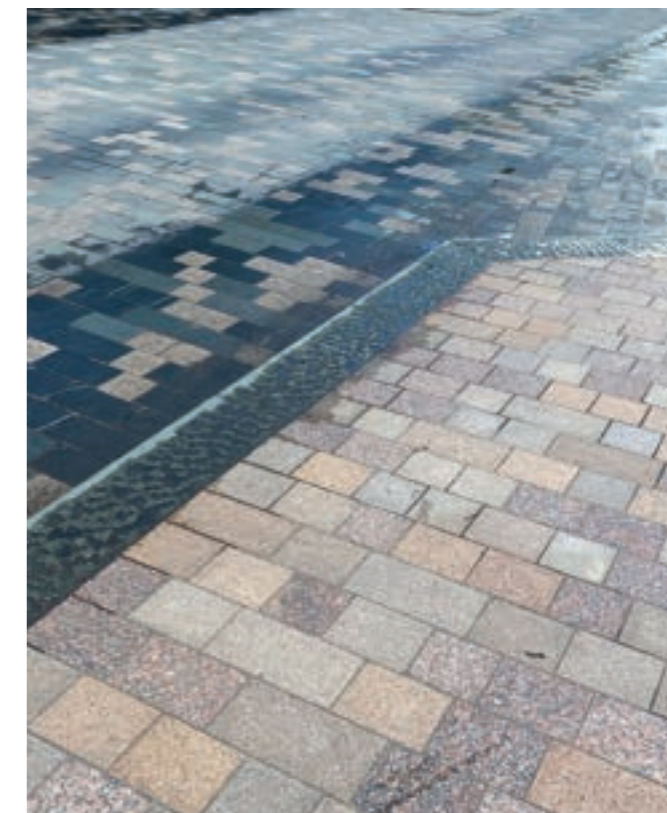
St. Andrew Street Projects (both east & west of George Street)

The following projects have been identified for St. Andrew Street which will contribute to securing the 'Place' objectives of the Masterplan.

Ref:	Project	Description
Appearance and Character		
1	Removal of clutter	Improvements to streetscape focused on removal of weeds, redundant street signage and temporary signage to reveal built character
2	Residential front door enhancements	Working with local residents to enhance their front doors onto George St - painted, restored, highlighted through public realm materials
3	Deep clean of existing paving, street furniture and building façades	Interim works whilst longer term streetscape enhancements are developed
4	Street & pedestrian crossing colouring	Focused on junctions with George Street and Jopp's Lane and Charlotte Street
5	Improvement to quality and consistency of shop front signage	Working with local businesses to enhance and co-ordinate shop front signage to create degree of consistency
6	Bin storage	Where on-street bin storage is required on-street, provide shelters for screening
7	Refurbish and restore existing street bins, bollards, cycle stands	Interim works whilst longer term streetscape enhancements are developed
Enhanced Place Experience		
8	Uplighting and feature lighting to illuminate our special buildings	Norco House (both external uplighting and internal ground floor window lighting) as well as listed buildings. Also working with local residents to enhance their front doors onto St. Andrew Street
9	Create active uses and frontage	Temporary uses within derelict buildings - specific buildings to be identified / kept under review
10	Signage and wayfinding strategy	Co-ordinated signage palette and types along St. Andrew Street. At Norco House and George Street junction, signage could be clearly positioned to direct to the Bon Accord Centre, NESCOL and further into the city centre.
11	Install rain gardens, SuDS and planting which filters out pollutants.	Footpath width decreased to allow for rain gardens / SuDS as part of streetscape softening
12	Street tree planting	Carriageway width balanced to include suitable pedestrian foot-paths and tree planting to formalise on street parking and frame the streetscape
13	Carriageway redesign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Widening carriageway to 6.2m for bus suitability Rebalancing the footway so it is evenly provided on both sides Formalised parking bays on both sides of street Repositioned bus shelters Retention of loading bays and parking where possible
14	Street furniture and bin storage	New street furniture located around Norco House and bus stops



A change in texture and colour can visually narrow the carriageway and slow down traffic



Subtle changes in materiality visually differentiate the carriageway from footways



Rain gardens planted between the carriageway and footways soften the streetscape

Table 19 - St. Andrew Street Projects

John Street (George Street to Loch Street)

This section of John Street, which is a secondary street, sees an introduction of a variety of different interventions such as street planting and carriageway narrowing, to help improve the quality of the streetscape. In particular to reduce the negative visual impact of street car parking and bin storage. The Masterplan proposes that on-street parking along the northern side of the street is formalised through new material build outs and with the introduction of street trees.

The street is also reconfigured to allow for more opportunities for additional planting, seating and commercial spill out spaces alongside a reduced footway width along the southern side of the street.

John Street (East of George Street)		
Secondary Street		
	Current Design	Proposed Illustrative Design
Street Design		
Typical carriageway width	8.05m	Increased to 9.66m (to include street planting)
Typical road width	5.85m	Decreased to 3.2m
Footpath width	2.11 / 3.70	Increased to 2.20m / decreased to 2.20m (variable)
On Street parking	Y - Circa 6 on-street spaces + Approximately 33m of single yellow line off-peak parking	Y
Loading bays	Y	Y
Bus route and stops	N	N
Materiality		
Carriageway	Hot rolled asphalt	Hot rolled asphalt
Footway	Paving slabs	Granite setts
Streetscape		
Refuse storage	Y	Y
Street planting	Y	Y - tree planting and rain gardens along both sides
Street furniture	Y	Y - various types of fixed and moveable

Table 20 - John Street Details

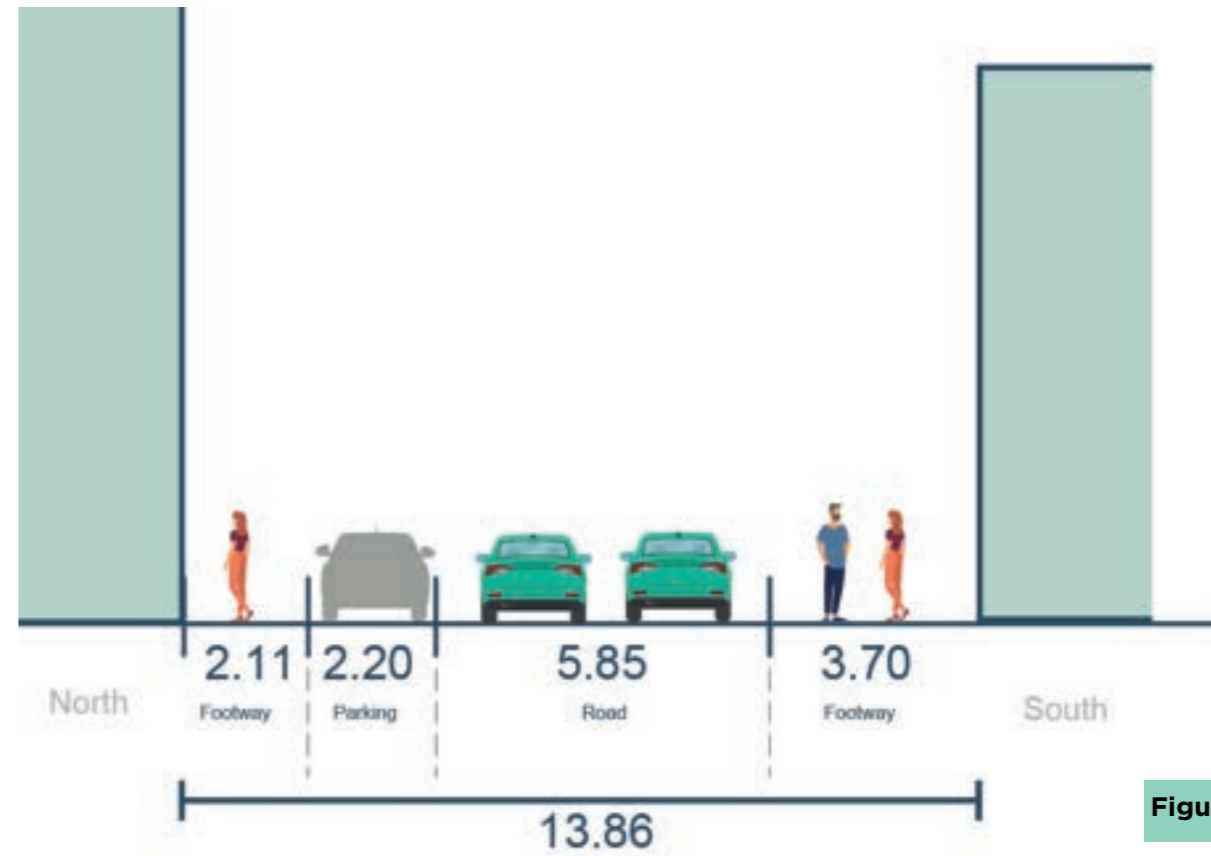


Figure 62 - Existing street section



Figure 63 - Proposed street section

Figure 64 - Concept plan of potential projects along John Street

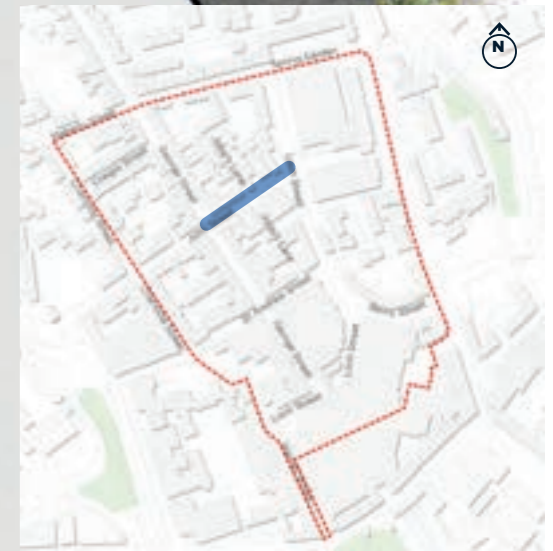


Figure 65 - Location within the Masterplan

John Street (George Street to Denburn Road)

Similarly to the eastern extent of John Street, this section leading to Denburn Road will enhance the quality of the streetscape and environment through the introduction of new street trees, bin shelter storage and rain gardens in order to soften and rejuvenate this area of the Masterplan.

John Street is also widened to provide safer provision for active travel through mixed traffic streets and bus movements in both directions. Improved materials along the footway and better visual screening of bins will help to improve the overall aesthetic of the street. More formalised parking bays will also allow for the introduction of tree planting to help break up the street scene and introduce more colour.

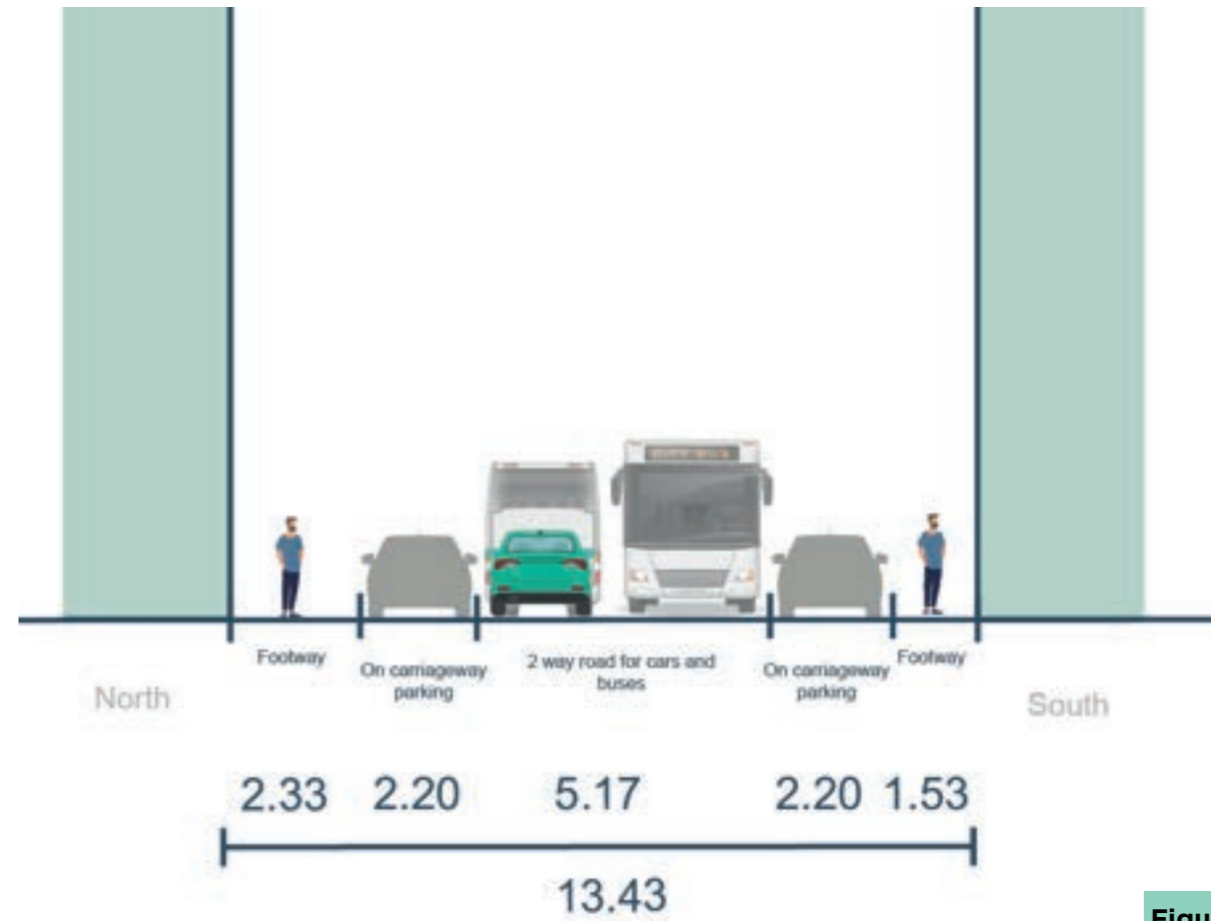


Figure 66 - Existing street section



Figure 67 - Proposed street section

John Street (West of George Street)		
Secondary Street		
	Current Design	Proposed Illustrative Design
Street Design		
Typical carriageway width	9.57m	Increased to 9.63m (to include street planting)
Typical road width	5.17m	Increased to 6.2m
Footpath width	2.33 / 1.53	Decreased to 1.8m / increased 1.80m (variable)
On Street parking	Y - Circa 15 on-street spaces	Y
Loading bays	Y	Y
Bus route and stops	Y	Y - Two way between George Street and Denburn Road
Materiality		
Carriageway	Hot rolled asphalt	Hot rolled asphalt
Footway	Paving slabs	Granite, tonal setts
Streetscape		
Refuse storage	Y	Y
Street planting	Y	Y - tree planting and rain gardens
Street furniture	Y	Y - various types of fixed and moveable

Table 21 - John Street Details

John Street Projects (both east & west of George Street)

The following projects have been identified for John Street which will contribute to securing the 'Place' objectives of the Masterplan.

Ref:	Project	Description
Appearance and Character		
1	Removal of clutter	Improvements to streetscape focused on removal of redundant satellite dishes, street signage and temporary signage to reveal built character
2	Residential front door enhancements	Working with local residents to enhance their front doors onto John Street - painted, restored, highlighted through public realm materials
3	Deep clean of existing paving, street furniture and building façades	Interim works whilst longer term streetscape enhancements are developed
4	Street & pedestrian crossing colouring	Focused on junctions with George Street, Jopp's Lane, Charlotte Street and Loch Street towards NESCOL
5	Improvement to quality and consistency of shop front signage	Working with local businesses to enhance and co-ordinate shop front signage to create degree of consistency
6	Bin storage	On-street bin storage is required on-street, provide shelters for screening
7	Refurbish and restore existing street bins, bollards, cycle stands	Interim works whilst longer term streetscape enhancements are developed
Enhanced Place Experience		
8	Uplighting and feature lighting to illuminate our special buildings	Sandman Hotel (both external uplighting and internal ground floor window lighting) as well as listed buildings. Also working with local residents to enhance their front doors onto John Street
9	Create active uses and frontage	Temporary uses within derelict buildings - specific buildings to be identified / kept under review
10	Signage and wayfinding strategy	Co-ordinated signage palette and types along John Street. At George Street and Loch Street junctions, signage could be clearly positioned to direct to the Bon Accord Centre, NESCOL and further into the city centre.
11	Install rain gardens, SuDS and planting which filters out pollutants.	Footpath width decreased to allow for rain gardens / SuDS as part of streetscape softening
12	Street tree planting	Carriageway width balanced to include suitable pedestrian footpaths and tree planting to formalise on street parking and frame the streetscape
13	Carriageway redesign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Widening carriageway to 6.2m for bus suitability along the George Street to Denburn Road section Rebalancing the footway so it is evenly provided on both sides Formalised parking bays on both sides of street Repositioned bus shelters Retention of loading bays and parking where possible
14	Street furniture and bin storage	New street furniture located around bus stops

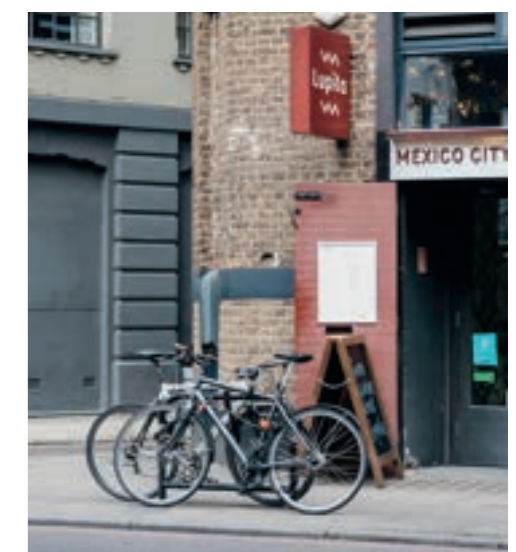


Table 22 - John Street Projects

Charlotte Street (John Street to Maberley Street)

Charlotte Street is the second of two residential streets within the Masterplan area which has a considerably different aesthetic to surrounding streets due to its materiality and residential offer, but also performs an important role in allowing traffic to travel along it, from Harriet Street and Spring Garden. The street is split into two, with a mainly residential character north of St. Andrew Street, with lower scale, historic and domestic building forms. Towards Robert Gordon's College, the street becomes more enclosed and the built form that defines it has less front doors onto street, making it feel less animated.

The street will continue to function as a residential street, however a key focus of transformation on this street is to slow traffic passing through, creating a resident and pedestrian focused environment. Pops of colour will add contrast to grey tones and new tree planting and landscape features within the street will create a more pleasant environment for local residents. This new character and aesthetic should be continued along the full length of this northern aspect of Charlotte Street.

Charlotte Street		
Tertiary Street		
	Current Design	Proposed Illustrative Design
Street Design		
Typical carriageway width	8.88m	Remains 8.88m
Typical road width	3.88m	Increased to 4.88m to support cyclist accessibility
Footpath width	3.73m / 2.22m	3.73m / 2.22m
On street parking	Y circa 47 bays	Formalised parking bays with footway build outs.
Loading bays	N	N
Bus route and stops	N (no bus route on northern section of Charlotte St)	N (no bus route on northern section of Charlotte St)
	Y (bus route only applicable to southern section of Charlotte St)	Y (bus route only applicable to southern section of Charlotte St)
Materiality		
Carriageway	Setts	Setts
Footway	Paving slabs	Black Granite Slab / Dark grey Whinstone Slab
Streetscape		
Refuse storage	Y	Y
Street planting	Y	Y - intermittently on both sides of carriageway defining car parking spaces
Street furniture	N	Y - raised planters as seating

Table 23 - Charlotte Street Details

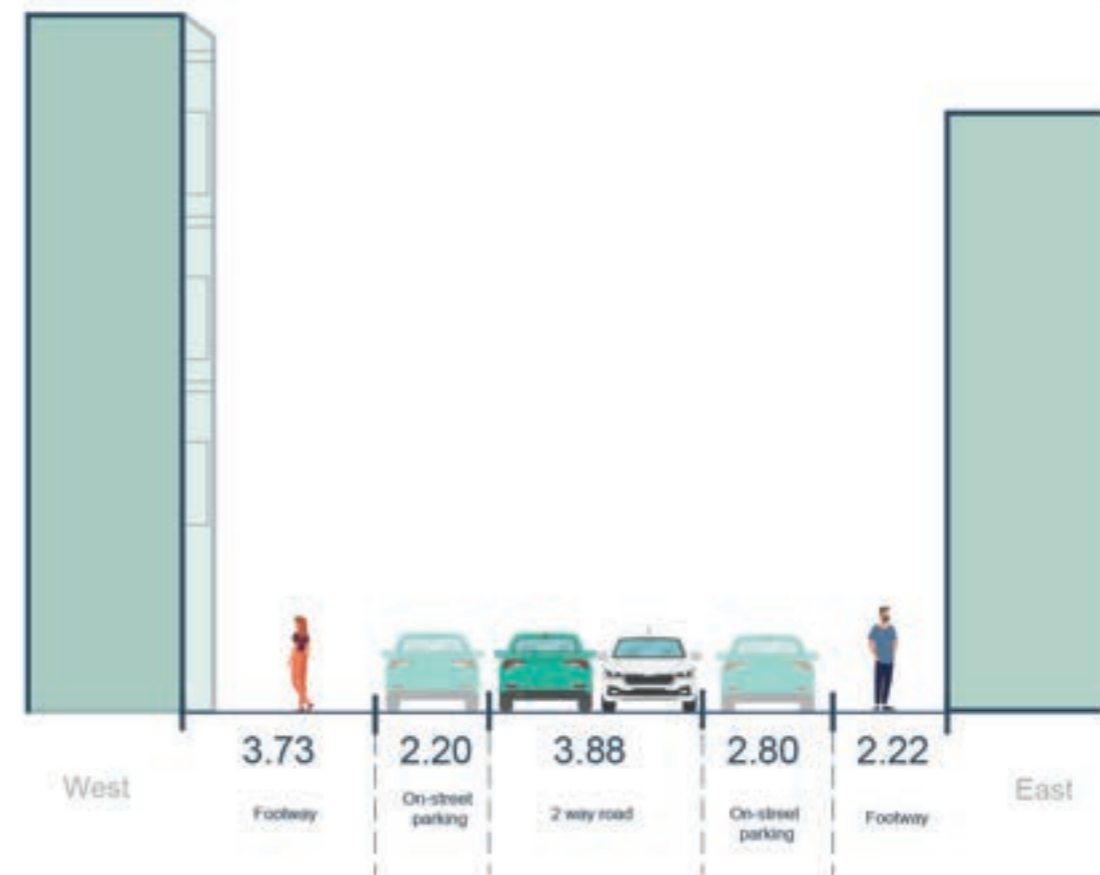


Figure 68 - Existing street section of Charlotte between John Street and Maberley Street

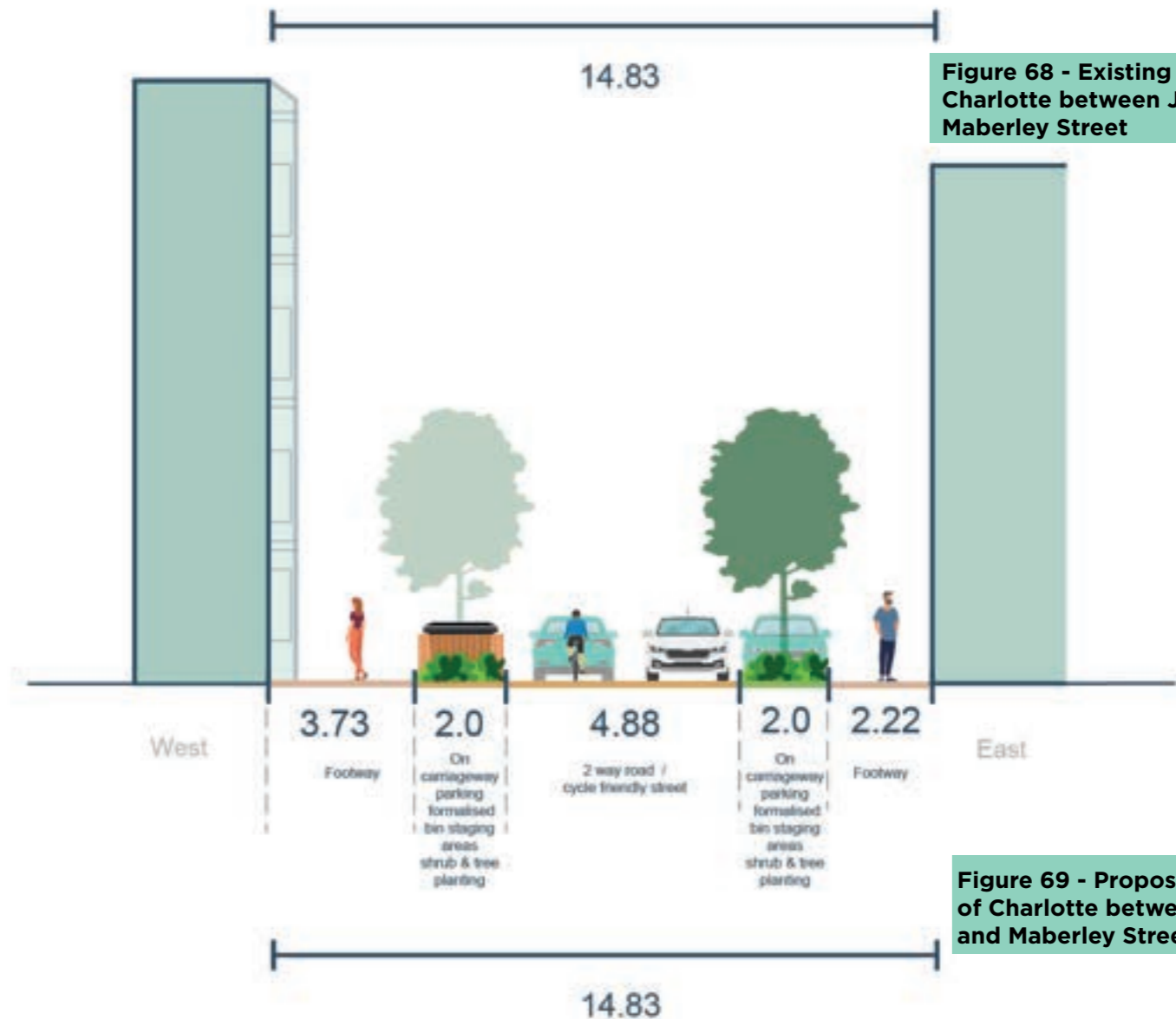


Figure 69 - Proposed street section of Charlotte between John Street and Maberley Street

Charlotte Street Projects

The following projects have been identified for Charlotte Street which will contribute to securing the 'Place' objectives of the Masterplan.

Ref:	Project	Description
Appearance and Character		
1	Removal of clutter	Improvements to streetscape focused on removal of redundant satellite dishes, particularly along western side of the street, street signage and temporary signage to reveal built character
2	Residential front door enhancements	Working with local residents to enhance their front doors at the northern end of Charlotte Street - painted, restored, highlighted through public realm materials
3	Deep clean of existing paving, street furniture and building façades	Interim works whilst longer term streetscape enhancements are developed
4	Bin storage	Where on-street bin storage is required on-street, provide shelters or visual screening
Enhanced Place Experience		
5	Front door lighting for residential tenements	Working with local residents to enhance their front doors onto Charlotte Street with wall mounted lighting
6	Signage and wayfinding strategy	Co-ordinated signage palette and types which links into the wider wayfinding strategy for the area.
7	Install rain gardens, SuDS and planting which filters out pollutants.	Footpath width decreased to allow for rain gardens / SuDS as part of streetscape softening
8	Street tree planting	Footpath width decreased to allow for street tree planting which defines on-street parking bays
9	Public spaces / residential grow spaces / play streets	Introduction of play street features
10	Carriageway redesign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rebalancing vehicle carriageway to support cyclist accessibility Footway realignment on both sides of street Junction radii tightening at junction with Charlotte Street & John Street / Maberley Street Planter build outs slow traffic movement Formalised parking bays on both sides of street
George Street As A Destination		
11	Improved CCTV coverage	At suitable locations e.g junction with John Street
12	Improved street lighting	New wall mounted and / or lighting columns within the carriageway
Reducing Vehicle Dominance		
13	More flexible use of on-street parking spaces - creating PARKlets which reclaim parking bays for socialising, play and dwell time.	Spaces to be identified with local residents. Interventions could be permanent or temporary depending upon approach. Opportunity to link with future community events / festivals etc across the area.



Figure 71 - location within the Masterplan

Figure 70 - Concept plan of potential projects along northern section of Charlotte Street



Subtle road alignments can help manage traffic speeds in residential areas



Creating comfortable pedestrian routes and rain gardens / soft planting features making better use of space available

Table 24 - Charlotte Street Projects

Jopp's Lane

Jopp's Lane is a tertiary street, has a intimate and quiet character and is home to a number of independent businesses. It is also where a number of NuArt mural works are located. It accommodates pedestrians however it is predominately used as a service access with some cars using the lower section to move through to get to their next destination.

Jopp's Lane will become a point of interest within the area, defined by a character and aesthetic than entices people to visit and explore. It will retain its informal character and become more of a shared surface route, with delineated footways, prioritising pedestrians in the area and offering a different sense of place. Colourful street furniture, vertical greening and sensory planting, festoon lighting and bold super graphics reinforce its connections with the NuArt festival and will allow people to more comfortably enjoy the character and visual interest along this unique street within the Masterplan.

The combination of proposed projects for Jopp's Lane will help to create a genuinely characterful and enjoyable environment that supports George Street's creative and artistic identity.

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Jopp's Lane		
Tertiary Street		
	Current Design	Proposed Illustrative Design
Street Design		
Typical carriageway width	4.40m	Decreased to 3.29m
Typical road width	4.40m	Decreased to 3.29m
Footpath width	1m / 0.89m	Redefined to 1.5m / 1.5m
On Street parking	N	N
Loading bays	N	N
Bus route and stops	N	N
Materiality		
Carriageway	Hot rolled asphalt	Granite tonal setts
Footway	Small concrete slabs & setts	Black Granite Slab / Dark grey Whinstone Slab
Kerb	Granite	Flush, mixed coloured granite
Streetscape		
Refuse storage	N	Y
Street planting	N	Y - moveable planters
Street furniture	N	Y - within footway provision

Table 25 - Jopp's Lane Details

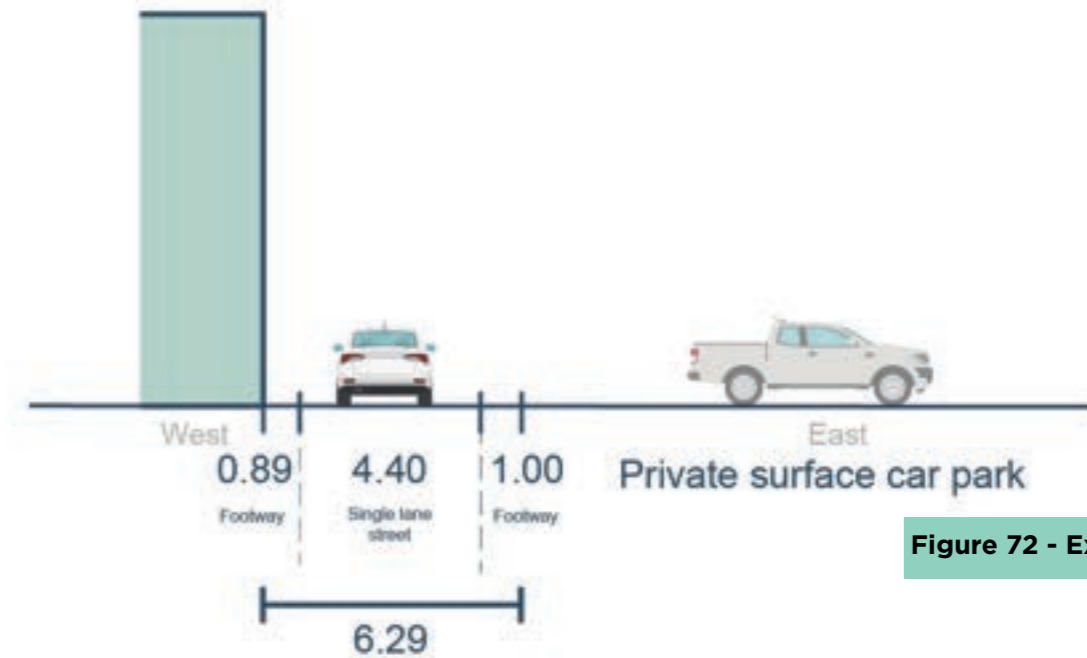


Figure 72 - Existing street section

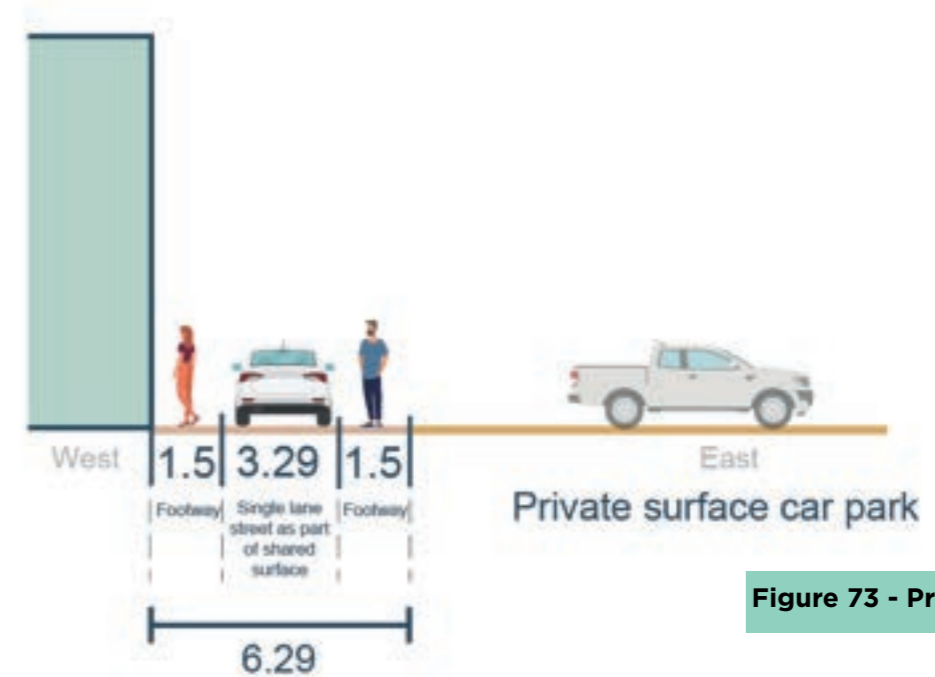


Figure 73 - Proposed street section

Jopp's Lane Projects

The following projects have been identified for Jopp's Lane which will contribute to securing the Place Objectives of the Masterplan.

Ref:	Project	Description
Appearance and Character		
1	Removal of clutter	Improvements to streetscape focused on removal of rubbish, weeds and overgrown planting,
3	Deep clean of existing paving, street furniture and building façades	Interim works whilst longer term streetscape enhancements are developed
4	Street & pedestrian crossing colouring	Encouraging mural painting and street painting across Jopp's Lane to create a fun and creative environment to walk through. Continuing this painting across John Street would connect both ends of Jopp's lane.
5	Improvement to quality and consistency of shop front signage	Working with local businesses to enhance and co-ordinate shop front signage to create degree of consistency that links back to the wider area strategy
Enhanced Place Experience		
6	Festoon lighting / lighting net	Festoon lighting located along both sections of Jopp's Lane. Opportunity to introduce distinctive and memorable lighting interventions to create a strong identity for Jopp's Lane
7	Create active uses and frontage	Temporary uses within derelict / vacant buildings to the north of Jopp's Lane, could include pop up art exhibitions, bars and restaurants to attract footfall into the area.
8	Signage and wayfinding strategy	Co-ordinated signage palette and types that link back to George Street. Signage could be positioned at John Street and St. Andrew Street.
9	Carriageway redesign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared surface route Reduced vehicular route width Junction radii tightening at junction with John Street and St. Andrew Street Distinctive crossing point at John Street and St. Andrew Street New palette of materials Inclusion of sensory planting at junction with John Street to support nearby uses
George Street As A Destination		
10	Visitor and residential information points - these could be pop up kiosks / interactive stands / live cycle counters / air quality readings etc	Encouraging street art on blank façades along Jopp's Lane will create a unique character for the area and make the area 'instagramable'. Art Streets create pockets of interest where people are encouraged to take and share photos on social media.
11	Improved CCTV coverage	At suitable locations e.g John Street and St. Andrew Street junctions.

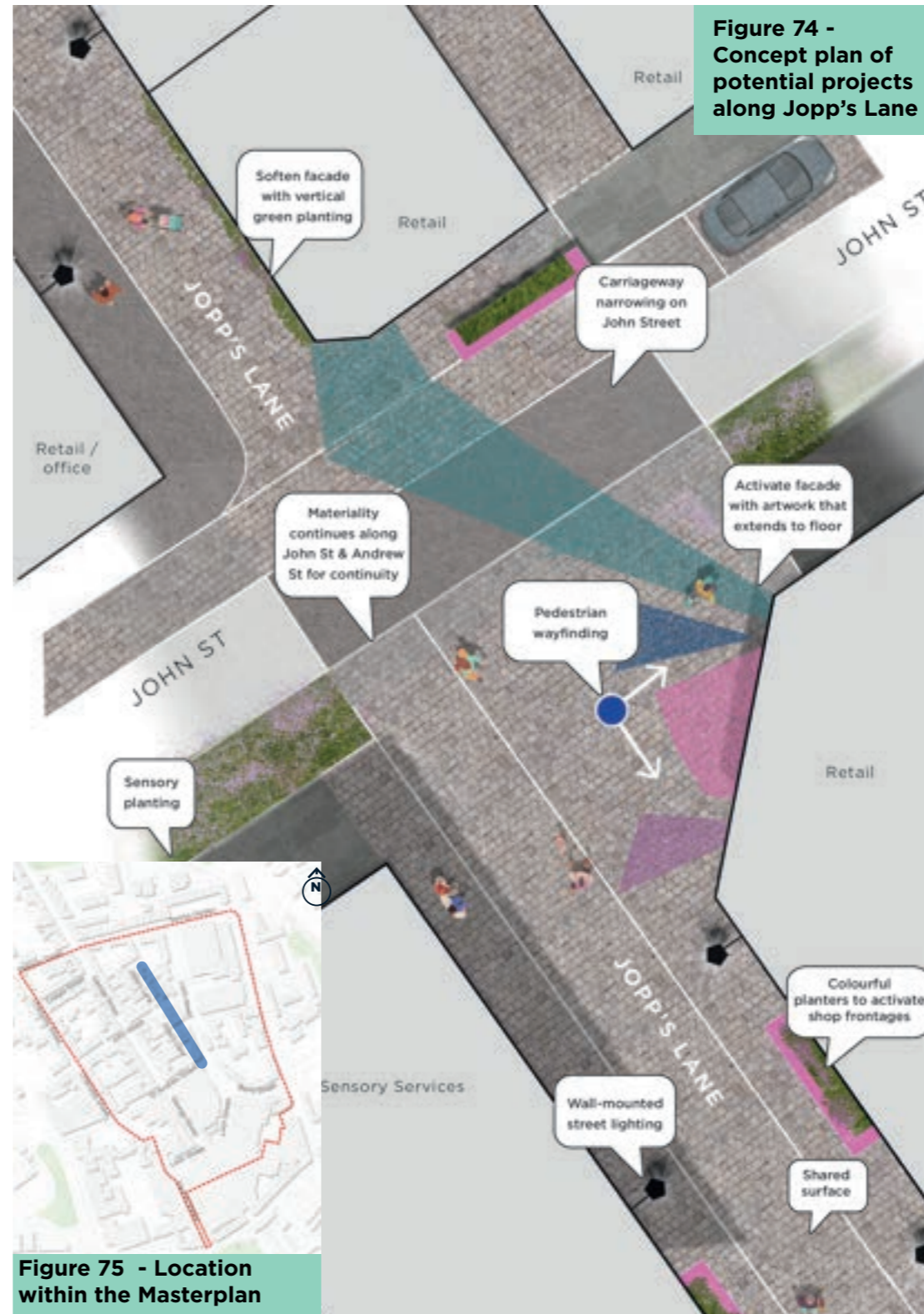


Figure 75 - Location within the Masterplan

Figure 74 - Concept plan of potential projects along Jopp's Lane



Catenary lighting creates a playful streetscape



Credit: Richard Wolfstrom

Super graphics on corners of buildings can help to invite people to explore



Credit: Richard Wolfstrom

Vertical greening helps boost the biodiversity within the area

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Table 26 - Jopp's Lane Projects

Spring Garden

Spring Garden is a peripheral route to the northern boundary of the Masterplan area, however it is a key primary street for vehicular movement from Skene Square to Gallowgate.

Spring Garden will continue to be a two way vehicular route, however the corridor will be rebalanced to create a greener environment with improved pedestrian footway provision.

Carriageway reconfiguration will provide street tree planting along its northern side and introduce rain gardens and boundary planting to help create a more pleasant environment for pedestrians and residents. Additions of colour and signage at key junctions such as Loch Street and George Street will help to create a clear and comfortable journey to NESCOL and George Street.

A 2.0m wide segregated cycle lane both east and westbound between the junction with Gallowgate and the junction with Loch Street would be included, with the rest of Spring Garden functioning as a mixed traffic street. This will allow for a safe cycle connection from the NCN1 to NESCOL.

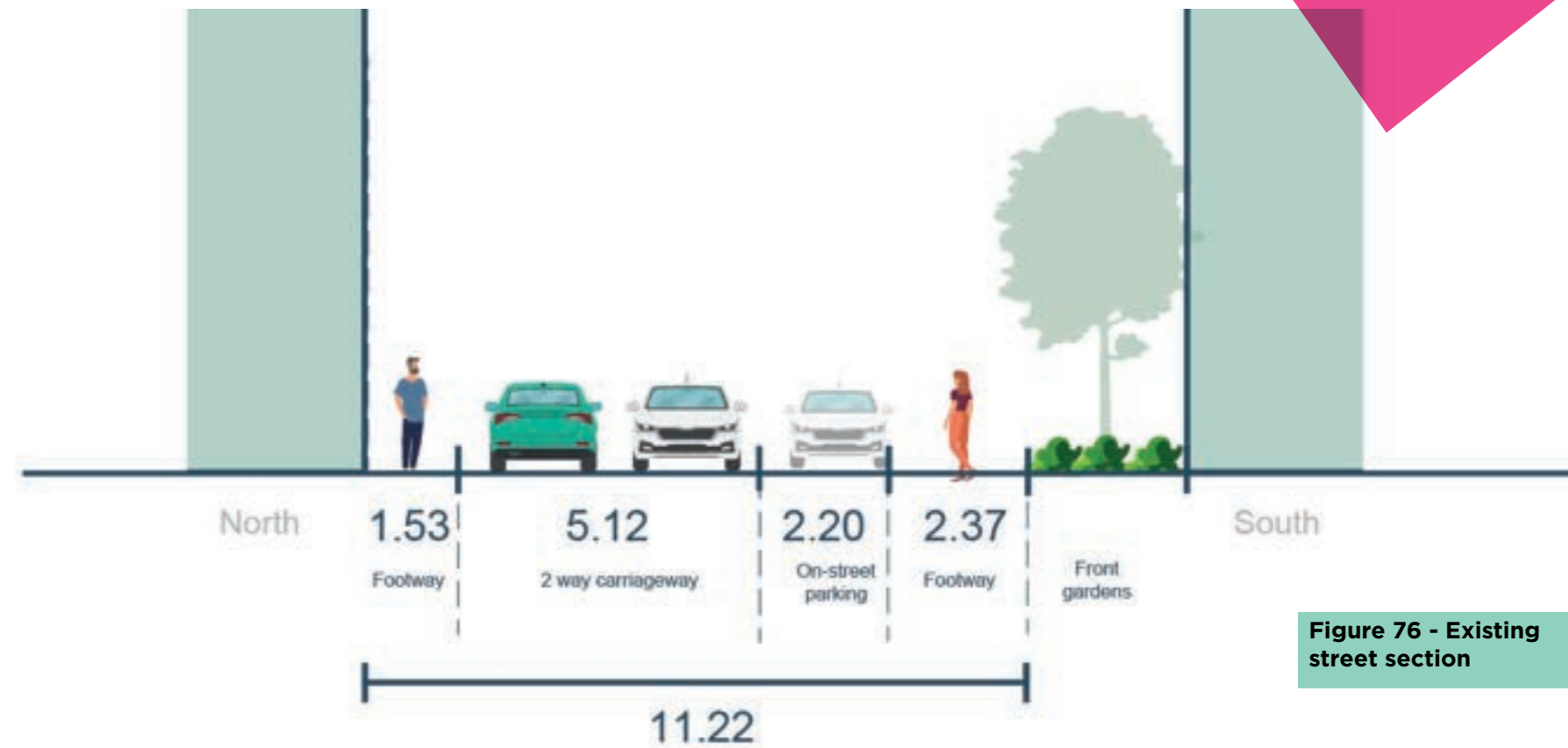


Figure 76 - Existing street section

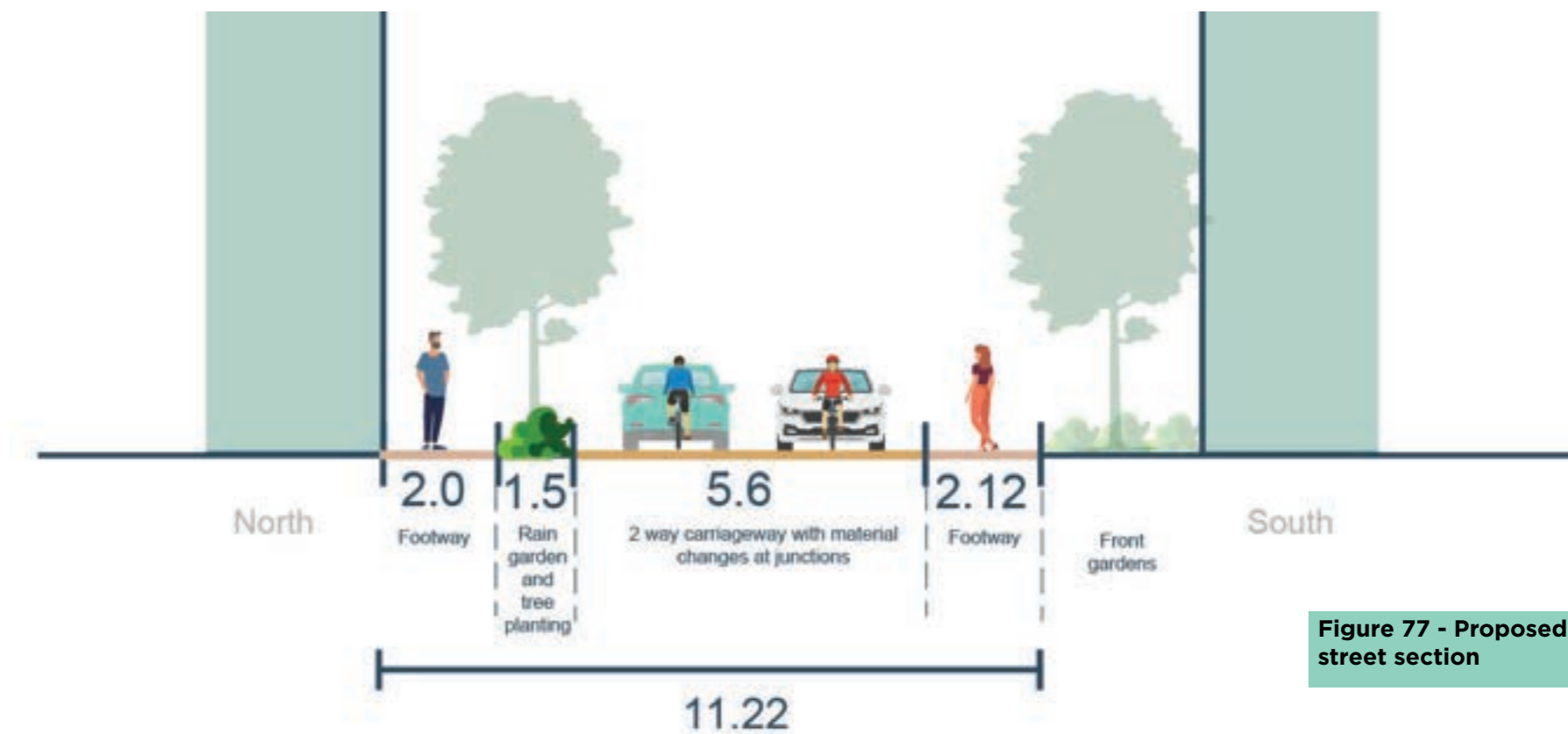


Figure 77 - Proposed street section

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Spring Garden		
Secondary Street		
	Current Design	Proposed Illustrative Design
Street Design		
Typical carriageway width	7.32	Decreased to 7.1m
Typical road width	5.12m	Increased to 5.6m
Footpath width	1.53m / 2.37m	Resized to 2m / 2.12m
On Street parking	Y (circa 9 no. of spaces / 1 accessible space)	Potential for existing parking for residents to be included within current courtyard parking provision. Potential loss of spaces
Loading bays	N	N
Bus route and stops	N	N
Materiality		
Carriageway	Hot rolled asphalt	Hot rolled asphalt
Footway	Paving slabs	Dark grey Whinstone slabs
Streetscape		
Refuse storage	N	N
Street planting	Y	Y - on one side of carriageway
Street furniture	N	Y - within footway provision

Table 27 - Spring Garden Details

Spring Garden Projects

The following projects have been identified for Spring Garden which will contribute to securing the 'Place' objectives of the Masterplan.

Ref:	Project	Description
Appearance and Character		
1	Removal of clutter	Improvements to streetscape focused on removal of redundant satellite dishes, street signage and temporary signage to reveal built character
2	Deep clean of existing paving, street furniture and building façades	Interim works whilst longer term streetscape enhancements are developed
3	Street & pedestrian crossing colouring	Focused on junction with Loch Street to make the area more attractive to students and visitors to NESCOL. This would help connect Loch Street to Spring Garden so the area reads as one environment around the college.
4	Refurbish and restore existing street bins, bollards, cycle stands	Interim works whilst longer term streetscape enhancements are developed
Enhanced Place Experience		
5	Front door lighting for residential tenements	Working with local residents to enhance their front doors onto Spring Garden
6	Create active uses and frontage	Temporary uses within derelict buildings - specific buildings to be identified / kept under review
7	Signage and wayfinding strategy	Co-ordinated signage palette and types along Spring Garden footways. At NESCOL and George Street junctions, signage could be clearly positioned to direct to the college and the city centre.
8	Install rain gardens, SuDS and planting which filters out pollutants.	Footpath width decreased to allow for rain gardens / SuDS as part of streetscape softening
9	Street tree planting	Carriageway width balanced to include suitable pedestrian footpaths and tree planting to formalise on street parking and frame the streetscape
10	Carriageway redesign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrowing vehicle carriageway Rebalancing the footway so it is evenly provided on both sides Junction radii tightening at junction with Loch Street, and at access points to residential car parks. This could include crossing build outs at these junctions Formalised parking bays on both sides of street
11	Street furniture and bin storage	New street furniture located around NESCOL
George Street As A Destination		
12	Visitor and residential information points	These could be located at Loch Street junction and George Street and could include interactive stands / live cycle counters / air quality readings etc
13	Improved CCTV coverage	At suitable locations e.g Gallowgate, Loch Street and George Street

Table 28 - Spring Garden Projects

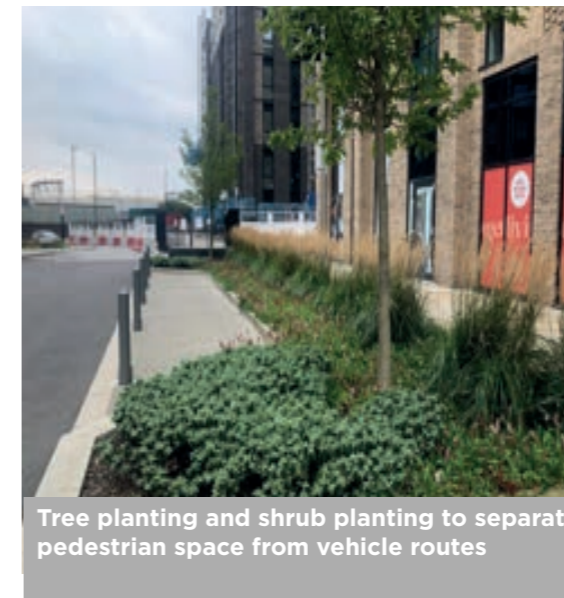
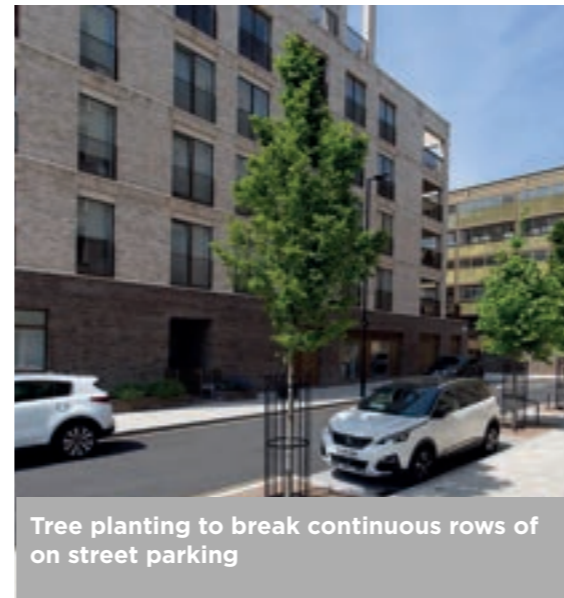
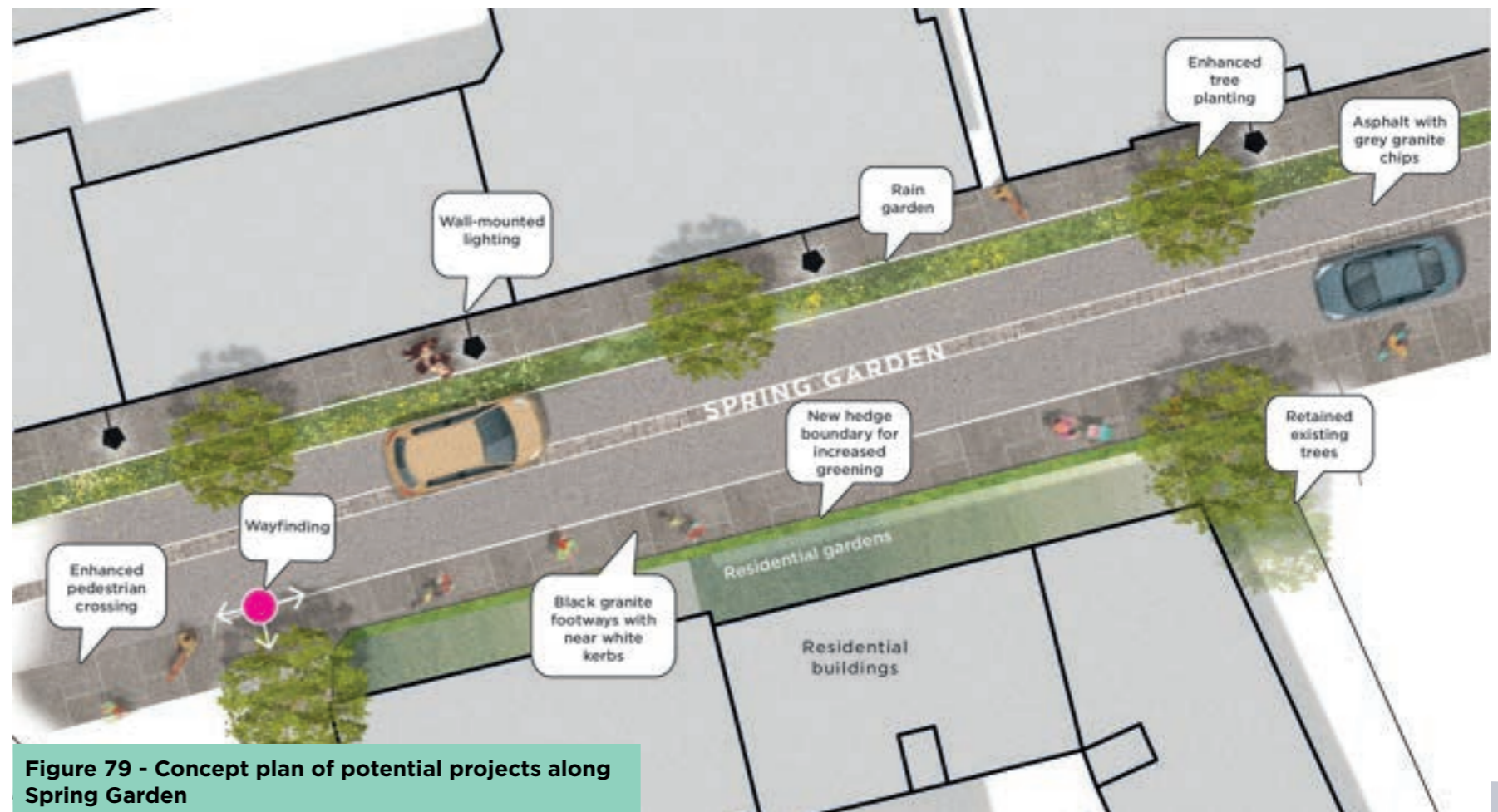


Figure 78 - Location within the Masterplan



Gallowgate

Gallowgate is a primary and NCN route to the east of the Masterplan boundary, and a key connector for traffic movement to and from the City Centre.

Gallowgate will continue to be a two way vehicular route. It currently has informal cycle lane provision along it and there is an opportunity to introduce improved cycle lane provision along the corridor, reinforcing its NCN status and connectivity to the City Centre. This could include a segregated 2.0m cycle lane in both directions as far as the existing street section will allow.

Although the existing carriageway is wide, the functional nature of this corridor limits the opportunity for the new street planting. Footways are adjusted to 2.0m to create safe and comfortable journeys and to allow for a segregated 2.0m cycleway in both directions, as far as possible towards Upperkirkgate. A narrow SuDS / rain garden is included along the western side of the street section to provide separation from the footpath and cycle lane. Cycle route will need to be designed around existing bus stops along Gallowgate. The proposals would require the loss of the existing on-street parking bays, however there is provision within close proximity both along Loch Street and within the nearby MSCP.

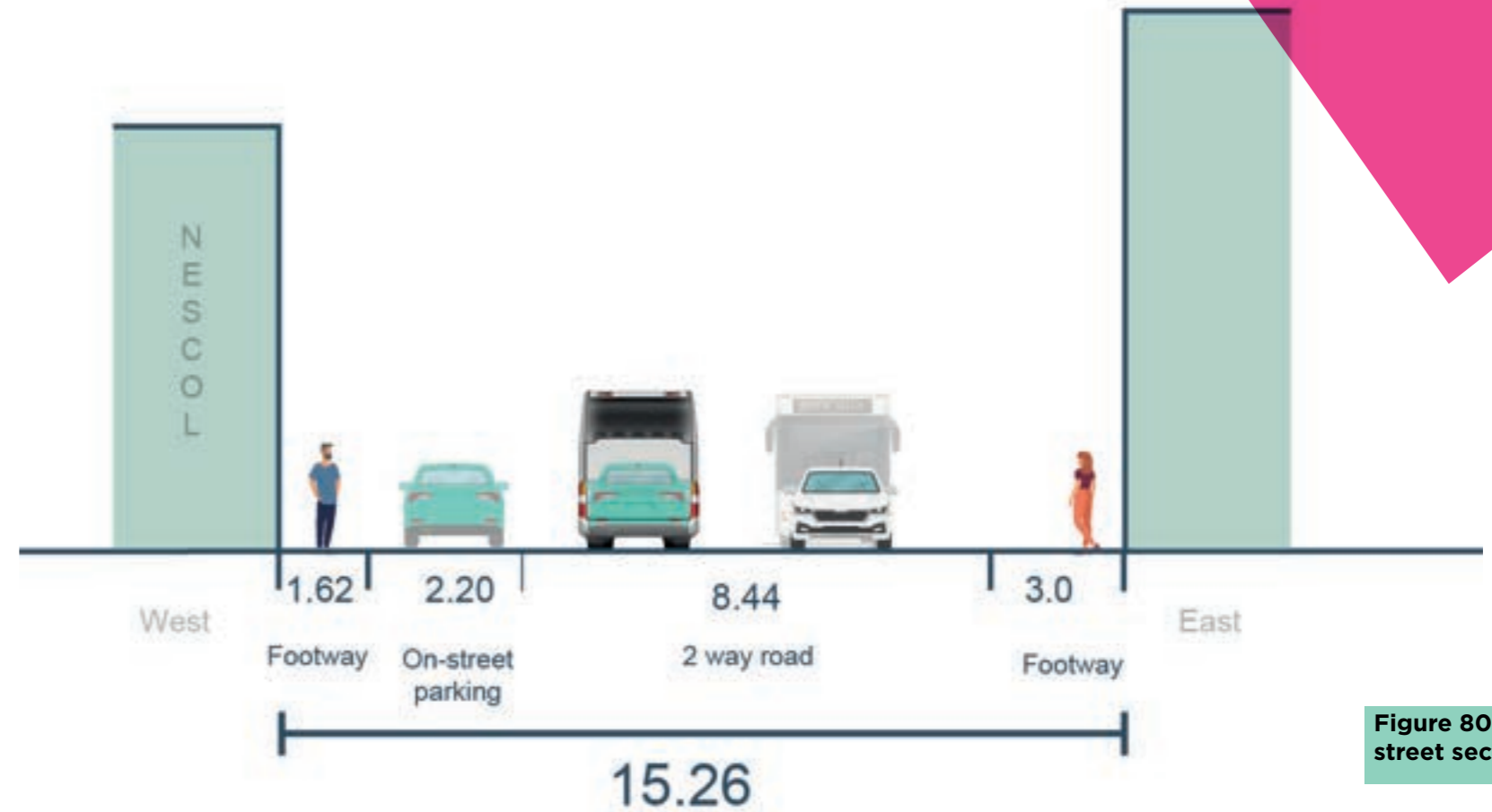


Figure 80 - Existing street section

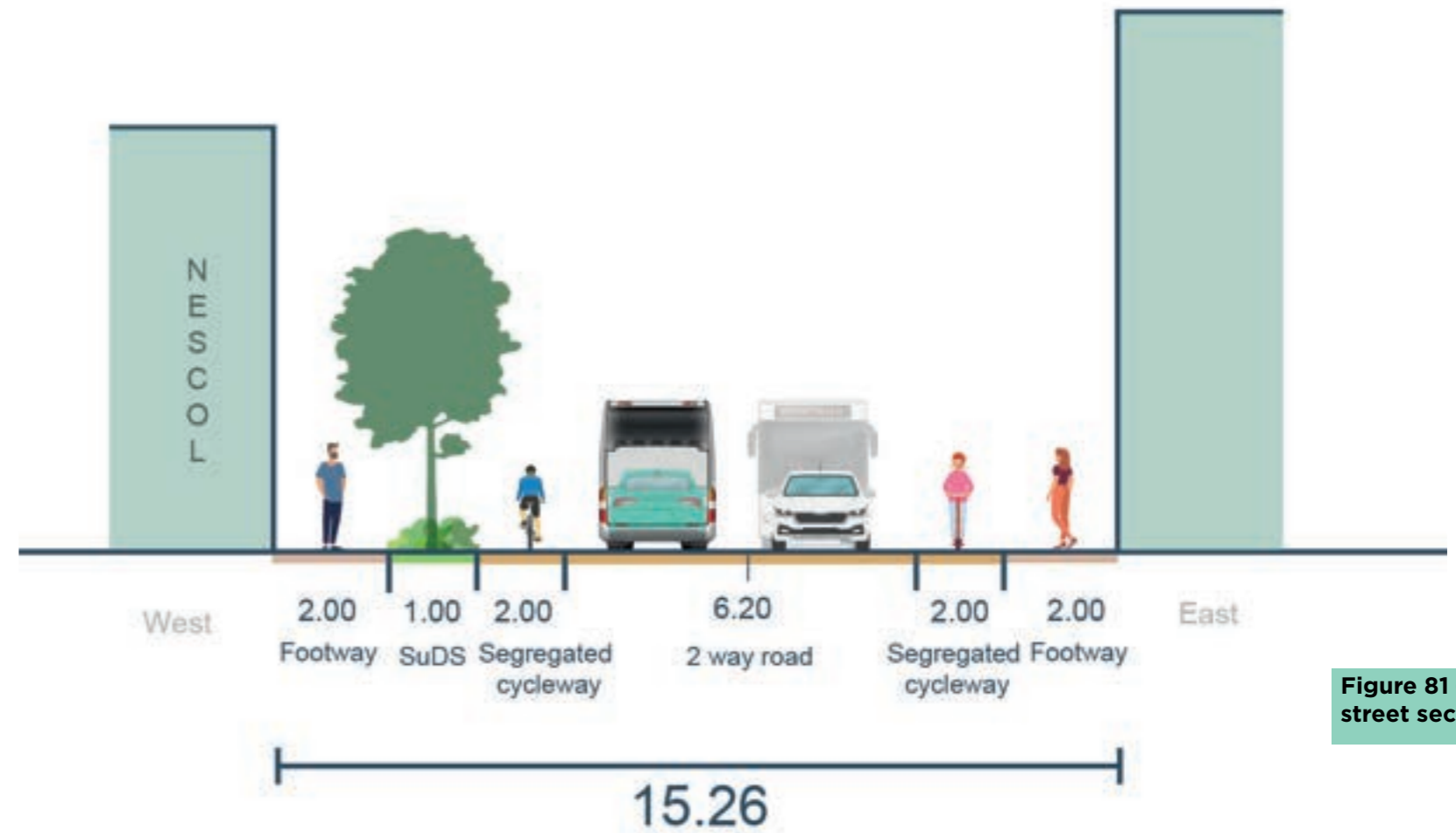


Figure 81 - Proposed street section

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Gallowgate		
Primary Street		
	Current Design	Proposed Illustrative Design
Street Design		
Typical carriageway width	10.64m	Increased to 11.20m
Typical road width	8.44m	Decreased to 6.20m
Footpath width	1.62m / 3m	Resized to 2m on each side
On Street parking	Y (circa 12 no. of spaces at NESCOL)	Loss of parking spaces to accommodate cycle infrastructure
Loading bays	N	N
Bus route and stops	Y	Y
Cycle lane	Y	Y - enhanced to provide segregation in both directions
Materiality		
Carriageway	Hot rolled asphalt	Hot rolled asphalt
Footway	Paving slabs	Dark grey Whinstone slabs
Streetscape		
Refuse storage	N	N
Street planting	Y	Y - on one side of carriageway
Street furniture	N	Y - within footway provision

Table 29 - Gallowgate Details

Gallowgate Projects

The following projects have been identified for Gallowgate which will contribute to securing the 'Place' objectives of the Masterplan.

Ref.	Project	Description
Appearance and Character		
1	Deep clean of existing paving, street furniture, bus stops and building façades	Interim works whilst longer term streetscape enhancements are developed
2	Refurbish and restore existing street bins, bollards, cycle stands	Interim works whilst longer term streetscape enhancements are developed
Enhanced Place Experience		
3	Front door lighting for residential tenements	Working with local residents to enhance their front doors towards Loch Street and Upperkirkgate
4	Signage and wayfinding strategy	Co-ordinated signage palette and types along footways. At NESCOL and both Berry Street and Spring Garden junctions, signage could be clearly positioned to direct to the College and the city centre.
5	Street tree planting	Carriageway width to include suitable pedestrian footpaths and SuDS features to manage stormwater and introduce biodiversity
6	Carriageway redesign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrowing vehicle carriageway Rebalancing the footway so it is evenly provided on both sides Segregated cycle lane for National Cycle Route 1 in both directions SuDS features included
7	Street furniture and bin storage	New street furniture located around NESCOL and bins
George Street As A Destination		
8	Visitor and residential information points	These could be located at Spring Garden and Berry Street junctions and could include interactive stands / air quality readings / daily cycle counts along NCN routes etc
9	Improved CCTV coverage	At suitable locations e.g Gallowgate, Spring Garden and Berry Street and around entrances to key buildings
10	Improved WiFi coverage	To extend to areas around NESCOL for students to use externally as part of improved dwell time opportunities

Table 30- Gallowgate Projects



Introduction of signage and wayfinding as part of an improved NCN cycle route



A segregated cycleway along Gallowgate in both directions will give cyclists a safe and designated route to and from the city centre, minimising interaction with vehicles.

Transformational Project 4

Bon Accord Centre

Overview

The Bon Accord Centre is a fundamental part of the George Street Masterplan area, because of its physical presence, how it influences the movement of people into and out of George Street and the goods and services it offers.

Since its construction in the 1990s it has reshaped George Street's relationship with Aberdeen city centre. Historically George Street served as a direct arterial route to Union Street and further south to the harbour.

However, the 3-storey building, whose layout capped the southern end of George Street, severed its direct physical connection to the city centre and from within the Masterplan area it is difficult to perceive the proximity of the heart of the city centre.

The northern elevation is defined by granite blockwork, ramped level changes, opaque glazed panels above the entrance. Wrapping along its northern and eastern elevations are brise soleil panels combined with granite blockwork to screen the multi-storey car park. The elevation running to the west towards and along Harriet Street is defined mainly by granite blockwork, service access yards and entrance and exit ramps from the multi-storey car park.

In its current form there is no animation to the elevations both at ground floor (in terms of shops / uses looking onto the street) and above to the roof (in terms of colour / screening to help add character to the frontage). Pedestrians can still continue towards Upperkirkgate, travelling through the centre, only during opening hours.



Opportunities to enhance:

Given the prominence of the Bon Accord Centre to George Street, and its surrounding streets, the Masterplan identifies a number of opportunities to improve the visual and functional use of the facade. The Bon Accord Centre is not within Council ownership and the following projects are suggested as a guide in line with the Vision and objectives of the Masterplan. Ultimately the ability and scope of delivery would be determined by the owners of the Bon Accord Centre.

Possible interventions could include:

1. Facade treatments

These could include a series of temporary or permanent features to completely change the look and feel of the building's elevations. Not only could this help the centre better integrate with the other transformational projects identified within the Masterplan, it would also help to promote the location of the centre itself, helping to visually establish it within the wider city centre. Opportunities to expand the NuArt festival further onto the building could be explored, as well as coloured cladding, living walls, bold colours added and retro-fitted panels.

2. Illumination

Linked to the creation of a new public space along Loch Street and at Norco Place, there could be an opportunity to project onto parts of the facade. This could include animation, artwork or even as part of an outdoor cinema. In addition there could be opportunities to creatively uplight the facade of the building to help bring colour, accentuating the reveals and depressions in the elevation, adding character and interest.

3. Activation

Opportunities to activate the ground floor of the northern elevation onto Loch Street and Berry Street should be explored. This could complement the proposed new public space along Loch Street and bring vibrancy to Loch Street. Uses could diversify beyond retail to more food and beverage and leisure focused to bring life to this part of the Masterplan beyond 5pm. Pop-up markets or

more permanent reconfigurations to ground floor service areas, both below the existing access ramps and above, could create space for both new commercial uses and dwell space for new cafe's.

4. Openings

There is potential to enhance the arrival experience to the Bon Accord, south along George Street, by re-configuring the building entrance onto George Street. Increasing the apertures of the building, updating the entrances with modern material palette, raising the ground floor door openings and replacing the opaque glass with clearer glass will create a more welcoming and inviting approach. Light will penetrate deeper into the building improving the internal experience as well as allowing for more through views, allowing people to see what activity is happening inside.

5. Longer term

There may be opportunities in the future to consider significant changes to the Bon Accord Centre, should market conditions be favourable. Large scale retail footprints are having to adjust and adapt to changing retail trends, with some completely moving towards a finer grained, more mixed use offer. Changes often include breaking the large scale of the buildings down, creating smaller units that are easier to let, as well as creating more pedestrian routes through. Future opportunities should be explored to better connect George Street to Upperkirkgate.

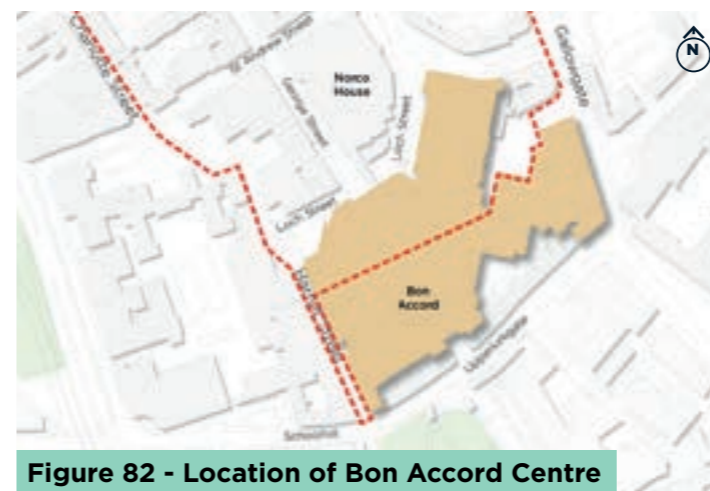


Figure 82 - Location of Bon Accord Centre



Opportunity to project onto parts of the facade. This could include animation, artwork or even as part of an outdoor cinema hosted within a new pocket park. Service access would still be provided but this could be part of a temporary pop up use.

Opportunities to creatively uplift the facade of the building to help bring colour, accentuating the reveals and depressions in the elevation, adding character and interest.

A more visually connected public realm with consistent materiality guides people down to an enhanced Bon Accord Centre entrance.



Either through internal reconfiguration or retrofit to create new activities onto Loch Street that help to bring activity, vitality and stronger fronts.

Alteration to elevation of the Bon Accord Centre along Loch Street with potential for single storey cafe/restaurant/bar unit.

Opportunities to expand the NuArt festival further onto the building could be explored, as well as coloured cladding, living walls, bold colours added and retro-fitted panels.

Facade alteration to Bon Accord Centre to allow for better visibility into the shopping centre.

Figure 83 - Concept image of Bon Accord Centre facade and street uses

Transformational Project 5

Redevelopment Opportunities

The Masterplan identifies a number of potential opportunity sites, both those that have a) live or ongoing planning interest and b) longer term potential redevelopment / investment site. Given that some sites have approved (but not yet commenced) applications, these have been identified as longer term opportunity sites.

The longer term potential redevelopment / investment sites are identified on the basis that the current form, appearance and/or quality of the building and its surrounding environment could benefit from investment or redevelopment, allowing them to better integrate with the 'place' proposals. The future of these sites will be determined by the suitability and opportunity presented by the market and the intentions of the asset / site owner.

A) Hilton Garden Hotel - St. Andrew Street

Opportunity to upgrade / refurbish / redevelop existing building and car parking area to rear to bring active frontage along St. Andrew Street. The site had an application refused and remains an important opportunity site along St. Andrew Street.

B) Norco House - George Street

Further detail as a transformational project. Opportunity to create landmark anchor through re-development / retrofit for mixed use.

C) Balaclava Bar, vacant units, former Nickel and Dime store and rear service yards / surface car park - George Street / Loch Street

Opportunity to create positive built form and greater massing along Loch Street / Crooked Lane, bringing ground floor active uses to a currently underutilised part of the Masterplan. Re-development in this location could have a positive, transformational impact on the arrival experience travelling north along Harriet Street, arriving to a new, high quality buildings and new uses.

D) Surface car park sites - Crooked Lane

Opportunity to realise development on current car park sites which occupy visually prominent locations on approach to George Street eastbound along St. Andrew Street. New development, at a considered scale, which addresses the entrance to Robert Gordon's College could help to create a better defined nodal point at this important junction.

E) Broadford Works - sitting just beyond the Masterplan boundary but representing a significant influence to the neighbourhood will be the realisation of Broadford Works. This could create a significant new residential community that will influence redevelopment opportunities across the Masterplan and begin to establish a new development context.

F) Large format retail units, surface car park and bike parking - Loch Street

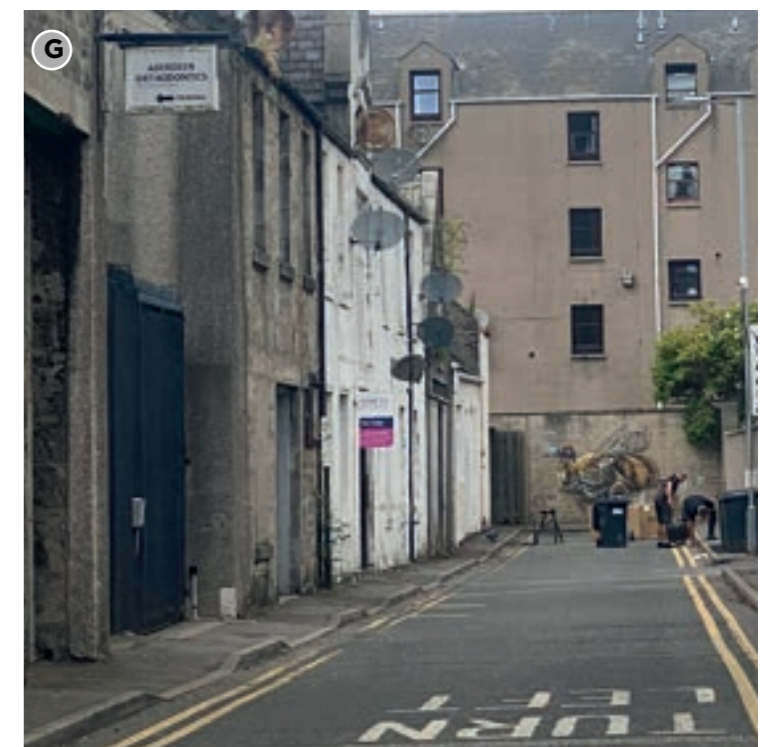
Longer term potential to reconsider building format and parking arrangements in this location, to better utilise the space available in a more efficient plot layout. Introducing a greater scale and density on the plot, suitable to George Street, could help to reinforce Loch Street junction and improve arrival experience to NESCOL. Current cycle and motorcycle parking on the site could be re-provided as part of the NESCOL site opportunities.

G) Vacant warehouse - Jopp's Lane

Opportunity to refurbish existing warehouse building for variety of potential uses bringing footfall and activity to Jopp's Lane



Artist impression



The table below summarises the planning status of sites that have submitted applications within or near to the Masterplan area, some of which are redevelopment opportunity sites.

Site Ref	Location	Status	Potential use	Application ref
1	92-126 John Street	Pending determination	Erection of student accommodation (circa 383 beds) with associated infrastructure and landscaping.	230514/DPP
2	Greyfriars House, Gallowgate	Approved	Residential Development (circa 140 units) including demolition of existing building and associated access, parking, landscaping and infrastructure works.	200246/PPP
3	28 Gallowgate	Withdrawn	Potential for residential or student accommodation	N/A
4	Bon-Accord Centre, George Street	Approved (but not commenced)	Mixed use development comprising Class 1 (Shops), Class 2 (Professional services), Class 3 (Food and drink), Class 4 (Business), Class 7 (Hotels), flats, serviced apartments, access, services and all ancillary development and associated demolitions.	170353/PPP
		Approved (but not commenced)	Variation of conditions 3 (approval of drawings), 6 (details of green wall), 7 (lighting scheme), 8 (landscaping) and 9 (external finishes) of planning permission P141192 in order to enable implementation of works associated with proposed cinema and restaurant terrace.	171136/S42
		Approved (but not commenced)	Formation of cinema within existing retail units and other associated works.	200101/PRE
		Certificate Issued	Proposed use of existing consented bowling centre (Class 11) as a family entertainment centre (within Class 11).	221243/CLP
5	Broadford Works - Maberly St	Approved (but not commenced)	Residential led (c.890 units) mixed use development, incorporating conversion of Listed Buildings. Named uses include apartments for rent; student residential accommodation; leisure; crèche/nursery; restaurant; cafe and bars; office; retail; concierge facilities; reuse of "Grey Mill" building as studio workshop, live/work and gallery space; public realm; car parking; and ancillary works.	160150/PPP
6	93-99 George Street	N/A	Proposed creation of 7 residential flats over existing class 2 (bank) which is currently pending a change of use application to a class 3 (restaurant)	220767/PREAPP
7	15 Maberly Street	Approved (but not commenced)	Redevelopment of an existing site for erection of 17 residential flats over 4 storeys including demolition and all associated works	200621/DPP
8	31 St. Andrew Street	Refused	Change of use from class 7 (hotels and hostels) to student accommodation (sui generis)	211263/DPP

Table 31 - Opportunity Site Details

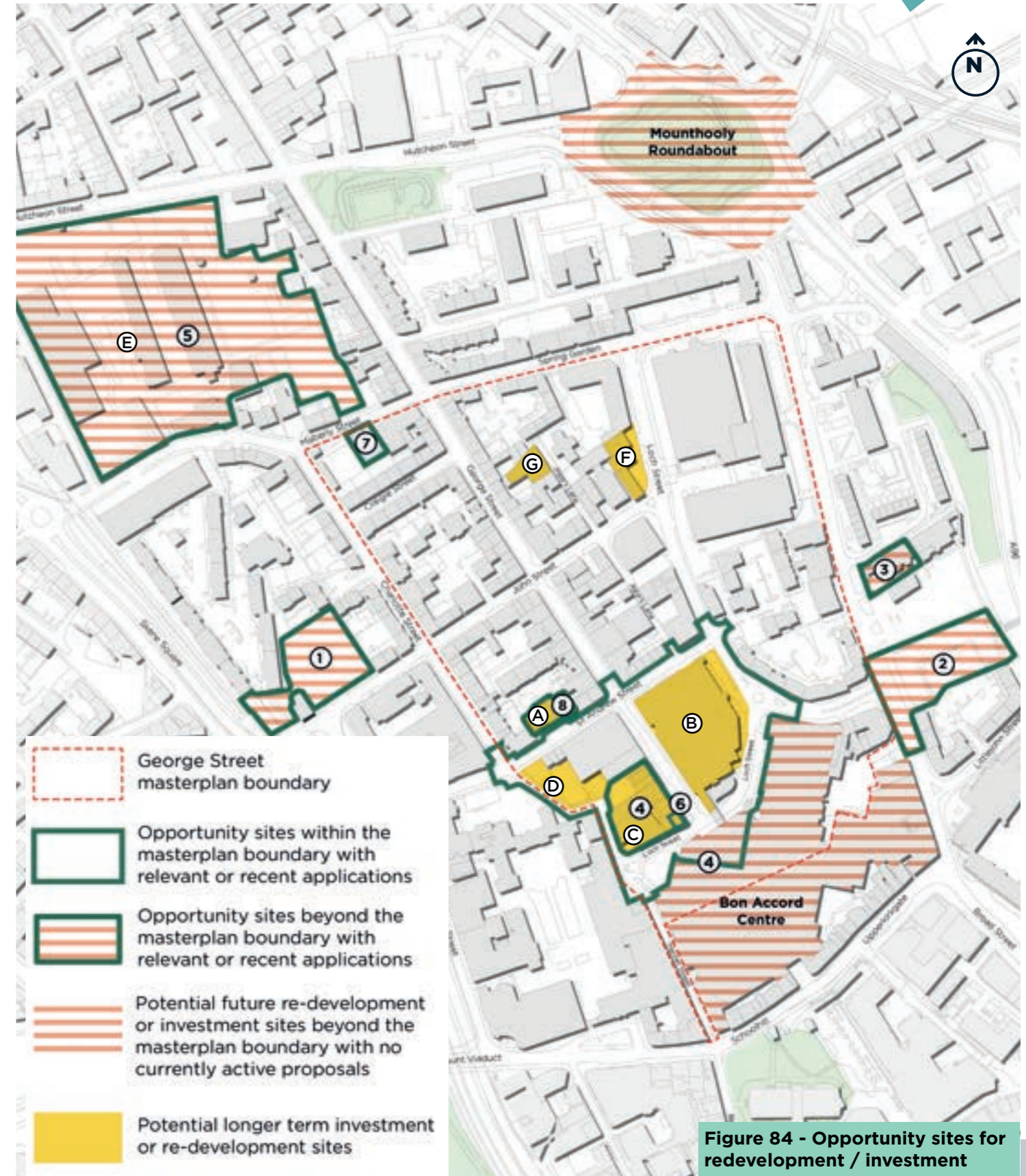


Figure 84 - Opportunity sites for redevelopment / investment

Transformational Project 6

NESCOL

NESCOL is an important educational institution located within the Masterplan area. It supports a variety of students offering both day and evening classes. Along with Robert Gordon's College, they attract high numbers to the area on a daily basis and the Masterplan seeks to ensure that students, staff, families, visitors, coming to the area are encouraged to make the most of George Street.

There are opportunities to be explored within and around the curtilage of NESCOL, to better integrate with the area and encourage more frequent trips between George Street and both institutions.

The 10 storey building and the single storey surrounding buildings occupy an important corner plot along Loch Street, Spring Garden and Gallowgate within the Masterplan area. The building is accessed from both the Gallowgate and Loch Street, with the Loch Street access located approximately 40m back from the street. The northern and western extents of the plot are occupied by surface car parking and defined by a low brick wall with railings.

The potential improvements proposed to Loch Street create an opportunity for the College to reconfigure its plot and boundaries to fully integrate with the surrounding environment. Potential opportunities to be explored could include;

1) Boundary interface with Loch Street

The existing low wall and metal rail fencing is tired and sets a defensive edge to the College grounds. Alongside the Loch Street streetscape enhancements, the boundary of the college could be updated and softened.

A refresh and refurbishment of existing gates could help alongside new soft landscape features. Alternatively, the existing boundary could be removed in full / part and replaced with tree planting, rain gardens and intermittent fixed seating and planters to create a clear plot boundary but also create a more welcoming interaction with the College grounds.

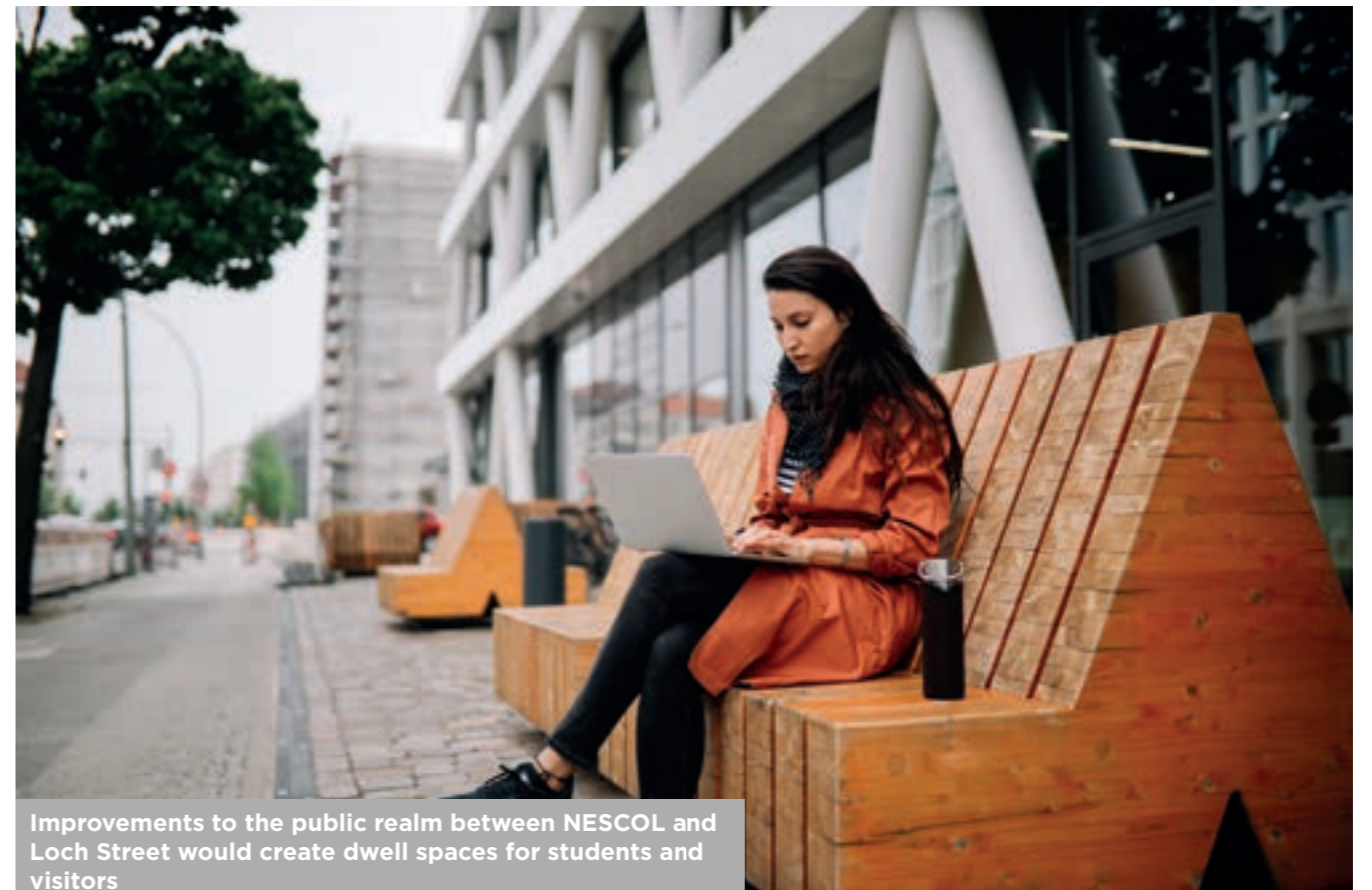
2) Parking and access

Car parking provision within the College will most likely continue to be required. However with the introduction of improved active travel accessibility to the College and parking provision nearby as part of streetscape enhancements, there may be an opportunity to assess and review car parking requirements within the plot and potentially create more cycle and bike parking closer to the entrance to the building.

3) Enhanced arrival to the College

Opportunity to continue the arrival to the College from both Loch Street and Gallowgate by creating a more multi-functional space on approach to the building. Linked to a review of on plot parking, there may be opportunities to improve the arrival and use of the space as you approach from Loch Street. Introducing contemporary, comfortable seating to support outdoor learning and social meeting spaces for students. Creating clearer arrival points with directional signage, information points, cycle repair points, high speed outdoor secure wifi for students, and improved lighting that guides you to the entrance.

Each of these potential opportunities are identified as ways that the College could integrate more with its surrounds, by encouraging more dwell space and educational activities, within an environment defined by tree planting, new planting and places to meet.



The Masterplan seeks to better integrate NESCOL into the George Street area.

Improvements to the public realm between NESCOL and Loch Street would create dwell spaces for students and visitors

Deliverability & Implementation

As the Vision, objectives and Transformational projects of the Masterplan are implemented, local stakeholders, the private sector and communities will be crucial to shaping the interventions emerging from this Masterplan.

It is recommended that dedicated working groups are set up to drive specific short term priority actions forward. The action focused working groups will be responsible for:

- Defining the details of the proposed action;
- Considering how it could be funded;
- Determining who needs to be involved in supporting its delivery and what their role will be;
- Seeking funding - this might require support from other partners;
- Determining the timetable for intervention;
- Monitoring and evaluating progress against key performance indicators and refining actions if agreed outcomes are not being met; and
- Reporting progress.

The makeup of the working groups will vary depending on the specific actions they are focused on. As such, the number of working groups and pace of delivery will depend on the number of stakeholder partners that can be engaged with and encouraged to get involved.

On-going Communication & Engagement

The Masterplan has engaged a number of stakeholders and interested people throughout its development. On going engagement will be key to helping to continue to shape and drive the various projects outlined in the Masterplan. It will also be important to share and communicate on the following;

- Recent and proposed investment in the city centre
- Projects that are being worked up
- Funding that is being sought and accessed

- How people and stakeholders get involved.
- The key partners to be engaged with on a regular basis include:
- Public sector partners (Police, NHS, Fire, NESCOL)
 - Local businesses
 - New owners of Norco House and Bon Accord
 - Residents
 - Local community and interest groups.

Quality engagement should generate potential volunteers to get involved in the delivery of specific actions and potentially resources to support their delivery.

The following mechanisms should be used to engage with key partners:

- Enhancement of the community websites and strengthen profile on social media
- Public engagement consultations will be used to continue the dialogue with local residents as projects develop in detail
- 'Piggybacking Events' - for example a stall at markets showcasing what's on and how to get involved
- Existing and enhanced business networking events - to share emerging ideas, test support and encourage ideas to refine and support their delivery; and
- Identification of a team of local ambassadors who are kept up to date about what is going on in George Street and then they can showcase positive messages to their contacts. Ambassadors can be proactive local independent businesses leaders and other individuals who come into contact with lots of local people e.g. shop keepers.

Next Steps

This Masterplan is just the first building block for regeneration of the George Street area and should be updated as a live programme of works to record progress on delivery of the projects within the Masterplan.

Further work will be carried out by the Council to understand and develop future opportunities, options and projects, aligned with the agreement of stakeholders.

Delivery of the projects identified in the Masterplan area will support and contribute towards delivering the wider objectives of the LOIP and City Centre and Beach Masterplan. They will be continually benchmarked and reviewed until completed.



Figure 85 - Illustrative concept of Harriet Street



Finalised Draft George Street Masterplan
11th October 2023

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Projects Influenced by Consultation Feedback

The following table provides a more detailed overview of the potential future projects identified in Section 4 of the Masterplan document.

The projects identified will need further discussions with the local community, business and stakeholders to deliver. It should also be noted that the Council will support both the local community and local businesses where possible to bring these projects forward.

When	Project	Proposal	Where	Objective	Lead & Partners
Short Term (Quick Win)	1. De-cluttering the Streets	Removal of clutter & unnecessary signage, satellite dishes, pole signage etc	Focus on areas with proliferation of clutter e.g George Street and agree priority areas based on early implementation of public realm change to maximise positive impact.	2	ACC & Local Community (Partners to be identified)
Short Term		Residential front door enhancements - painted, restored, highlighted through public realm materials	For residential properties that open onto Local Access Streets and which have no front porch or threshold to the street	2	Local Residents Groups & ACC
Short Term (Quick Win)		De-clutter existing streetscape - combine highways and pedestrian signage, where possible and remove unnecessary items	Focus initially where public realm interventions are proposed and prioritise pedestrian focused environments e.g Lower George Street	1, 2	ACC
Short Term (Quick Win)	2. Improved Street Appearance	Deep clean of existing paving, street furniture and building façades	Areas to be identified by local community. Suggest focus on buildings where public realm interventions are proposed to maximise impact.	1,2	ACC, Aberdeen Inspired, Local Shop Owners
Short Term	3. Identity	Create an online neighbourhood presence	To cover the George Street Masterplan area as well as the wider George Street Community to the north to showcase events and create a place for residents, stakeholders and others to be kept up to date on related neighbourhood activity.	1,2	Community Organisations (to be identified)
Short Term	4. Place Management	Appoint local champions for George Street who will focus on delivering agreed Vision and strategies in the area e.g area promotion and assisting with delivery of meanwhile or temporary uses	To cover the George Street Masterplan area (and ensure co-ordination with adjacent community initiatives / projects)	1,6,7	Local Community Groups in partnership with ACC
Short Term		Establishing a core group of businesses owners / institutions to represent George Street and co-ordinate stakeholder activity	To cover the George Street Masterplan area (and ensure co-ordination with adjacent community initiatives / projects)	1,6,7	To be identified / connected if existing
Short Term	5. Security	Woman and Vulnerable Group Safety Audit	Area wide	1,7	Local Community with ACC
Short Term (Quick Win)	6. Lighting	Pop up street canopy / overhead lighting	Focused along George Street	1,2	Local community & arts groups with ACC & Aberdeen Inspired
Short Term		Front door lighting for residential tenements	Focus on residential properties that open onto public streets and which have no front porch or threshold to the street. A priority area could be George Street & Craigie Street	1,2	Local community / ACC / Aberdeen Inspired
Short Term (Quick Win)	7. Reactivating alleys, lanes and back streets	Making use of and activating underutilised spaces in a creative way e.g meanwhile uses, pop up events, temporary events space, tactical urbanism	Focus on streets, vacant spaces, car parks where there are low levels of activation.	5,6,7	Local Community Groups, George Street Businesses and ACC, Arts Groups, Outreach Groups
Short Term		Encourage meanwhile uses such as pop ups, street closures, parklets etc to improve activity	Area wide, beginning on George Street	5,6,7	ACC, Aberdeen Inspired, Local Shop Owners

When	Project	Proposal	Where	Objective	Lead & Partners
Short Term	8. Creating an Adaptable Neighbourhood	Using empty units for art exhibitions, book launches, College end of year exhibitions, temporary performance space, overspill exhibition space for the nearby Art Gallery, local street library etc	In areas vacant units that address primary or secondary streets to limit negative perceptions of void units. E.g Lower George Street and St. Andrew Street	5,6,7	Local Community Groups, Arts Groups, Educational Institutions, Bon Accord
Short Term	9. A multi-generational space	Catering for the diversity of visitors and residents, with improved facilities and amenities for various ages and abilities -e.g temporary seating, drinking water stations, shade areas, information points etc	Across areas with higher pedestrian footfall and near to local retail. Should be considered alongside parklets and spill out space being created.	1,3,4	ACC / Local Community
Short Term (Quick win)	10. Art & Colour	Commission Creative placemaking work onto pedestrian areas & research the possibility of commissioning creative artwork in focussed areas to support NuArt profile in the Masterplan area	In pedestrian focused areas such as South George Street. Longer term this can be expanded to junction locations with improved pedestrian links	2,6	ACC, Other Art Institutions & NuArt
Short Term (Quick win)		Attractive visual screening across poor quality environments	Focus on areas where there are low levels of activation e.g. service yards / gable ends / blank elevation. Prioritise larger and most visible façades	1,2,6	Bon Accord Centre, shop owners, private landlords, ACC
Short Term		Street & pedestrian crossing colouring - super graphics from buildings to street level. This can be developed alongside NuArt locations to expand visual identity whilst respecting heritage setting and character	In pedestrian focused areas such as South George Street. Longer term this can be expanded to junction locations with improved pedestrian links	2,4	ACC & private landlords
Short term		Shop front creative interventions such as painted displays, painted shutters, window dressing etc.	Along streets where majority of shops close after 17:00. Focus along George Street, St. Andrew Street and John Street to deliver co-ordinated impact.	1,2,6,7	ACC, or a Creative and Cultural Organisation/ Institution, or Culture Aberdeen
Short Term	11. Animating buildings / façades	Research Creative Commissions for the façades of buildings in George Street	Build from Jopps Lane in partnership with willing land / property owners. Community can help to determine priority areas.	1,2	ACC, Creative and Cultural Organisation/Institution, or Culture Aberdeen
Short Term	12. Signage & Fronts	Early dialogue with owners of Bon Accord Centre to discuss enhancements to the north and eastern façades of the shopping centre and car park	Focus on the northern and eastern elevations of the Bon Accord Shopping Centre	6,7	ACC / Bon Accord Centre Owners
Short Term	13. Alive after 5pm	Establishing a strategy to co-ordinate later opening times / weekends across various uses. E.g NESCOL& Robert Gordon's Colleges evening openings promoted to local restaurants, cafés, bars etc to encourage college patrons into the area.	Across the neighbourhood	1,7	ACC, Aberdeen Inspired, Local Shop Owners, Local Business Groups, NESCOL & Robert Gordon's College
		Introduce reward vouchers initiative etc to promote cross business patronage between retailers and other businesses as well as local residents' discounts.			
Short Term (Quick win)	14. Calendar of events	Curate a co-ordinated calendar of events for George Street area & promote through social media	Area wide	1,6,7	ACC, Aberdeen Inspired
Short Term		Celebrate heritage and the ornate architectural diversity through commercial events, walking tours, online/apps, heritage signage / info points and feature lighting.	Focusing on historic buildings of architectural interest and / or social and cultural significance.	1,6,7	ACC, Aberdeen Inspired

When	Project	Proposal	Where	Objective	Lead & Partners
Short Term (Quick win)	15. Making streets work harder	More flexible use of parking spaces - creating PARKlets which reclaim parking bays for socialising, play and dwell time. Create a PARK(ing) Day which could bring a festival of parklets to the area.	Focus where the type of existing businesses can benefit from adjacent spill out space / dwell space i.e cafes, bars, community uses	4,5,6	ACC
Short Term		Better provision and / or quality of cycle parking in convenient locations	Prioritise anchor locations such as Bon Accord Centre, NESCOL and George Street as well as at arrival gateways / bus stop locations.	3,4	ACC
Short Term (Quick win)		Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) 1 - retain the 2-way operation of Berry Street but for car-park access/egress only	Berry Street, Loch Street and St. Andrew Street. (Note existing small central reservation exists along Berry Street which will need some minor amends to implement ETRO).	4	ACC
Short Term (Quick win)		ETRO 2 - Reduce & restrict speed of traffic by narrowing carriageway with temporary build-outs and signage. If successful restrict to local access only.	Charlotte Street between Spring Garden and John Street	4	ACC
Short Term (Quick win)		ETRO 3- Remove general traffic along Blackfriars St northbound, creating more freedom for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.	Blackfriars Street	4	ACC
Short Term		Introduce bin storage or shelters where bins are required to be stored on street	Residential locations and pedestrian focused areas e.g Craigie Street & St. Andrew Street	3,4	ACC / Aberdeen Inspired
Short - Medium Term	16. Creating an Adaptable Neighbourhood	Tap into local talent by providing space for start-ups / pop up events to encourage students to stay beyond their course. Establishing partnerships and routes to wider institution involvement in George Street area events / initiatives	Adjacent to Bon Accord Centre. Any new urban spaces created within Neighbourhood	7	ACC, Aberdeen Inspired, Educational Institutions, Arts & Culture Institutions
Short - Medium Term	17. Art & Colour	Commission a sculpture trail across the area	Area wide, beginning on George Street but route could be co-designed with community	1,6	ACC, Creative and Cultural Organisation/Institution, or Culture Aberdeen
Short - Medium Term	18. Improved Street Appearance	Improve quality & consistency of shop front signage and consider means to align with current policy and identify opportunities for shop owner support	Area wide, beginning on George Street	6,7	ACC, Aberdeen Inspired, Local Shop Owners
Short - Medium Term	19. Increasing dwell time	Coordinated palette of street furniture including provision for elderly, range of physical abilities, visually impaired, NESCOL students and cyclists	Area wide but focus firstly on John Street, St. Andrew Street, George Street and Loch Street	4,6	ACC, NESCOL
Short - Medium Term	20. Smart High Street	Visitor and residential information points - these could be pop up kiosks / interactive stands / live cycle counters / air quality readings / parking availability etc	Area wide, beginning on George Street and along cycle routes	1,3,4,6	ACC, Aberdeen Inspired
Short - Medium Term	21. Provision of Necessities	Consider provision of basic services, public toilets, 'changing spaces' toilets, and disabled access points	Along streets with pedestrian activity and along local access streets.	1,4,5,6	ACC
Medium Term	22. Redefining Residential Streets - Urban Pilot Project	Customising existing streets to support healthier and sustainable urban life for residents - interventions could include designated bin storage, defined parking bays, EV charge points, street greening / communal gardens, play street elements, urban allotments, lighting, SuDS etc	Focus on areas with density of residential accommodation eg. Charlotte Street and Craigie Street. Exact areas to be co-ordinated with community and developed in co-ordination with ETROs	3,4,6	Local residents supported by ACC
Medium term	23. Street planting & urban greening	Installing green walls, SuDS, Living walls & roofscapes and other urban greening solutions as part of a neighbourhood wide strategy to improve bio-diversity	Focusing on large scale blank gable ends and façades that are orientated to support green walls. Secondary focus on smaller infill areas	2,3	ACC / Business Owners

When	Project	Proposal	Where	Objective	Lead & Partners
Medium Term	24. Improved Street Appearance	Develop a palette of materials and street furniture to help celebrate George Street character (to be developed alongside public realm detail design stages)	Across streets which are undergoing interventions to increase pedestrian space	3,4,5	ACC
Medium Term		Uplighting and feature lighting to illuminate buildings	Primary focus on buildings of interest including Norco House and other historic buildings	1,6	ACC / Business Owners / building owners
Medium Term		Create a signage and wayfinding strategy, with a new suite of bespoke and George Street characterised signage kit, including at key arrival points into the neighbourhood	Focus on edges of the neighbourhood where people travel into the area (gateway locations). Develop along main pedestrian routes that flow from those gateway locations.	1,4,6	ACC / Business Owners
Medium term	25. Security	Improved CCTV coverage	In areas where community and local businesses report most anti-social behaviour incidents	6	ACC?
Medium term	26. Lighting	Lighting strategy for George Street - for both wayfinding & security	Area wide as part of proposed lighting strategy	4,6	ACC
Medium term	27. Street planting & urban greening	Street trees, planting and rain gardens as part of transformational project 3. Opportunities to introduce increase in bio-diversity, pollinator friendly planting and nature rich environments	Area wide as part of wider public realm strategy & transformational project 3	4,6	ACC
Medium term	28. Making primary routes work harder	Inclusion of cycle lanes along key routes	Along streets identified within the Masterplan cycle accessibility strategy	4	ACC
Medium - long term	29. Improved Environmental Performance	Retrofitted rain gardens and planting which filters out pollutants across existing buildings (roofs / façades) to combine with streetscape improvements. Programme could also be extended to existing internals of buildings for retrofit, improving thermal insulation and reduced energy consumption.	Area wide intervention across existing streets	3,4	ACC / National Govt, private occupiers, local businesses, local residents and other potential retrofit grants / funds
Medium - Long Term	30. Improved Street function	Street redesign to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carriageway narrowing • Footpath build out at junctions / junction improvements • Pedestrian prioritised crossing points • Footpath widening • On-carriageway bus stops to prioritise public transport and slow cars • Spill out space for businesses • Seating and rest points • Cycle parking and repair stations 	Area wide but focus firstly on John Street, St. Andrew Street, George Street and Gallowgate.	3,4	ACC
Medium - Long Term	31. Prioritising Sustainable Travel	Reconfiguring current bus routes as well as provision of enhanced bus stops with interactive boards / wifi / charging points to encourage greater use and improved passenger experience	John Street, St. Andrew Street, George Street and Loch Street (in liaison with bus operators).	1,3,4	ACC, bus operators
Medium - Long Term		Ensuring there is adequate space for cyclists along key routes with cycle parking through the area would encourage more cyclists to use the area safely.	Along streets identified as formalised and advisory cycle routes as per the Cycle Accessibility Strategy	3,4	ACC
Longer term	32. Animating buildings / façades	Create active uses and frontages along Loch Street at ground level. Improve entrance to the George St approach by widening the openings to the building at ground floor	Loch Street and George Street	1,4,6,7	Bon Accord Centre

Appendix 2

Planning Context

Planning Policy Review

Overview

This section sets out the policy and guidance at local administrative levels that have influenced preparation of the George Street Masterplan.

The policy sections of the Aberdeen City Centre and Beach Masterplan document provide further policy and guidance at UK, Scotland and Regional administrative levels.

City Centre Recovery Task Force: Report

Covid-19 has changed the face of city centres up and down the UK. As a result of necessary health measures, businesses and streets usually bustling with people were transformed overnight.

In 2021, the Scottish Government and Scotland's seven cities established a Task Force to identify the actions needed to take together to support city centre recovery from the effects of the pandemic, working through our existing successful partnership of the Scottish Cities Alliance.

The pandemic has heightened awareness of inequality, poverty and disadvantage, and there is clear evidence that harm has been felt unevenly. The Scottish Government has set the national direction with its ten-year National Strategy for Economic Transformation, which will build on the Covid Recovery Strategy to create a greener, fairer, more inclusive wellbeing economy.

The key messages arising from the report were about the nature and role of city centres and how, without people, city centres are just empty spaces and buildings. What makes our cities flourishing, vibrant, social, creative, interesting and resilient is that they are places where large numbers of people come together.

The principal challenge considered in the Task Force Report is how to attract people back into our city centres, and this is something that should be applied when looking at the future of George Street. How to attract people back into George Street.

Local Policy

At the Local level, planning policy guidance and advice is provided by the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023. The plan provides detailed planning policy to be considered when assessing proposals across the city, including the city centre and beach; and also provide more detailed information and briefs in relation to specific opportunities (OP sites).

The Council's **Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP)** and associated Locality Plans are key in setting out a Vision for Aberdeen as "a place where all people can prosper", and considers the People, Place and Economy of Aberdeen. The refreshed Local Outcome Improvement Plan was approved in July 2021, with an annual report published in July 2022. **The LOIP identifies 15 'stretch' outcomes to be delivered by 2026 and 75 shorter term improvement aims.** Stretch Outcomes particularly relevant to George Street include: **Child Friendly City** which supports all children to prosper and engage actively with their communities by 2026; **Healthy life expectancy** (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026 - this includes the Key Drivers of encouraging adoption of healthier lifestyles, and increasing satisfaction and use of community facilities and green environment to increase the health and well-being for older people and people managing long term conditions); **Addressing climate change** by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate; and, **Increasing sustainable travel** with 38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as main mode of travel by 2026.

Local Planning Advice

Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023

The repair and replacement of shops and signs is a prevalent topic. Historic and original features add to the overall pleasant experience of buildings, streetscape and their wider surroundings. Inappropriate design, proportions or materials can detract from a building and the wider streetscape and setting.

The Supplementary Guidance acknowledges a principle of retaining and repairing historic materials, with replacement requiring thorough consideration. New shops and signs need to be designed for their location to ensure they provide a positive experience to the streetscene.

The guidance applies to existing and new shop fronts and signs. The guidance is to be used on a citywide basis for retail and commercial premises including banks, betting offices, restaurants, estate agents and beyond. The signage guidance should be considered in all instances.

Hierarchy of Centres

Scottish Planning Policy states that a sequential approach should be used when selecting locations for all uses which generate significant footfall, including retail and commercial leisure uses, offices, community and cultural facilities, and where appropriate, public buildings; and requires that locations are considered through a hierarchy of centres. Within this SPP, George Street is identified as a Neighbourhood Centre which is the preferred location for local retail, commercial leisure, community and cultural provision only.

Transport and Accessibility

Transport provision should be considered from the very outset of a development proposal, with particular attention paid to the need to encourage sustainable travel.

The Local Transport Strategy highlights the role that spatial planning can play in ensuring Aberdeen has "a sustainable transport system that is fit for the 21st Century, accessible to all, supports a vibrant economy, facilitates healthy living and minimises the impact on our environment" through the careful siting and design of development and the implementation of parking policies and Travel Plans to discourage unnecessary car travel.

A sustainable transport system will also help reduce emissions to tackle climate change, improve air quality, and lead to a healthier population.

Green Space Network and Open Space

Access to good quality green and blue infrastructure, including areas of open space and green networks, will contribute to a greener, healthier, smarter, safer, stronger, wealthier and fairer city. This guidance will assist the George Street Masterplan in assessing and demonstrating their compliance in enhancing and improving green infrastructure to create useful, sustainable and well used places. This will benefit the wider community, the natural environment and support a healthy economy.

Big Buildings

Guidance is given to ensure big building proposals, when appropriate, will have a positive impact on the streetscene and surrounding area, and Aberdeen's skyline.

Big buildings can be tall buildings and/or bulky buildings. Generally a big building is regarded as one that exceeds the general height of the surrounding built context and/or whose footprint is in excess of the established development pattern of the surrounding area.

According to guidance, big buildings should:

- Complement or improve the existing site context, consider the natural topography, scale and height of structures, urban grain, streetscape and built form, open spaces, effect on the skyline, and respect, reinforce and, where applicable create opportunities for enhanced views and vistas and make a positive contribution to the skyline when viewed from all angles from near, middle and distant views, both during the day and at night;
- Consider the environment and amenity of those in the vicinity of the building, including micro climate, overshadowing, glare reduction, night time appearance, internal and external lighting;

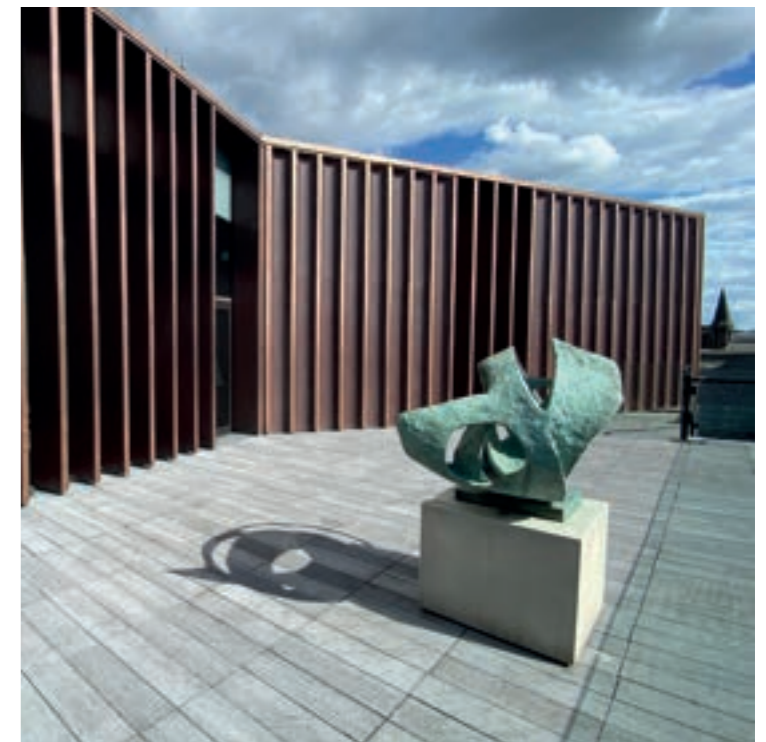
- At street level, present an active frontage and be comfortable for people and, where feasible, include publicly accessible areas within the building;
- Be situated in areas where existing topography, urban scale and transport make them sustainable;
- Have a well-designed vertical emphasis;
- Be constructed of high quality materials, craftsmanship and have detailing with low maintenance implications;
- Provide fully integrated servicing arrangements which are, wherever possible, off street;
- Comply with civil aviation requirements and those of other telecommunication, television and radio transmission networks; be adaptable over time and utilise best sustainable practices; and
- Contain a mix of uses rather than rely on a single use to achieve a viable development. It may be appropriate for big buildings to form part of a wider development mix with smaller scale buildings that reduce any dominating impact.

Urban Realm Manual 2021 (Draft)

The Draft Urban Realm Manual 2021 aims to provide clarity, certainty and consistency on the city's requirements for a comprehensive approach to understanding and developing place and movement hierarchies, their appropriate hard landscaping material specifications, the retention and re-use of important features as well as identifying new opportunities to sustainably enhance and green the city.

Maintaining and enhancing the existing built environment, as well as delivering new development of distinctive high-quality places, is important to Aberdeen. To consistently have sustainable and efficient streets and places that are easy for all to use, that look good and have longevity give a positive impression and a lasting sense of place are fundamental to successful city life.

The public realm of George Street and the surrounding streets is something to be enhanced throughout this Masterplanning process, so by considering the principles of the urban realm manual and responding to the place and movement context in planning, design, responsible sourcing, responsible use and the principles of the circular economy, a successful place can be achieved.



City Centre and Beach Masterplan Projects

As outlined in the City Centre and Beach Masterplan, there is a concentration of growth across the city of Aberdeen, which is prioritising people focused development, with an emphasis that supporting infrastructure and public spaces are integrated.

An emerging development context is changing the way the City will function over the course of the next few decades, through a suite of committed projects and those that are already well under construction.

Connectivity is an important consideration, with increased connections promoted through the area and to other key points in the city centre by foot, cycle and public transport.

Within the Masterplan study area, at the time of writing, both the former John Lewis store (Norco House) and the Bon Accord Centre have potential to influence the future regeneration of the neighbourhood. The Bon Accord Centre has an active planning consent for proposals along George Street and Norco House has new owners.

1. Some of the immediately significant pipeline development and infrastructure projects which will influence the George Street Masterplan beyond its boundary include; Upperkirkgate and Schoolhill Streetscape Improvements which look to pedestrians sections of the street as well as improve public realm quality along this corridor.
2. Improved public realm setting to the Aberdeen Art Gallery

3. A new urban park in Union Terrace Gardens
4. Broadford Works proposing to deliver c.890 units as part of a mixed use development, incorporating conversion of Listed Buildings.

Moving further out from the immediate city centre, some other developments of influence include:

1. Aberdeen Beach and associated developments
2. Aberdeen Stadium
3. Beach Boulevard

Also the new Beach Development Framework North and South have been identified on the plan adjacent.

Aberdeen City Council's role in the future regeneration of George Street will be one that supports growth and change, using its powers to help facilitate and co-ordinate the appropriate type of change in line with the George Street Vision and objectives. The Council welcomes the opportunity to engage with and work collaboratively with stakeholders and interested parties.



Indicative view of north Belmont street status: detailed design and delivery in conjunction with local stakeholders



Schoolhill + Upperkirkgate
Birds eye view from Aberdeen Art Gallery



Beach Masterplan
Birds eye view



Aberdeen City Council's Planned Development Pipeline

Aberdeen City Council Projects

1. Leisure facility
2. Beach ballroom
3. Slipway
4. Boardwalk
5. Beach pavilion building
6. Broad Hill structures
7. Beach Boulevard
8. Guild Street
9. Rose / Thistle / Chapel Street
10. Upperkirkgate / Schoolhill
11. Castlegate
12. Urban park
13. Events park
14. Landscaping
15. Broad Hill
16. Reconfigured beach landscaping
17. Beach ballroom plaza
18. Beach village
19. Justice street roundabout

Privately Led Projects

1. North Dee Business Quarter
2. Mither Kirk
3. Aberdeen Broadford Works
4. Woolmanhill Former Hospital
5. Bon Accord Centre
6. St Nicholas Centre
7. Trinity Centre
8. Union Square
9. Stadium

20. Berryden Improvements
21. Aberdeen Market
22. Queen Street
23. Union Terrace Gardens
24. Union Street Public Realm
25. Aberdeen Market Public Realm

Appendix 3

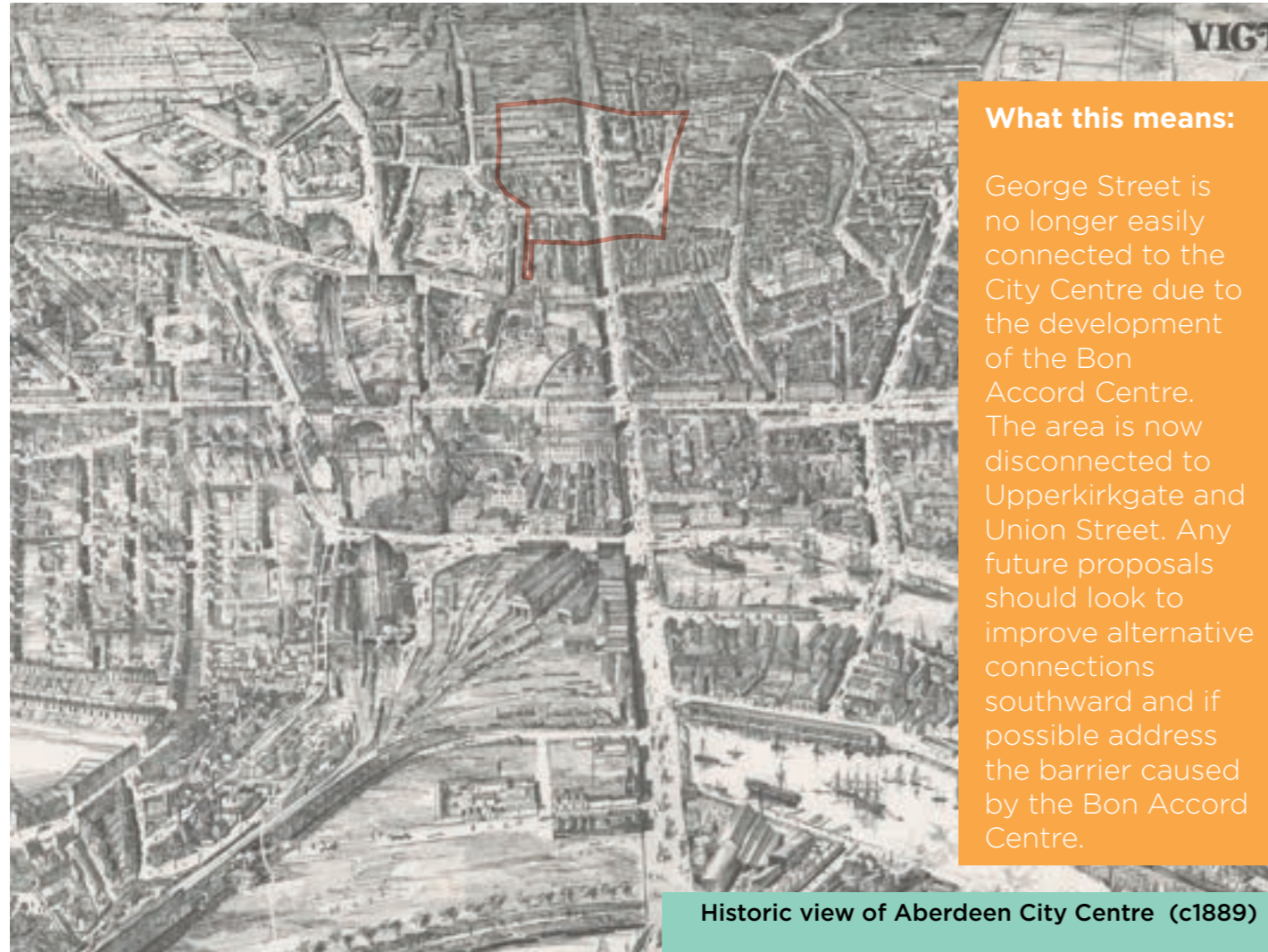
Spatial Context

Respecting Conservation And Heritage

The George Street area has a long standing, dense urban character, with most of its historical urban grid remaining intact today. George Street once formed a powerful urban corridor, which ran parallel to King Street, leading from the City's docklands, across Union Street and northwards out of the city centre towards Kittybrewster where local farm marts and agricultural trade was located. George Street was further reinforced as a key corridor in the early to mid 1900's, carrying a tramway along its length.

Over the years, the urban context of George Street has dramatically changed with the construction of the Norco "Ziggurat" building, and later the development of the Bon Accord and St Nicholas centres across the southern end of George Street.

The historic mapping on this page reveal the original nature and character of George Street. Much of current thinking in urban planning seeks to reinforce and identify historic patterns and character to create a strong sense of "embedded place."



Historic view of Aberdeen City Centre (c1889)

What this means:

George Street is no longer easily connected to the City Centre due to the development of the Bon Accord Centre. The area is now disconnected to Upperkirkgate and Union Street. Any future proposals should look to improve alternative connections southward and if possible address the barrier caused by the Bon Accord Centre.



A dense work community with Candle & Soap Works, Stables, Public Baths and Foundries. George Street provides a direct connection through to Union Street and further south to the docks.



Introduction of the tramway along George Street which connected Kittybrewster train station to the tramway along Union Street to the south. An important neighbourhood through which activity and people moved.



Some of the denser historic grain becomes eroded with new development and infill. Robert Gordon's College also sees redevelopment. A central tramway through George Street has been discontinued.



Relatively little change through to the 70's although Loch Street continues to function as an important secondary street to George Street providing access to local schools, Places of Worship and Public Offices.



By 1990- 1995 both the George Street and Loch Street connection to Upperkirkgate and further south to Union Street are severed, with the area cleared to make way for the Bon Accord Centre Development.



By 2022 the area has undergone significant change to the south and east of the study area. Most of the historic grain remains intact along George Street, St. Andrew Street, John Street & Craigie Street.

Listed Buildings

The George Street area sits just north of the City Centre Conservation Area, with Harriet Street and Gallowgate connecting into the study area.

There are a number of listed buildings / structures surrounding the George Street area and a small number within including:

Within study area

- Category B listed 230 George Street And 34 John Street (3-storey, 4-bay Classical Bank);
- Category B listed 261-265 (Odd) George Street (former college building with prominent octagonal tower);
- Category C listed 46 Charlotte Street and Arched Gateway;
- Category C listed 26 John Street (3-bay warehouse with ornate Dutch gable to John Street elevation);
- Category C listed 119-127 (Odd Nos) George Street (5-bay commercial and residential building with distinctive wallhead stack and flanking crow-step gables); and
- Category C listed 111 Gallowgate including Boundary Wall and Railing.

Beyond study area

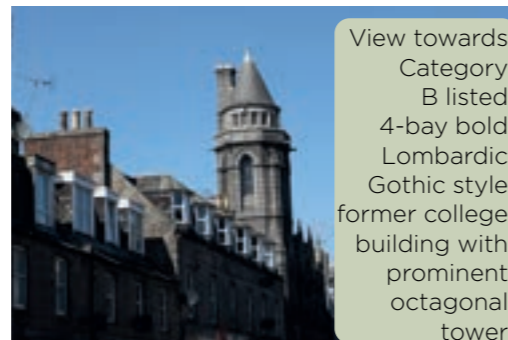
- A number of Category B & C listed buildings along Upperkirkgate;
- Category A listed Porthill Court Residential tower blocks;
- Category A listed Robert Gordon College; and
- Category B listed Gerrard Street Baptist Church (former united free church)

There are a number of buildings identified through the baseline analysis which also add to the overall character and identity of the place, which are

identified in the plan adjacent. These buildings have no formal protected designation. The purpose of identifying these is to understand their relationship to George Street and is not intended as a recommendation for formal listing or categorisation.



Category A listed 1959 modern brutalist block of flats along Gallowgate



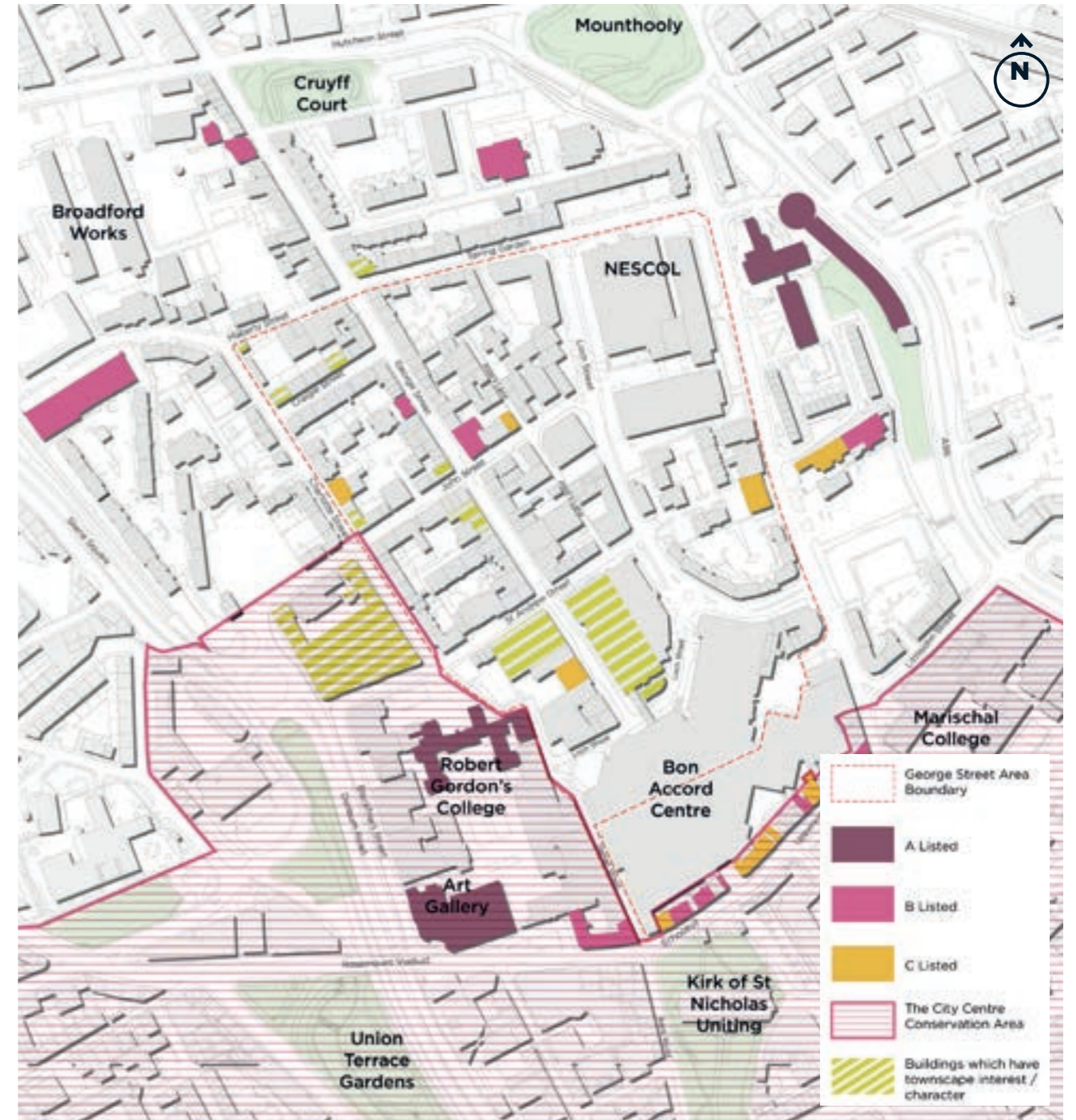
View towards Category B listed 4-bay bold Lombardic Gothic style former college building with prominent octagonal tower



View towards 1960s Norco House expressing its brutalist ziggurat facade.



View towards Category B listed classical bank building occupying a prominent George Street junction.



Historical Character

Norco Building

Northern Co-operative Society's Norco House (most recently occupied by John Lewis) was built in 1966-70 for the (now-defunct) Northern Co-operative Society.

Designed by Covell Matthews Architects, the building is an example of brutalist, modernist architecture and intended to be a showpiece within the city's architectural make-up. The rippling, mound like profile of the massing of the building was particularly striking and unlike anything within the George Street area. The exposed concrete strips take similar design language from other well known brutalist buildings e.g Preston Bus Station as well as examples from other department store façades in Europe.

The building was taken over by John Lewis and renovated and converted in 1987. The department store was the organisation's northernmost store and was further expanded to the east in 1987 as part of the expansion of the John Lewis Partnership into Aberdeen. John Lewis has since closed (2021) and is now used by the NHS as a temporary vaccination hub on the ground floor.



Loch Street Soup Kitchen

Aberdeen Public Soup Kitchen was first established as a charity in 1800 in St Mary's Chapel in St Nicholas Church. It supplied a breakfast of coffee and bread and a lunch of bread, soup and a piece of beef or mutton to the needy of the city.

The Soup Kitchen moved to Loch Street in 1838 and this new building was opened by Lord Provost Stewart in December 1894. The ground floor dining room had accommodation for at least 50 people and the tables were marble topped. In 1926, a total of nearly 27,000 meals were provided with funding still coming from charitable donations since few could afford even the two pence for the lunch.

The building survived major developments in the surrounding area but in recent years its charitable purpose was no longer thought necessary, and it was converted into a café in the mid 1990s. In 2022, the building still stands at 41-43 Loch Street, with the covered walkway for the Bon Accord Centre to its south. It is occupied by a outlet of the Jo Malone London fragrance and candle store.



Street Furniture

As demonstrated in the plan, there is a lack of seating and dwell space within the George Street area. Contrastingly, issues with bin storage are visible across the entire site. A clear demand for cycle storage presents an opportunity to expand existing cycle facilities.



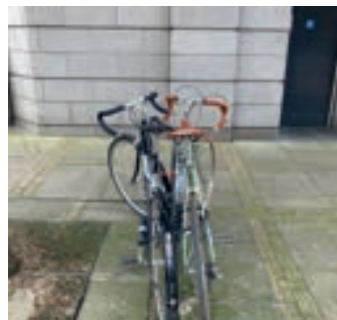
Residential Bin storage

There are bins which spill out into the public realm across the wider George Street area. As well as lowering the visual appeal of a space, these also pose accessibility issues.



Providing dwell space

There is a low provision of seating within the George Street area. Existing seating environments could be improved. For instance, whilst there are benches on George Street, these are positioned with their backs to the road and next to bollards. This makes for an unwelcoming dwell space.

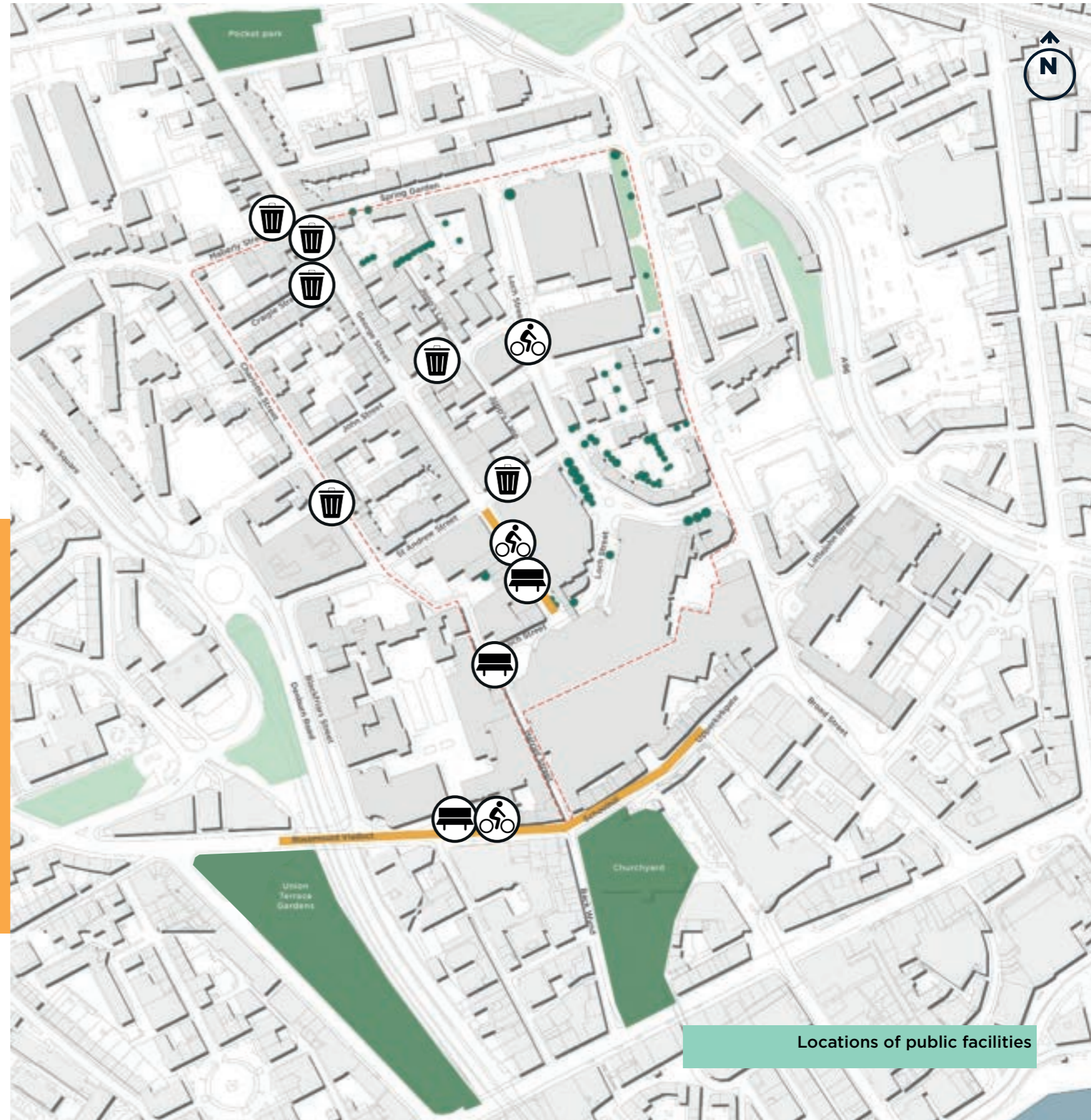


Cycle storage

Cycle storage is located adjacent to the college and also along George Street itself. This is well used and there is clearly a demand for adequate cycle storage and repair stations. There is an opportunity to incorporate additional facilities for cyclists across the area.

What this means:

Additional seating elements are required across the George Street area to improve accessibility and to create areas for dwell space. Bin storage is a problem across the entire site and negatively impacts visual quality and accessibility of the streetscape.



Locations of public facilities

Shop Fronts & Clutter

George Street is home to many independent and varied local businesses as well as regional and national retailers, each with their own graphic identity and approach to shop frontage promotion. As a result, the quality of the overall townscape of George Street can become cluttered and visually disjointed.

There are advantages to creating a more considered and co-ordinated approach to shop frontage appearance. Achieving more consistency with a broad set of guides can help to still promote local businesses and retailers whilst also ensuring that the architectural and visual aesthetic of George Street is able to be seen.

The images to the right illustrate some of the issues and how they could be overcome.

Opportunities to co-ordinate the design and aesthetic of shop frontages should be explored, in accordance with the Council's Shop Frontage Design Guidance.



Inconsistencies in George Street's shop frontage



Indicative approaches to creating a more coherent townscape and retail environment

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GEORGE STREET DRAFT MASTERPLAN

TRAFFIC MODEL TESTING

IDENTIFICATION TABLE	
Client/Project owner	Aberdeen City Council
Project	George Street Draft Masterplan
Study	Traffic Model Testing
Type of document	Report
Date	14/07/2023
Reference number	GB01T21D88/14_07_23
Number of pages	24

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 SYSTRA Ltd (SYSTRA) is supporting Aberdeen City Council (ACC) to develop the transport-related elements of the George Street Draft Masterplan (GSM), which examines proposals (including streetscape, public realm and transport network etc.) on George St and the immediately surrounding area. An initial draft GSM was presented to elected members in December 2022, this was further developed and subject to public consultation throughout the first half of 2023, with the finalised draft Masterplan presented to August 2023 Council.
- 1.1.2 To support the ongoing GSM development and to help facilitate responses to stakeholders during consultation, SYSTRA was appointed to undertake traffic modelling. For consistency and efficiency, the GSM modelling built upon associated modelling work already underway to support the development and delivery of the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan (CCMP) and Beachfront Development Framework (BDF). The traffic modelling and associated technical analysis provided the analytical framework to understand critical issues such as through-routeing within the study area. It also provided a consistent baseline for assessing the impacts and benefits of the proposed changes associated with the GSM.
- 1.1.3 The impacts and benefits of the proposed measures outlined in the draft GSM were assessed in the traffic modelling. Refinements to the proposals were subsequently assessed and analysed to support the development of GSM recommendations for change that benefit the study area as a connected and inclusive part of the city centre, aligned with the wider City Centre Masterplan objective to create a place as a destination and not a through route.
- 1.1.4 The purpose of this report is to present the data and analysis supporting the recommended implementation of proposed GSM measures that include:
- Traffic management proposals that reduce opportunities for through-traffic in the area while maintaining and enhancing accessibility for all travel modes

- Recording the displacement of traffic from local roads in the core of the study area onto streets at the top of the revised Roads Hierarchy while minimising the overall impacts on the network as a whole
- Balancing the accessibility requirements across all travel modes

1.1.5 The traffic modelling provides an indication of the impacts and benefits in the central core of the study area achievable by introducing the proposed GSM while also considering any network impacts within the wider context of Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan project delivery.

1.2 Summary Conclusions

1.2.1 The traffic modelling exercise undertaken to support the development of the George Street Draft Masterplan helped to understand its impacts and benefits and assisted in refining the package of measures being proposed. The results of the modelling have demonstrated that the proposed measures would introduce changes that help deliver the wider ambitions of the Masterplan through:

- Traffic management proposals that reduce opportunities for through-traffic in the area (circa 21% reduction in through-trips across the day) while maintaining and, in some cases, enhancing accessibility for all modes
- Encouraging traffic to route away from certain local roads in the core of the study area onto streets at the top of the revised Roads Hierarchy which are of a standard appropriate for higher volumes of traffic, while minimising the overall impacts on the network as a whole
- Balancing the accessibility requirements across different modes (e.g. using roadspace formerly occupied by general traffic to provide opportunities for improved public transport and active travel, ensuring that suitable alternative routes for general traffic are available where restrictions are introduced etc.)

1.2.2 The traffic flow changes proposed are intuitive in nature and are most evident in the core of the study area and its immediate environs. Through successive iterations of model testing, a balanced set of proposals has been arrived at, which seek to deliver the overall Masterplan vision (e.g. by reducing private vehicle through routeing and creating opportunities for repurposing road space).

1.2.3 Minimising any traffic impacts of the proposed measures was also a focus of the modelling work and the proposals were successively refined in accordance with this principle. Therefore, while certain streets in the Masterplan area do see an increase in general traffic in one direction, these are often counter-balanced by reductions in traffic in the opposite direction or on adjacent routes. The local network within the GSM study area is shown to operate within the available capacity and without significant congestion or delays being evident throughout the modelled period.

1.2.4 The modelling has helped demonstrate that the proposals can deliver significant positive change through reduced traffic flows on key streets that are central to the masterplan objectives and priority projects. This provides opportunities for better public transport and active travel facilities, spill-out space and diversity of street activity in these areas.

2. TRAFFIC MODELLING

2.1 Existing Model Scenarios

2.1.1 The Aberdeen City Centre Paramics Model (ACCPM) forms the basis of the modelling work undertaken. The 2019 Base Year model was recently updated in assessing the proposed Beachfront Development Framework and forecast scenarios available from that work have been used to efficiently produce a consistent Reference Case scenario for the GSM. Figure 1 provides a flow chart of the model development and testing for the BDF work and shows how this supports a number of parallel studies in Aberdeen City Centre, including the GSM.

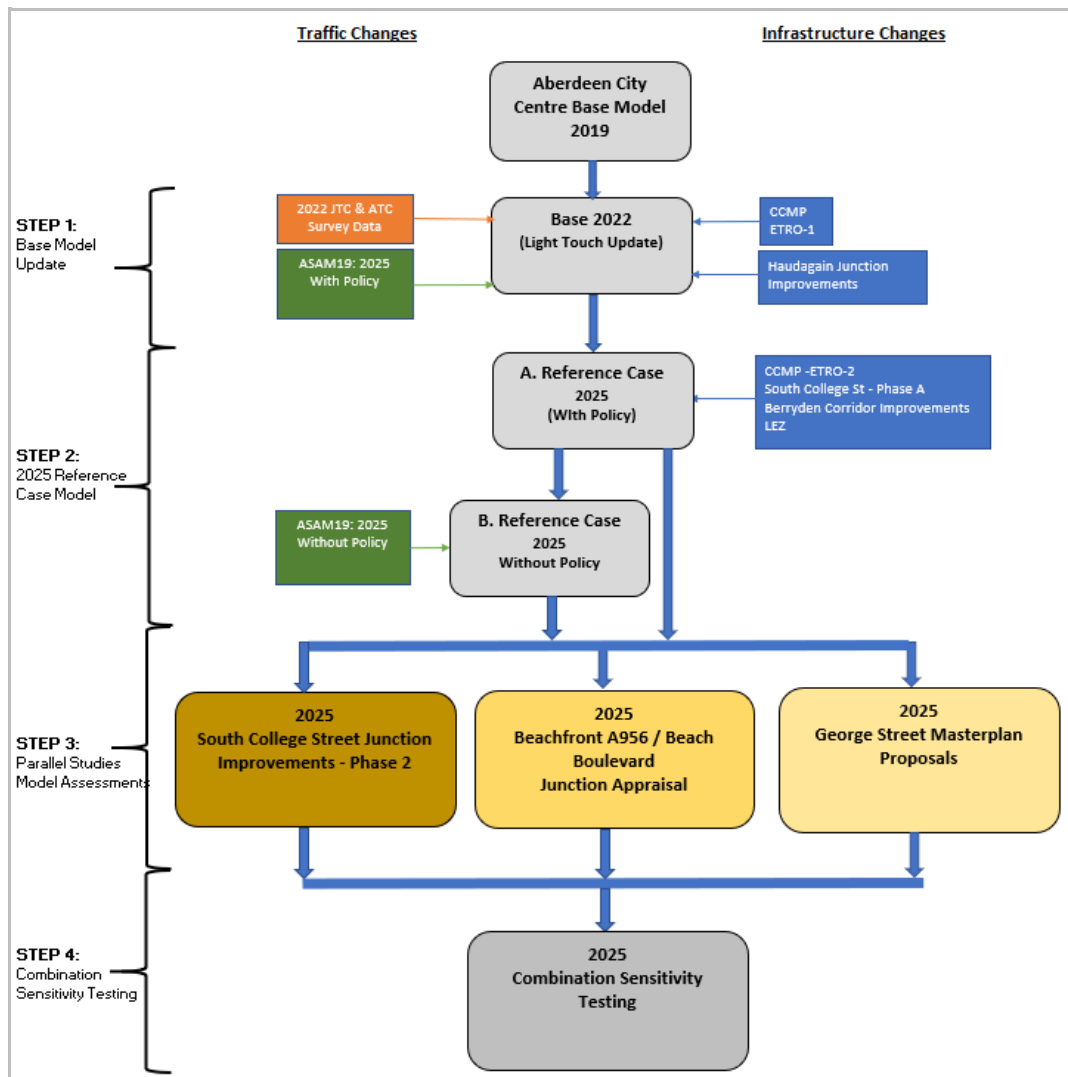


Figure 1. Model Development & Testing for BDF

2.1.2 In simple terms, the currently available versions of the ACCPM available are:

1. ACCPM Base 2019
2. Base 2022 Light Touch update: ACCPM Base plus CCMP ETRO-1 & Haudagain improvements with demand changes from ASAM19 2025 “with policy” forecast
3. Reference Case 2025:
 - 3.1. Reference Case A: 2. plus CCMP ETRO-2, South College St Phase A, Berryden Corridor improvements & LEZ

3.2. Reference Case B: Same network as 3.1 with demand changes from ASAM19 2025 “without policy” forecast

- 2.1.3 For clarity, the acronym ETRO relates to packages of traffic management measures associated with the City Centre Masterplan that will be implemented through Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETRO). The acronym has been used for brevity in this document rather than listing all measures individually. For further details of the measures included in ETRO-1 and ETRO-2 the reader is referred to the report ‘*Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan – Traffic Management Plan – Phase 2*’ (Ref: GB01T21D88-0622_1, 13th June 2022).
- 2.1.4 The term Reference Case is used to indicate a forecast baseline model that will be used as a consistent means for comparing the impacts and benefits of proposed interventions. The forecast year of 2025 has been selected in this case as it coincides with the first future year for which forecasts are available from the regional ASAM19. A Reference Case network is typically developed by adding committed (or highly likely) transport interventions into the Base network to best represent the transport network likely to be in place for each forecast year.
- 2.1.5 For the GSM modelling, it was agreed with ACC that the Reference Case 2025 network (Model Version 3) would be adopted as this includes additional measures that will be in place in the near future (e.g. City Centre Masterplan, Low Emission Zone etc.), and therefore offers the most realistic baseline against which to assess the potential impacts of the GSM. For consistency, with other ongoing adjacent studies, the modelling and analysis has focused on the “with policy” variant (Model Version 3.1). Further details of the “With” and “Without Policy” forecasts can be found in the report ‘*Addressing Uncertainty in transport Appraisal Assessment – Aberdeen Case Study*’ (Ref: GB01T21D88-0623, June 2023).

2.2 Local Traffic Context

- 2.2.1 The streets within the study area serve a variety of different purposes, providing access for private vehicles and public transport services both travelling to and through the area. Local resident access is served by a combination of private off-street and permit holder parking while some short-term on-street parking is also available for visitors and those accessing local shops and businesses. There are also key land-uses with off-street parking within the study area, including:
- Bon Accord retail centre
 - North East Scotland College
 - Robert Gordon’s College
- 2.2.2 This diversity of residential, educational, retail and other business land-uses demands flexible access for users across all modes within the study area.
- 2.2.3 The current traffic management regime in place also provides opportunities for through-traffic on certain movements. In particular, west to east movements can currently travel from Woolmanhill to Gallowgate/West North St via John St, Loch St and Berry St. This can be seen by some drivers as an attractive alternative to travelling via the priority road network (e.g. Skene Square, Hutcheon St, Mounthooly, West North Street). Private vehicles can also currently travel the length of George St between Hutcheon St and St Andrew St, which provides a through-routeing opportunity to Rosemount Viaduct and beyond for north to south (and some longer-distance east to west) trips. The presence of vehicular through routing can be seen as adding a degree of friction to local movements across all modes, particularly for active travel and public transport. This negatively impacts the sense of place

within the study area and is considered to be detrimental to a positive sense of neighbourhood.

2.2.4 Analysis was undertaken to indicate the approximate scale of through-routeing within the study area. The analysis was based on the trip matrices from the 2025 ACCPM “with policy” forecasts as this provided a consistent dataset enabling all trips entering and/or exiting the study area to be identified, in the absence of bespoke survey data. Figure 2 helps provide some geographical context to the analysis undertaken.

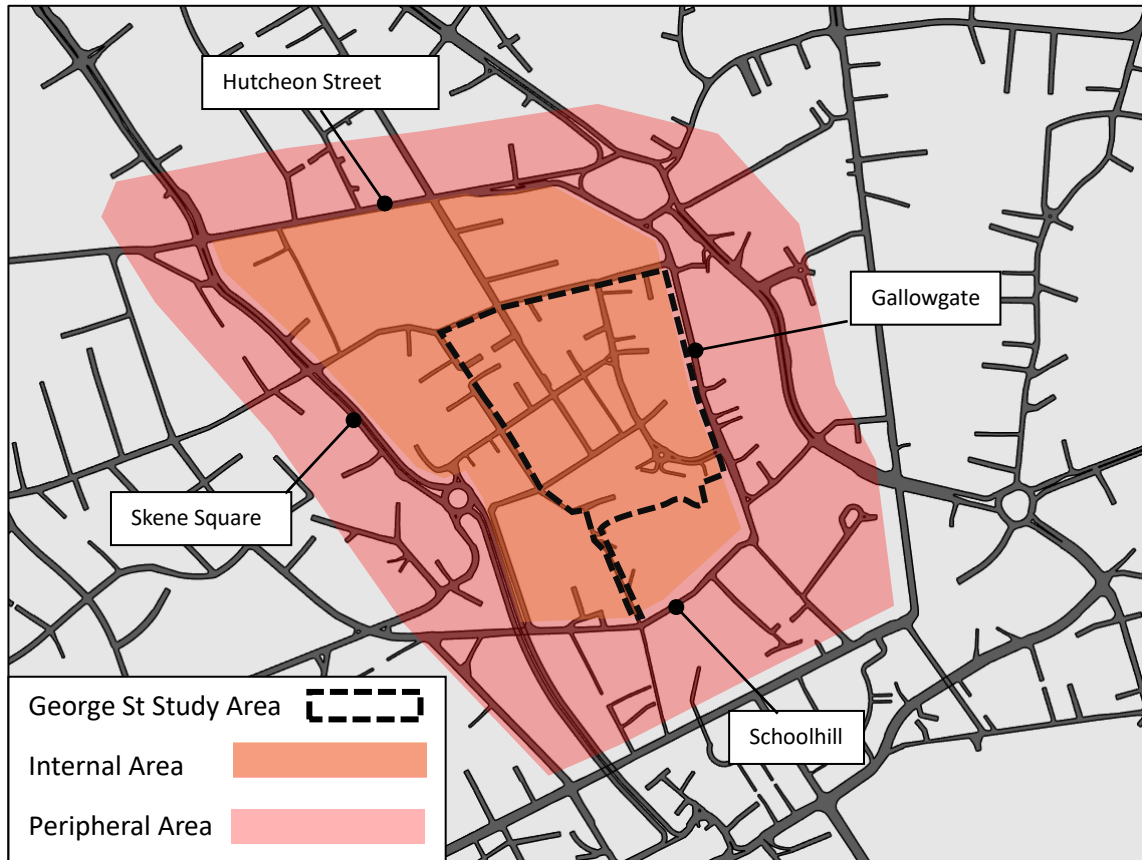


Figure 2. Internal and Peripheral Areas for Through-Routeing Analysis

2.2.5 Analysis was firstly undertaken to assess the total volume of trips that cross the Internal Area (i.e. the geographical area bounded by Hutcheon Street (north), Skene Square/Denburn Rd (west), Schoolhill (south) and Gallowgate (east)) boundary. Any trips crossing the boundary where both the start and end point lies physically outside the internal boundary were considered to be through-trips. For the 2025 Reference Case scenario:

- Total Trips Crossing the Internal Area boundary 0700-1900 = 33,413
 - Of which: 11,675 (35%) are through-trips

2.2.6 The above provides an indication of the average level of through routeing across the Internal Area as a whole (i.e. the average across all links combined). A second level of analysis focused on specific streets within the study area to assess their individual levels of through-routeing. For this analysis, the Peripheral Area was added to the Internal Area to ensure that the level of through routeing is not exaggerated by including trips going to or from locations very close to the study area. Therefore, any trips traversing the link where both the start and end point lies physically outside the combined Internal and Peripheral area were considered to be through-trips. Table 1 presents these for the 2025 Reference Case scenario.

Through-trips (0700-1900)		2025 Ref Case	%age Through-
Location	Direction	Through-trips	trips on link
John Street between Woolmanhill and Charlotte Street	EB	598	15%
	WB	137	8%
John Street between Charlotte Street & George St	EB	601	15%
	WB	0	0%
John Street between George Street and Loch Street	EB	504	12%
George Street between Hutcheon Street and Spring Garden	NB	481	20%
	SB	158	9%
George Street between Spring Garden and John Street	NB	137	9%
	SB	49	4%
George Street between John Street and St Andrew Street	NB	39	4%
	SB	50	15%
Maberley Street east of Skene Square	EB	903	33%
	WB	1365	38%
Maberly Street between Charlotte St & George St	EB	905	34%
	WB	1374	41%
Spring Garden west of Loch St	EB	624	30%
	WB	1328	38%

Table 1. Through Routeing at Key Locations - 2025 Reference Case

2.2.7 This secondary analysis demonstrates, as may be expected, a wide variation in the percentage of through trips on individual links across the study area, ranging between 4% and 41% (depending on location and direction) for the subset of links presented. It should be noted that the 35% through-trips figure (ref. §2.2.5) represents the cross-area average for the whole of the Internal Area while the figures for individual links in Table 1 present a selected subset of through-trip percentages at salient locations. As such, the absolute and percentage figures for the subset of individual links should not be expected to sum to the cross-area average.

2.3 George Street Draft Masterplan Scenario

2.3.1 The draft GSM presented to Council in December 2022 contained a range of potential measures that could be included to achieve the objectives. From a transport perspective, these focused on access for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport (bus) and general traffic. The [draft GSM](#) presented formative proposals for further testing and to generate consultation response, with an ethos to propose changes to vehicular movement in the area that limited through routing while providing opportunities to realise the proposed ‘Vision’. The proposed GSM movement and accessibility scenario reflected in the modelling reported in this document is shown in Figure 3.

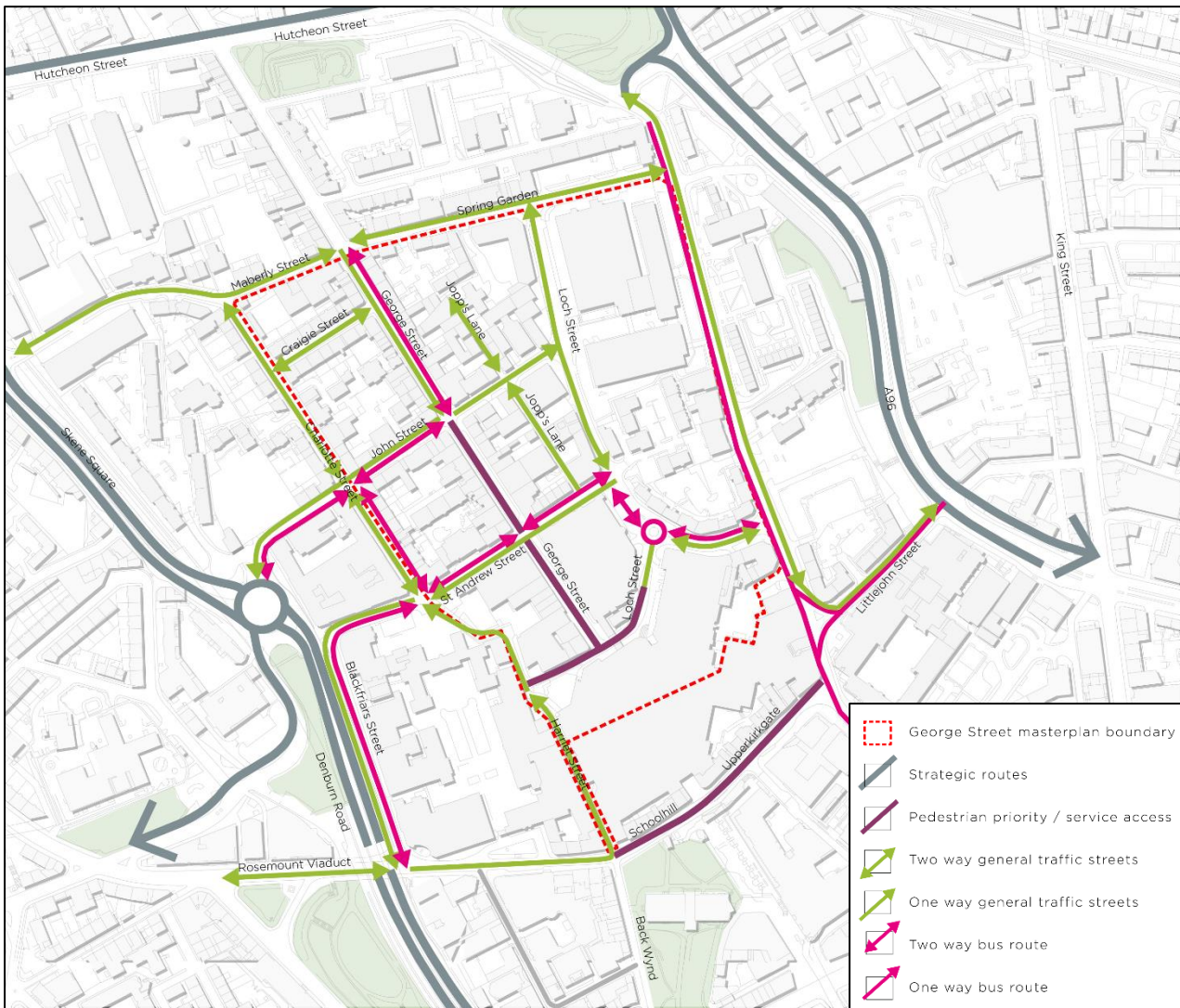


Figure 3. GSM Movement and Accessibility Plan

2.3.2 To provide a suitable representation of the proposed measures within the ACCPM for the modelling, the key traffic management changes affecting general traffic and bus routes/stops were reflected. This ensured that general traffic routing, bus routing and stopping patterns through the study area would adapt in line with the proposed measures. In cases where pedestrian and cycling measures are proposed to be incorporated into existing road space that will be freed up by restrictions to general traffic and/or buses, this is reflected in the model by amendments to the number of lanes and/or direction of travel available for use by general traffic, buses etc. on the relevant links. Therefore, the effects of all proposed measures were reflected in the model where their implementation results in some restriction to either buses or general traffic (e.g. one-way links, road/lane closures, barred movements etc.).

2.3.3 The draft GSM provided an initial start point for the modelling (Test 1), which was undertaken in an iterative manner with results being produced for discussion with ACC. Locations where congestion was evident in the modelling were examined to identify potential remediation and consider potential variants to the initial GSM option. For example, in the first Option Test model runs, congestion was evident at locations including:

- Skene Square/Caroline Place northbound approach to the junction at Hutcheon Street
- Hutcheon Street eastbound approach to the junction at George Street
- George Street southbound approaches to the junctions at Spring Garden and John Street and Spring Garden westbound approach to the junction at George Street

2.3.4 Upon examination of the reasons, it became evident that these areas of congestion were heavily influenced by the introduction of one-way only northbound operation on Loch Street in the first GSM Option Test. The removal of the southbound access to and egress from land uses on Loch Street (e.g. NESCoI, residential parking etc.) resulted in an increase in traffic turning from Hutcheon Street to access George Street southbound and on Spring Garden westbound leading to queue formation and congestion at the locations mentioned. Therefore, in developing a more refined set of proposals all subsequent Option Test variants adopted two-way operation on Loch Street.

2.3.5 Proposed refinements were incrementally incorporated into the model (creating Test 2, Test 3 etc.) and revised results produced for further discussion, resulting in a total of seven test variants being modelled. For brevity, the results of each individual model iteration are not discussed in this report but details of the measures reflected in, and the rationale for each of the different variants modelled are provided in Appendix B.

2.3.6 The results outlined in this report relate to the most recent (Test 7) model variant, with the proposed network measures incorporated in the GSM Test Scenario model being:

- One-way general traffic operation on:
 - George St southbound between Spring Garden & John St (currently 2-way)
 - John St westbound between George St & Charlotte St (currently 1-way eastbound) with cyclist, bus, taxi and private hire access retained eastbound
 - Blackfriars St southbound between St Andrew St & Rosemount Viaduct (currently 2-way)
 - St Andrew St westbound from George St to Charlotte St (currently 2-way)
- Local access (i.e. no through traffic) either implemented or retained as existing on George St south of John St, Jopp's Lane, Craigie St and Charlotte St between Maberly St & John St
- Bus Routes diverted to use Charlotte St instead of George St between John St & St Andrew St

Note: Restrictions apply to general traffic with 2-way bus, taxi and private hire operation maintained on all relevant routes.

2.3.7 These measures were aimed at discouraging through-traffic from the area while maintaining access across all modes for residents, businesses and visitors as required. The above measures were added to the 2025 Reference Case network to create the GSM Test Scenario for comparison.

3. MODEL TEST RESULTS

3.1 General

3.1.1 Both the Reference Case and GSM Option Test models were run using the same forecast 2025 (With Policy) travel demand levels for the AM (0700-1000), inter (1000-1600) and PM (1600-1900) peak periods represented in the ACCPM. The general operational conditions in the network were compared visually and the impacts in terms of traffic flow differences at key locations were extracted as a key comparator between the Reference Case and Option Test models.

3.2 Traffic Flow Comparisons

3.2.1 The ACCPM includes comprehensive coverage of the city centre streets and includes all relevant streets within the GSM study area. Modelled traffic volumes have been compared across the network but with a particular focus on the streets in and directly adjacent to the study area. This approach ensures that the impacts are understood:

- On the streets in the core of the GSM study area (e.g. George St, John St, Loch St etc.)
- In the wider context and at key locations within the local roads hierarchy (e.g. Skene Square, Hutcheon St, West North St etc.)

3.2.2 Figures 4 to 6 present diagrams of the change in traffic volumes between the 2025 Reference Case and 2025 Option Test model runs for the 3 hour AM, 6 hour inter and 3 hour PM peak periods respectively, hence hourly volumes can be approximated by dividing by 3 (AM & PM peak) or 6 (inter peak), if required. The traffic volumes at key locations in the study area for the 2025 GSM Option Test are represented by the blue text and directional arrows while the percentage change in traffic volume compared with the 2025 Reference Case are shown in red text. It should be noted that the traffic volumes and percentage differences are unique to the location and direction of the link shown, hence volumes and percentages will differ between links, even in cases where they appear to be directly adjacent.

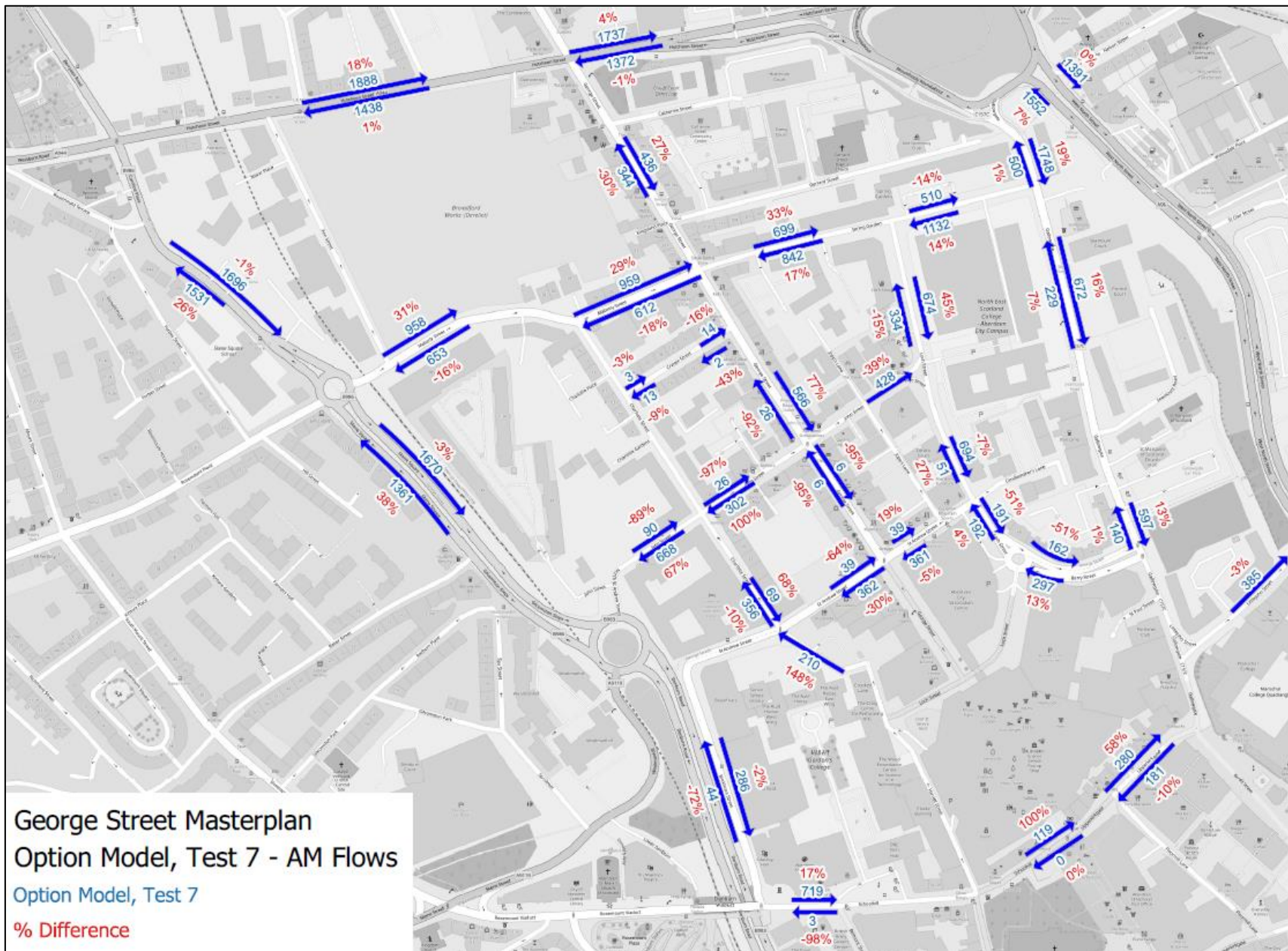


Figure 4. AM Peak Period (0700-1000) Traffic Flow and Difference Plot

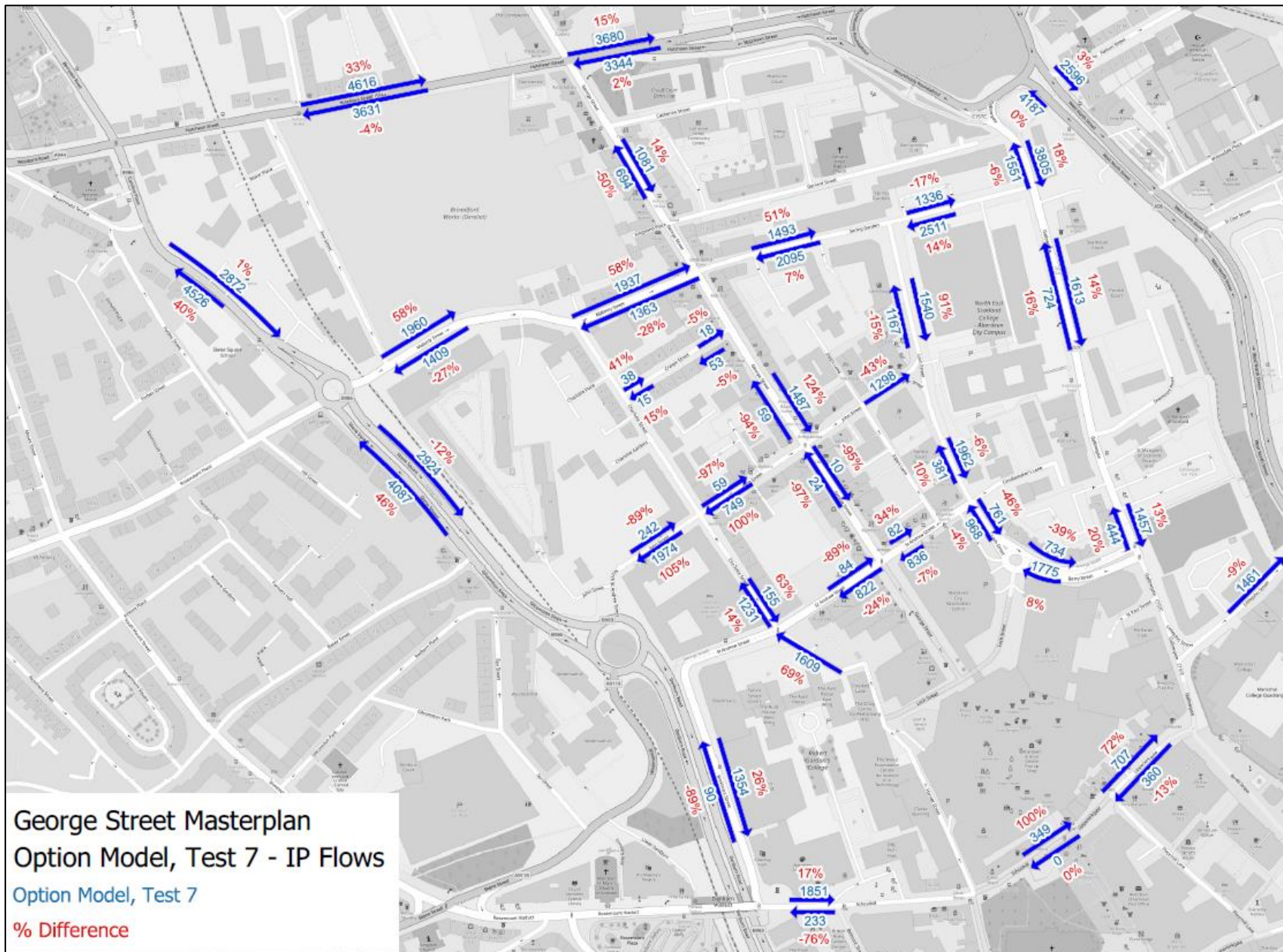


Figure 5. Inter Peak Period (1000-1600) Traffic Flow and Difference Plot

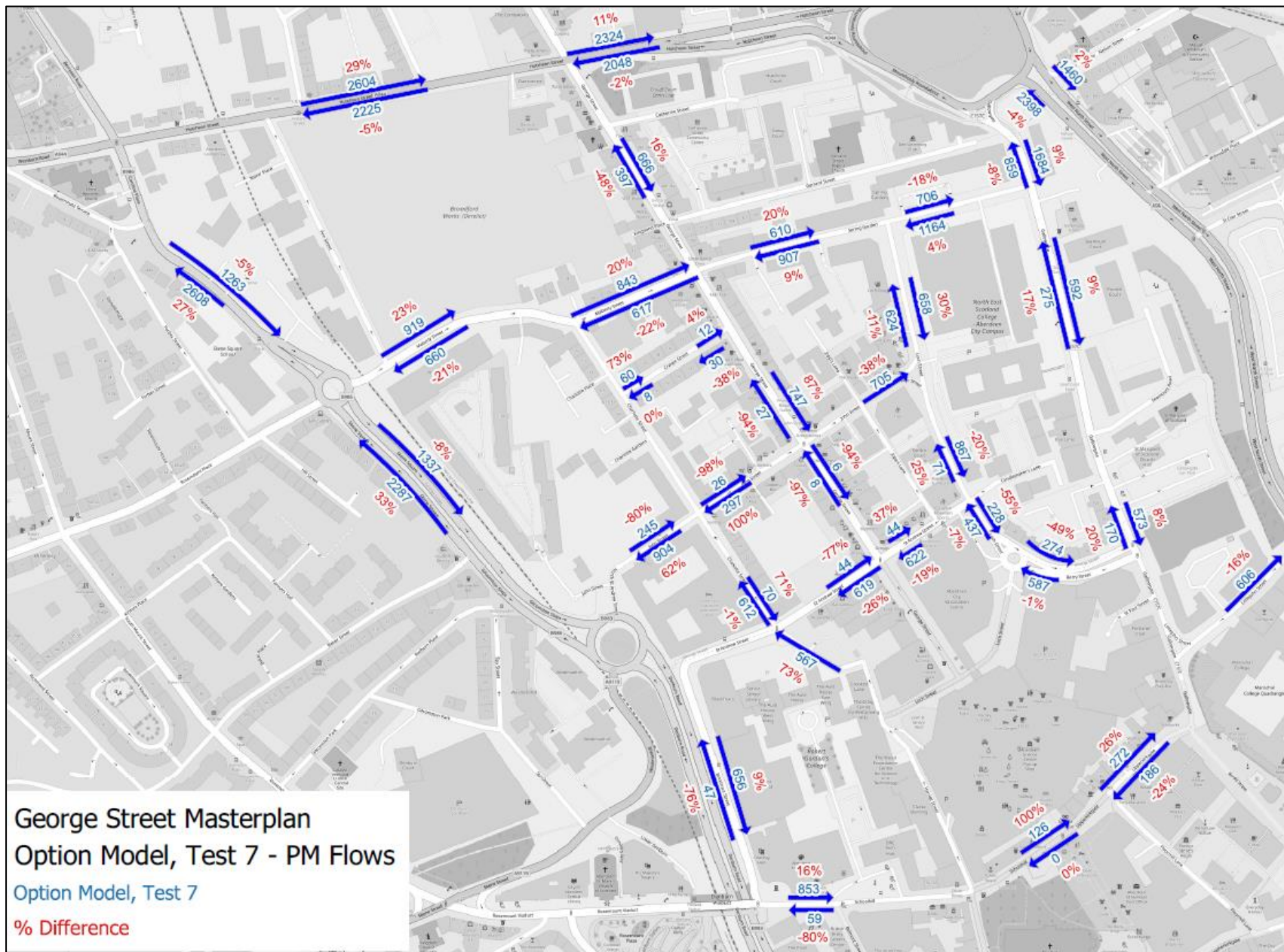


Figure 6. PM Peak Period (1600-1900) Traffic Flow and Difference Plot

3.2.3 More detailed results of the traffic flow analysis for the 2025 forecasts are presented in Appendix A in tabular form. These have been tabulated for five separate “screenlines”, where adjacent modelled links are chosen by drawing a line that dissects the core area of the network in either a north/south or east-west direction. To aid understanding of the data presented in Appendix A, a summary of notable impacts at key locations is provided below:

Core Area

○ George Street

- Traffic volumes reduced by approximately 95% in both directions between John St and St Andrew St (see Screenline 3)

Note: while the modelling assumed 2-way operation on George Street between John Street and St Andrew St in the GSM Test, the low volumes of traffic evident could be accommodated by one-way operation, if required

- Northbound traffic volumes reduced north of John St (by 92-94% on Screenline 2 and 33-55% on Screenline 1) due to introduction of one-way system
- Southbound traffic volumes increased north of John St (by 77-124% on Screenline 2 and 12-23% on Screenline 1) due to one-way westbound operation of John St west of George St enabling route through to Woolmanhill

○ John Street

- Eastbound traffic volumes reduced (by 80-90% on Screenline 4 and 38-43% on Screenline 5) due to the removal of eastbound access from Woolmanhill
- Westbound traffic volumes increased (by 66-105% on Screenline 4) due to reversal of John St to be westbound only west of George St (Note: westbound operation forms part of the GSM proposed measures)

○ Maberly St

- Eastbound traffic volumes increased (by 20-58% see Screenlines 4 & 5) alongside southbound volumes on Loch St (by 30%-91% on Screenline 2) and Gallowgate (by 9%-19% on Screenlines 1 & 2) due to the removal of eastbound access from Woolmanhill/John St resulting in localised re-routeing to access eastern/south eastern part of study area and beyond
- Westbound traffic volumes decreased west of George St (by 16%-27% on Screenline 4) and increased east of George St (by 7%-17% on Screenline 5) due to reversal of John St to be westbound only west of George St impacting localised routeing

Wider Network

○ Skene Square/Hutcheon St

- Northbound volumes on Skene Square increased (by between 26% and 46% - see Screenlines 1 and 2) and eastbound volumes on Hutcheon St increased (by between 18% and 33% - see Screenline 4) due to removal of eastbound access to John St from Woolmanhill resulting in wider re-routeing via the priority road network

3.2.4 The traffic flow changes evident at other locations on the wider network are relatively minor in terms of absolute traffic volumes.

- 3.2.5 Overall, the location and nature of these traffic flow changes are in line with the expectations based on the amendments to the traffic management regime with the proposed GSM measures in place. That is to say that the most significant changes in traffic volume occur within the study area and its immediate environs (i.e. where the proposed GSM measures are introduced). When interpreting the results of the traffic flow analysis, it is worth noting that all volumes of traffic have been presented for the full 3 hour (AM & PM) and 6 hour (inter) peak periods and that a seemingly large percentage change in traffic volume does not necessarily equate to a large volume of traffic on an hourly basis.
- 3.2.6 To provide some context to the overall scale of change, the largest absolute increase in traffic volume is evident on Skene Square northbound (+1,287 vehicles) during the inter peak period. When examining this on an hourly basis, this equates to approximately 215 vehicles per hour or between 3 and 4 vehicles per minute. It should also be borne in mind that roads such as the A944 Hutcheon Street and Skene Square are designated as priority radial routes at the highest (primary) level of the local roads hierarchy. Their design and configuration are therefore of an appropriate standard to accommodate higher volumes of traffic compared with the other secondary and tertiary roads within the core study area.
- 3.2.7 Accordingly, the general operational performance across the whole ACCPM network is similar when comparing the Reference Case and the GSM Option Test. The local network within the Internal Area of the GSM is shown to operate within the available capacity and without significant congestion or delays being evident throughout the modelled period.
- 3.2.8 The increases in traffic volumes on the wider network (e.g. on Denburn Road/Skene Square northbound and Hutcheon St eastbound) with the GSM measures in place indicate that drivers could expect to experience some additional queuing and delays at these locations compared with the Reference Case. The modelling indicates that these are likely to be more prevalent during the typically more congested PM peak period. These impacts are at the locations expected, on the priority radial routes at the highest level of the road hierarchy, which are configured and designed to accommodate higher traffic volumes. Furthermore, it would be expected that traffic signal optimisation could assist in minimising future delays and congestion as a result of changes in traffic routing patterns.

3.3 Impacts on Through-Routeing

- 3.3.1 The analysis of through-routeing was repeated for the GSM Test Option to assess the impact of the measures on through trips. Firstly, considering the total volume of trips that cross the Internal Area for the 2025 GSM Option Test scenario:
- Total Trips Crossing the Internal Area boundary 0700-1900 = 33,220 (Reference Case = 33,413)
 - Of which: 9,280 are through-trips (Reference Case = 11,675)
- 3.3.2 This analysis shows that in comparison to the Reference Case, the total number of trips crossing the Internal Area boundary remains similar, albeit there is a slight reduction. However there is a reduction of 2,395 through trips, approximately 21%, as a result of introducing the proposed GSM measures.
- 3.3.3 The change in volumes of through-routeing traffic at key locations within the Internal Area is presented in Table 2.

Through-trips (0700-1900)		2025 Ref Case	2025 Option	Difference	%age Difference
Location	Direction	Through-trips	Through-trips		
John Street between Woolmanhill and Charlotte Street	EB	598	0	-598	-100%
	WB	137	448	311	227%
John Street between Charlotte Street & George St	EB	601	0	-601	-100%
	WB	0	440	440	100%
John Street between George Street and Loch Street	EB	504	28	-476	-94%
George Street between Hutcheon Street and Spring Garden	NB	481	260	-221	-46%
	SB	158	218	60	38%
George Street between Spring Garden and John Street	NB	137	0	-137	-100%
	SB	49	468	419	855%
George Street between John Street and St Andrew Street	NB	39	0	-39	-100%
	SB	50	3	-47	-94%
Maberley Street east of Skene Square	EB	903	820	-83	-9%
	WB	1365	982	-383	-28%
Maberly Street between Charlotte St & George St	EB	905	824	-81	-9%
	WB	1374	983	-391	-28%
Spring Garden west of Loch St	EB	624	578	-46	-7%
	WB	1328	1251	-77	-6%

Table 2. Through Routeing Comparison at Key Locations

3.3.4 To summarise the salient observations from this analysis, when the proposed GSM measures are implemented:

- Through-routeing is eliminated on George Street northbound between St Andrew St and Spring Garden due to the combination of local access only measures south of John St and one way southbound operation only between Spring Garden and John St
- Through routeing is eliminated on John Street eastbound (between Woolmanhill and Charlotte Street) and reduced by 94% eastbound between George St and Loch St due to the removal of eastbound access for private vehicles from Woolmanhill
- Through routeing is increased on George St southbound between Hutcheon St and John St and on John St westbound west of George St due to the opening of one-way operation westbound on John St between George St and Woolmanhill, however:
 - The overall volume of traffic on John St west of George St is significantly lower in the GSM Option test (1,290 westbound operation only) than in the Reference Case (4,003 eastbound operation only)
 - The volume of through trips on John St west of George St is lower in the GSM Option test (440 westbound operation only) than in the Reference Case (601 eastbound operation only)
 - While there is an increase in general traffic volumes on George St southbound, the combined 2-way volumes are lower in the GSM Option Test due to the removal of northbound general traffic (George St between Spring Garden and John St: Reference Case = 1,560 northbound + 1,265 southbound (Total 2,825); GSM Option Test = 0 northbound + 2,654 southbound (Total 2,654))
 - The two-way volume of through trips on George St between Spring Garden and John St increases from 186 in the Reference Case to 468 in the GSM Option Test across the 12 hour period 0700-1900. Therefore, while the southbound percentage increase in through routeing appears high, the total change in through routeing on this section of George St equates to between 23 and 24 vehicles per hour, less than 1 vehicle per minute – while total 2-way traffic volumes are reduced
 - The modelling does not include specific measures to dissuade general traffic from using the George Street southbound to John Street westbound movement as a through route to Woolmanhill. In reality, measures such as changes to the traffic signal staging/timings, amendments to the local carriageway or

streetscape etc. could be introduced to make this route less attractive for traffic and lower the volume of trips using this as a through route

- There are reductions in eastbound and westbound through routeing volumes on both Maberly St and Spring Garden when the GSM measures are introduced due to the changes in east-west routeing and study area access/egress at Woolmanhill/Denburn Road.

3.3.5 The changes in through-routeing trips at key locations within the Internal Area are in line with the expectations given the proposed GSM measures implemented in the modelling. As in the Reference Case, there remains a wide variation in the percentage of through trips on individual links across the study area (depending on location and direction) when the proposed GSM measures are introduced. However, the proposed changes result in a general reduction in the level of through-routeing across the George Street study area as a whole.

3.4 Conclusions

3.4.1 The traffic modelling exercise undertaken to support the development of the George Street Draft Masterplan helped to understand its impacts and benefits and assisted in refining the package of measures being proposed. The results of the modelling have demonstrated that the proposed measures would introduce changes that help deliver the wider ambitions of the Masterplan through:

- Traffic management proposals that reduce opportunities for through-traffic in the area (circa 21% reduction in through-trips across the day) while maintaining and, in some cases, enhancing accessibility for all modes
- Encouraging traffic to route away from certain local roads in the core of the study area onto streets at the top of the revised Roads Hierarchy which are of a standard appropriate for higher volumes of traffic, while minimising the overall impacts on the network as a whole
- Balancing the accessibility requirements across different modes (e.g. using roadspace formerly occupied by general traffic to provide opportunities for improved public transport and active travel, ensuring that suitable alternative routes for general traffic are available where restrictions are introduced etc.)

3.4.2 The traffic flow changes proposed are intuitive in nature and are most evident in the core of the study area and its immediate environs. Through successive iterations of model testing, a balanced set of proposals has been arrived at, which seek to deliver the overall Masterplan vision (e.g. by reducing private vehicle through routeing and creating opportunities for repurposing road space).

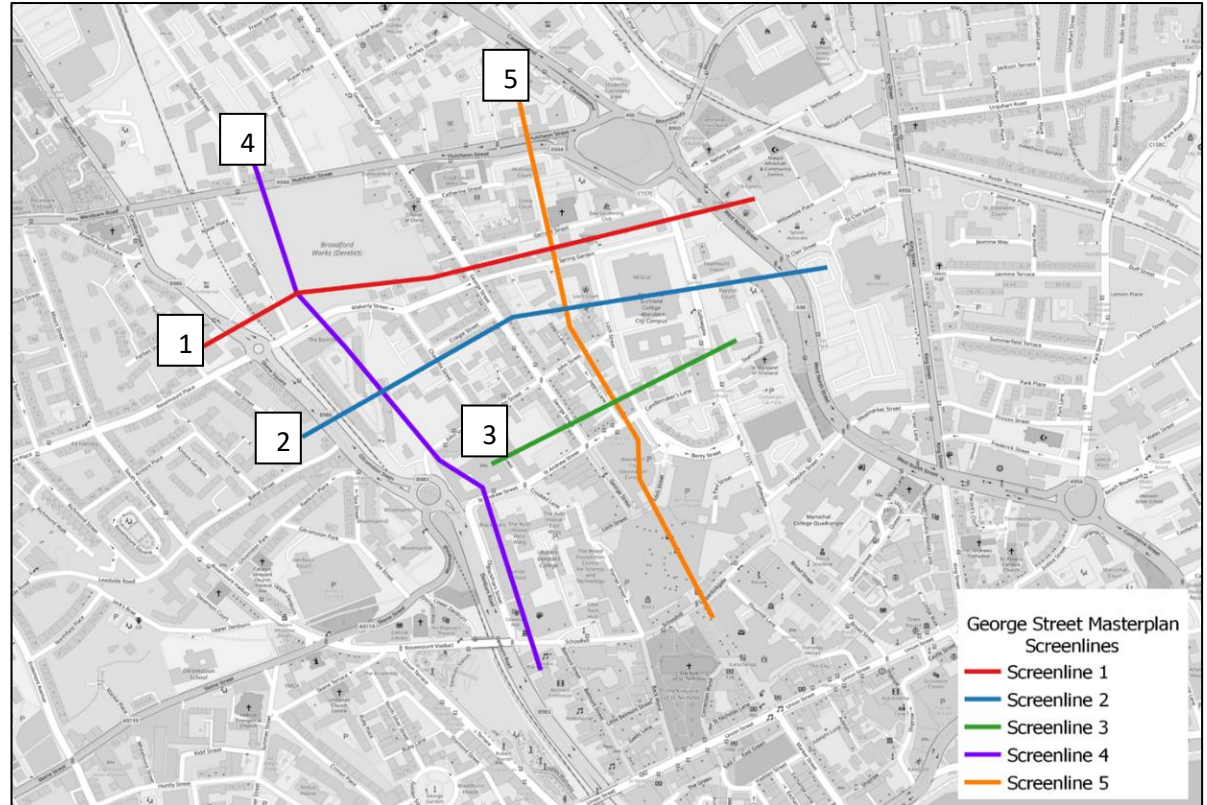
3.4.3 Minimising any traffic impacts of the proposed measures was also a focus of the modelling work and the proposals were successively refined in accordance with this principle. Therefore, while certain streets in the Masterplan area do see an increase in general traffic in one direction, these are often counter-balanced by reductions in traffic in the opposite direction or on adjacent routes. The local network within the GSM study area is shown to operate within the available capacity and without significant congestion or delays being evident throughout the modelled period.

3.4.4 The modelling has helped demonstrate that the proposals can deliver significant positive change through reduced traffic flows on key streets that are central to the masterplan objectives and priority projects. This provides opportunities for better public transport and active travel facilities, spill-out space and diversity of street activity in these areas.

APPENDIX A – LINK FLOW & SCREENLINE ANALYSIS

A set of five screenlines¹ crossing the city centre, broadly in the north-south and east-west directions was derived. These enable flow differences between the Reference Case and Test Option at key locations in and around the GSM study area to be understood. The screenline locations are shown in the adjacent Figure.

¹ A screenline is a line joining adjacent links in a modelled network, which generally dissects an area of interest, enabling the traffic flow trends (e.g. local volumes, routing patterns etc.) to be assessed for each direction. For example, Screenline 1 in the adjacent Figure enables the northbound and southbound traffic flow trends to be assessed collectively for Skene Square, Ann Street, George Street, Gallowgate and West North Street



Screenline 1			AM Peak 0700-1000				Inter Peak 1000-1600				PM Peak 1600-1900			
Location	Description	Direction	2025 Reference Case Flow	2025 Option Test Flow	Difference	%age Difference	2025 Reference Case Flow	2025 Option Test Flow	Difference	%age Difference	2025 Reference Case Flow	2025 Option Test Flow	Difference	%age Difference
1	Skene Square	NB	1211	1531	321	26%	3248	4532	1284	40%	2052	2606	554	27%
		SB	1706	1693	-12	-1%	2833	2860	27	1%	1321	1248	-73	-6%
2	Ann Street	NB	8	8	0	-2%	38	36	-2	-5%	30	29	-1	-3%
3	George Street	NB	508	342	-165	-33%	1418	661	-757	-53%	775	347	-428	-55%
		SB	407	500	93	23%	1054	1184	130	12%	633	727	94	15%
4	Gallowgate	NB	497	500	3	1%	1644	1551	-93	-6%	930	859	-70	-8%
		SB	1472	1748	276	19%	3233	3806	573	18%	1547	1683	136	9%
5	West North Street	NB	1447	1551	105	7%	4206	4190	-16	0%	2490	2395	-94	-4%
		SB	1391	1391	0	0%	2531	2596	66	3%	1426	1460	34	2%

Screenline 2			AM Peak 0700-1000				Inter Peak 1000-1600				PM Peak 1600-1900			
Location	Description	Direction	2025 Reference Case Flow	2025 Option Test Flow	Difference	%age Difference	2025 Reference Case Flow	2025 Option Test Flow	Difference	%age Difference	2025 Reference Case Flow	2025 Option Test Flow	Difference	%age Difference
1	Skene Square	NB	985	1361	375	38%	2799	4087	1287	46%	1720	2287	567	33%
		SB	1728	1670	-58	-3%	3323	2924	-399	-12%	1454	1337	-117	-8%
2	George Street	NB	321	26	-295	-92%	969	59	-910	-94%	476	27	-449	-94%
		SB	320	566	246	77%	664	1487	822	124%	400	747	348	87%
3	Loch Street	NB	394	334	-61	-15%	1367	1167	-199	-15%	704	624	-80	-11%
		SB	464	674	210	45%	807	1540	733	91%	508	658	150	30%
4	Gallowgate	NB	214	229	15	7%	626	724	99	16%	235	275	40	17%
		SB	582	672	90	15%	1414	1613	199	14%	543	592	50	9%
5	West North Street	NB	1161	1272	112	10%	3029	3099	70	2%	1801	1770	-31	-2%
		SB	1302	1313	11	1%	2352	2489	138	6%	1271	1375	104	8%

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Screenline 3			AM Peak 0700-1000				Inter Peak 1000-1600				PM Peak 1600-1900			
Location	Description	Direction	2025 Reference Case Flow	2025 Option Test Flow	Difference	%age Difference	2025 Reference Case Flow	2025 Option Test Flow	Difference	%age Difference	2025 Reference Case Flow	2025 Option Test Flow	Difference	%age Difference
1	Charlotte Street	NB	397	356	-40	-10%	1084	1231	148	14%	616	612	-5	-1%
		SB	41	69	28	68%	95	155	60	63%	41	70	29	70%
2	George Street	NB	127	6	-121	-95%	735	24	-711	-97%	287	8	-279	-97%
		SB	129	6	-123	-95%	219	10	-210	-96%	107	6	-101	-94%
3	Jopps Lane	NB	12	13	1	11%	103	127	25	24%	35	52	17	49%
4	Loch Street	NB	40	51	11	28%	346	381	35	10%	57	71	14	25%
		SB	744	694	-49	-7%	2095	1962	-133	-6%	1081	867	-214	-20%
5	Gallowgate	NB	225	242	17	8%	631	736	105	17%	236	276	41	17%
		SB	602	690	88	15%	1491	1693	203	14%	611	663	52	8%
Screenline 4			AM Peak 0700-1000				Inter Peak 1000-1600				PM Peak 1600-1900			
Location	Description	Direction	2025 Reference Case Flow	2025 Option Test Flow	Difference	%age Difference	2025 Reference Case Flow	2025 Option Test Flow	Difference	%age Difference	2025 Reference Case Flow	2025 Option Test Flow	Difference	%age Difference
1	Hutcheon Street	EB	1600	1888	289	18%	3479	4616	1138	33%	2015	2604	588	29%
		WB	1430	1438	7	1%	3782	3631	-151	-4%	2350	2225	-124	-5%
2	Maberly Street	EB	731	957	227	31%	1242	1962	720	58%	750	919	169	23%
		WB	774	653	-121	-16%	1933	1412	-521	-27%	830	661	-168	-20%
3	John Street	EB	854	90	-765	-90%	2205	242	-1963	-89%	1197	245	-952	-80%
		WB	410	680	271	66%	975	2002	1027	105%	586	971	385	66%
4	St Andrew Street	EB	157	43	-114	-73%	786	90	-696	-89%	197	48	-149	-76%
		WB	290	286	-3	-1%	1077	1355	277	26%	605	656	52	9%
5	Schoolhill	EB	615	719	104	17%	1588	1851	262	17%	736	853	117	16%
		WB	155	3	-152	-98%	989	233	-756	-76%	290	59	-231	-80%
Screenline 5			AM Peak 0700-1000				Inter Peak 1000-1600				PM Peak 1600-1900			
Location	Description	Direction	2025 Reference Case Flow	2025 Option Test Flow	Difference	%age Difference	2025 Reference Case Flow	2025 Option Test Flow	Difference	%age Difference	2025 Reference Case Flow	2025 Option Test Flow	Difference	%age Difference
1	Hutcheon Street	EB	1699	1762	63	4%	3615	4082	467	13%	2132	2375	243	11%
		WB	1383	1377	-7	0%	3305	3357	53	2%	2092	2057	-35	-2%
2	Maberly Street	EB	527	698	172	33%	992	1492	501	51%	507	609	102	20%
		WB	720	843	123	17%	1958	2096	137	7%	835	907	72	9%
3	John Street	EB	697	428	-268	-38%	2281	1298	-983	-43%	1136	705	-431	-38%
4	St Andrew Street	EB	33	39	6	18%	61	82	21	35%	32	44	12	38%
		WB	382	361	-21	-6%	897	836	-61	-7%	763	622	-141	-19%
5	Schoolhill	EB	0	119	119	0%	0	349	349	0%	0	126	126	0%
		WB	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%

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APPENDIX B – MODELLED SCENARIOS

The tables below provide a summary of the main measures included within each of the different model variants used in this phase of model testing and to briefly describe the rationale for each Test.

Measures Included	Reference Case	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3	Test 4	Test 5	Test 6	Test 7
2019-2025 ASAM19 "With Policy" Demand Forecasts	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CCMP ETRO-1 & ETRO-2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Haudagain Junction Improvements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
South College Street - Phase A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Berryden Corridor Improvements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Low Emission Zone	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Local access (i.e. no through traffic) on George St south of John St, Jopp's Lane, Craigie St and Charlotte St between Maberly St & John St	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
George St southbound only between Spring Garden & John St	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
John St Westbound only between George St & Charlotte St	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Loch St northbound only between St Andrew St & Spring Garden	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X
Blackfriars St southbound only between St Andrew St & Rosemount Viaduct	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Berry St for access to Loch St car park only, no through route to/from Loch St	X	✓	✓	X	X	✓	X	X
Bus routes diverted from George St to Charlotte St between John St & St Andrew St	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Right turn from Loch St southbound to St Andrew St westbound barred	X	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X
St Andrew St bus/taxi only both directions between Jopp's Lane and George St	X	X	X	X	X	✓	X	X
St Andrew St bus/taxi only eastbound between Jopp's Lane and George St	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓
No through traffic on George St south from St Andrew St	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓
Option Test	Rationale for Test							
Test 1	Original option as outlined in Draft GSMM							
Test 2	2-way access reinstated on Loch St to avoid congestion caused by wider rerouting for local access to NESCoI, local residential etc.							
Test 3	Impact of reinstating through route via Berry Street assessed							
Test 4	To test impact of reduced level of through-routing via St Andrew St							
Test 5	To test impact of eastern section of St Andrew St being bus and taxi only in both directions							
Test 6	To test impact of eastern section of St Andrew St being bus and taxi only eastbound but permitting general traffic westbound							
Test 7	To prevent southern section of George St being accessed as a through route via St Andrew St							

APPROVAL					
Version	Name		Position	Date	Modifications
1	Author	Boris Johansson	Project Manager	31/05/2023	Version 1 for ACC comment
	Checked by	Callum Guild	Associate	31/05/2023	
	Approved by	Callum Guild	Associate	31/05/2023	
2	Author	Boris Johansson	Project Manager	26/06/2023	Version 2 addressing previous comments
	Checked by	Callum Guild	Associate	26/06/2023	
	Approved by	Callum Guild	Associate	26/06/2023	
3	Author	Boris Johansson	Project Manager	30/06/2023	Version 3 addressing additional comments
	Checked by	Callum Guild	Associate	30/06/2023	
	Approved by	Callum Guild	Associate	30/06/2023	
4	Author	Boris Johansson	Project Manager	14/07/2023	Version 4 addressing final comments
	Checked by	Callum Guild	Associate	14/07/2023	
	Approved by	Callum Guild	Associate	14/07/2023	

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Birmingham – Newhall Street

Lancaster House, Newhall St,
Birmingham, B3 1NQ
T: +44 (0)121 393 4841

Birmingham – Suffolk Street

8th Floor, Alpha Tower, Crowne Plaza, Suffolk Street
Birmingham, B1 1TT
T: +44 (0)121 393 4841

Bristol

One Temple Quay, Temple Back East
Bristol, BS1 6DZ
T: +44 118 208 0111

Dublin

2nd Floor, Riverview House, 21-23 City Quay
Dublin 2, Ireland
T: +353 (0) 1 566 2028

Edinburgh

Prospect House, 5 Thistle Street, Edinburgh EH2 1DF
T: +44 (0)131 460 1847

Glasgow

The Centrum Business Centre Limited, 38 Queen Street, Glasgow,
G1 3DX
T: +44 (0)141 468 4205

Leeds

100 Wellington Street, Leeds, LS1 1BA
T: +44 (0)113 360 4842

London

One Carey Lane, London, England EC2V 8AE
T: +44 (0)20 3855 0079

Manchester –City Tower

16th Floor, City Tower, Piccadilly Plaza
Manchester M1 4BT
T: +44 (0)161 504 5026

Newcastle

Floor E, South Corridor, Milburn House, Dean Street,
Newcastle, NE1 1LE
T: +44 (0)191 249 3816

Reading

Davidson House, Forbury Square,
Reading, RG1 3EU
T: +44 118 208 0111

Woking

Dukes Court, Duke Street
Woking, Surrey GU21 5BH
T: +44 (0)1483 357705

York

Meridian House, The Crescent
York, YO24 1AW
Tel: +44 1904 454 600

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George Street Mini Masterplan (DRAFT)

Aberdeen City Council
December 2022



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Optimised Environments

86 Princess Street | Manchester | M1 6NG
t 0161 696 7550

Optimised Environments Ltd. Registered in Scotland SC359690.
Registered address: Quartermile Two | 2 Lister Square | Edinburgh | EH3 9GL

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1. Introduction

This report has been prepared by Optimised Environments Ltd. on behalf of Aberdeen City Council.

The purpose of this document is to establish a clear vision, supporting objectives and set of development principles that will stimulate and support the delivery of incremental but transformational change for the George Street area, securing a range of economic, social and environmental benefits.

Delivery of the Mini Masterplan will help to ensure that George Street becomes a successful and vibrant community that plays its role in the ongoing transformation of Aberdeen City Centre.

1.2 Role Of The Mini Masterplan

The overall objective of the commission is the development of a Mini Masterplan for the George Street area. This Mini Masterplan forms part of a wider City Centre and Beach Masterplan which will be regularly reviewed to ensure Aberdeen City Council's strategy for the City Centre and the Beach remains up to date and relevant, with a clear focus on delivery.

The Mini Masterplan puts forward a strategy for the George Street area in the wider city centre context, complementing its existing strengths and building on recognised opportunities. The strategy for the area will be informed by a thorough understanding of place, a SWOT analysis and a strategy for change guided by a clear vision and objectives.

It focuses predominantly on urban realm improvements but will also consider and suggest recommendations for more fundamental and widespread change (both physical and non-physical) across the study area informed by community and stakeholder consultations as well as in response to wider City Centre projects.

It sets out a regeneration Masterplan identifying areas of change and supporting design aspirations. Supporting the Masterplan is a list of potential Mini Masterplan projects that can be implemented, through a combination of public and private sector involvement to secure the vision and objectives of the Mini Masterplan.

The Mini Masterplan acts as a tool to promote the following aspects:

- Consider the appropriate policy, cultural and physical fit for change;
- Engaging with the needs and ambitions of local residents, businesses and stakeholders;
- Establishing development potential (in the form of indicative sketches and scenarios) for areas of change;
- Mediating between a range of landowner and other stakeholder interests to realise areas of change;
- Promoting a vision for change that can stimulate market action;
- Celebrating and respecting the area's cultural heritage; and
- Engendering a sense of cooperation and coordination between different agents of change to deliver on the Mini Masterplan's place vision.

1.3 Structure Of The Document

The structure of the document is as follows:

1. Community and Stakeholder Engagement

A summary of the community and stakeholder engagement feedback to date and its key themes.

2. Vision And Objectives

Describing the Vision for the Mini Masterplan and its objectives. It also describes how the vision aligns with the wider objectives of the Aberdeen City Centre and Beach Masterplan.

3. George Street in Context

Setting out the wider context to the area and identifying any important influences and considerations.

4. Place and Features

Review of the physical features across the study area as well as brief summary of the land-use and planning context.

5. SWOT Analysis

Summary of the Mini Masterplan area's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

6. How to Respond

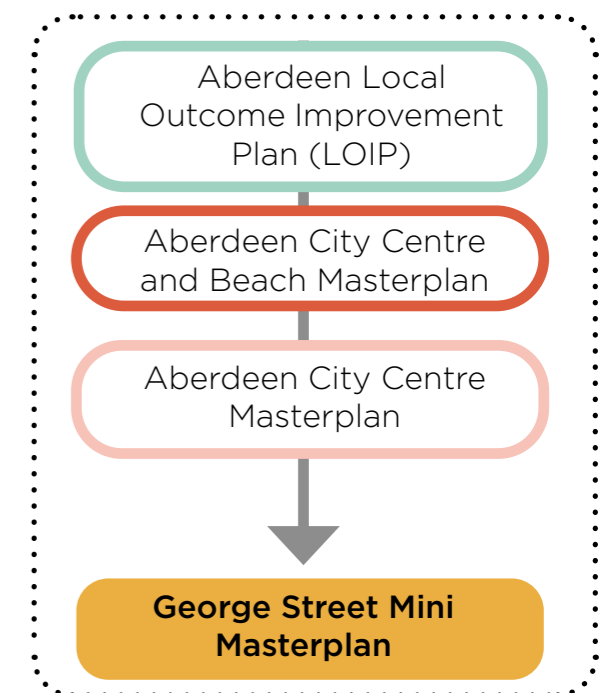
Describing the Mini Masterplan principles for change and how they align to the Vision and Objectives.

7. The Mini Masterplan

Setting out the Mini Masterplan strategy for change with supporting information on public realm, movement and environmental interventions.

8. Future Projects Action Plan

Identifying suggestions and interventions to help deliver short, medium and longer term change across the Mini Masterplan area.



Hierarchy diagram of Aberdeen's strategic plans and the role of this document within the City Centre Masterplan

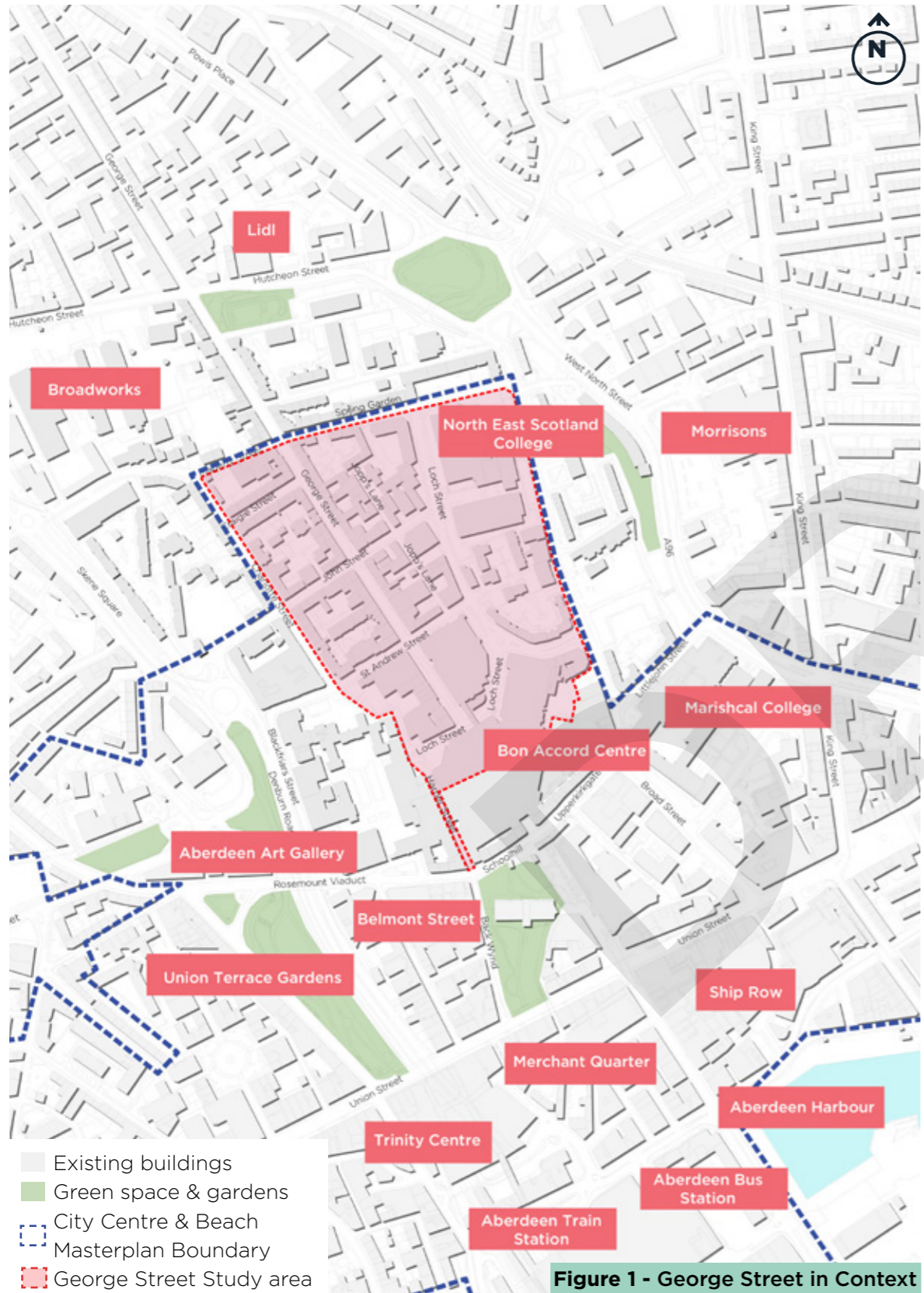


Figure 1 - George Street in Context



The Mini Masterplan sits amongst some of the City's most well known locations

2. Community And Stakeholder Engagement

2.1 Background

In February 2022 Aberdeen City Council undertook a consultation exercise to understand local stakeholder and community members views and aspirations for the George Street area.

As part of the exercise a report was commissioned to detail the feedback and key themes arising. A copy of this report can be found online: <https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s133398/Appendix%20E%20-%20George%20Street%20Consultation%20Analysis.pdf>

The following pages provide a summary of the key findings of the consultation feedback.

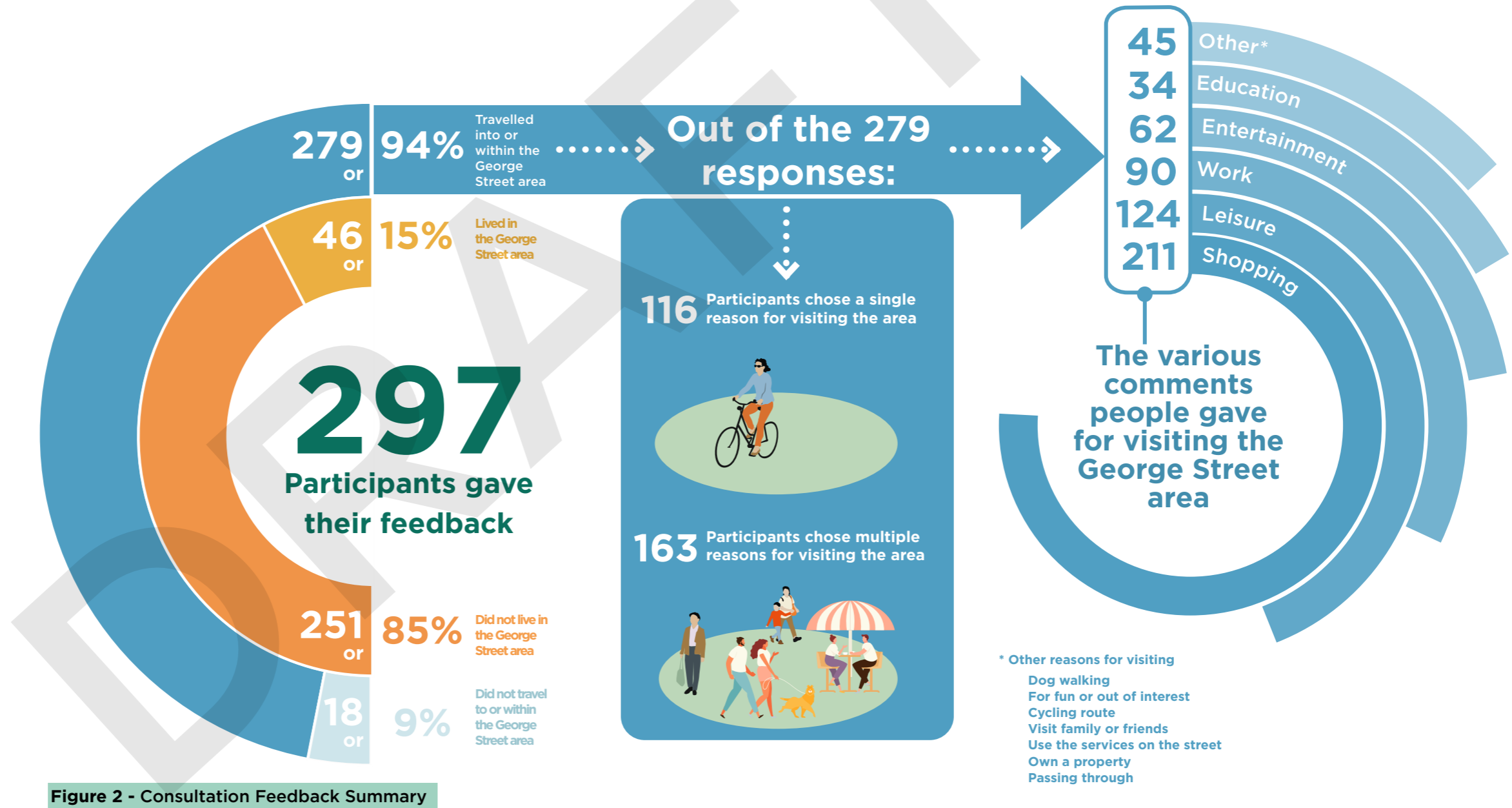


Figure 2 - Consultation Feedback Summary

Consultation feedback summary. Extract taken from the George Street Consultation document.

2.3 Potential Interventions

Through analysis of the consultation feedback and establishing key themes, a number of potential interventions were identified. These interventions, both physical and non physical, could be further considered through the development of the Mini Masterplan to sustain and enhance the dynamic community within George Street.

Potential physical / place interventions

- Opportunity to enhance and modernise the streetscape of the George Street Area, which could include enhancements to the public realm, de-cluttering and provide improved pavements, places to dwell and spaces to host street events;
- Revitalising the streetscape by looking at ways of filling vacant properties and establishing a co-ordinated shop frontage design. These would help to reactivate the area and reduce perceptions of decline / dereliction;
- Introduce space and facilities to help support temporary and meanwhile uses, to introduce more activity and animation to the area. This type of intervention could include pop up events, temporary road closures, temporary seating, planting features, signage and wayfinding. The space created would also allow businesses to expand out into the street to host events;

- Improve the pedestrian experience through enhanced materials, low level lighting, wayfinding, pedestrian prioritisation measures, better managed and potentially reduced street parking as well as planned cycle lanes and safe cycle storage to encourage more cyclists into the area;
- Improve safety and crime rates in the area, through enhancements to the public safety such as more CCTV, better street lighting and greater levels of activity (through different uses and types of spaces) to improve the sense of safety both during day and evening; and
- A more radical suggestion raised through the consultation feedback was to demolish both the Bon Accord Centre and Norco House and to replace with public facilities, public space, green space. This and other options would need to be tested and appraised through the George Street Mini Masterplan Area study.

Potential non physical / place interventions

- Creation of a brand identity and localised incentives for visits for George Street that helps to promote a stronger online presence;
- Working with the council, local community groups and stakeholders to expand the city centre events programme to include the George Street area;
- Creation of a business community to support those investing in the area and to coordinate local businesses;
- Feedback suggests the existing community is strong and well connected, however a coordination group could be set up among residents to liaise with businesses to organise local events;
- Continued inclusion and collaboration with locals and stakeholders throughout the design and decision making process;
- Creating incentives for local entrepreneurs to set up in the area; and
- Increase investment opportunities in the in the area to attract larger brand names. There is a view among feedback that big brand names would encourage more business and footfall in the area.

2.4 Additional Engagement

A key part of continuing the conversation has been to host a number of stakeholder workshops as well as a public consultation exercise. The following feedback has come from initial stakeholder discussions.

Stakeholder Feedback Summary

First reaction feedback during these sessions includes comments as follows:

- Lack of urban landscaping and green spaces;
- Feels busy and vibrant – but not alive after 5pm;
- Historical connection severed by Bon Accord Centre – some connections are constrained;
- There is a real fragility of business – although George Street has survived Covid relatively well, its small independent businesses may be lost because of energy costs;
- The area doesn't feel overly safe at night – lighting is poor;
- Concern about transport and bus routes;
- George Street has become increasingly constrained with clutter;
- Only decent green space is on Hutcheon Street;
- Diversity is great - lots of ethnically diverse shops;
- College, Robert Gordon's, Sandman and Finnies are all attractors. Estimate of 11,000 people potentially associated with all on a daily basis; and

- Broadford works really needs to be tackled – there are few big sites that could be real game changers.

Community Planning Feedback Summary

- There are several community organisations that are operating in the area, but what they do not have is a knowledge of what each other are doing and how they could support each other;
- Create a Community Network were groups, organisations and individuals would be asked to share ideas and take forward some actions;
- Add to the already developed and well attended George Community Council;
- Use of notice boards and a social media presence to promote what is going on;
- A small minority do not like the shops and would like to see a return of more traditional offer, such as butchers, bakers, or clothes shops; and
- Accessibility issues with uneven pavement and minimal seating opportunities.

A copy of both the Stakeholder Feedback Report and Community Planning Feedback Report can be found online: <https://committees.aberdeency.gov.uk/documents/s133398/Appendix%20E%20-%20George%20Street%20Consultation%20Analysis.pdf>

3. Our Vision

George Street Connected!

The 'local' Neighbourhood: a vibrant and inclusive city centre community at the heart of reinvention.

George Street will become a place to form new connections; Social, Cultural, Economic and Educational. An authentic neighbourhood offering an evolution of George Street; a place for people to come together; with spaces that link activities, aspirations and ideas.



3.1 Aberdeen's Wider Masterplan Vision

A primary role for the George Street Mini Masterplan, is to ensure that its underlying principles support and complement those of the wider City Centre and Beach Masterplan.

The current vision for Aberdeen City Centre is:

‘To create a world class city centre and beach that respects and enhances Aberdeen’s unique qualities and characteristics and puts people at its heart...’

The key objectives of the City Centre & Beach Masterplan are categorised into three themes, taken directly from the LOIP:

Economy

- Eradicating poverty;
- Supporting residents into fair work; and
- Enabling 500 residents to upskill and move into economic opportunity.

People

- Child Friendly City which supports all children to prosper and engage actively with their communities by 2026;
- Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026; and
- Increasing satisfaction and use of community facilities and green environment to increase the health and well-being for older people and people managing long term conditions.

Place

- Increasing sustainable travel with 38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as main mode of travel by 2026;
- Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen’s carbon emissions by 61% by 2026; and
- Addressing the nature crisis by protecting/ managing 26% of Aberdeen’s area for nature by 2026.

3.2 George Street’s Contribution To Aberdeen

Building on the wider the LOIP’s key themes of Economy, People and Place, George Street can directly support and contribute to the success of the City.

It can do this successfully by:



ECONOMY

Fully contributing to a more varied and dynamic local economy, where local businesses are supported, and where new businesses, and people with ideas are encouraged to start-up, to grow and to thrive.



PEOPLE

Supporting a neighbourhood full of a diverse mix of people and communities, participating in all that our district has to offer in terms of culture, education, everyday activities, a place to call home and a bustling street-life.



PLACE

Becoming a place that is vibrant, comfortable, inclusive, playful and inviting. Being part of the city, but with a sense of the local intact.

4. George Street In Context

4.1 Study Area

With a thriving business economy, Aberdeen is in a prime location spatially and economically for future development. Further information on the strategic context can be found within the Aberdeen City Centre and Beach Masterplan. <https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s135130/CCMP%20-%20Appendix%202%20-%20City%20Centre%20Beach%20Masterplan%202022.pdf>

The area identified for the Mini Masterplan is outlined opposite. The development of the Mini Masterplan will focus primarily within the study area. However, in order for wider benefits to be leveraged from investment within the George Street area, the Mini Masterplan must acknowledge and respond to opportunities beyond it's boundaries, understanding the influence of planned investment / development.

The George Street neighbourhood is located towards the northern boundary of the City Centre & Beach Masterplan area. George Street itself runs North to South, forming a once historic key route between the city centre core and areas to the North of the city.

The area is defined to the south by the Bon Accord Centre, which serves the historic connection to the City Centre. It is bounded to the south west by Robert Gordon College and by Gallogate, Spring Garden and North East Scotland College (NESCOL).

George Street hosts a diversity of uses which give the area its own distinct character all of which sit within the wider context of Aberdeen's economy and cultural offer.

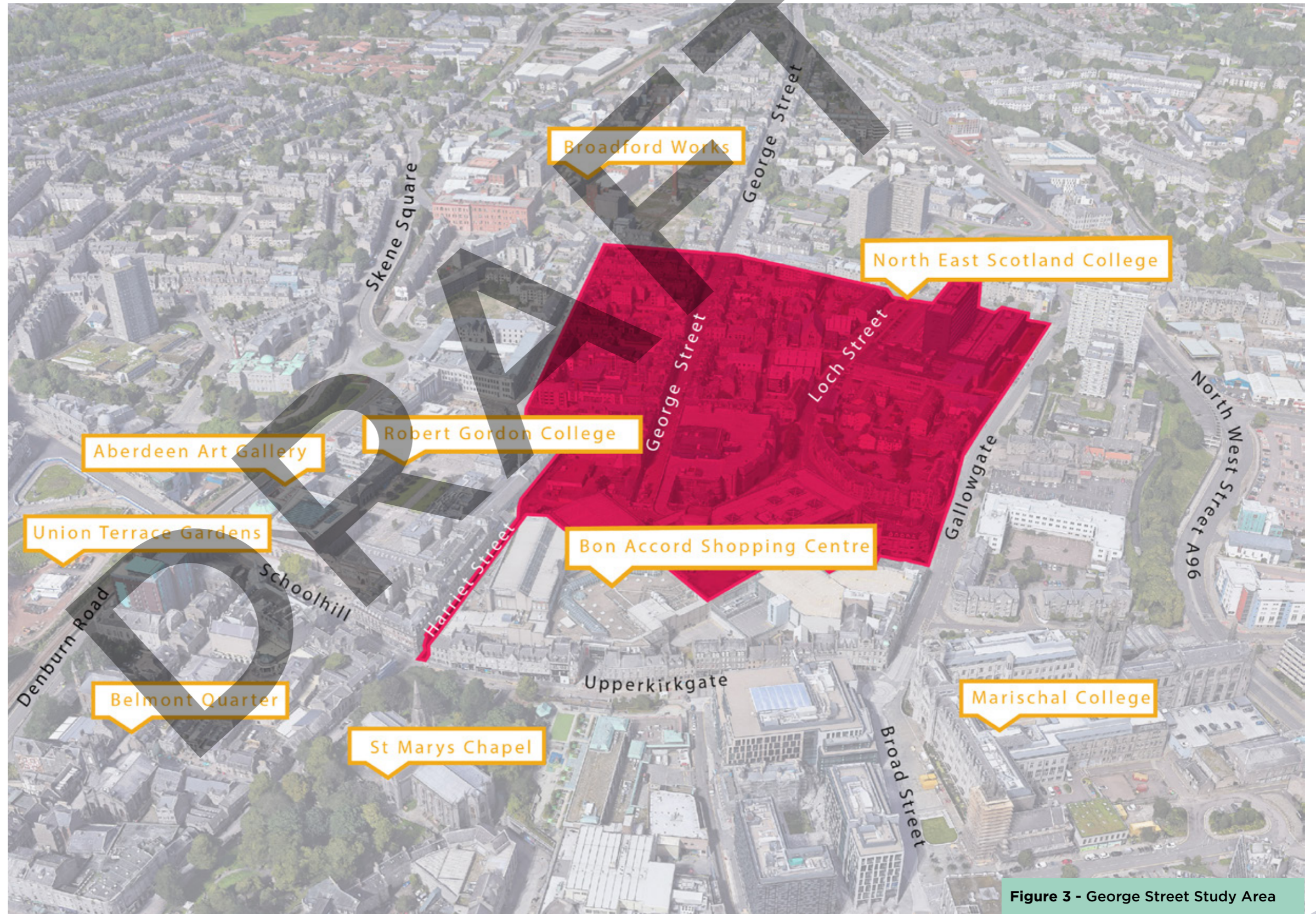


Figure 3 - George Street Study Area

4.2 Areas Of Influence

George Street sits to the northern fringes of a dynamic part of Aberdeen City Centre.

To the south lies a number of leisure and cultural destinations and established city quarters (Belmont Quarter Merchants Quarter and Ship Row), some of which are undergoing phased regeneration programmes.

Also influencing the George Street area is its relative proximity to the retail core of the City, Union Street and the soon to be delivered Union Terrace Gardens.

Immediately adjacent to the study area are a number of significant civic and education institutions which form important destinations within the city and which influence the future potential role of the George Street area.

Importantly, the study area is also surrounded by an existing residential influence to the north, with several existing residential communities located along and near to the George Street corridor north towards Kittybrewster.

The future role of the George Street study area must look to respond to these surrounding influences and to help support emerging regeneration priorities whilst supporting those existing residential, civic and educational communities that currently exist.

There are 5 immediate areas of influence which will directly influence and shape the future character, identity and role of George Street. These are:

Broadford Works - a significant new residential and mixed use community to the north of the study area (c.890 new residential units). The George Street area will be influenced not only by future residents visiting local amenities within the area, but also but an increase in pedestrian traffic through the area to access the south of the city.

North East Scotland College (NESCOL) - a significant stakeholder within the Mini Masterplan boundary. It is home to a student population studying and living within the area. The influx of students and the supporting uses and activities required will influence the future use and role of the area. Students will also likely pass through the study area, due to the poor quality links across infrastructure to the east, to access outdoor, retail and leisure destinations to the south.

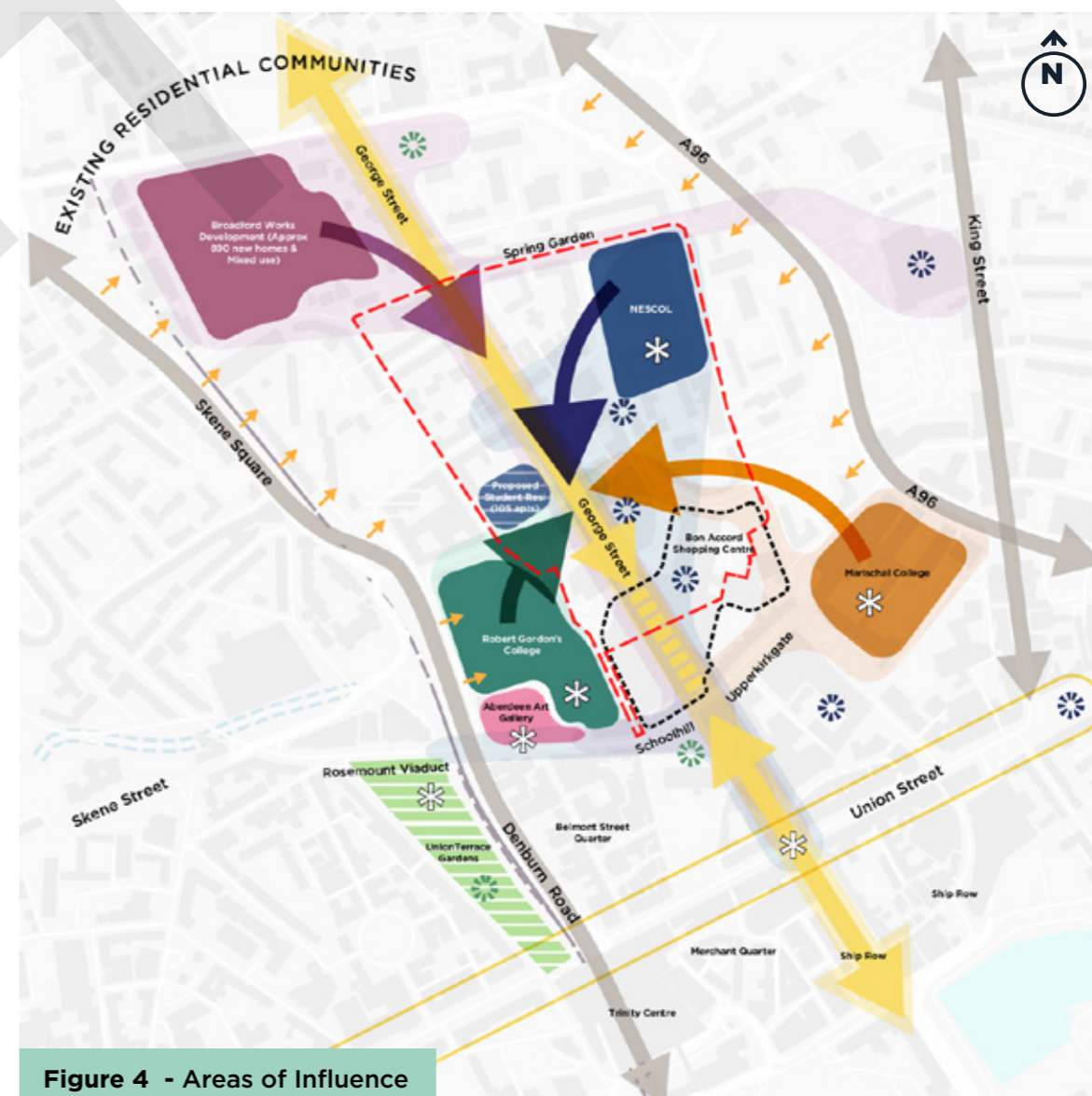
Robert Gordon's College & Art Gallery - one of Aberdeen's most prestigious education institutions and Cultural assets. Although currently

both have no direct physical connection through to George Street other than via a rear service access and along St. Andrews Street, the George Street area is influenced by the potential to capture and respond to the patrons and visitors to these destinations.

Both NESCOL and Robert Gordon's College have the potential to see a significant amount of students, staff and parents use their facilities and the Masterplan should seek to ensure that George Street both supports the functions of the college as well as capturing the potential benefits of such a significant number of people attending both institutions.

Marischal College - an important Civic and Cultural destination for the city, and although located immediately east of the study area, it presents a significant influence both physically (townscape quality and distinctiveness) and as the headquarters of Aberdeen City Council. An influence which drives footfall and which could look to be better integrated with the George Street area.

George Street - the historic corridor characterised by traditional granite buildings and active ground floor uses is itself a key influence on the rest of the study area. The main onward connection to Union Street is via a private connection through the Bon Accord Shopping Centre. The influence of George Street is currently contained to its corridor but in the future it may look to expand or focus activity to help establish a better defined sense of place and centre.



4.3 Planning Policy Review

This section sets out the policy and guidance at local administrative levels that have influenced preparation of the George Street Mini Masterplan, and with which this exercise seeks to comply.

The policy sections of the Aberdeen City Centre and Beach masterplan document provide further policy and guidance at UK, Scotland and Regional administrative levels.

City Centre Recovery Task Force: Report

Covid-19 has changed the face of city centres up and down the UK. As a result of necessary health measures, businesses and streets usually bustling with people were transformed overnight.

In 2021, the Scottish Government and Scotland's seven cities established a Task Force to identify the actions needed to take together to support city centre recovery from the effects of the pandemic, working through our existing successful partnership of the Scottish Cities Alliance.

The pandemic has heightened awareness of inequality, poverty and disadvantage, and there is clear evidence that harm has been felt unevenly. The Scottish Government has set the national direction with its ten-year National Strategy for Economic Transformation, which will build on the Covid Recovery Strategy to create a greener, fairer, more inclusive wellbeing economy.

The key messages arising from the report were about the nature and role of city centres and how, without people, city centres are just empty spaces and buildings. What makes our cities flourishing, vibrant, social, creative, interesting and resilient is that they are places where large numbers of people come together.

The principal challenge considered in Task Force Report is how to attract people back into our city centres, and this is something that should be applied when looking at the future of George Street. How to attract people back into George Street.

Local Policy

At the Local level, planning policy and guidance is provided by the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2017, which will soon be replaced by the emerging Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2022. Both of these plans provide detailed planning policy to be considered when assessing proposals across the city, including the city centre and beach; and also provide more detailed information and briefs in relation to specific opportunities (OP sites).

The Council's Local Outcome Improvement Plan and associated Locality Plans are key in setting out a vision for Aberdeen as "a place where all people can prosper", and considers the People, Place and Economy of Aberdeen. The refreshed Local Outcome Improvement Plan was approved in July 2021, with an annual

report published in July 2022. The LOIP identifies 15 'stretch' outcomes to be delivered by 2026 and 75 shorter term improvement aims. Stretch Outcomes particularly relevant to George Street include: Child Friendly City which supports all children to prosper and engage actively with their communities by 2026; Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026 - this includes the Key Drivers of encouraging adoption of healthier lifestyles, and increasing satisfaction and use of community facilities and green environment to increase the health and well-being for older people and people managing long term conditions); Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate; and, Increasing sustainable travel with 38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as main mode of travel by 2026.

4.4 Supplementary Guidance Within The Development Plan 2017

Shops and Signs

The repair and replacement of shops and signs is a prevalent topic. Historic and original features add to the overall pleasant experience of buildings, streetscape and their wider surroundings. Inappropriate design, proportions or materials can detract from a building and the wider streetscape and setting.

The Supplementary Guidance acknowledges a principle of retaining and repairing historic materials, with replacement requiring thorough consideration. New shops and signs need to be designed for their location to ensure they provide a positive experience to the streetscene.

The guidance applies to existing and new shop fronts and signs. The guidance is to be used on a citywide basis for retail and commercial premises including banks, betting offices, restaurants, estate agents and beyond. The signage guidance should be considered in all instances.

Hierarchy of Centres

Scottish Planning Policy states that a sequential approach should be used when selecting locations for all uses which generate significant footfall, including retail and commercial leisure uses, offices, community and cultural facilities, and where appropriate, public buildings; and requires that locations are considered through a hierarchy of centres. Within this SPD, George Street is identified as a Neighbourhood Centre which is the preferred location for local retail, commercial leisure, community and cultural provision only.

Transport and Accessibility

Transport provision should be considered from the very outset of a development proposal, with particular attention paid to the need to encourage sustainable travel.

The Local Transport Strategy highlights the role that spatial planning can play in ensuring Aberdeen has "a sustainable transport system that is fit for the 21st Century, accessible to all, supports a vibrant economy, facilitates healthy living and minimises the impact on our environment" through the careful siting and design of development and the implementation of parking policies and Travel Plans to discourage unnecessary car travel.

A sustainable transport system will also help reduce emissions to tackle climate change, improve air quality, and lead to a healthier population.

Green Space Network and Open Space

Access to good quality green and blue infrastructure, including areas of open space and green networks, will contribute to a greener, healthier, smarter, safer, stronger, wealthier and fairer city. This guidance will assist the George Street Mini Masterplan in assessing and demonstrating their compliance in enhancing and improving green infrastructure to create useful, sustainable and well used places. This will benefit the wider community, the natural environment and support a healthy economy.

Big Buildings

Guidance is given to ensure big building proposals, when appropriate, will have a positive impact on the streetscene and surrounding area, and Aberdeen's skyline.

Big buildings can be tall buildings and/or bulky buildings. Generally a big building is regarded as one that exceeds the general height of the surrounding built context and/or whose footprint is in excess of the established development pattern of the surrounding area.

According to guidance, big buildings should:

- Complement or improve the existing site context, consider the natural topography, scale and height of structures, urban grain, streetscape and built form, open spaces, effect on the skyline, and respect, reinforce and, where applicable create opportunities for enhanced views and vistas and

make a positive contribution to the skyline when viewed from all angles from near, middle and distant views, both during the day and at night;

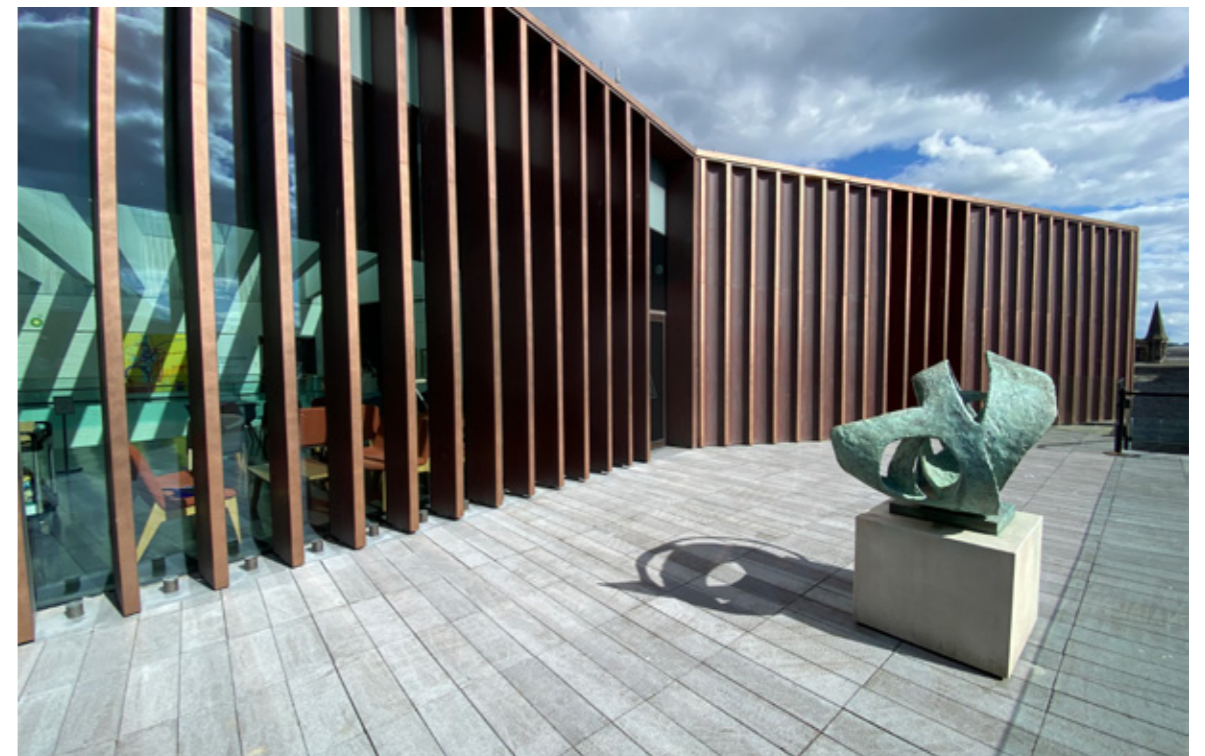
- Consider the environment and amenity of those in the vicinity of the building, including micro climate, overshadowing, glare reduction, night time appearance, internal and external lighting;
- At street level, present an active frontage and be comfortable for people and, where feasible, include publicly accessible areas within the building;
- Be situated in areas where existing topography, urban scale and transport make them sustainable;
- Have a well-designed vertical emphasis;
- Be constructed of high quality materials, craftsmanship and have detailing with low maintenance implications;
- Provide fully integrated servicing arrangements which are, wherever possible, off street;
- Comply with civil aviation requirements and those of other telecommunication, television and radio transmission networks; be adaptable over time and utilise best sustainable practices; and
- Contain a mix of uses rather than rely on a single use to achieve a viable development. It may be appropriate for big buildings to form part of a wider development mix with smaller scale buildings that reduce any dominating impact.

Urban Realm Manual 2021 (Draft)

The Draft Urban Realm Manual 2021 aims to provide clarity, certainty and consistency on the city's requirements for a comprehensive approach to understanding and developing place and movement hierarchies, their appropriate hard landscaping material specifications, the retention and re-use of important features as well as identifying new opportunities to sustainably enhance and green the city.

Maintaining and enhancing the existing built environment, as well as delivering new development of distinctive high-quality places, is important to Aberdeen. To consistently have sustainable and efficient streets and places that are easy for all to use, that look good and have longevity give a positive impression and a lasting sense of place are fundamental to successful city life.

The public realm of George Street and the surrounding streets is something to be enhanced throughout this masterplanning process, so by considering the principles of the urban realm manual and responding to the place and movement context in planning, design, responsible sourcing, responsible use and the principles of the circular economy, a successful place can be achieved.



4.5 Development Pipeline

As outlined in the City Centre and Beach Masterplan, there is a concentration of growth across the city of Aberdeen, which is prioritising people focused development, with an emphasis that supporting infrastructure and public spaces are integrated.

An emerging development context is changing the way the City will function over the course of the next few decades, through a suite of committed projects and those that are already well under construction.

Connectivity is an important consideration, with increased connections promoted through the area and to other key points in the city centre by foot, cycle and public transport.

Within the Mini Masterplan study area, at the time of writing, both the former John Lewis store (Norco House) and the Bon Accord Centre have potential to influence the future regeneration of the neighbourhood. The Bon Accord Centre has an active planning consent for proposals along George Street and Norco House is currently for sale.

1. Some of the immediately significant pipeline development and infrastructure projects which will influence the George Street Mini Masterplan beyond its boundary include; Upperkirkgate and Schoolhill Street Improvements which look to pedestrians sections of the street as well as improve public realm quality along this corridor.

2. Improved public realm setting to the Aberdeen Art Gallery
3. A new urban park in Union Terrace Gardens
4. Broadford Works delivering c.890 units as part of a mixed use development, incorporating conversion of Listed Buildings.

Moving further out from the immediate city centre, some other developments of influence include:

1. Aberdeen Beach and associated developments
2. Aberdeen Stadium
3. Beach Boulevard

Pipeline developments have been identified on the plan on the following page.

Aberdeen City Council's role in the future regeneration of George Street will be one that supports growth and change, using its powers to help facilitate and co-ordinate the appropriate type of change in line with George Street vision and objectives. The Council will not be expected to deliver development beyond land in its control or additional projects across the city. It welcomes the opportunity to engage with and work collaboratively with stakeholders and interested parties.



Indicative view of north Belmont street status: detailed design and delivery in conjunction with local stakeholders



Schoolhill + Upperkirkgate
Birds eye view from Aberdeen Art Gallery



Aberdeen Beach Projects
Concept visualisation of urban park

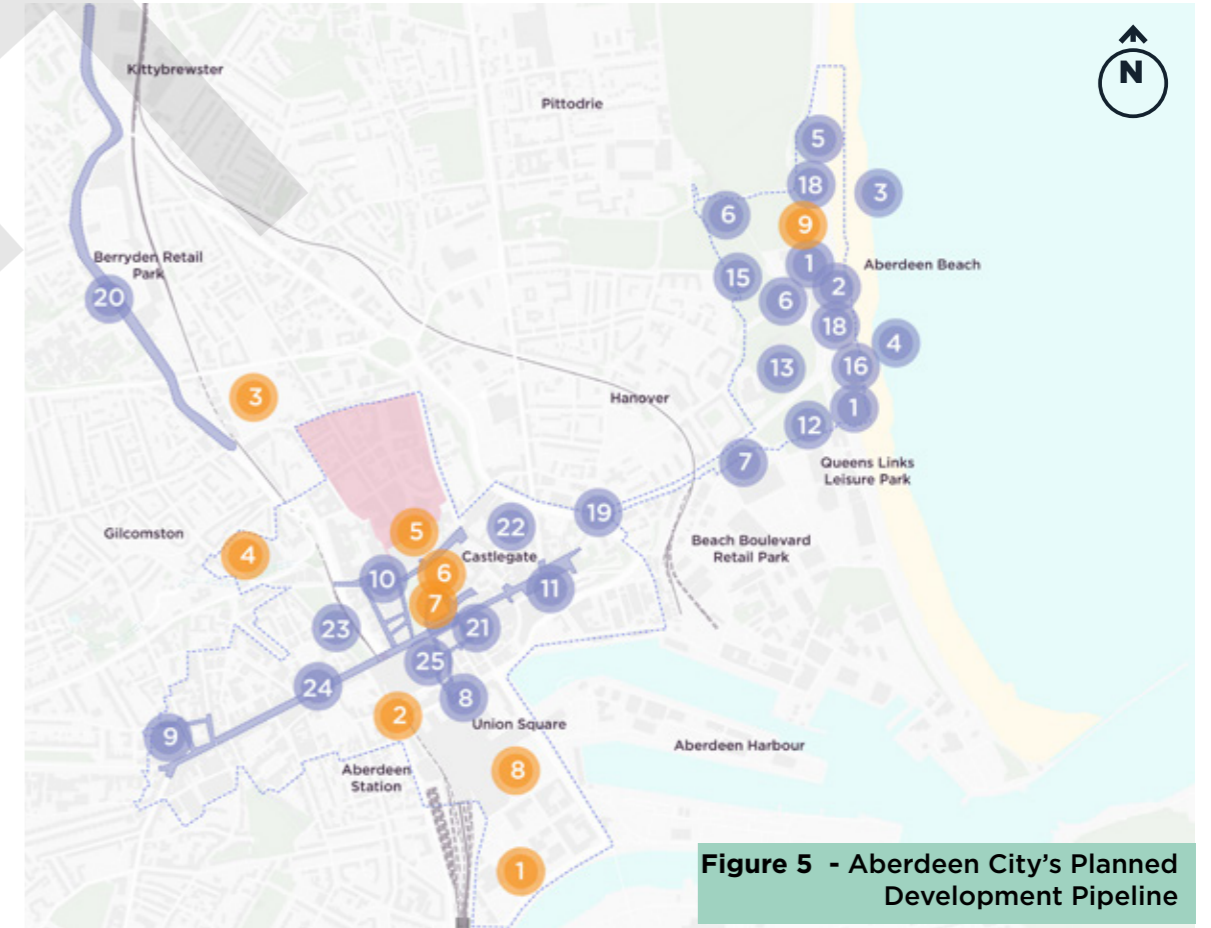


Figure 5 - Aberdeen City's Planned Development Pipeline

Aberdeen City Council Projects

1. Leisure facility
2. Beach ballroom
3. Slipway
4. Boardwalk
5. Beach pavilion building
6. Broad Hill structures
7. Beach Boulevard
8. Guild Street
9. Rose / Thistle / Chapel Street
10. Upperkirkgate / Schoolhill
11. Castlegate
12. Urban park
13. Events park
14. Landscaping
15. Broad Hill
16. Reconfigured beach landscaping
17. Beach ballroom plaza
18. Beach village
19. Justice street roundabout
20. Berryden Improvements
21. Aberdeen Market
22. Queen Street
23. Union Terrace Gardens
24. Union Street Public Realm
25. Aberdeen Market Public Realm

Privately Led Projects

1. North Dee Business Quarter
2. Mither Kirk
3. Aberdeen Broadford Works
4. Woolmanhill Former Hospital
5. Bon Accord Centre
6. St Nicholas Centre
7. Trinity Centre
8. Union Square
9. Stadium

5. Place and Features

5.1 Introduction

Understanding the characteristics of a place, and what its strengths and weaknesses are, is part of the process in developing the Mini Masterplan. This understanding of place and its features allows opportunities for change and enhancement to be explored. This section introduces the five most pertinent influences affecting the Mini Masterplan area, which are:

- **Activity and Vibrancy** - understanding where areas are busy and active and where others suffer from inactivity, and consequently issues around anti-social behaviour and decline;
- **Legibility** - how easy an area is to get to and navigate around;
- **Public Realm** - a review of the quality of the public realm, its capacity to support change and areas where it is affecting the potential of the place;
- **Access and Movement** - understanding the movement and flow of pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles across the area; and
- **Heritage and Conservation** - understanding the historical character of the area, heritage value of buildings and how the urban grain has evolved over the years.

5.2 Activity And Vibrancy

The plan adjacent illustrates areas where active and non active frontages are located across the study area.

George Street and the immediate sections of John Street and St. Andrews Street, which connect with George Street, are where the highest degree of frontage activity is focused. This corridor is the active day time spine to the area.

Craigie Street and parts of John Street experience some degree of passive surveillance but as uses along these streets change to more domestic and residential uses the degree of activity begins to drop.

Streets such as Spring Gardens, Loch Street and Charlotte Street have lower amount of active frontages, with a noticeable reduction in building activity and sense of 'coming & going'. Frontages have some windows looking onto the street but these areas feel much less surveillanced with buildings being predominantly residential, built as enclosed, inward facing apartment blocks, with only a few communal entrances.

Towards the south of George Street, particularly along Loch Street, Harriet Street and around the Norco House, building frontage activity is extremely low or absent.

What this means:

- The nature of the uses means that although activity along George Street is high during daytime hours, the area's evening activity is significantly lowered as shops close;
- Streets with low or no active frontages negatively impact upon perceptions of place, often making them feel unsafe and unwelcoming. This discourages visitors or encourages people to use alternative routes through;
- Future interventions should look to work both to increase activity in areas of low activity and introduce improvements to further increase levels of activity in those that have passive or higher levels of activity.

- George Street Area Boundary
- Building frontages with high surveillance and an activated ground floor use
- Building frontages with passive surveillance and ground floor activity
- Building frontages with no active use or surveillance at ground floor
- Building frontages with some passive surveillance but no direct access or activity to the street

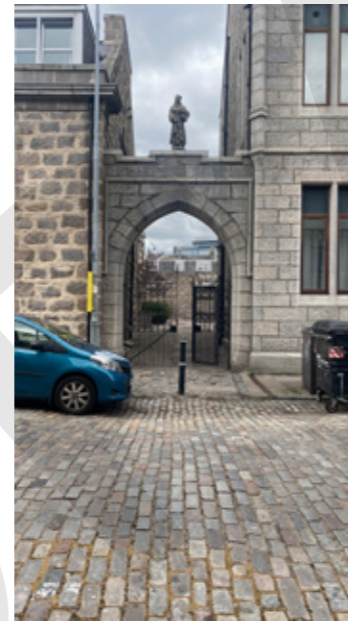


Figure 6 - Active and Non-Active Frontages

5.3 Legibility

The urban design structure of George Street is set out in the plan adjacent. There are a number of features and characteristics of the area which provide design cues and influences which should be considered when future development is brought forward. Some of these features help to drive a sense of place and character.

- The historic grid helps aid orientation and legibility north - south along George Street as well as east - west.
- Long range views and vistas along grid of streets within the study area help legibility within the study area
- Legibility breaks down further east towards A96 and along Loch Street and Harriet Street.
- A number of attractive & prominent architectural features on street corners help reinforce role of George Street as the central corridor of the study area
- Number of taller feature buildings on edge of the study area provide long range views along internal east - west perpendicular streets to George Street
- The quality of arrival points surrounding street network in many instances is difficult to read
- Internal courtyards of residential courts prevent pedestrian permeability and through movement



What this means:

The area is easier to understand and navigate from within the centre of the study area, but as you approach the edges it becomes less clear as to how you can transition to the next part of the city, particularly to the west, south and east of the study area. This means clear and well co-ordinated signage and wayfinding may be required to help people to move more successfully through the neighbourhood.



Figure 7 - Legibility

5.4 Signage And Promotion

The variety of commercial shop front signage is focused along the George Street Corridor. In many instances retailer signage varies and contrasts in order to draw consumer attention. In addition, there are also a number of retail units which have smaller signs attached to building façades.

This creates an uncoordinated and negative visual impact to George Street and increases the degree of visual clutter along the street. As a result a number of the historic features of the buildings are lost or hidden. However, these are also part of the identity of the local retailers and traders of the area and are part of the area's social makeup.

In contrast, the historic street signage is much more consistent and understated.

There may be opportunities to better integrate and co-ordinate retailer signage so that it responds to local historic characteristics but still allows retailers to advertise and promote their trades.



5.5 Public Realm Quality

The quality of public realm within George Street is varied. Public realm is predominantly medium or low quality.

There are some examples of high quality materials (for instance, along the northern side of George Street where new high-quality paving has been incorporated), but these tend to be localised and sit within low-medium quality streets.



Ongoing improvements across the wider area

In the wider George Street area, there are a number of locations which have undergone recent public realm improvements. These spaces have a higher quality of materials and signage (see image below). At present, because of the lower quality of materials, George Street feels cut off from these refinements. There is an opportunity to further expand upon recent city-wide improvements to George Street.



High quality public realm

- A higher quality of materials is present within these spaces, but instances of this area low within the study area.
- Pedestrians are prioritised within the streetscape.
- The public realm is accessible to all users and feels safe at all points.
- Although there are areas with high quality public realm along George Street, these are currently limited to the finish of pavements (see image). There is an opportunity to enhance the quality of the public realm across the entire streetscape.

Medium quality public realm

- Elements of high quality spaces including street furniture and trees, but with a dominance of lower-quality materials and/or damaged materials.
- Vehicles are prioritised within the streetscape.
- The public realm is accessible to all users and feels safe at certain points.

Low quality public realm

- The streetscape is lacking in both high quality materials and street furniture.
- Vehicles are prioritised within the streetscape.
- The public realm is not accessible to all users and does not feel safe.



Figure 8 - Public Realm Review

5.6 Pedestrian Experience of the Public Realm

There is a sense of 'here and thereness' when moving through the George Street area. This is enhanced in places where the public realm looks directly into spaces such as residential courtyards and disused buildings.

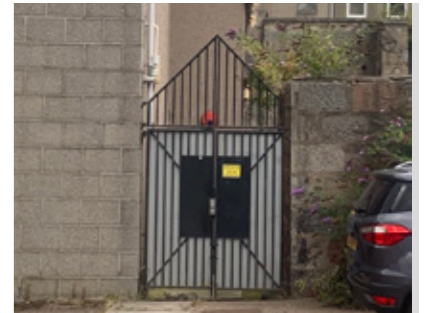
There is a sense of intrigue as the eye is drawn to artworks and graffiti, framed by archways and doorways. Movement through the site is often characterised by travelling under bridges towards an object or building in the distance.

Contrastingly, some boundaries feel hostile. Locked gates and boarded up windows signify to the pedestrian that this is a space to quickly move past, rather than stop and dwell.



Form and textures of the public realm

Notable shapes in the public realm include circles, curved sweeping edges, and arches. Whilst the most prevalent colour is grey, there are variations in tones. Hints of pink, lilac, ochre, and red tones can be identified across site. In some places, the public realm is representative of Aberdeen's urban-coastal interface. This can be spotted with the use of large weathered pebbles and in gravel planting that is reminiscent of a coastal environment.



5.7 Green Space

There is a lack of accessible and functional green space within the George Street area. Existing street trees within the public realm are either struggling, or have died.

There is an opportunity to incorporate functional green space to soften the surrounding hardscape and perform a number of valuable functions. These might include well-being benefits, nature-interactions, and stormwater management.

There are existing areas of greenspace within walking distance of the study area (as shown on the adjacent plan) however the quality of the pedestrian journey to and from these spaces is often uncomfortable, due to conflict with vehicles or narrow pedestrian footways or more difficult to navigate. A summary of these issues is set out below;

- **Route from Union Terrace Gardens:**

Cuts through Harriet Street which feels unsafe due to the lack of surveillance and pedestrian blind spots.

- **Route from Churchyard:**

Most straightforward route involves cutting through the shopping centre demonstrating lack of connectivity to George Street.

- **Route from Pocket park / Cruyff Court:**

Main route is along vehicular dominated streets.



Accessible green space

Accessible green spaces are currently located outside of the George Street area. Notable nearby green spaces include a cruyff court set within a small pocket park, Union Terrace Gardens and the churchyard on Schoolhill. There is a need for more accessible public green spaces within the George Street area, as these currently fall outside of the site boundary.



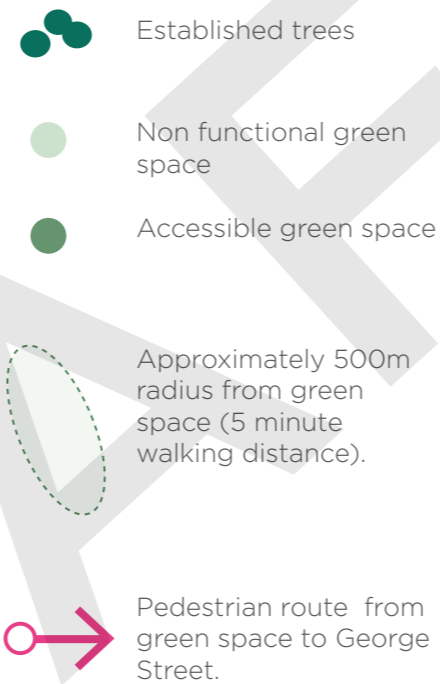
Non-functional green space

Whilst there are 'green' spaces within the George Street area, these tend to exist as grass verges adjacent to roads, or are set behind a boundary adjacent to residential property. There is a clear need to enhance existing green spaces so that they perform an environmental, social, and aesthetic function.



Established trees

Established trees in George Street are mostly located along main vehicular roads or within residential courtyards. There is an opportunity to incorporate tree planting within the public realm to perform a number of social and environmental functions.



What this means:

Although there are accessible green spaces within a 5 minute walk of George Street, the routes to these spaces are of a low quality in terms of pedestrian experience and safety. Existing accessible green spaces are also limited in the types of functions they perform and users they attract. Additional green spaces which serve a wider range of users are required.

5.8 Street Furniture

As demonstrated in the plan, there is a lack of seating and dwell space within the George Street area. Contrastingly, issues with bin storage are visible across the entire site. A clear demand for cycle storage presents an opportunity to expand existing cycle facilities.



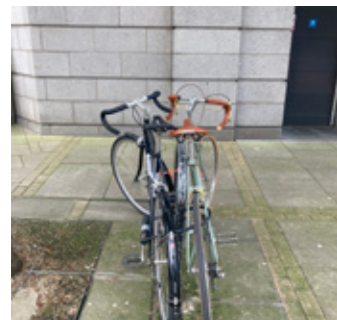
Residential Bin storage

There are bins which spill out into the public realm across the wider George Street area. As well as lowering the visual appeal of a space, these also pose accessibility issues.



Provision for dwell space

There is a low provision of seating within the George Street area. Existing seating environments could be improved. For instance, whilst there are benches on George Street, these are positioned with their backs to the road and next to bollards. This makes for an unwelcoming dwell space.



Cycle storage

Cycle storage is located adjacent to the college and also along George Street itself. This is well used and there is clearly a demand for adequate cycle storage and repair stations. There is an opportunity to incorporate additional facilities for cyclists across the area.



What this means:

Additional seating elements are required across the George Street area to improve accessibility and to create areas for dwell space. Bin storage is a problem across the entire site and negatively impacts visual quality and accessibility of the streetscape.



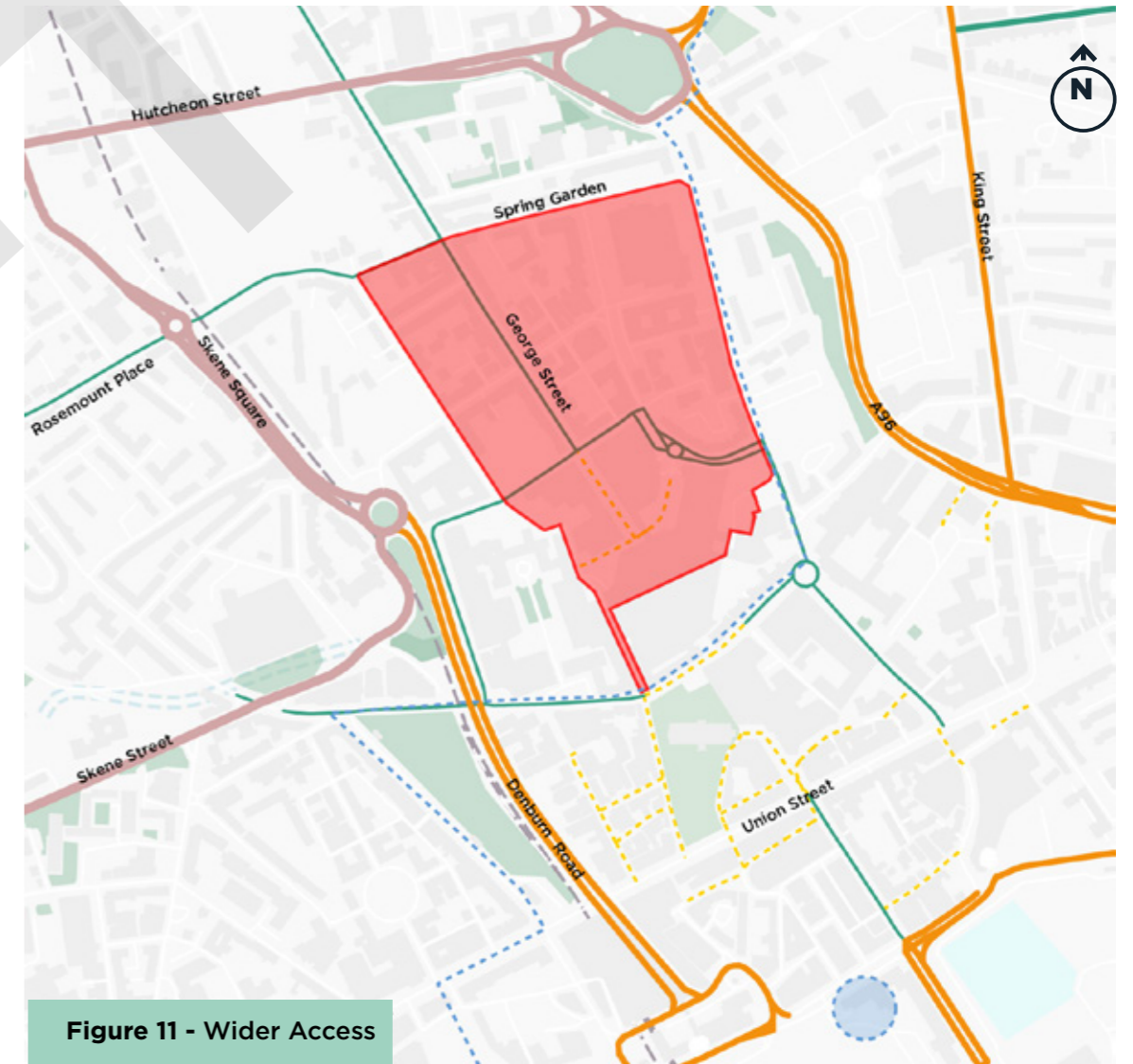
Figure 10 - Locations of public facilities

5.9 Access and Movement

City Centre Movement

Aberdeen City Centre is accessible using a variety of modes and routes. The rail station provides access for local towns to the north west and south of the city (e.g. for commuter and retail purposes) as well as more strategic access to Dyce Airport and longer-distance trips to Inverness, Edinburgh and beyond. The city centre is well served by a network of bus routes, providing radial access to and from adjacent towns and residential areas, as well as key land-uses including Robert Gordon and Aberdeen Universities, hospitals including Aberdeen Royal Infirmary and Aberdeen Harbour.

Further information on the strategic movement and access to the city centre can be found in the Aberdeen City centre and Beach Masterplan.



- Study Area
- Primary Vehicle Routes
- Secondary Vehicle Routes
- Tertiary Vehicle Routes
- - - Pedestrian Priority
- - - National Cycle Route
- Railway
- Aberdeen Bus Station

George Street

The George Street area is a walkable neighbourhood with a number of links into the core of the city centre on foot. It is also well connected by bus to the wider city centre.

From a vehicular perspective, George Street is identified as a tertiary route within Aberdeen's roads hierarchy, predominantly providing access to local residential and commercial properties. However, it also connects directly to primary routes at Powis Place and Hutcheon Street and, with it lying approximately midway between the Denburn Road/Woolmanhill (primary) and West North Street (secondary) routes, does provide an alternative to these north-south routes, either as a local rat-run or when seeking access to local facilities including North East Scotland College and West North Street car park.

George Street is, however, multi-functional in nature with its pedestrianised access to the Bon Accord Centre in the south and all vehicle operation in each direction along the rest of its length. It serves various local bus routes, has pedestrian activity on both sides and also contains some advisory cycle priority measures along its length. In addition, the combination of on-street resident permit and short-stay pay and display parking serving the mixed residential and commercial frontages along George Street ensure that the competition for the available streetspace is significant.

What this means:

- Aberdeen is a walkable city centre, with numerous pedestrian priority streets
- George Street is well positioned and connected via bus links and a National Cycle Route
- Push to make the city centre a destination rather than a through route
- Future pipeline projects to promote pedestrianised zones and vehicle restricted areas

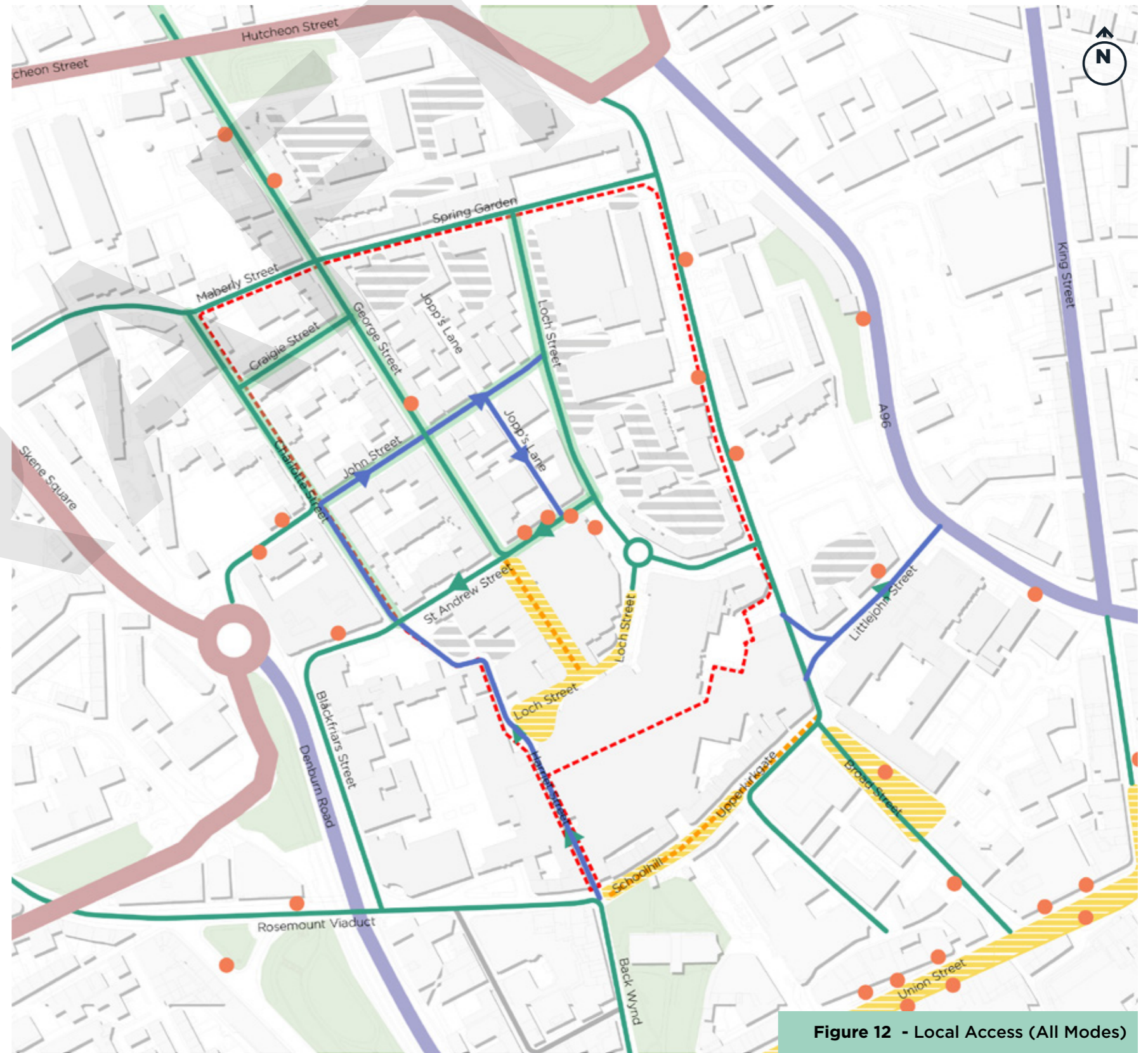
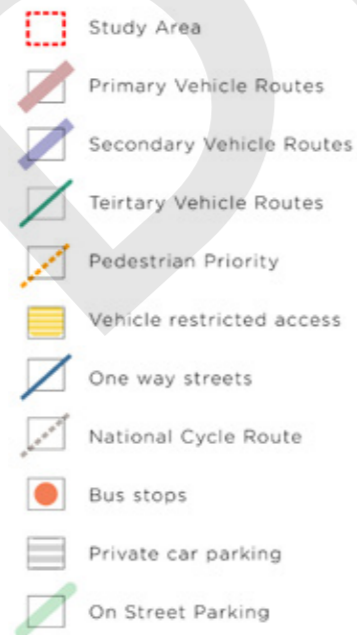
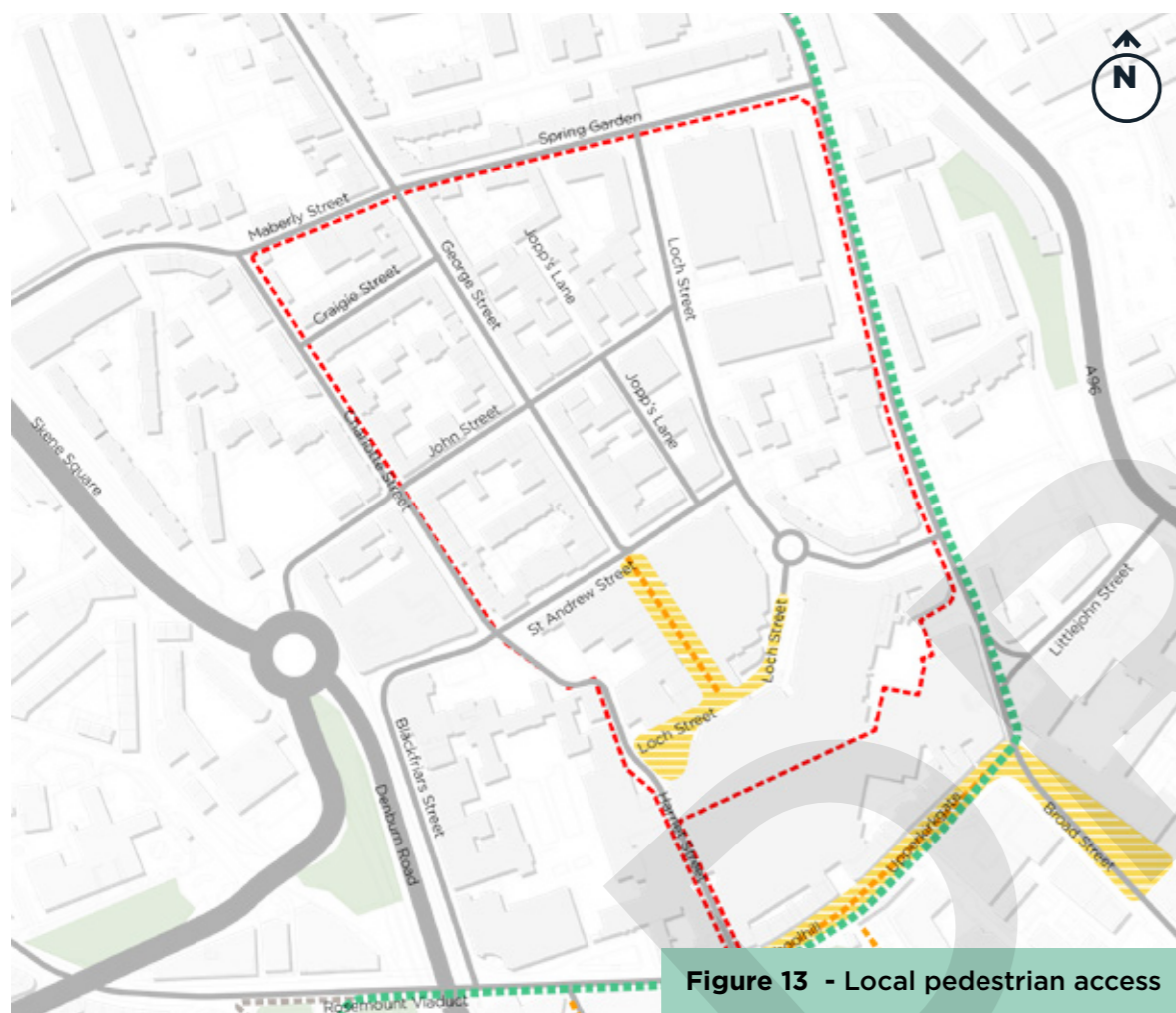


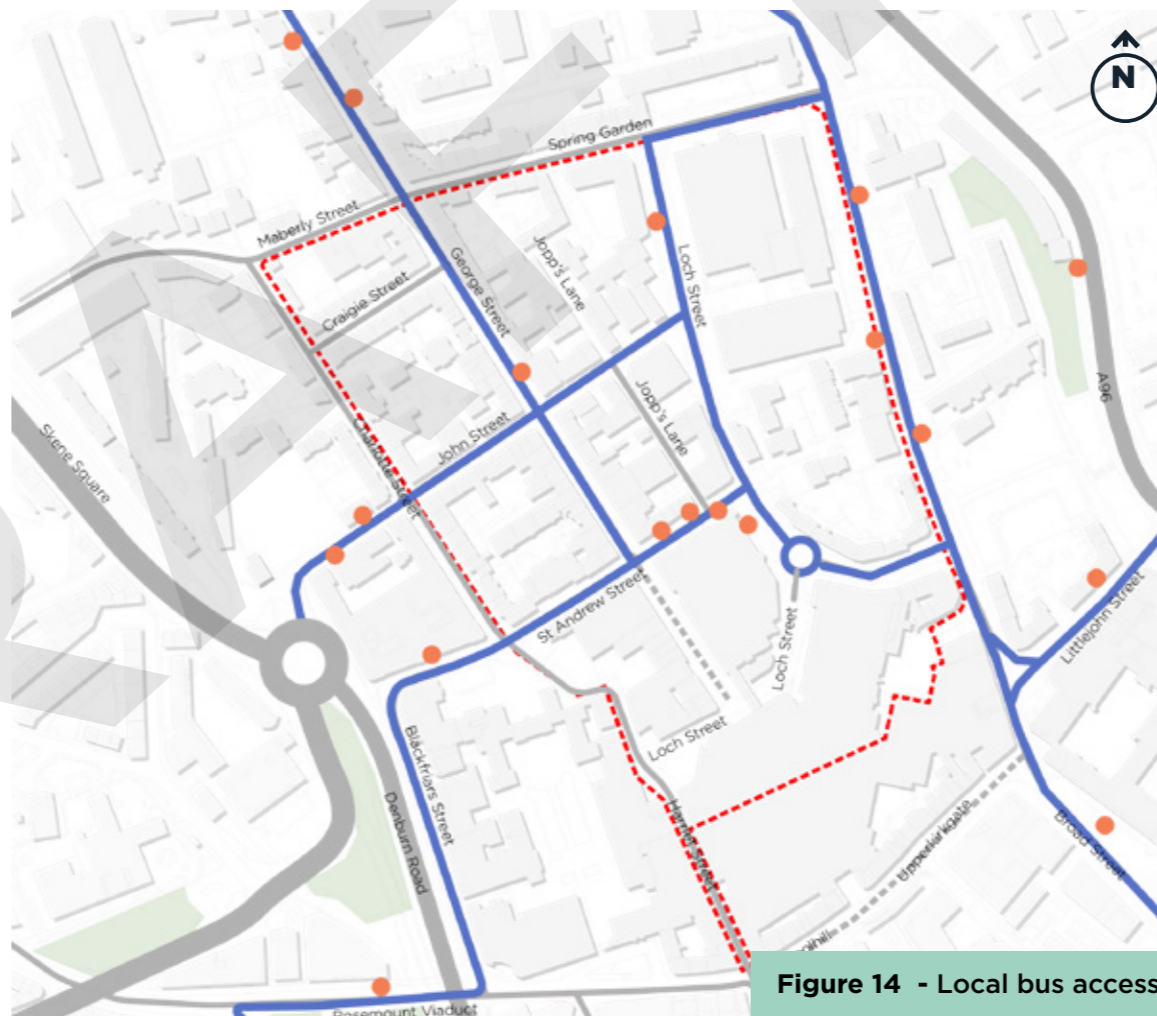
Figure 12 - Local Access (All Modes)

5.10 Street Network Function

Pedestrian And Cycle Accessibility



Public Transport



The plan above demonstrates the existing public walking and cycling networks across the George Street area. The cycle network is limited to the designated National Cycle Network Route 1 which runs along the eastern edge of the study area connecting Loch Street to Upperkirkgate and across to Union Terrace Gardens. With that said, George Street is identified as a local cycle route with cyclists still using the busier road network despite a lack of designed cycle lanes.

The plan highlights the lack of cycle infrastructure across the study area. The levels of pedestrian connectivity through George Street are reasonable but with limited direct access to Schoolhill / Upperkirkgate. The Bon Accord Centre in some way restricts north - south pedestrian and cycle movement, forcing cyclists travelling south to Loch Street and to Harriet Street for those moving north.

St Andrew Street, John Street, George Street, Loch Street and Gallowgate are streets which service the local bus routes in the area. These are important for access and connections to Aberdeen's Bus Centre which acts as a travel hub for the city centre, as well as connections to further afield, beyond the city centre. John Street is one way in the eastbound direction from Charlotte street to Loch Street, while St Andrew Street is one way westbound from Loch Street to Blackfriars Street. The figure above shows the bus routes and where stops are located with 400m of the study area.

Vehicle Movement Function

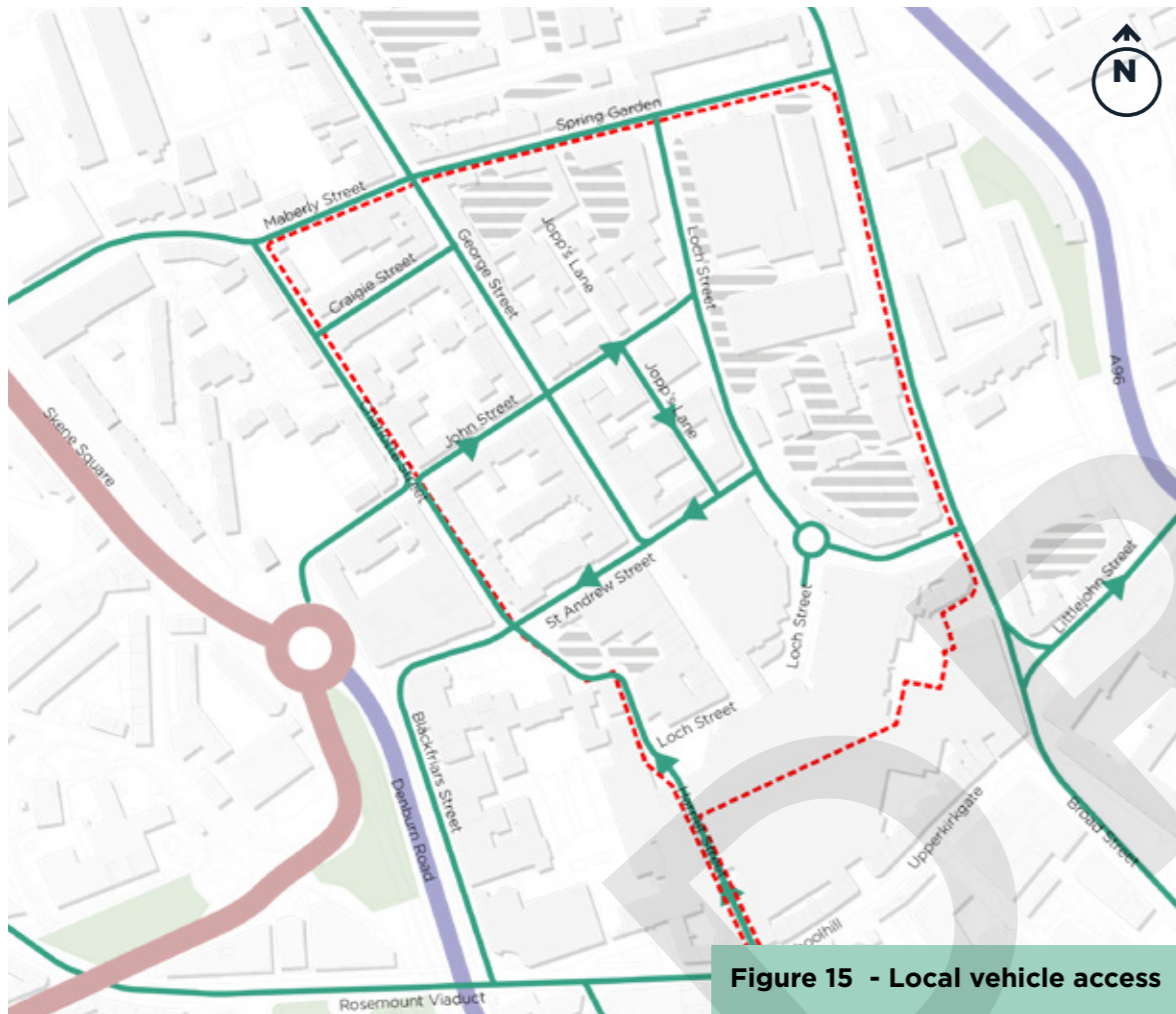





Figure 15 - Local vehicle access

Streets within the study area have a wide range of functions, varying from those with very high volumes and mixes of vehicular and pedestrian traffic along the boundaries, to those that are for local access only. Regardless of mode there is a shared objective by users: quick, safe journeys that experience minimal disruption. The figure above highlights the significance of streets within the study area; Primary, Secondary and Tertiary routes. Arrows also denote which of these routes are one way. Primary routes streets support the movement of various modes of travel and at greater volumes, including pedestrians, cyclists, bus and vehicles. Tertiary streets have a lesser impact upon the network and carry low numbers of vehicles and traffic.

Street Place Function



Figure 16 - Street functions and place

-  Vehicular dominated street
-  Vehicular dominance resulting in restrictions to other forms of movement
-  Pedestrian priority spaces
Streets where pedestrians are prioritised over vehicles.
-  Residential vehicular streets
Quieter residential streets where vehicles are still prioritised.
-  Pedestrian crossing points which could be improved.

*For the purpose of this analysis, vehicular dominant streets are understood as streets where vehicles have priority over pedestrians.

The most common type of street across site are vehicle dominant streets. In contrast, there has been little provision for pedestrian priority streets. Whilst there are locations where cyclists have been considered e.g. markings painted on the road along George Street, vehicles still dominate the streetscape. There are a number of crossing points which could be improved to ensure better pedestrian and cyclist safety. These tend to break up the pedestrian journey and significantly lower the pedestrian experience of a given space.

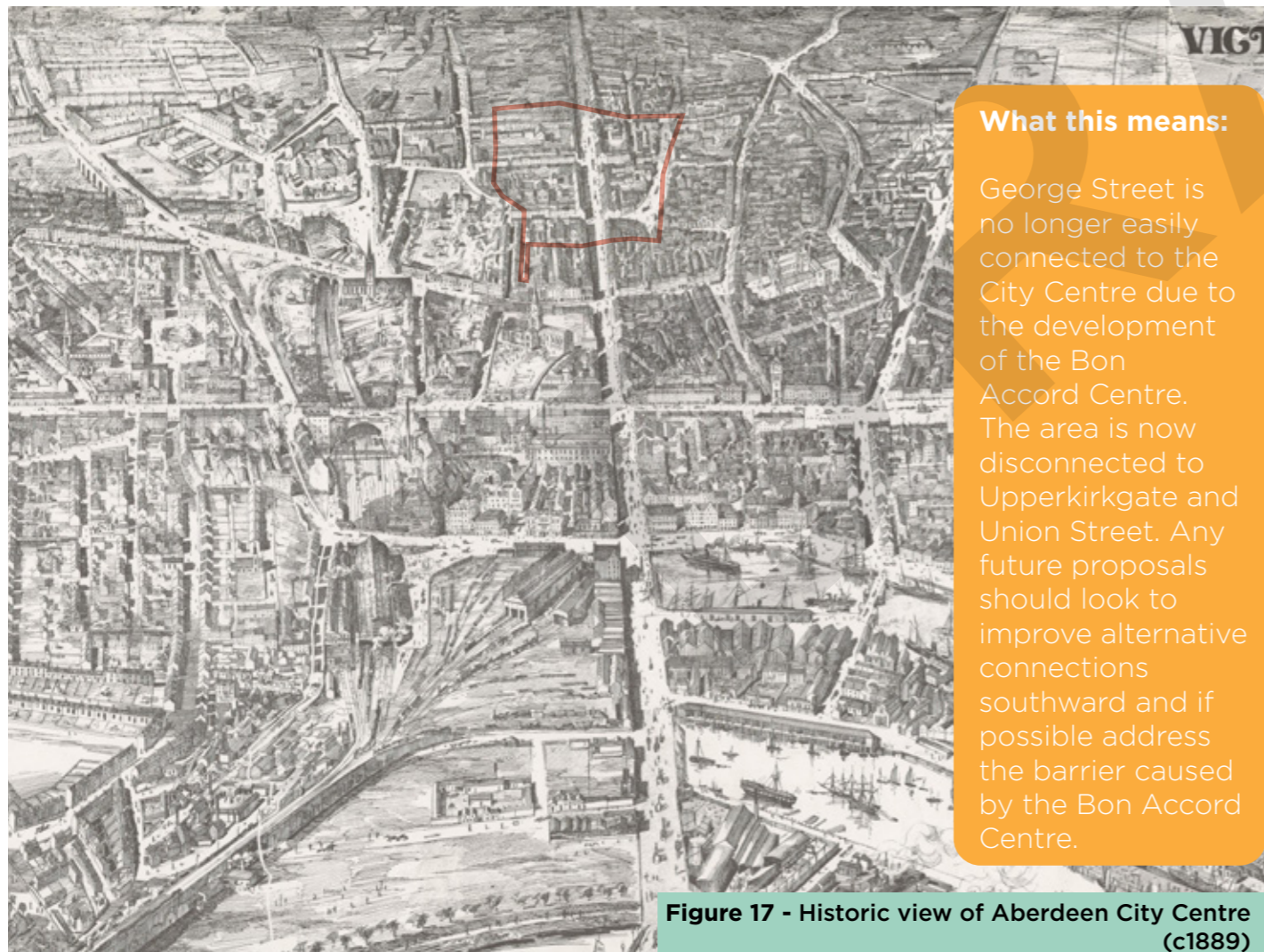
What this means:
The pedestrian and cyclist experience of George Street is negatively affected by the prevalence of cars. The design of key routes subtly signifies to cyclists and pedestrians that this is a space for cars rather than people. There are safety concerns around pedestrian/cyclist conflicts with cars, and local air quality.

5.11 Respecting Conservation And Heritage

The George Street area has a long standing, dense urban character, with most of its historical urban grid remaining intact today. George Street once formed a powerful urban corridor, which ran parallel to King Street, leading from the City's docklands, across Union Street and northwards out of the city centre towards Kittybrewster where local farm marts and agricultural trade was located. George Street was further reinforced as a key corridor in the early to mid 1900's, carrying a tramway along its length.

Over the years, the urban context of George Street has dramatically changed with the construction of the Norco "Ziggurat" building, and later the development of the Bon Accord and St Nicholas centres across the southern end of George Street.

The historic mapping on this page reveal the original nature and character of George Street. Much of current thinking in urban planning seeks to reinforce and identify historic patterns and character to create a strong sense of "embedded place."



What this means:

George Street is no longer easily connected to the City Centre due to the development of the Bon Accord Centre. The area is now disconnected to Upperkirkgate and Union Street. Any future proposals should look to improve alternative connections southward and if possible address the barrier caused by the Bon Accord Centre.

Figure 17 - Historic view of Aberdeen City Centre (c1889)



A dense work community with Candle & Soap Works, Stables, Public Baths and Foundry's. George Street provides a direct connection through to Union Street and further south to the docks.



Introduction of the tramway along George Street which connected Kittybrewster train station to the tramway along Union Street to the south. An important neighbourhood through which activity and people moved



Some of the denser historic grain becomes eroded with new development and infill. Robert Gordon's College also sees redevelopment. A central tramway through George Street has been discontinued.



Relatively little change through to the 70's although Loch Street continues to function as an important secondary street to George Street providing access to local schools, Places of Worship and Public Offices.



By 1990- 1995 both the George Street and Loch Street connection to Upperkirkgate and further south to Union Street are severed, with the area cleared to make way for the Bon Accord Centre Development.



By 2022 the area has undergone significant change to the south and east of the study area. Most of the historic grain remains intact along George Street, St. Andrew Street, John Street & Craigie Street

5.12 Listed Buildings

The George Street area sits just north of the City Centre Conservation Area, with Harriet Street and Gallogate connecting into the study area.

There are a number of listed buildings / structures surrounding the George Street area and a small number within including:

Within study area

- Category B listed 230 George Street And 34 John Street (3-storey, 4-bay Classical Bank);
- Category B listed 261-265 (Odd) George Street (former college building with prominent octagonal tower);
- Category C listed 46 Charlotte Street and Arched Gateway;
- Category C listed 26 John Street (3-bay warehouse with ornate Dutch gable to John Street elevation);
- Category C listed 119-127 (Odd Nos) George Street (5-bay commercial and residential building with distinctive wallhead stack and flanking crow-step gables); and
- Category C listed 111 Gallowgate including Boundary Wall and Railing.

Beyond study area

- A number of Category B & C listed buildings along Upperkirkgate;
- Category A listed Porthill Court Residential tower blocks;
- Category A listed Robert Gordon College; and
- Category B listed Gerrard Street Baptist Church (former united free church)

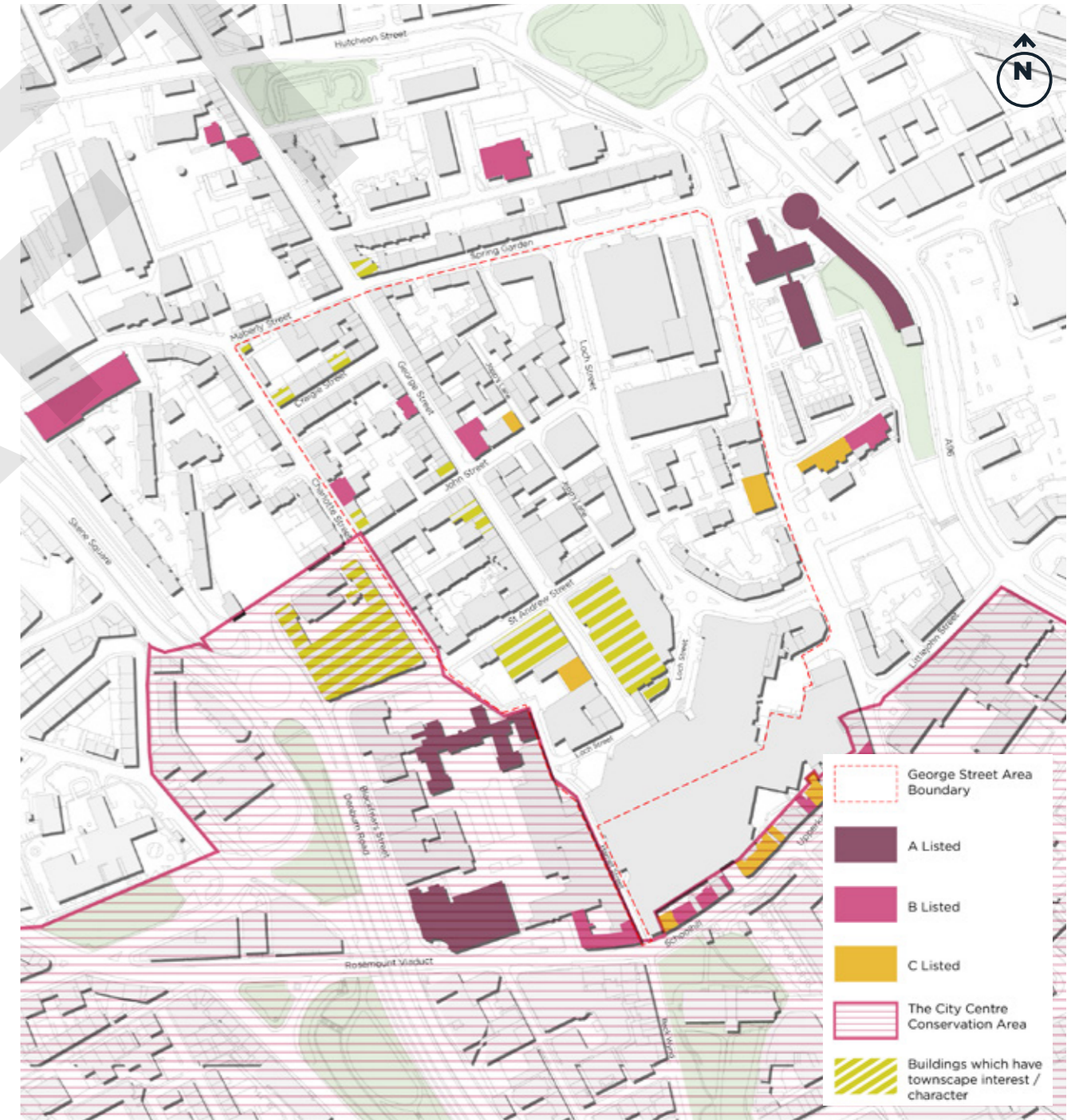


Figure 18 - Historical Character

There are a number of buildings identified through the baseline analysis which also add to the overall character and identity of the place, which are identified in the plan adjacent. These buildings have no formal protected designation. The purpose of identifying these is to understand their relationship to George Street and is not intended as a recommendation for formal listing or categorisation.

Norco Building

Northern Co-operative Society's Norco House (most recently occupied by as John Lewis) was built in 1966-70 for the (now-defunct) Northern Co-operative Society.

Designed by Covell Matthews Architects, the building is an example of brutalist, modernist architecture and intended to be a showpiece within the city's architectural make-up. The rippling, mound like profile of the massing of the building was particularly striking and unlike anything within the George Street area. The exposed concrete strips take similar design language from other well known brutalist buildings e.g Preston Bus Station as well as examples from other department store façades in Europe.

The building was taken over by John Lewis and renovated and converted in 1987. The department store was the organisation's northernmost store and was further expanded to the east in 1987 as part of the expansion of the John Lewis Partnership into Aberdeen. John Lewis has since closed (2021) and now used by the NHS as a temporary vaccination hub on the ground floor.



Loch Street Soup Kitchen

Aberdeen Public Soup Kitchen was first established as a charity in 1800 in St Mary's Chapel in St Nicholas Church. It supplied a breakfast of coffee and bread and a lunch of bread, soup and a piece of beef or mutton to the needy of the city.

The Soup Kitchen moved to Loch Street in 1838 and this new building was opened by Lord Provost Stewart in December 1894. The ground floor dining room had accommodation for at least 50 people and the tables were marble topped. In 1926, a total of nearly 27,000 meals were provided with funding still coming from charitable donations since few could afford even the two pence for the lunch.

The building survived major developments in the surrounding area but in recent years its charitable purpose was no longer thought necessary, and it was converted into a café in the mid 1990s. In 2022, the building still stands at 41-43 Loch Street, with the covered walkway for the Bon Accord Centre to its south. It is occupied by a outlet of the Jo Malone London fragrance and candle store.



5.13 Local Character

George Street sits to the northern fringes of a dynamic part of Aberdeen City Centre. The area can be broadly characterised into six character areas based on their location and type and uses found across the area (figure 6). A visual selection of images over the following pages illustrate the features described below. The character areas are identified as;



What this means:

- George Street is the focus of character and identity with intact building architectural features and could be reinforced to create a sense of centre
- John Street & Craigie Street are most visually and architecturally connected to George Street
- Areas to south and east lack strong, cohesive character and could experience greater degree of intervention.
- Historic texture / materials within intact core add positive character and could be celebrated
- Street art works successfully to animate & add colour contrast in areas with poorer quality townscape

- George Street Area Boundary
- Historic grey granite buildings with distinct facade and roof detailing and expressions
- Areas with predominantly grey granite/pebble dashed facade buildings with street facing fenestrations and roof pitches
- Brutalist / geometric built form with minimal facade detailing
- New built structures
- Former industrial buildings
- Buildings with a lack of distinct structural elements or facade quality



Figure 19 - Local Character

In addition to these immediate characters; to the south lies a number of leisure and cultural destinations and established city quarters (Belmont Quarter Merchants Quarter and Ship Row), some of which are undergoing phased regeneration programmes.

5.14 Land Uses

The section of George Street within the study area is predominately a mixed use urban high street. George Street is comprised of primarily granite tenement buildings with small local retail shops at ground floor, complemented by small flatted residential units on the upper floors.

Within this retail offer, units are dominated by a variety of independent health and beauty shops, takeaways and repair shops, creating a vitality to the area. The distribution of these uses is identified on the plan on the following page.

As shown on the GOAD plan, at the time of writing and according to GOAD plan records, there are a number vacant units to the south of the study area. The Norco House site is currently vacant (the building's ground floor is used as a temporary COVID-19 vaccination centre) as well as units along George Street and within the Bon Accord Centre. However, some of the vacant units are being used for other meanwhile uses and/or being brought to market, presenting an evolving context of change.

Residential

Aberdeen as a whole has experienced an over-supply of second hand stock, mainly flats and predominantly tenement flats, since the oil price led downturn in 2015, of which there are a considerable amount within George Street.

George Street plays an important role within the wider city centre, offering people the opportunity to access more affordable and attainable residential accommodation within a city centre setting. An opportunity to access accommodation within the heart of the city centre, it provides a sustainable and well connected urban neighbourhood to allow those who choose to live there with access to Aberdeen's city centre.

However, the area has struggled to secure any new residential growth due to the suppressed values across the market and fewer larger, readily available development sites.

Retail

The retail market on George Street has historically been split in two. The presence of the former John Lewis adjacent to the Bon Accord Centre attracted national retailers such as Santander, Blacks, Magnet Kitchens and Greggs occupying larger units at the South end of the street. These created and benefited from increased footfall brought by the department store. George Street also has a well regarded local business in Finnies, The

Jewellers, which attracts city centre visitors and those from further afield further along George Street.

However, lower George Street's retail market dynamic has been impacted by the closure of John Lewis. The Bon Accord Centre also has a current planning application for expansion however at the time of writing the Bon Accord Centre is in administration.

In contrast, the retail market to the North of George Street comprises smaller, local and independent retail units offering low everyday items to the market, serving the people that live there. These include local takeaways, beauticians and cafés.

Education

The presence of North East Scotland College within the study area and Robert Gordon's College to the south west are important local institutions that interact with George Street. Their student populations frequently travel into and through George Street and the offer of some local businesses caters for local students (including cafés, convenience retail, gaming cafés and student residential). Both College curriculum will drive and influence the future uses within George Street and the Masterplan should look to ensure the ability to support and respond.

Existing and Emerging Business

Across the George Street neighbourhood, there are several organisations such as George Community Council and the Greater George Street Traders Association, that are operating in the area with each having their own distinctive role. However, it is apparent through local studies that each lacks a knowledge of what the other is doing and how they could support each-other. There lies the possibility to create a Community Network where groups, organisations and individuals would be asked to share ideas and take forward some actions that had come from the event and further consultations that exist for the area. It would add to the already developed and well attended have views on what is needed in the area.



6. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

6.1 Introduction

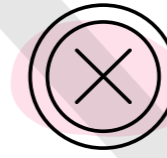
The following SWOT is based on the spatial analysis of George Street. It is also influenced by feedback from the consultation exercises with both the local community and local stakeholders.

The SWOT analysis will help shape the masterplan detailed in the following sections.



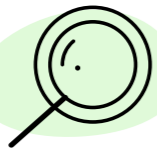
Strengths

1. George Street sits on the northern fringe of the City Centre, within a short walking distance of local amenities, the retail core and adjacent to recently delivered investment around Marschial College.
2. A long established, resilient, community who proudly support the independent business offer within the area.
3. The NuArt festival includes Jopps Lane and other areas of George Street, displaying an annual programme of murals, helping draw people into the area and add colour and vibrancy to the streetscape.
4. Along with its listed buildings, there are buildings of character and interest that add a strong identity and townscape character to George Street.
5. Strong links via bus to the immediate city centre as well as north to existing residential communities along George Street
6. Range of independent shops and businesses which play an important role in providing tertiary services for locals as well as the wider city. Includes some higher end and well regarded businesses including Finnies the family jewellers.
7. A present residential and student community within the study area who can support local services and amenities.
8. Two of the city's well known educational institutions in North East College Scotland and Robert Gordon's College, who between attract significant number of users to the area, and recognise the role of children and young people.
9. Strong sense of local community and entrepreneurial, self starter spirit. Several successful organisations in and around the area including the George Community Council and Greater George Street Traders Association.



Weaknesses

1. Loch Street pedestrian environment is poor and creates severance between both Colleges and the core of George Street.
2. Quality of the built form adjacent to NESCOL, industrial low storey units, is of a poorer quality than the intact historic core and creates a visual disjoint.
3. Arrival gateways and thresholds to George Street area are poorly defined in some locations, namely on approach from Maberley Street, John Street, Spring Garden and Harriet Street. The experience along many of these connections for pedestrians is poor.
4. The northern elevation of the Bon Accord Centre is a dominant, imposing and poorly activated frontage. It reads as the rear of the building with entrance accesses which are difficult to read and parts are dominated by servicing areas.
5. George Street is an area of predominantly poor quality urban form. Inactive façades, surface car parking and run down / vacant units to the rear create a poor quality arrival point to the area via Harriet Street.
6. Limited wayfinding across the neighbourhood. George Street is 'hidden' from the rest of the city to the south (by the Bon Accord Centre) and from the west (by dominant highways infrastructure).
7. Quite a lot of street clutter and untidiness which weakens the aesthetic and townscape quality of the place; limited bin storage, over grown planting, seagull and dog fouling.
8. Little to no basic necessities available such as accessible public toilets, information stands, water fountains or shading etc.
9. Area has limited activity in the evenings and therefore can feel unsafe and uninviting. NESCOL evening classes are the exception which are offered throughout term time.



Opportunities

1. Form stronger and better defined routes in and out of the neighbourhood and avoid relying solely on pedestrian access via the Bon Accord Centre (private link) and Harriet Street (heavily constrained).
2. Reduce the impact of private car through journeys and create more space for pedestrians, cyclists and other modes of transport and active travel.
3. Develop a cohesive approach to character of the public realm - through shop frontage, wayfinding and street materiality.
4. Re-activate areas of low activity (spaces and vacant buildings) both short and longer term to address issues of vacancy early.
5. Improved environmental maintenance and facilities across the area to tackle issues that impact on the day to day experiences of residents and businesses.
6. Norco House is an example of brutalist architecture, which invites opinion and interest, a recognisable piece of Aberdeen's social history which could be brought back to life as part of a mixed use development.
7. Better promotion of George Street businesses.
8. Creation of more dwell spaces across the neighbourhood.
9. Introduce more urban greening to what is a hard environment through new and retrofit interventions.
10. Further encourage start ups and independent retailers and businesses into the area and support those already there.
11. Explore opportunities to encourage more residential accommodation into the area by offering a new form of residential offer.
12. Diversify the anchor of the neighbourhood, away from traditional retail (Norco House) to a more mixed use, experiential and potentially cultural based offer.
13. Develop stronger programme links to surrounding, well established institutions.



Threats

1. The George Street area remains visually hidden from the main pedestrian thoroughfares and areas of planned public realm investment planned via the wider City Centre and Beach Masterplan. Risk of the area become further detached (physically and psychologically) from the rest of the City
2. Linked to the above, at the time of writing, significant changes to the surrounding retail assets. Bon Accord Centre is under administration, Norco House is on the market for sale and other large floorspace properties (currently vacant) are on the market. The area could be at risk of further decline if no action is taken.
3. Threat of demolition of Norco House if a suitable use isn't found and loss of embedded carbon.
4. Threat of other areas in the city centre having a stronger and more inclusive presence than George Street and taking opportunity away.
5. Threat of online and out of town shopping having a stronger appeal to some of the larger brand stores within the neighbourhood.
6. Older and ageing populations being isolated due to poor provision and public realm quality
7. Aging buildings can require more maintenance and may fall into disrepair if vacant for long periods of time causing further issues of urban blight.
8. If the public realm falls into further disrepair, anti social behaviour will be encouraged in these areas and lower daily footfall.
9. With most parking on street for local residents, anticipate future issues with EV charging for historic buildings.

7. How Does George Street Respond?

7.1 Understanding

Our understanding of the place and the aspirations of the people who are part of it will shape the strategy for change across the area.

The strategy for the Mini Masterplan seeks to capture the potential of the area's physical characteristics, its diverse community and the emerging wider opportunities that the city is looking to secure.

Our focus for the Mini Masterplan strategy, in response to public and stakeholder engagement, our baseline assessment and our George Street Vision, proposes to:

- Embrace difference..... highlight the quirks & celebrate the variety
- Build our reputation – Encourage discovery & build recognition (place branding & curation).
- Create new reasons to come to the area
- Unlock big changes (Stimulate & Deliver) through incremental interventions
- Fix the edges and enhance the arrival
- Demand more from our streets - invite activity but manage movement
- Create a greener form of urbanism & more liveable environment

7.2 Vision

George Street Connected!

The 'local' Neighbourhood: a vibrant, creative and inclusive city centre community at the heart of reinvention.

George Street will become a place to form new connections; Social, Cultural, Economic and Educational. An authentic neighbourhood offering an evolution of George Street; a place for people to come together; with spaces that link activities, aspirations and ideas.



ECONOMY

Fully contributing to a more varied and dynamic local economy, where local businesses are supported, and where new ones, and people with ideas are encouraged to start-up, to grow and to thrive.



PEOPLE

Supporting a neighbourhood full of a diverse mix of people and communities, participating in all that our district has to offer in terms of culture, education, everyday activities, a place to call home and a bustling street-life.



PLACE

Becoming a place that is vibrant, comfortable, inclusive, playful and inviting. Being part of the city, but with a sense of the local intact.

7.3 Our Objectives For People

1. A place to continue to call home. An enhanced, greener environment in which to live sustainably and safely.
2. Encouraging community and individual wellbeing – creating amenity spaces and enhanced streets that foster greater social interaction, build and reinforce local community networks, and which support relaxation and dwell time.
3. Supporting community diversity from local shop owner, student, street artist, start-up business, exhibitor to resident with opportunities for all.
4. Encouraging a sense of local ownership & stewardship through events and initiatives shaped by the variety of local residential, educational and business communities.
5. A people focused place which offers a variety of uses and activities to support people of all ages – for residents and visitors.



Figure 20 - Ingredients for a more people focused place



Figure 21 - People Concept Diagram

7.3 Our Objectives For Place

1. Define a coherent, colourful street aesthetic with a co-ordinated palette of quality materials, planting and street furniture distinctive to George Street.
2. Harder working streets - somewhere that is easy and safe to navigate, with a clearer hierarchy of streets and wayfinding. Reclaiming streets to prioritise a positive pedestrian experience, manage traffic movements, improve their environmental sustainability.
3. Tackling areas of inactivity through a programme of transformational change - from short to long term - making space for pop-ups, tactical urbanism and interactions that are experience focused.
4. Supporting the core to do more - addressing infrastructure barriers and poor-quality movement thresholds to encourage more comfortable journeys into & out of George Street.
5. Illuminating culture and identity - inviting you to learn about the built and social history through interpretation, intervention in the public realm and lighting.



Figure 22 - Ingredients for a colourful and experience focused place

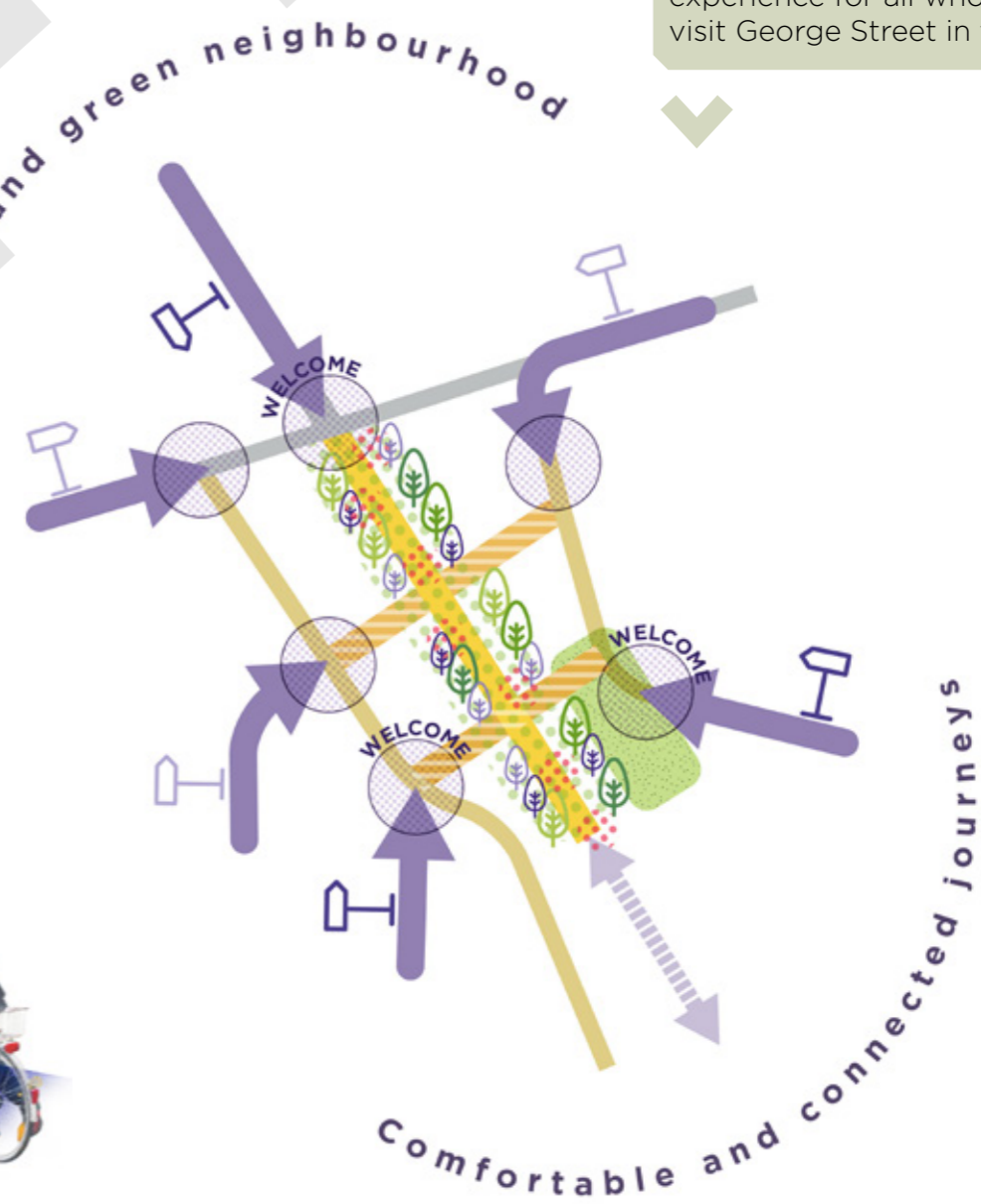


Figure 23 - Place Concept Diagram

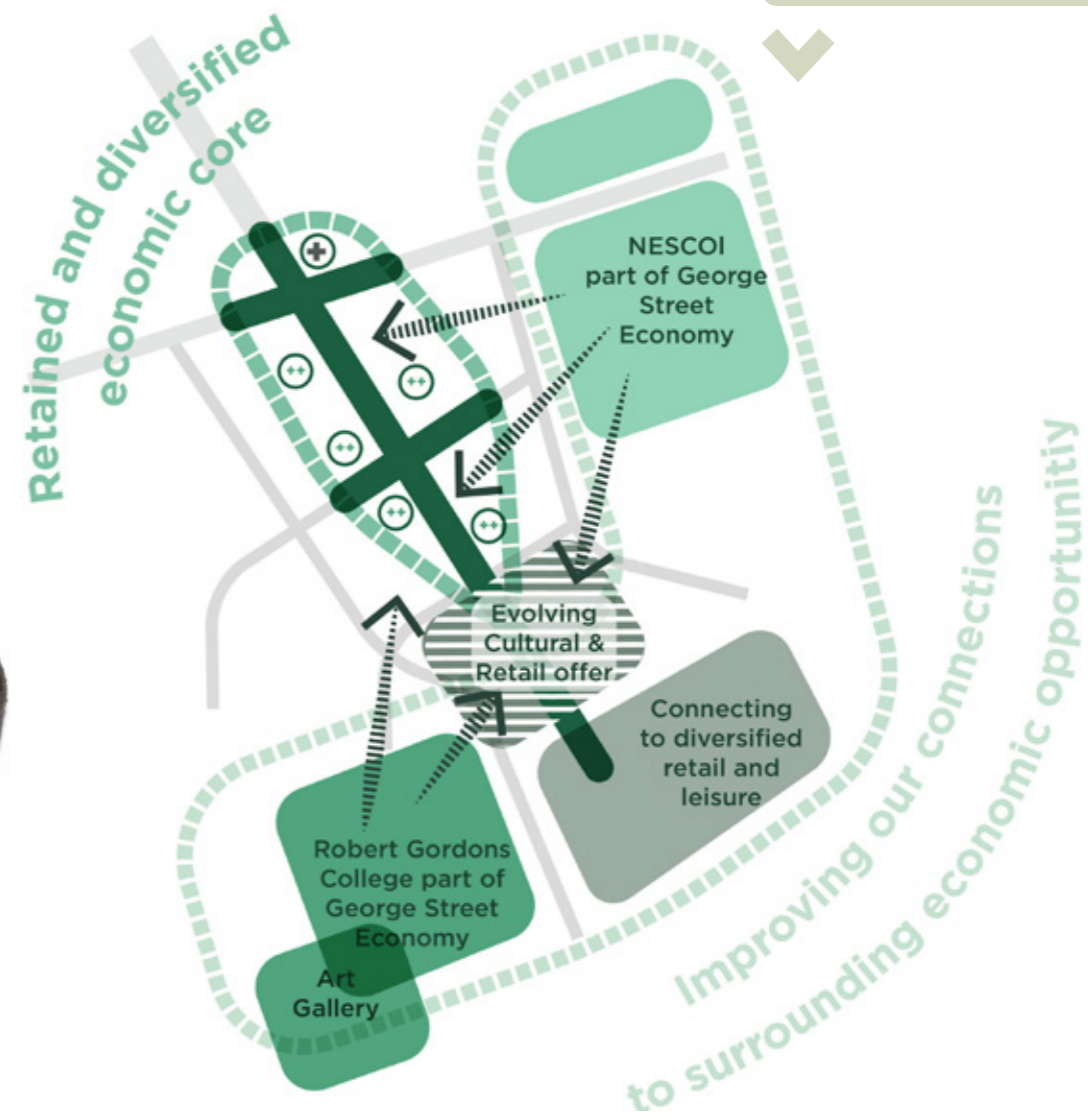
Concept diagram exploring the role of environmental and place interventions to improve the experience for all who live, work and visit George Street in the future.

7.4 Our Objectives For Economy

1. Retain the existing economic heart of the neighbourhood.
2. Encourage renewal and diversification to support new small and local enterprises that can define the culture of George Street.
3. Foster a culture of entrepreneurialism and experimentation – providing flexible spaces, space to fail and a means to support experimentation and trial.
4. Help the neighbourhood to respond to new residential, student & other demands – finding new locations to grow.
5. Establish a distinctive role in the city’s cultural offer – create a home of sorts for a burgeoning scene for arts, craft and independents.
6. Play a key role in evolving the city’s retail offer and reshaping its core.



Figure 24 - Ingredients for a sustained and diversified economy



Concept diagram exploring the future role of George Street’s economic assets and how surrounding significant economic drivers can contribute to George Street’s future.

Figure 25 - Economy Concept Diagram

8. The Mini Masterplan

8.1 Masterplan Strategy

The masterplan sets the long term regeneration for George Street over the duration of the wider City Centre & Beach Masterplan.

George Street is a complex existing urban environment and the scope of physical change must be carefully managed and delivered alongside the existing requirements of local businesses and residents. It must, however, also create a clear step-change in the quality and function of the environment and look to support longer term redevelopment opportunities when they become available.

The Masterplan will be used as a tool to co-ordinate and prioritise key projects and areas of focus for the neighbourhood. The Council has a clear ambition for the area and it will seek to both deliver and support projects alongside existing stakeholders and those seeking to take forward future development.

The Masterplan identifies where physical change should occur to support the mini-masterplan's vision and objectives. Supporting the Masterplan are a number of projects, ranging from the short term to longer term which will secure the vision and objectives.

Delivery of the Masterplan will require a co-ordinated and a collaborative approach across public and private sector organisations.

The following plans and illustrations set out within this section illustrate what is proposed by the Mini Masterplan strategy for George Street.

The place plan on the following page sets out areas of change and focus. These are explained in more detail below. The following pages explain in greater detail the public realm and movement aspirations for the Mini-Masterplan.

1. Streets & Spaces

- Connections to existing green spaces such as Cruyff Court and Union Terrace Gardens will be enhanced for active travel creating better access to the City's existing greenspaces;
- George Street will become an active travel friendly neighbourhood, promoting safer and more equitable sustainable journeys within, focused along George Street, John Street and St. Andrews Street;
- Potential to create new and improved pedestrian links across key anchor destinations as well as part of potential future redevelopment to the south of George Street;
- Opportunity to create a new public, flexible space for the neighbourhood. The scale of the space is dependent upon future proposals for Norco House. There is potential for a space to be delivered as part of a more holistic redevelopment to the site. If future proposals for Norco House require it to occupy the same development footprint (of Norco House and the later John Lewis extension), there is still potential to create an improved environment along Loch Street and

- Berry Street, reducing the size and width of highway infrastructure to make way for public space which can accommodate green infrastructure and outdoor uses; and
- Creating improved arrival gateways into the neighbourhood, either through public realm enhancements (signage, improved crossings, carriageway amends etc) or through a combination of public realm upgrades and well designed, new built form creating a positive presence onto the street.

2. Built Form

- The Masterplan will support a landmark building for George Street. This could be achieved through the re-purposing and revitalisation of Norco House, bringing it back in to active use, creating a distinctive landmark feature due to its architectural form and future use. Alternatively, a new landmark building could be created as part of comprehensive redevelopment. A landmark building should be sensitively designed, of high quality and which positively activates the surrounding streets. It could explore expressions of height so long as its form and orientation respect the adjacent historic character of George Street and proposals are in alignment with the Council's Big Buildings Guidance;

- Local landmark buildings will focus on activating the ground floor and better dressing building fronts / boundaries to create a positive relationship with the street;
- Improvements to the existing shop frontages of George Street. A balance needs to be achieved between retaining the individual character & identity of the various businesses but also applying guidance and ordering principles to help manage the degree of visual clutter and disjointed appearance of the street. This will also involve clearing other redundant clutter such as satellite dishes and unnecessary street signage;
- Improvements to the north elevation of the Bon Accord Centre and multi storey car park (MSCP) elevations. This could include increasing the aperture of the pedestrian entrances to the north to create better visual permeability into the building. For the MSCP elevations it could include introducing animation to the blank façades, including green walls / projection space / artistic installations and / or ground floor retail offer along Loch Street;
- The Masterplan will support longer term, market led interventions focused around Loch Street (adjacent to the NESCOL) and the Spring Garden Charlotte Street area. There is potential to improve the quality of the built

form and public realm environment around the college. This could involve short term improvements to existing buildings, or longer term redevelopment should opportunities become available; and

- There is also the opportunity to introduce a better balance between car parking and available green / multi-functional space within the NESCOL site, offering more space to students, visitors and enhance the environment along Loch Street.

3. Land Uses

- Potential to redevelop land to the southern end of George Street. The Council has no direct land ownership in this area however the Masterplan supports an aspiration to see the area re-activated through mixed use and residential redevelopment of vacant buildings or underutilised parcels of land;
- Future residential development to the south of George Street has the potential to diversify and uplift the type of accommodation on offer within the wider city centre, attracting young professionals and young families into high quality residential accommodation. This will encourage more local spending to be captured within the area, benefiting local businesses.

- Improvements will better link future development to new and existing open spaces and all that the city has to offer and drawing in the ongoing regeneration around Marschial College;
- George Street corridor remains as a mixed use led environment supporting some residential development. It should also extend to the east towards NESCOL and south west towards Robert Gordon's College, helping to integrate and support these existing educational institutions; and
- Both educational institutions have the opportunity to establish stronger physical and programme connections with the George Street area. NESCOL currently hosts a number of evening classes which attract people to the area in the evenings and improvements to the pedestrian experience will help the College to continue to host and grow this offer. The Masterplan will also support opportunities for both educational facilities to diversify the use of their campus through weekends, summer and evenings recognising that there is potential to attract a significant number of people to the area more of the time, and helping to diversify and support the local economy.

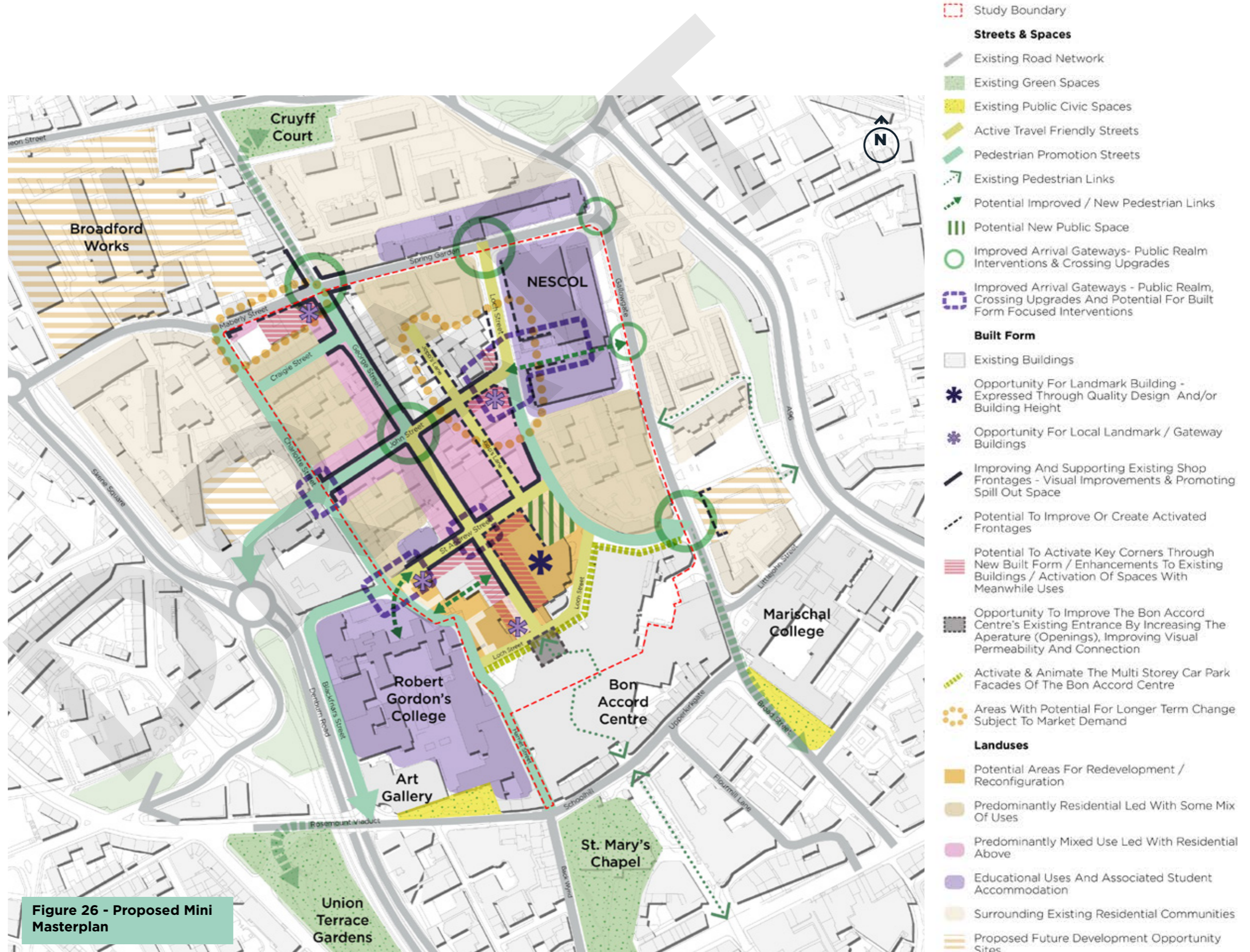


Figure 26 - Proposed Mini Masterplan

8.2 Public Realm Strategy

The consistency and quality of the public realm across the Mini Masterplan area, and those areas immediately surrounding it, are vital to the ongoing vitality of the neighbourhood. There is an opportunity to celebrate the unique quirks of the area through a distinctive, George Street specific, visual identity but to also ensure that it is joined up and connected with the surrounding parts of the city.

The public realm strategy for the Mini Masterplan area focuses on the following elements:

- 1. Greener Streets** - the role of Green Infrastructure as part of the street
- 2. Legibility** - how improved wayfinding and signage can help journeys into and around the area
- 3. Materiality** - ideas as to how a materials language which works with the wider city but also reinforces George Street
- 4. Illuminating** - how lighting can help define and prioritise routes; and

Greener Streets

Greener Streets will increase the level of green infrastructure through various interventions. However, George Street is a historic environment, with many historic

streets sections, which means that there may be limitations in some places to fully implement all of the proposed greening interventions. The suitability of these will be determined though more detailed design testing through a combination of new build and retrofit.

There are opportunities to re-configure, improve and redefine the existing street network across George Street. This would create more opportunities to introduce the following features, helping improve environmental sustainability as well as enrich experiences for those who travel along them;

- Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs);
- Tree planting;
- Mini habitats;
- Street greening features such as shrub planting, wild-flowers, edibles and sensory planting; and
- Vertical green walls and features.

All streets within the Mini Masterplan should look to introduce more green infrastructure elements, a combination of short term, modest interventions to more interventionist approaches which could include carriageway re-configuration.

Establishing a strong network of 'Green Streets' will also help to connect to wider existing and planned open space assets including Union Terrace Gardens, St Nicolas Gardens and the wider City Centre streetscape projects. Public Realm Street Function.

The future public realm function of the Mini Masterplan streets is set out below. Interventions are identified but subject to more detailed design testing.

Green Vehicular Street:

Vehicular streets with interventions to improve the pedestrian and cyclist experience, and to perform a greater range of environmental functions.

Expect to see:

- Widened pavements, improved pedestrian crossings e.g natural stone setts, cycle opportunities, bioretention verges and/or rain gardens with pollinator friendly perennial planting, semi-mature tree planting of pollution-tolerant species.

Tree-lined Avenue:

Leafy green avenue with trees (single or both sides) to help perform a number of place-making, social, and environmental functions.

Expect to see:

- A mixture of semi-mature tree planting with below ground

soil cells and/ or standard trees in large planters, cycle opportunities, accessible rain gardens with sensory pollinator planting, planted green verges adjacent to roads, cycle racks, a mixture of lighting columns and wall-mounted lights, new natural stone paving.

Spaces within the public realm.

Public realm interventions are more bespoke and distinctive to George Street in these locations to encourage visitors to dwell.

Expect to see:

- Large semi-mature specimen trees, new natural stone bespoke feature paving, sensory perennial planting, bespoke lighting columns, new playful and bespoke street furniture including cycle parking, lighting and seating.

Incubator Street:

Streets with lower cost, moderate interventions which may initially begin as temporary installations. Examples include: parklets, multi-purpose moveable planters and street furniture, and/or playful artworks and road markings.

Expect to see:

- Moveable planters, cycle opportunities, mixture of evergreen climbing plants, colourful perennial planting,

parklets, new murals and artworks created in conjunction with the local community. Painted road markings in collaboration with local artist(s) and/or local community.

Play + Grow Street:

Streets with a mixture of permanent and ephemeral interventions to encourage playfulness in the public realm. Interventions might be linked to ongoing exhibitions or events within new cultural building(s).

Permanent interventions include: accessible rain gardens and/or the movement of water to encourage incidental play. Ephemeral, short term interventions include interactive outdoor exhibitions and/ or public art.

Residential streets with new growing beds and/or planters. These could also function as a traffic calming method, for bin screening, and to help formalise on street parking. Grow Streets might be linked to future site wide well-being and community initiatives.

Expect to see:

- Timber raised growing beds, timber planters for trees, cycle storage / parking, EV charge points, standard fruiting trees, hardwood play equipment and residential grow spaces.



Repeated tree planting to help with street sequencing and to draw eye upwards.
Image: Newcastle-upon-Tyne University.



Community growing spaces within the public realm to strengthen community ties and foster a connection to nature.
Image: Edible York



Moderate greening interventions could include moveable planters and vertical screening
Image: Brussels

- Study Boundary
- Existing squares
- Green Vehicular Street
- Tree Lined Avenue
- Key Space Within Public Realm
- Incubator Streets
- Play + Grow Streets
- Opportunities for facade greening / vertical planting walls / art installations to create an attractive new facade to the Bon Accord Centre
- Rationalised street carriageway to include removal of mini roundabout creating more space for key spaces
- Opportunities to introduce public realm and landscape features within private land to create stronger pedestrian and place connections into George Street
- Potential future expansion towards existing public parks and squares
- Retained existing tree
- New clear stem street tree (Illustrative number of trees shown)
- New mature tree (Illustrative number of trees shown)
- New fruiting tree (Illustrative number of trees shown)

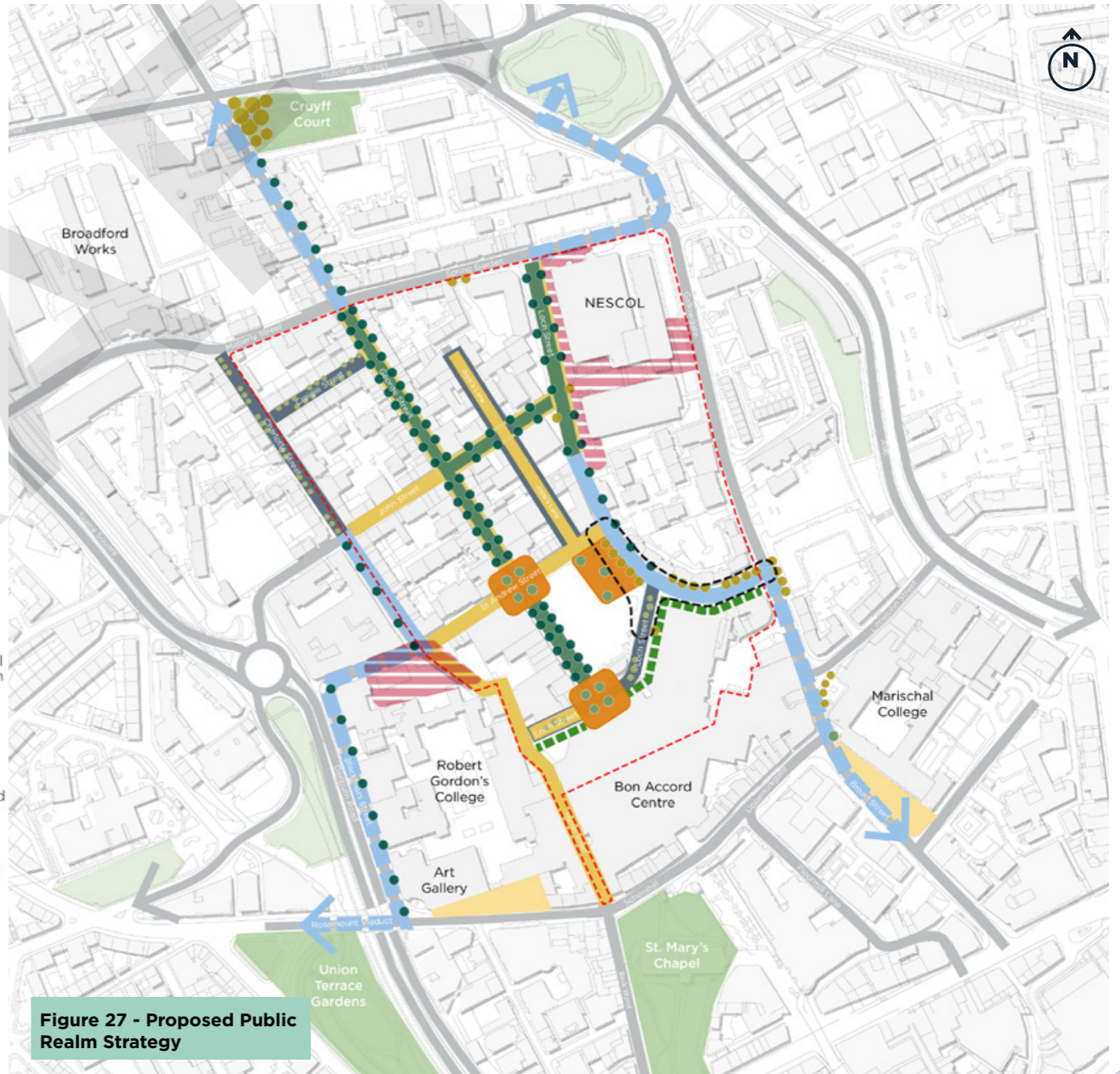


Figure 27 - Proposed Public Realm Strategy

8.3 Public Realm Influence

Some streets within the Mini Masterplan will still be required to provide a function that allows buses and other vehicles to travel along them more frequently. This means that there must be a balance between street function and aesthetic, accepting that there may be limitations to the degree of public realm interventions in some locations in order to preserve function e.g. maintaining a minimum carriageway limiting scope for footway widening / tree planting or minimum corner radii for bus turning meaning possible restrictions to materials.

The balance of form and aesthetic will be evaluated through more detailed design studies as projects develop.

Nevertheless, all streets should seek to ascertain an improved public realm aesthetic alongside their function and look to secure as much improvement to the public realm as possible. Some public realm features, although more modest, can still deliver impact and an improvement on current condition.

Strong Public Realm Influence:

A strong public realm influence reflects and reinforces George Street's unique local character. The look and feel of these streets will reinforce its sense of place and accommodate features unique to the neighbourhood. Hard and soft materials within these areas will be bespoke and eye-catching. Crossing points and gateway spaces will incorporate visual cues that the visitor is arriving to George Street. These might include the use of colour, artworks, and/or bespoke

lighting within key spaces. Public realm interventions here should look to take priority over vehicle function.

Moderate Public Realm Influence:

These streets also reinforce the George Street neighbourhood's local character with the use of materials featured within the local Urban Realm Design Guide. Design elements such as planting, lighting, and paving subtly communicate the local character of George Street whilst also reflecting the visual patterns of the wider area. The consideration of public realm appearance may have to consider some vehicular functions along these streets.

Modest Public Realm Influence:

The public realm identity is more modest in these spaces, which tend to be residential streets or areas adjacent to the Mini Masterplan boundary. Design elements are in keeping with the Urban Realm Design Guide. These streets need to fulfil important, wider vehicle movement functions and as such public realm influence must be balanced with technical design requirements, established through more detailed testing.

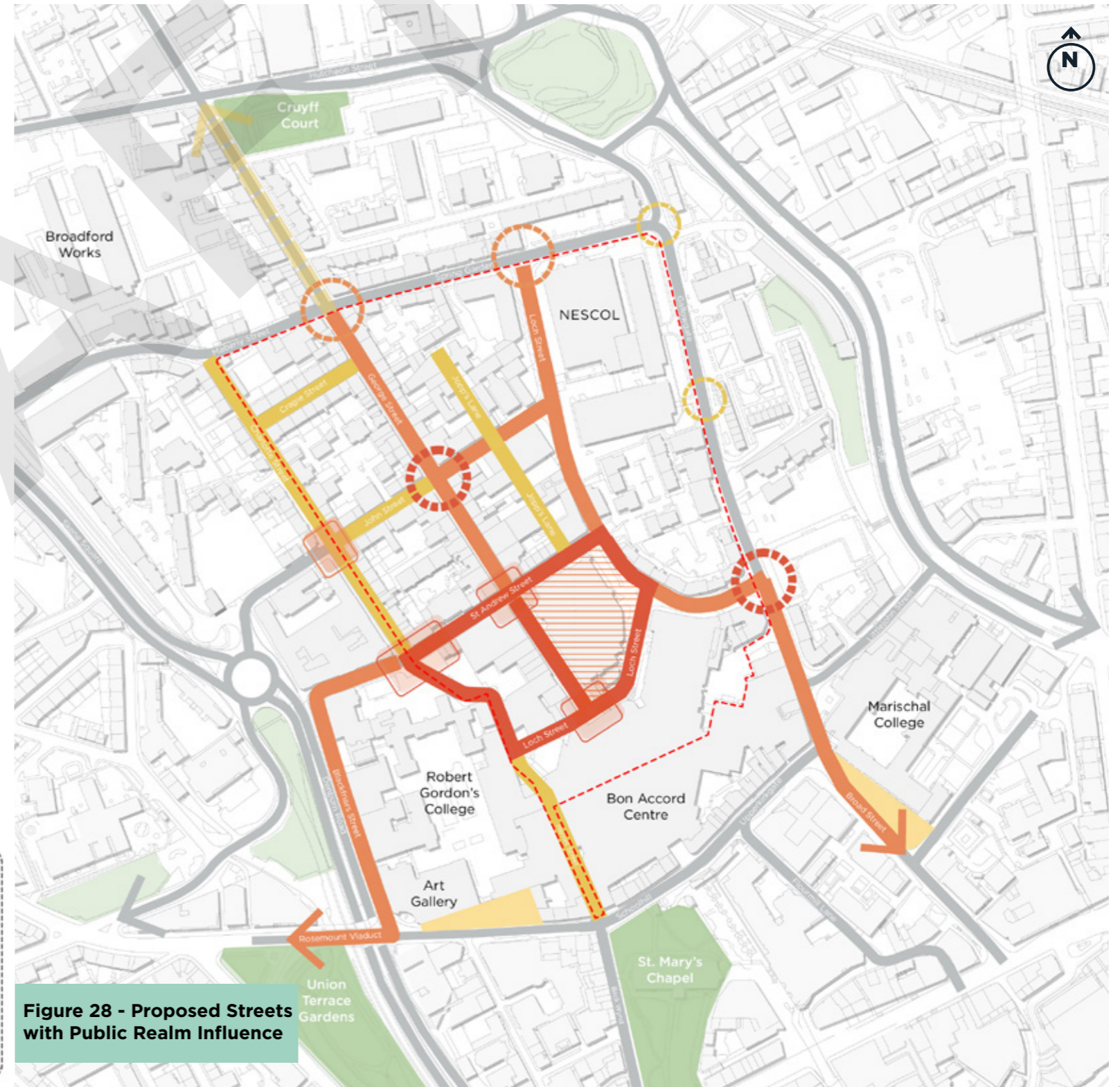


Figure 28 - Proposed Streets with Public Realm Influence

Materials

The approach to materials for George Street should build upon the principles of the Urban Realm Guide, establishing a co-ordinated palette of materials and textures consistent with those across the City Centre. Opportunities to introduce additional materials and details to support George Street's character could then be added as additional layers. The adjacent table sets out opportunities to develop this.

BESPOKE



CONSISTENT



Colourful artwork and supergraphics painted onto asphalt.
Image: Superfreshdesign by Andra on Bujdoss, Williamsburg. Image rights TBC.



Coastal plants to reference George Street's geographical location and enhance the urban-coastal setting.
Image: Pink Sea Thrift (*Armeria maritima*). Copyright P. Shannon.



Bespoke lighting projections to communicate the story of George Street.
Image: Vitre heritage lighting by Urbis. Image rights TBC.



Playful painted markings to distinguish active travel routes and encourage playfulness in the public realm.
Image: Station Road, Harrow by Europa. Copyright Mark Smith.



Bespoke setts and/or public art might be integrated into granite paving within key spaces.
Image: Regent Street by Hardscape.



Flowering / fruiting trees or trees with distinct visual interest to distinguish key spaces and promote urban biodiversity.
Image: *Prunus subhirtella Autumnalis*. Copyright Deepdale.



Wall-mounted lighting to be integrated in certain areas to help minimise street clutter.
Image: Legend Wall-mounted Street Lights, Thorn Lighting.



Edge detail within pedestrian friendly spaces formed with three rows of granite setts laid in a stretcher bond to complement citywide public realm improvements.
Image: Urban Realm Design Guide.



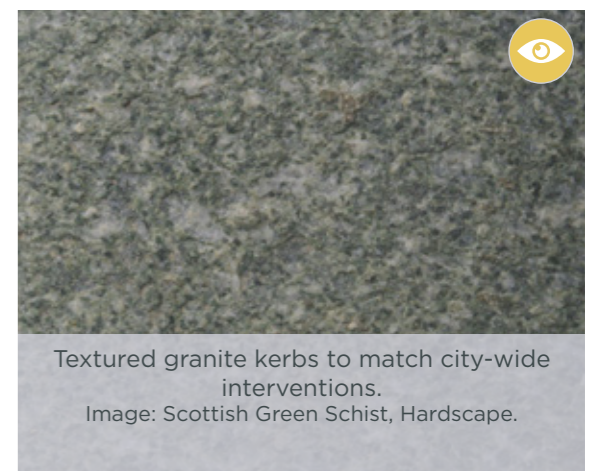
Contemporary granite slabs and setts of various sizes as a high-quality urban realm surface material.
Image: Granite, Urban Realm Design Guide.



Pollution tolerant trees with an upright habit as street trees.
Image: *Tilia cordata* green spire, Urban Realm Design Guide.



Modern matt black street lighting with reference to old Aberdeen street lanterns.
Image: Legend Street Light, Thorn Lighting.



Textured granite kerbs to match city-wide interventions.
Image: Scottish Green Schist, Hardscape.

Spotted: In select areas within George Street. Playful and bespoke interventions which respond to the unique local character of George Street.

Spotted: At repeated intervals within key spaces of the George Street area. Elements informed by both Urban Realm Design Guide and the unique character of George Street.

Spotted: Across the entire George Street area to ensure consistency throughout the public realm. Elements informed by Urban Realm Design Guide.

8.4 Illumination

Lighting will be used across the public realm to improve pedestrian, cyclist, resident, student and visitor safety as well as improving both the approach experience to George Street. The illumination strategy focuses on improving lighting for both safety and wayfinding in the following ways;

- Lighting is responsive to Urban Realm Design Guide with pedestrian, vehicular, and wall mounted lights in a cohesive matte-black;
- Where possible, wall-mounted lights have been integrated into the public realm as a way to both add character and reduce street clutter;
- In key arrival and public realm spaces there will be bespoke artistic lighting interventions which respond to, and enhance, George Street's unique identity and help to celebrate an enhanced sense of arrival to the neighbourhood; and
- Lighting should be used to highlight important gateway locations, subtly signalling to pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles that they are arriving to the George Street area. Lighting can also illuminate buildings of interest across the Mini Masterplan.

- ▭ Study Boundary
- Vehicular column lighting
- Pedestrian column lighting
- Wall-mounted lighting
- Mixture of column lighting at key intervals and wall-mounted lights to avoid street clutter
- ▭ Bespoke lighting columns in key spaces of public realm
- ▭ Bespoke artistic lighting interventions at arrival spaces
- ⊙ Lighting to highlight key gateway to George Street
- * Bespoke lighting to highlight key façades and buildings e.g. up-lighters and projections

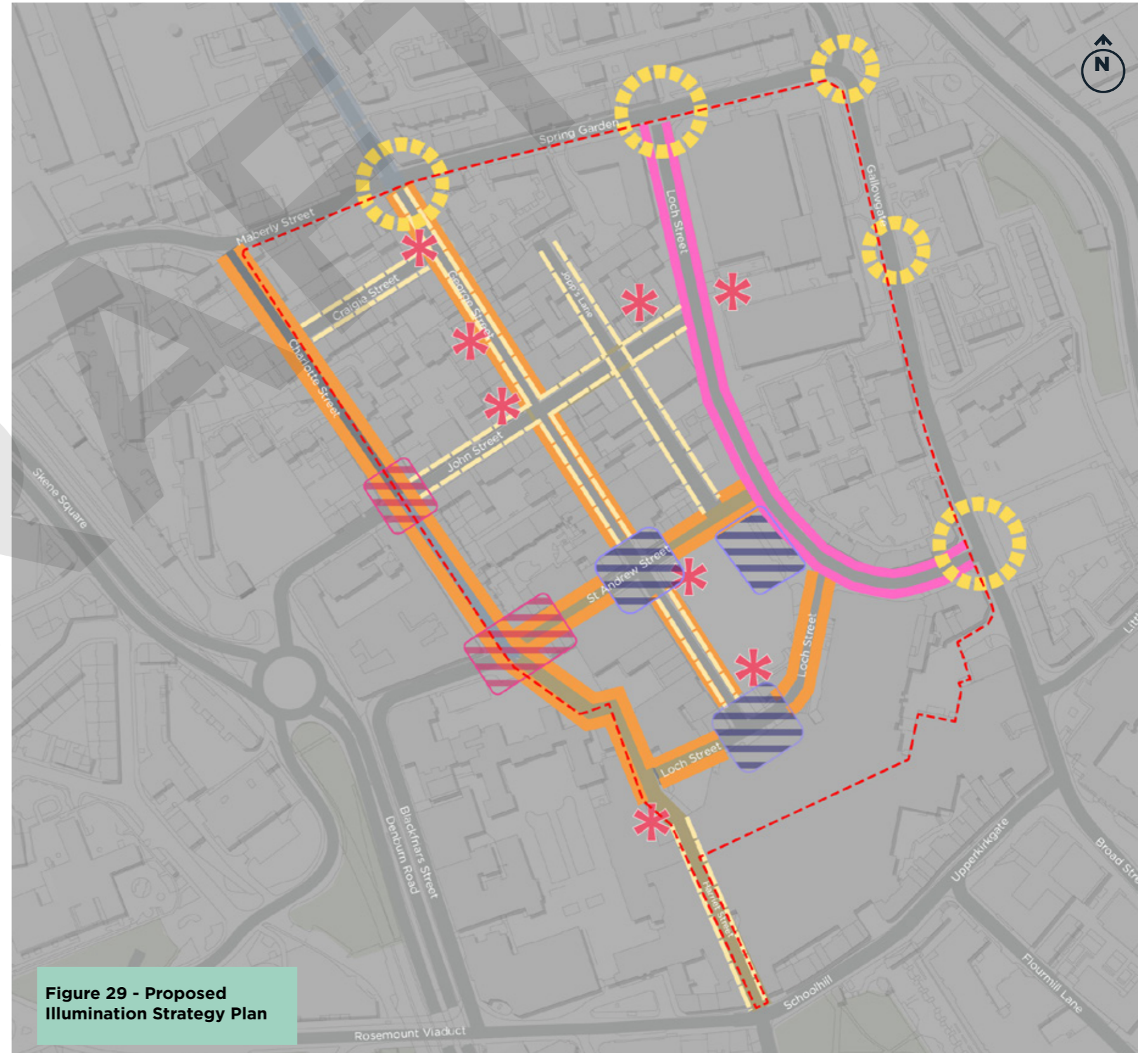
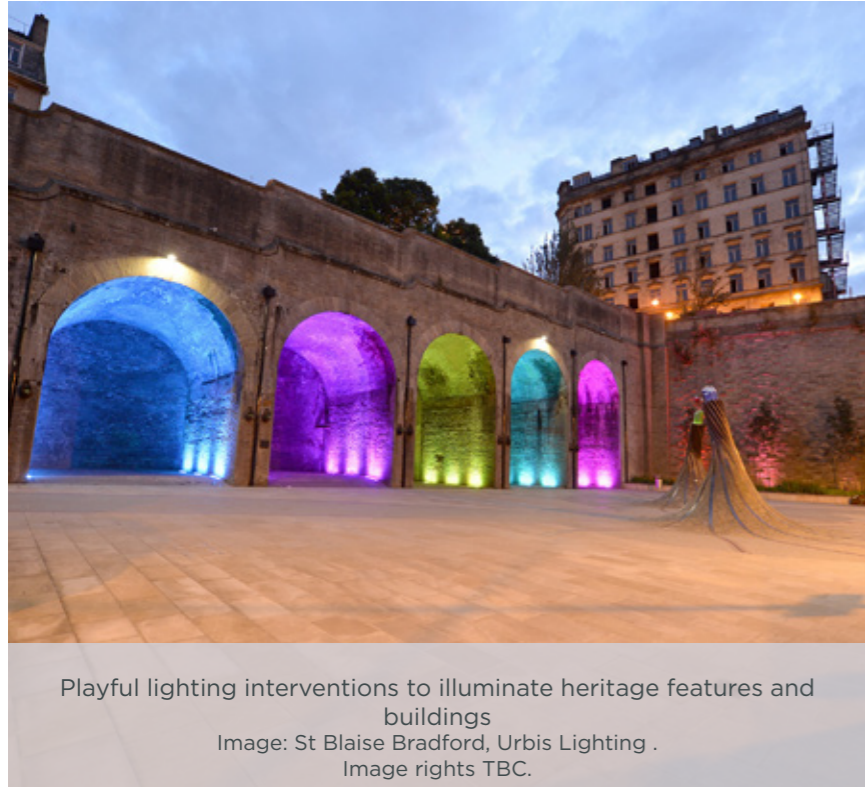


Figure 29 - Proposed Illumination Strategy Plan



Playful lighting interventions to illuminate heritage features and buildings
 Image: St Blaise Bradford, Urbis Lighting .
 Image rights TBC.



Lighting as public art to distinguish key spaces
 Image: Phoenix Flowers, Garscube Landscape Link by Pudsey Diamond in collaboration with Land Engineering and 7N Partnership
 Copyright: Pudsey Diamond.



Uplighters to highlight key heritage features.



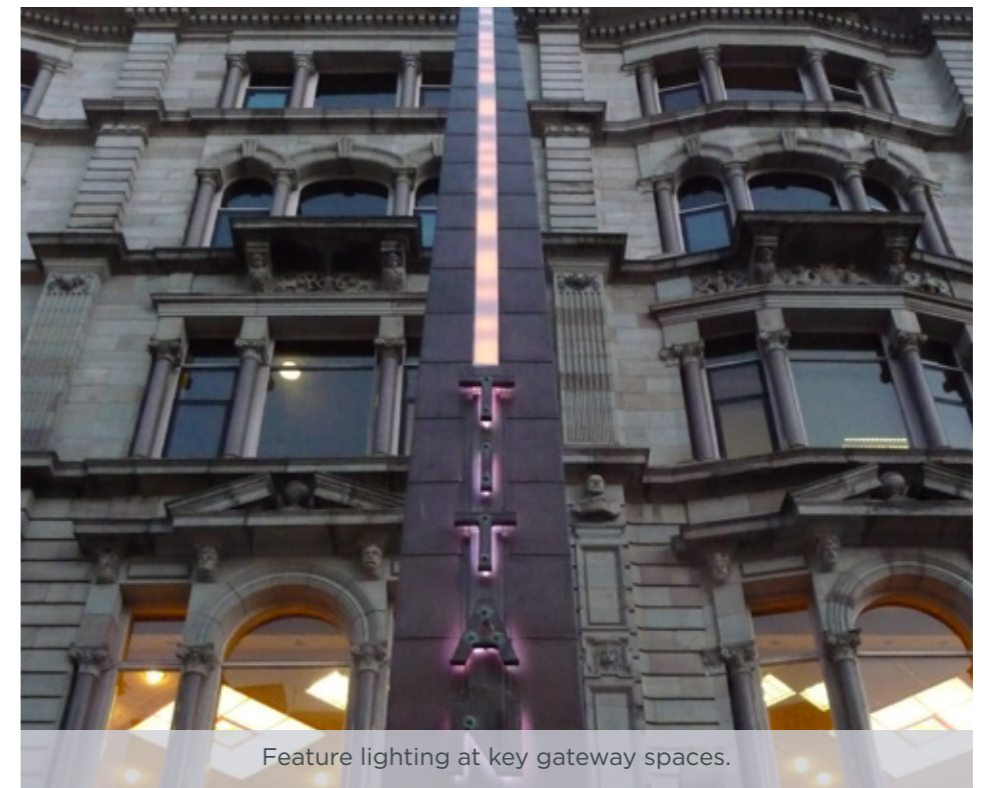
Artistic projections to communicate the narrative of a place
 Image: Giraffe Playground, Uppsala, Philips Lighting. Image rights TBC.



Wall-mounted lighting to reduce street clutter
 Image: Legend Light by Thorn Lighting.



Wall-mounted lighting to reduce street clutter
 Image: Altrincham, Greater Manchester



Feature lighting at key gateway spaces.

8.5 Shop Fronts & Clutter

George Street is home to many independent, successful and varied local businesses as well as regional and national retailers, each with their own graphic identity and approach to shop frontage promotion. As a result, the quality of the overall townscape of George Street can become cluttered and visually disjointed.

There are advantages to creating a more considered and co-ordinated approach to shop frontage appearance. Achieving more consistency with a broad set of guides can help to still promote local businesses and retailers whilst also ensuring that the architectural and visual aesthetic of George Street is able to be seen.

The images to the right illustrate some of the issues and how they could be overcome.

Opportunities to co-ordinate the design and aesthetic of shop frontages should be explored, in accordance with the Council's Shop Frontage Design Guidance.



Figure 30 - Inconsistencies in George Street's shop frontage



Figure 31 - Indicative approaches to creating a more coherent townscape and retail environment

8.6 Pedestrian Movement

All streets across the neighbourhood should promote pedestrian and sustainable movement to the top of the movement hierarchy. George Street will have a series of pedestrian and active travel focused streets that enable this and support a vibrant neighbourhood.

Local access vehicles will still be permitted to move around the neighbourhood, but vehicles travelling to other destinations will be relocated around the periphery of the Mini Masterplan area, in line with the existing road hierarchy.

The Mini Masterplan establishes three types of street environment across the neighbourhood, with streets varying depending upon their location and the uses they serve.

1. Active Travel Friendly Streets

Streets that are adapted and re-configured to support the highest levels of pedestrian, cycling and wheeling movement across the neighbourhood. These streets will prioritise safe and comfortable active travel movements, helping to encourage activity and vibrancy, creating spill out uses from the ground floor, space for temporary pop-ups, market stalls, outdoor exhibition space as well as dwell time and relaxation space within George Street. These streets will aim to reduce conflict with cars, contribute to improved local air quality and promote a safer environment for socialising, exercise and play.

2. Pedestrian Promotion Streets

A network of streets adapted to provide greater pedestrian footpath space, more managed street car parking, improved pedestrian crossing points and reduced carriageway widths.

3. Pedestrian Friendly Streets

Streets with improved pedestrian foot ways and environments that provide comfortable and accessible links to surrounding parts of the City. These streets will also include improved pedestrian crossings at key gateway locations into George Street to help improve pedestrian legibility and comfort into the area.



Relatively simple measures as a starting point can help to promote pedestrian movements to the top of the movement hierarchy



Figure 32 - Proposed Pedestrian Street Types Plan

8.7 Cycle Accessibility

The cycle strategy for George Street aims to increase cycle accessibility to the heart of the neighbourhood by creating safer and accessible cycle routes.

The Mini Masterplan will promote cyclist provision that is on the vehicle carriageway, as part of the aspiration to create low speed, lower traffic neighbourhood streets.

A cycle route is proposed that is complimentary to the existing National Cycle Network (NCN) Route which travels along Gallowgate and Schoolhill / Upperkirkgate. This proposed route will help to make the environment more cycle friendly, both for travelling to and through the area, while also complementing existing cycling facilities (e.g. access to cycle parking at Bon Accord Centre).

The proposed route will travel from Gallowgate along Spring Garden, onto Loch Street, along John Street to George Street, west along St Andrew Street before heading along Blackfriars Street and connecting back to the NCN route along Schoolhill.

The current NCN route provides more efficient and direct access to the City Centre and this will continue to function as such.

The proposed route through George Street is intended as a leisurely route and the design and routing will reflect this function. The routing also responds to the proposed bus routing through the area to ensure that both modes do not run along the same street (as far as practical) to avoid modal conflicts.

The Masterplan seeks to restrict vehicle through movements in and around George Street, by lowering vehicle trips (allowing only for local access) and as a result creating more space for active travel opportunities.

The cycle route will encourage users of all ages and abilities to use cycling as a means of getting to and from George Street and part of the wider cycle provision offer across the City.

The route design and alignment will be dependent upon more detailed traffic analysis and volumes. It will also be designed in line with Cycling by Design 2021 (or subsequent) guidance. There will also likely be a requirement to improve cycle connections at key junctions and where the route connects with the NCN route to support active travel across the area.



Cycle accessibility through George Street along with other active modes of travel



- - - Study Boundary
- Existing Road Network
- National Cycle Network Route
- National Cycle Network Link Route
- Cyclist Infrastructure

Figure 33 - Proposed Cycle Accessibility Plan

8.8 Bus Accessibility

The approach to bus servicing across George Street is to continue to maintain high levels of overall bus penetration by public transport into the George Street neighbourhood.

With lower numbers of overall car journeys through the area, bus services will have less competition for carriageway space meaning that there are more opportunities for more comfortable journeys by bus in and around George Street. Potential opportunities include the introduction of targeted public transport improvements (e.g. local bus priority measures, better boarding/alighting facilities etc.).

The bus accessibility strategy looks to work with the existing bus routes as far as possible. The only

alteration to existing routing would be along the section of George Street between John Street and St. Andrews Lane. Removal of buses from this short section will allow for more active travel and spill out space. This area is well served by existing bus stops along George Street and St. Andrews Street. This also reduces the potential conflict for cycle accessibility along George Street.

Any future amends to existing bus routing would be in agreement with existing bus operators across the local network. The design requirements for streets providing bus services will need to be carefully considered, for example the design approach to narrower streets / tighter corner radii and the potential for vehicle over-run onto footways. This will be further explored through more detailed design testing.

Maintaining and improving public transport accessibility and facilities in the area is key in order to provide a realistic and equitable alternative to private car use and to promote sustainable travel choices for the future. The Mini Masterplan proposals for bus accessibility would support the City's wider sustainable transport ambitions, including Aberdeen Rapid Transit (ART) and wider Bus Priority Fund Studies currently ongoing.



Investment in bus journey infrastructure as well as a sustainable bus route can help increase patronage



- Study Boundary
- Existing Road Network
- Bus Routes
- Bus Stops
- 100m Coverage From Bus Stops

Figure 34 - Proposed Bus Accessibility Plan

8.9 Car Movements

The main principle for managing car access within George Street is towards prioritising accessibility to those who need to enter or exit the area (e.g local residents, patrons to local businesses). This principle is complementary to the Council's Roads Hierarchy where traffic is focused on appropriate roads. The proposed street network within George Street will ensure that primary streets facilitate movements around the area and that the secondary and local access streets provide access **to but not through** the neighbourhood.

Providing local access for vehicles can lead to an improvement in local air quality, reduced vehicular conflict for public transport and active modes of travel, creating more space within the street which can be dedicated to enhanced public realm and better facilities for public transport, pedestrians, cyclists and spill out space for local businesses.

The proposed vehicle movement network across George Street comprises of:

1. Two Way Primary Streets

Streets that allow for vehicle movements in both directions. They are located to the edges of the neighbourhood and provide easy access to the surrounding Strategic Routes.

2. One Way Secondary Streets

Streets converted to one way car movements. These provide access along sections of George Street and along St. Johns Street. Vehicles are directed back onto Primary Streets. Their one way movements prevent 'rat-running' through the area and allow for a lower car environment around the George Street, John Street, St. Andrew's core of the neighbourhood.

3. Local Access Streets

Streets open to vehicle access and which allow local users and patrons access to the neighbourhood. These streets will be enhanced to promote greater pedestrian and active travel movements and designed in a manner which manages traffic speeds.

4. Car Park Access Only

Berry Street must remain accessible to vehicles to allow access to the Bon Accord Centre multi storey car park (MSCP). It will provide access from Gallowgate and Loch Street and egress from the MSCP onto Berry Street.

Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETROs) could be used to begin to test the suggested re-ordering of vehicle movements. The northern section of Charlotte Street could be piloted to reduce through traffic in what is a predominantly residential part of

the neighbourhood, opening up opportunities to make use of the street for other uses (e.g play / urban grow spaces). Another area to apply an ETRO could be along Berry Street by maintaining access to the car park via Berry St while restricting through traffic. There will be a requirement to understand the extent to provide right turn egress from the Bon Accord Centre MSCP across an existing central reserve as well as the rationalisation of the junction at Gallowgate.



Streets with local access supporting the neighbourhood but managing car movements and access

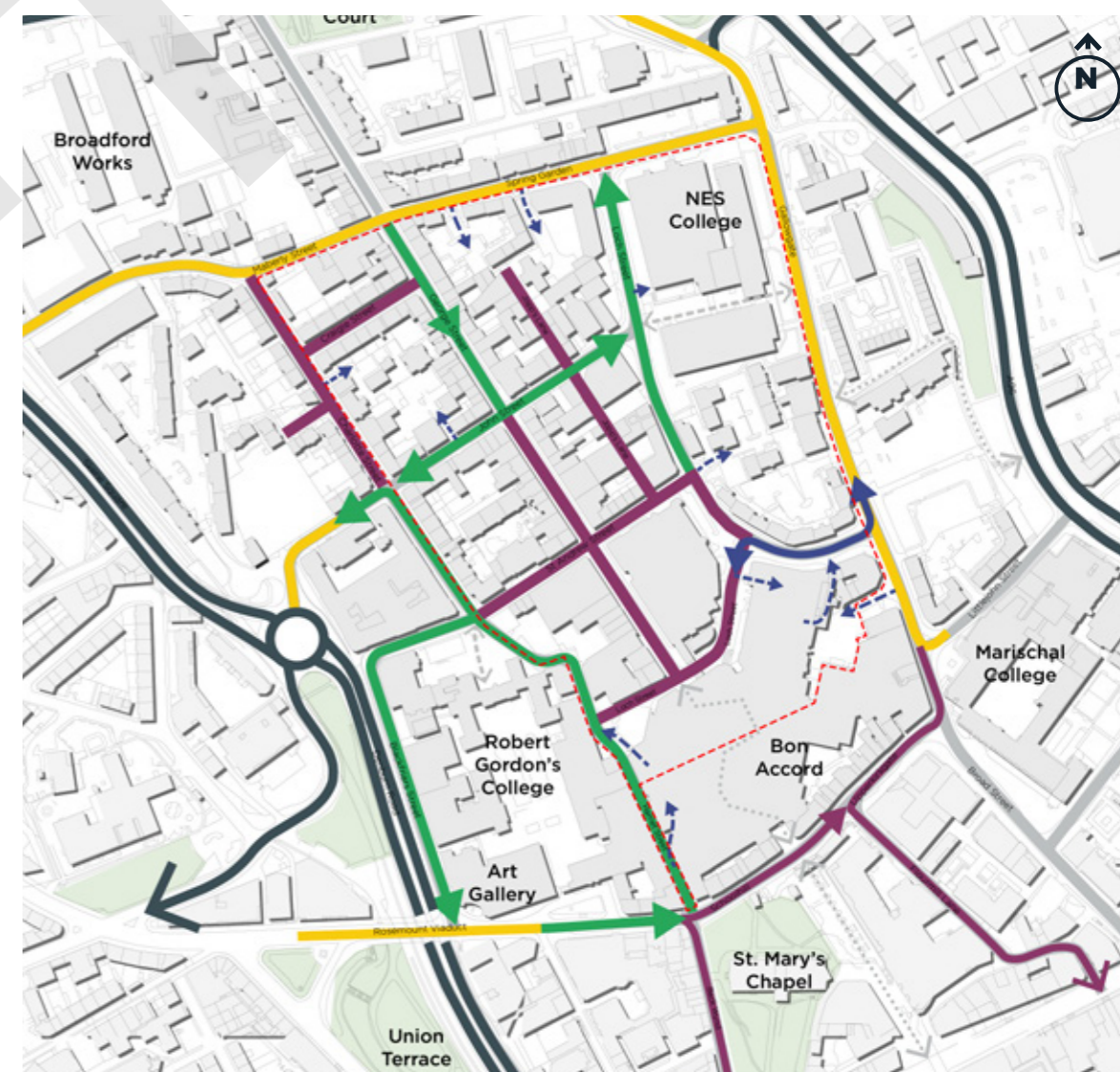


Figure 35 - Proposed Car Movement Plan

9. Future Projects Action Plan



Community Led Projects

9.1 Future Projects

The Mini Masterplan has set out a vision and objectives to deliver change across George Street. It aims to promote and deliver change from the outset, through short term or meanwhile interventions, whilst longer term opportunities are being developed in greater detail.

The following pages provide a number of actions, described in summary, which seek to support the established Vision and Objectives for George Street. Each intervention is delivered through projects (both physical and non physical) which will have positive impact on improving the vitality of George Street. A more detailed breakdown of emerging projects can be found in Appendix 3.

The Council have the ability to both stimulate change and deliver change in areas across George Street; however the interventions highlighted will require collaboration, mobilisation and coordination across community, private and a variety of other stakeholders in order to determine and deliver change.

The potential projects list will continue to be co-developed by local stakeholders, community members and Council officers. It is intended to be a 'live' resource which can be updated and reviewed as opportunities emerge, so long as they support the vision and objectives of the Mini Masterplan.

2. INTERVENTIONS
3. Potential PROJECTS are suggested here

1. OBJECTIVE

The circles show in order of significance:

1. The objective we are trying to achieve
2. The intervention that could help achieve the objective
3. The various projects that sit within each intervention.





Local Business Projects





Aberdeen City Council Projects

Safe and comfortable experience

- Attractive visual screening across poor quality environments
- Coordinated palettes for street furniture, shop fronts and planting
- Improvements to street furniture, lighting and inclusion of temporary planters
- Increased CCTV
- Visitor and residential information points - these could be pop up kiosks / interactive stands / live cycle counters / air quality readings etc

Enhancing the pedestrian experience

Tackling the voids

- Encourage meanwhile uses such as pop ups, street closures, parklets etc to improve activity
- Establishing a strategy to coordinate later opening times / weekends etc across various uses.
- Encourage future uses that support vision and identity of George Street

Tackling inactivity & vacant space

Prioritising sustainable travel

- Reconfiguring current bus routes as well as provision of enhanced bus stops with interactive boards / wifi / charging points to encourage greater use and improved passenger experience
- Ensuring there is adequate space for cyclists along key routes with cycle parking through the area would encourage more cyclists to use the area safely

Reducing vehicle dominance

Improved street appearance for people

- Develop a palette of materials and street furniture to help celebrate George Street character (to be developed alongside public realm detail design stages)
- Refurbish and restore existing street bins, bollards, cycle stands
- Introduce bin storage or shelters where bins are required to be stored on street

Appearance and character

Smart high streets and necessities

- Celebrate heritage and the ornate architectural diversity through commercial events, walking tours, online/apps and feature lighting.
- Consider provision of basic services, public toilets, 'changing spaces' toilets, and disabled access points

George Street as a destination

Art and colour

- Introduce a sculpture trail across the area -
- Street & pedestrian crossing colouring
- Shop front creative interventions

Appearance and character

Making primary routes work harder

- Introducing Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders
- Better provision and / or quality of cycle parking in convenient locations
- Greater flexibility of on street parking spaces, creating parklets which reclaim parking bays for dwelling, playing and socialising
- Encourage carriageway narrowing, footpath widening and spill out spaces

Reducing vehicle dominance

9.2 Deliverability & Implementation

Going forward, stakeholders, the private sector, the Council and the community will be crucial to the delivery of the interventions emerging from this Mini Masterplan.

It is recommended that dedicated working groups are set up to drive specific short term priority actions forward. The action focused working groups will be responsible for:

- Defining the details of the proposed action;
- Considering how it could be funded;
- Determining who needs to be involved in supporting its delivery and what their role will be;
- Seeking funding - this might require support from other partners;
- Determining the timetable for intervention;
- Monitoring and evaluating progress against key performance indicators and refining actions if agreed outcomes are not being met; and
- Reporting progress to relevant bodies.

The makeup of the working groups will vary depending on the specific actions they are focused on. It is important to ensure that the same people are not tasked with getting involved in all the working groups as this will impact on progress. As such, the number of working groups and pace of delivery will depend on the number of stakeholder partners that can be engaged with and encouraged to get involved.

9.3 Sustainability Assessment

Sustainability is a broad and all encompassing concept. One approach to understanding its application and relevance to an existing urban neighbourhood like George Street can broadly consist of the following five capitals (established by Forum for the Future), which include:

- **Manufactured Capital** - provision of goods and services to meet human needs;
- **Natural Capital** - use of renewable materials / energy, ecological diversity, environmental capacity;
- **Financial Capital** - generating income and financially sustainable;
- **Social Capital** - community diversity, community governance and inclusivity and engagement; and
- **Human Capital** - improved quality of life, well-being, knowledge and skills as well as protecting minority interests.

The social, economic and environmental sustainability of George Street is paramount to the Mini Masterplan and the series potential projects identified across the following pages will help to deliver it's vision and objectives around People, Place and Economy.

The following describes how, as the Mini Masterplan develops through Consultation. Options or interventions can be assessed to determine the Best Practical Sustainable Option (to be further developed by Sonas Energy).

The Mini Masterplan sets out a vision which aims to promote local enterprise, encourage social mobility and respond to the climate change crisis through environmental improvements. The balance and delivery of these will have various positive impacts for the neighbourhood as a whole.

The Mini Masterplan will set out a best practicable sustainable solution to meeting the objectives set out within the strategy. This would be carried out through a Sustainability Assessment, which sets out potential criteria to provide well defined benefits across each of our People, Place and Economy objectives.

A key outcome is defining what success for George Street looks like. The assessment would apply a process which is designed to measure the impact of social, environmental and economic interventions and where the balance or emphasis across each should lie to deliver the most impactful and long term positive change for the neighbourhood.

The Sustainability Assessment would recognise that any specific intervention has a mixture of advantages and disadvantages. As a result, the most favourable option is that which provides the most overall benefit with the fewest down sides. Understanding what is the most favourable option will be assessed against a set of agreed and weighted criteria.

The selection and weighting of these criteria should transparent and explicit, developed through engagement and consultation.

Example criteria that could be assessed under each of the five capitals could include:

- **Manufactured Capital** - Pollution Risk, Transport Impacts, Ease of Construction, Quality, Recyclability at end of life;
- **Natural Capital** - Construction CO2, Embedded Carbon, Waste Production, Enhancement of Bio-diversity;
- **Financial Capital** - Capital Cost, Impact on Growth, Affordability;
- **Social Capital** - Improves links and access, Supports Voluntary & Charities, improves social interaction; and
- **Human Capital** - Promotes well being, improves security, improves access to leisure.

9.4 On-going Communication & Engagement

There is scope to expand on the current online presence of George Street to engage more effectively with a wider range of residents, visitors, workers and businesses.

Having articulated priorities for intervention within the Mini Masterplan there is a need to begin to share important messages with key stakeholders including:

- Recent and proposed investment in the centre;
- Projects that are being worked up;
- Funding that is being sought and accessed; and
- How to get involved.

The key partners to be engaged with on a regular basis include:

- Public sector partners (Police, NHS, Fire, NESCOL);
- Local Resilience Partnership;
- Local businesses;
- Residents; and
- Local community and interest groups.

Quality engagement should generate potential volunteers to get involved in the delivery of specific actions and potentially resources to support their delivery.

The following mechanisms should be used to engage with key partners:

- Further enhancement of the website and strengthen profile on social media;
- Public engagement consultations will be consulted upon and this be used to continue the dialogue with local residents;
- Piggybacking Events – for example a stall at markets showcasing what’s on and how to get involved;
- Existing and enhanced business networking events – to share emerging ideas, test support and encourage ideas to refine and support their delivery; and
- Identification of a team of local ambassadors – they could be trained and then kept up to date about what is going on in George Street and then they can showcase positive messages to their contacts. Ambassadors can be proactive local independent businesses leaders and other individuals who come into contact with lots of local people e.g. shop keepers.

9.5 Next Steps

This Mini Masterplan report is just the first building block for George Street and should updated as a live programme of works to record progress on delivery of the projects within the Masterplan.

Further work will be carried out by the Council to understand and develop future opportunities, options and projects, aligned with the agreement of stakeholders.

Development at George Street will support and contribute towards delivering the wider objectives of the LOIP and City Centre and Beach Masterplan.



**George Street
Mini Masterplan (DRAFT)**
December 2022

open
optimised environments
PART OF SLR



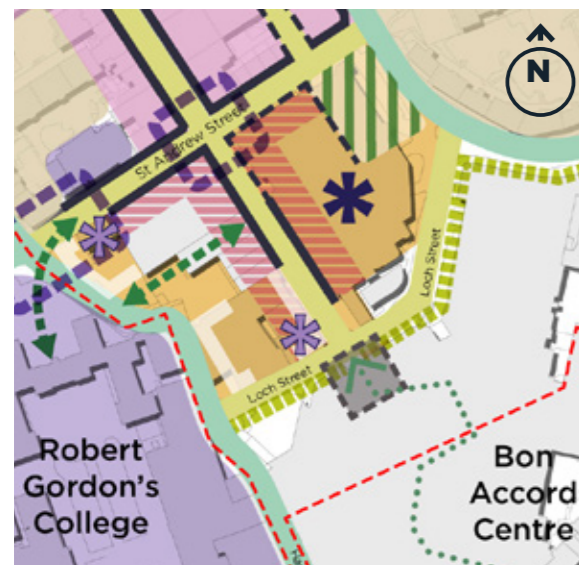
Appendix 1: Re-imagining South George Street

Introduction

This section sets out potential, illustrative future proposals for Norco House and surrounding area. It explores 3 potential development scenarios each with a different approach to future development use and provision of space.

These proposals are not ranked in order of preference but are meant to explore the art of the possible whilst also demonstrate how each work with the principles established within the Mini Masterplan Strategy. It is hoped that these help to re-frame the potential of the building and identify new potential design responses, uses and public realm opportunities which re-establish the area as an important city wide anchor.

The extract of the Mini Masterplan below illustrates the key spatial considerations for the area, which each proposal seeks to address to varying degrees.



Scale Of Change For Norco House

Two of the proposals set out over the following pages assume the retention of the Norco House building, retaining the striking and distinctive brutalist form of the building. The options work to reactivate the building and assume that the current floorplate and column grid remain in situ.

There may be potential to retain the brutalist exterior of the building but strip back the interior floor plates to offer a greater degree of flexibility and accommodation of uses. This would require further design testing and development and would be subject to more detailed surveys.

Each proposal also considers a variety of potential future landuses. Residential accommodation is recognised as an important element that will contribute to the economic sustainability of the neighbourhood. If residential development is to be brought forward within this area, it should look to accommodate a variety of people and be diverse in its property type, avoiding mono-type development.

Extract from George Street Mini Masterplan Strategy Plan

A Retrofit First approach To Norco House

Two of the three proposals retain the Norco House building, both its brutalist building envelope and its interior floor slabs and column grids.

This approach allows for a retrofit first approach to Norco House in response to the climate crisis and the increasing demand on our natural resources. It looks at retention and reuse in order to minimise the carbon produced through demolition, landfill and extraction of new materials for new development.

Norco House in particular is a building with high embedded carbon due to its concrete construction. Demolition of this building, the removal and processing of the waste and the redevelopment of the site would all produce more carbon emissions.

Demolition isn't just an environmental problem. It is frequently undesirable on social and economic grounds. Research by the London School of Economics identified that demolition is both costly and unpopular in many instances. Retrofit of existing buildings



can be cost-effective, depending upon local market conditions because it conserves and enhances existing places and neighbourhoods. As for carbon emissions, retrofit makes sense because of the substantial embodied energy savings made in re-purposing existing buildings, compared with the ultra-high embodied energy costs of demolition and rebuild.

When looking at design options for the retrofit of Norco House we have outlined some of the buildings main challenges to retrofit

- Deep floor plan;
- Crude concrete facade with minimal windows;
- Inactive frontages at ground floor;

Yet the building also has positive qualities that will allow it to be successfully refurbished:

- It has a regular and widely-spaced structural grid allowing for internal efficiencies;



- Generous floor-to-ceiling heights;
- Potential for high live retail floor loadings allowing for additional floors to be added.

There is potential to totally re-imagine the future use of Norco House, diversifying it's offer to the area and wider City. The retrofit and reactivation of this building being a statement of success and an example of how we can work with the challenges of reducing reusing and recycling across our built environment.

All scenarios are indicative and would be subject to further design development, detailed assessments of the building conditions, viability testing and collaboration with the private sector, who retain control of the building, and who will continue to do so. The Council would welcome proposals for this area to be brought forward in line with the Mini Masterplan strategy and place making goals identified within this document.



Scenario 1 - Renovation and Rationalisation

This scenario explores the potential to demolish the later Norco House extension, retaining and refurbishing the brutalist and distinctive Norco House.

The demolition makes way for a new George Street urban civic space - Greyfriars Square (*the name Greyfriars is a nod to a historic ward which encapsulated part of the study area*). A new glazed facade to the east of the building allows a greater amount of natural light into the building whilst providing an animated new, mixed use address onto the square.

Development Approach:

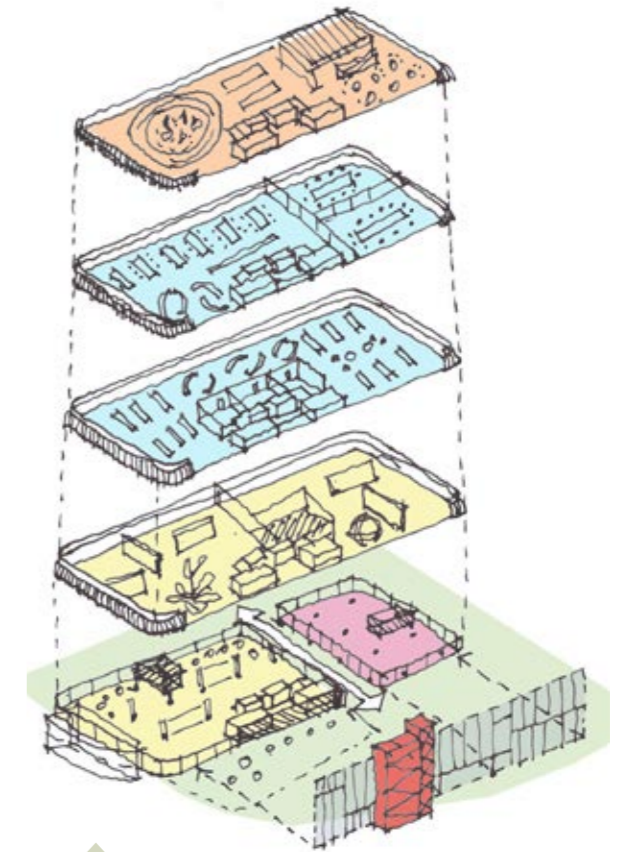
1. Norco House 1990's extension demolished;
2. Retained and refurbished Norco House to accommodate new ground floor and upper floor uses;
3. Demolition of the extension allows for more natural light to infiltrate the floor plan and allow for more flexibility of use;
4. A new pocket park, Greyfriars Square, providing new residential and public amenity along St. Andrew Street and Loch Street. There is potential for this to become a sculpture park, outdoor exhibition space or more flexible uses civic space;
5. Infill development could comprise of ground floor retail, food and beverage and commercial spaces with residential above;
6. Existing road infrastructure along Loch Street narrowed to create larger pedestrian space and pocket park;
7. Alteration to elevation of Bon Accord Centre along Loch Street with potential for single storey food and beverage units facing onto Greyfriars Square;
8. St. Andrew's Street traffic calmed to create new space to Norco House;
9. Sub station retained on Crooked Lane;
10. New residential frontage onto St. Andrews Street and Crooked Lane.
11. Approximately 98 new residential dwellings created.



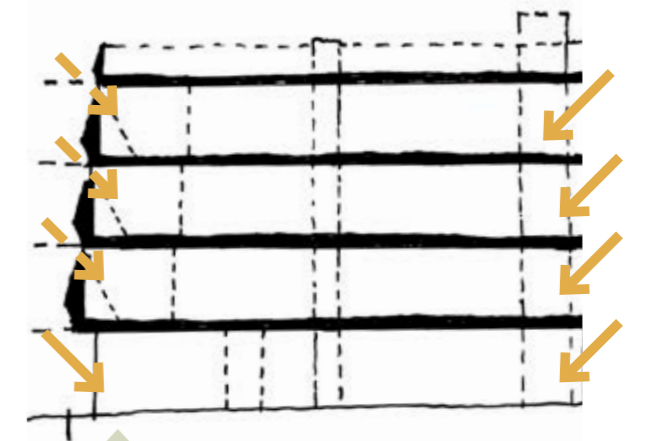
Illustrative layout

- Existing buildings
- Retained buildings
- Proposed new development
- Refurbished / re-purposed
- Enhanced public realm
- Pocket Park

Illustrative layout showing how Norco House could be retained and brought back to life next to a new civic space



Flexible structure and column spacing allows for many different uses throughout the building.



Demolition of 1980s extension allows for more natural light deeper into the plan. More natural light will allow for a greater flexibility in use.

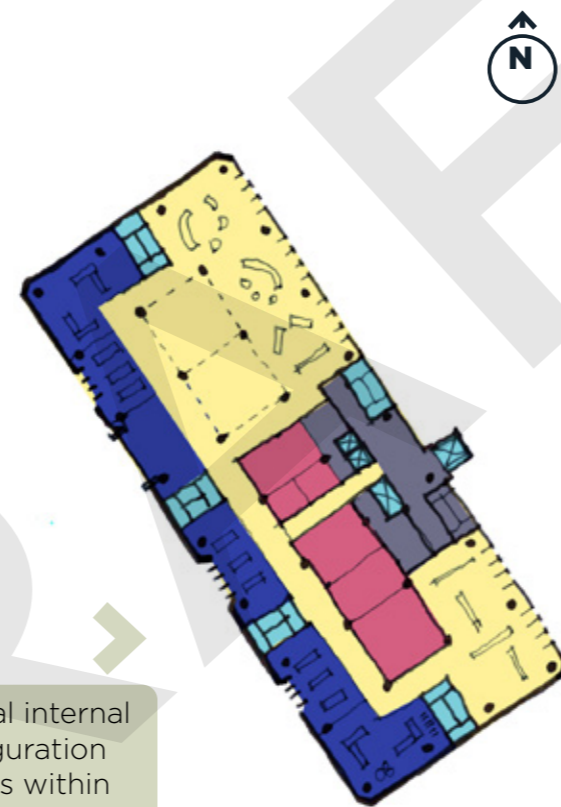
Norco House Potential Uses



Ground floor plan

The proposed ground floor looks to accommodate a number of different occupants and users within the floor plan. The open plan and large span between columns allows for the plan to be split up for different functions. The central yellow area is accessed from George Street and provides access to the lift core to the uses above. The areas in light pink could accommodate food and beverage operators bringing

day and evening activity to George Street. The dark blue spaces could be flexible workshop spaces for the community, entrepreneurs and start ups. Areas around the lift core and stair cores can act as back of house storage and plant for the different occupiers.

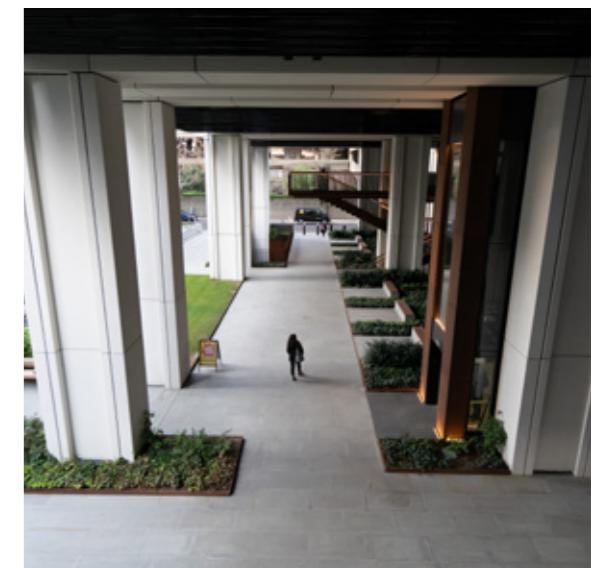


Typical upper floor plans

The upper floors separate the uses based upon the amount of natural light that penetrates into the floorplan. The existing facade to George Street has mostly clerestory glazing. These locations could be occupied by focused workspaces or incubator workshops that don't require large amounts of natural light and views. The middle of the plan, with the lowest levels of natural light, could accommodate recording studios, photographic light rooms, storage

- Food + beverage
- Workshop/ incubator
- Flexible entrance space/co-working space
- Back of house
- Recording studio/ lightroom
- Vertical circulation

Potential internal reconfiguration and uses within Norco House



Examples of how the new exposed building elevation can be celebrated and connect to a potential new public park adjacent

and plant rooms. The new glazed east facing facade could accommodate open plan co-working spaces, meeting rooms and cultural functions (e.g galleries / exhibitions) etc.

There are four lift cores in the existing building and this allows the building to be let out to multiple operators on different levels of the building. For example, the external lift onto the park could provide exclusive access to the activities on the roof, including roof top cinema, urban allotments or community performance space.

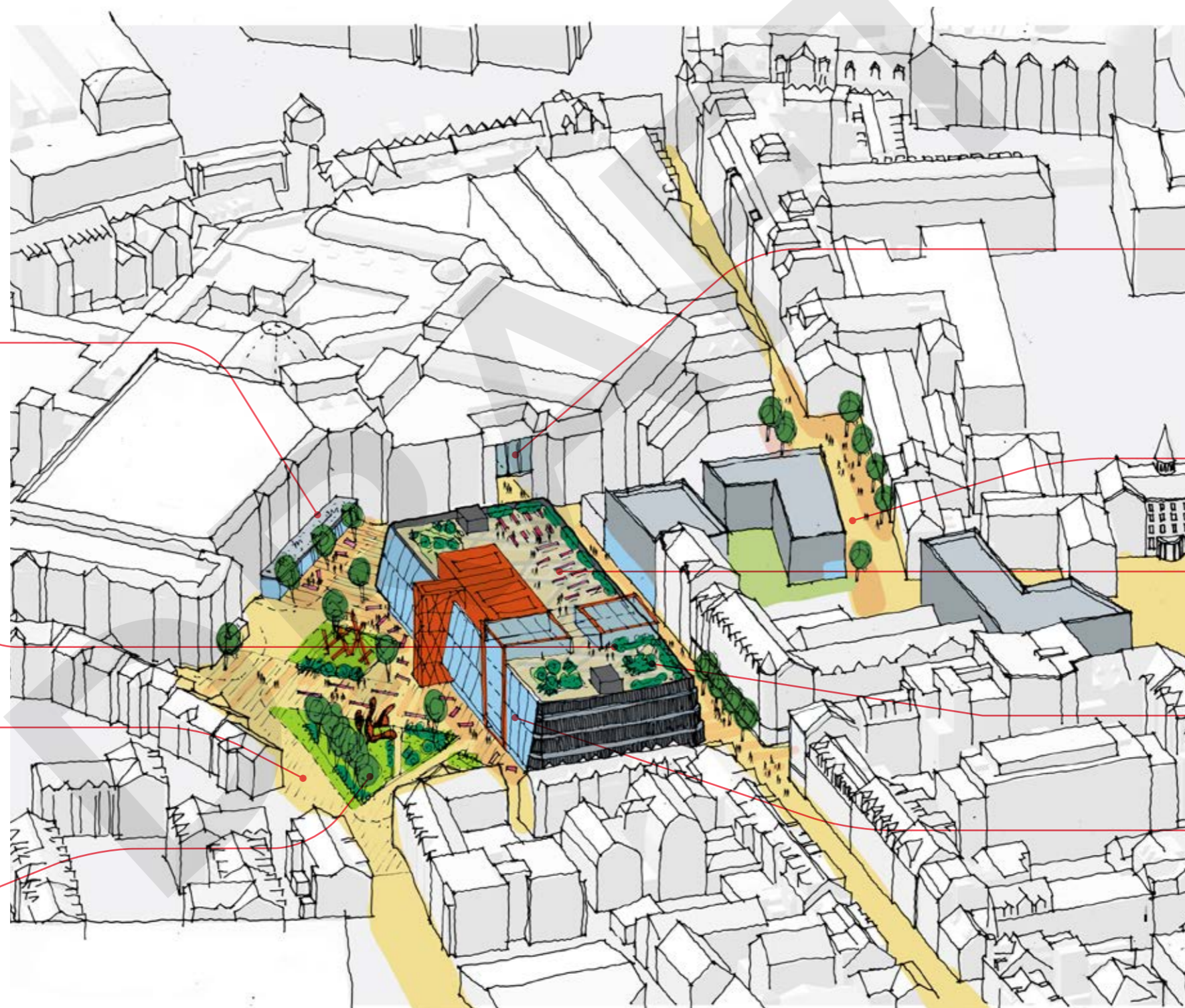
Scenario 1 - Renovation and Rationalisation

Alteration of Bon Accord Centre's elevation to provide single storey cafe/restaurant/bar units to create animation onto Loch Street

Atrium cut into the existing Norco House structure to provide natural light to illuminate the link between Greyfriars Square and George Street

Existing road infrastructure along Loch Street narrowed to create larger pedestrian space and pocket park

Greyfriars Square: Ground floor uses from the refurbished Norco House spill out onto the new park and create animation. Potential for sculpture park and external exhibitions.



Indicative sketch view of Scenario 1

Facade alteration to Bon Accord Centre to allow for better visibility into the shopping centre

Infill mixed use development. Potential for commercial/retail on the ground floor and residential above

New street trees and public realm improvements to Crooked Lane

Roof top public space

Infill mixed use development. Potential for commercial/retail on the ground floor and residential above

Making the most of roof space for solar collection, rainwater collection and sedum roofs

New glazed facade to Norco House onto the Loch Street pocket park. Glazing will allow for more natural daylight into the deep floor plan

What If!

Norco House was re-imagined as a cultural, entrepreneurial, community and mixed use hub adjacent to a new civic space in the City.

Scenario 2 - A New Residential Scale

This scenario explores the potential to introduce residential development as part of an integrated redesign of the Norco House site. It looks to demonstrate an approach that retains the most distinctive elements of Norco House whilst introducing a mix of residential typologies. It proposes to demolish the eastern extent of the 1980s Norco House extension, refurbishment of Norco House, additional residential floors to Norco House and a new build development of residential development adjacent.

The new building element screens views of the Bon Accord Centre car park and alongside a new elevation to Norco House, frames and overlooks a small pocket park along St. Andrews Street.

This scenario explores the ability to deliver the potential for circa 150-200 new dwellings which could help to attract a different type of resident to the area, for example graduates, young professionals or starter families who wish to access all that the City has to offer whilst being in walking distance to high quality public spaces and a vibrant local community.

Development Approach:

1. Demolition of the 1980s Norco House Extension;
2. Refurbishment of Norco house - Ground floor and first floor refurbished to accommodate



Illustrative layout

Illustrative layout showing how Norco House could be retained integrated as part of a residential led, mixed use development

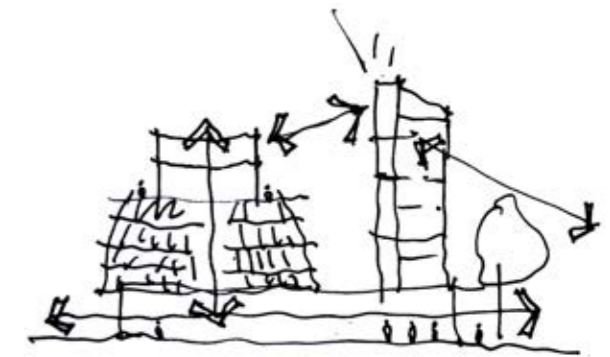
- Existing buildings
- Retained buildings
- Proposed new development
- Refurbished / re-purposed
- Enhanced public realm
- Pocket Park

workshops, retail, co-working and office spaces. Creation of an atrium through the centre of building to allow for natural light to infiltrate the plan and make it suitable for residential redevelopment. Addition of two new residential floors to the existing Norco House (structural ability to support additional floors would need to be determined through detailed design feasibility);

3. Interventions to ground floor of Norco House to allow for a clear route from George Street to Greyfriars Square. Creation of strong visual permeability and connection between Loch Street and George Street;

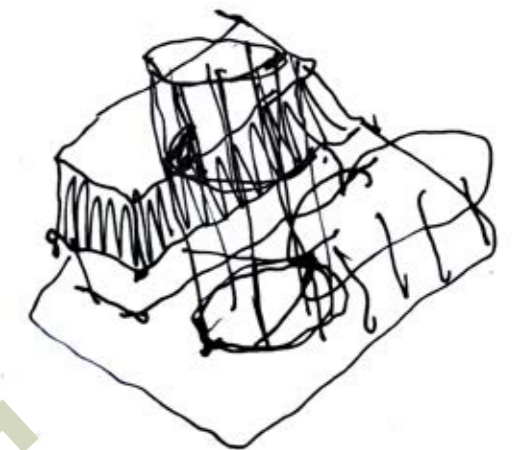
4. New residential building to the east of Norco House. This makes the most efficient use of the site for higher density residential development whilst still allowing for a park and public amenity;
5. Service area entrance to north west corner of the Bon Accord Centre re-located to enter / exit onto Harriet Street
6. Infill development along St. Andrews Street could comprise of ground floor retail and commercial spaces with residential uses above;

7. Existing road infrastructure along Loch Street narrowed to create larger pedestrian space and pocket park;
8. Alteration to elevation of the Bon Accord Centre along Loch Street with potential for single storey cafe/restaurant/bar units facing onto the new Greyfriars Square;



Concept sketch

Ground floor link between the refurbished Norco House and the new residential block. Additional floors to Norco House and a new atrium to bring in natural light. Active frontages onto the public realm.



Concept sketch

A slim block beside the long squat ziggurat of Norco House. A higher density residential development that links into the existing Norco House.

Norco House Potential Uses



Ground floor plan

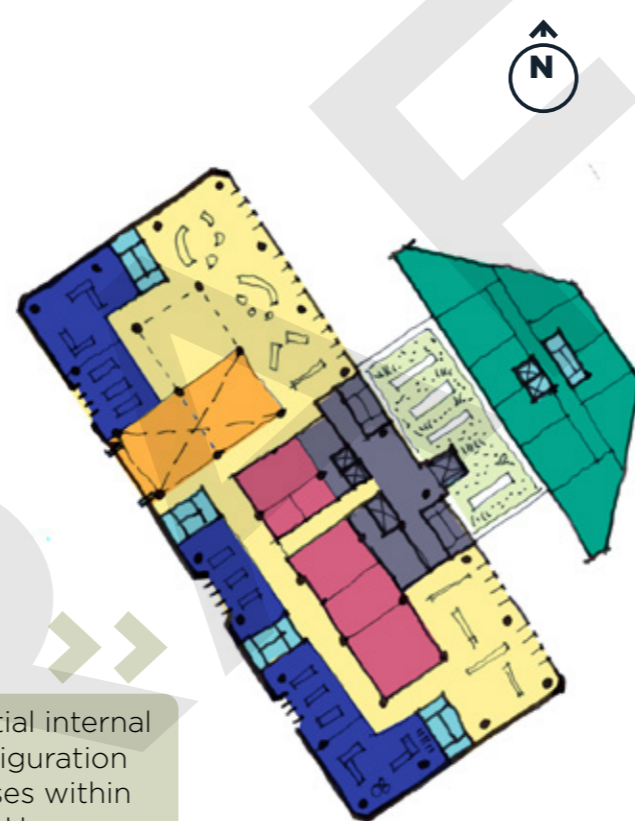
The proposal for the ground floor looks to accommodate a number of different occupants and users within the floor plan. The open plan and large span between columns allow for the plan to be split up to allow for different functions. The central yellow area is accessed from George Street and provide access to the lift core to the uses above. The areas in light pink could be food and beverage operators bringing day and evening activity to George Street. The dark blue spaces could be flexible workshop spaces for the community. Areas around the lift core and stair cores can act as back

of house storage and plant for the different occupiers.

An atrium is cut through the existing slabs of Norco House to provide natural light to the new link to George Street and to enhance the entrance experience.

To the west of Norco house a new residential tower is proposed. Ground floor food and beverage floorspace allows for activation onto the pocket park. A single storey link between the two buildings could be the entrance/reception to a hotel use or convention centre.

Potential internal reconfiguration and uses within Norco House



First floor plan and Upper floors

The first floor uses are connected to the ground floor and accessed via it. The uses respond to the amount of natural light in the floorplan. The existing facade to George Street has mostly clerestorey glazing. These could be occupied by focused workspaces or incubator workshops that don't require large amounts of natural light and views. The middle of the plan, lowest levels of natural light, could accommodate recording studios, photographic light rooms, storage and plant room. The new glazed facade

onto Loch Street and the new park could accommodate open plan co-working spaces, meeting rooms etc.

The top two floors of Norco House are to be refurbished to accommodate residential use. An atrium is required at the centre of the plan to allow for natural light to the apartments. Two additional floors are added to Norco House around the perimeter of the atrium. All circulation is arranged around the atrium. There is a shared lift core between Norco House and the new residential block.

Key

- Food + beverage
- Workshop/incubator
- Flexible entrance space/co-working space
- Back of house
- Residential
- Potential link to between tower and existing building (hotel/conference centre, student residential/education, PRS/co-working space/gym)
- Recording studio/Lightroom
- Vertical circulation
- Atrium space

Scenario 2 - A New Residential Scale

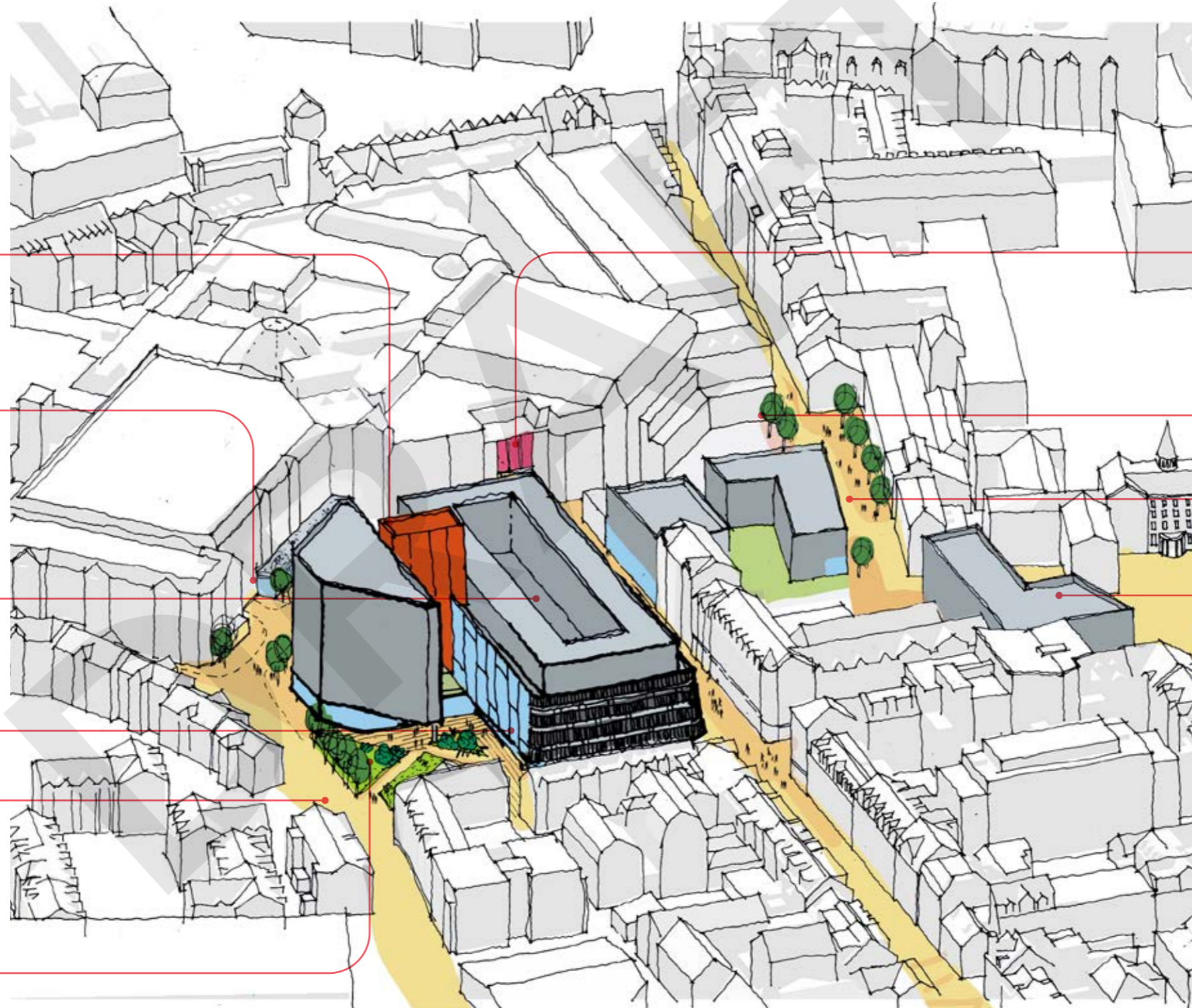
New lift core to serve both the residential accommodation within the refurbished Norco House and the new residential building to the east

Alteration of the Bon Accord Centre elevation along Loch Street to provide single storey cafe/restaurant/bar units to provide animation to Loch Street

Atrium cut into the existing structure of Norco House to provide natural light into the middle of the building and make it suitable for residential accommodation

New glazed facade to the east elevation of Norco House to allow for more natural light penetration
Existing road infrastructure along Loch Street narrowed to create larger pedestrian space and pocket park

Greyfriars Square. Ground floor uses from the refurbished Norco House and the new residential building development spill out onto the new pocket park and create animation and activity



Indicative sketch view of Scenario 2

Facade alteration to the Bon Accord Centre to allow for better visibility into the shopping centre

Visual screening of the Bon Accord Centre Service area and car park ramp

New street trees and public realm improvements to Crooked Lane

Infill mixed use development. Potential for commercial/retail on the ground floor and residential above



What If!

Norco House could be retained as part of a residential led, mixed use redevelopment of the site.

Scenario 3 - A Mixed Use Community

This scenario considers the full demolition of Norco House and the Norco House Extension to allow for a new residential led development to occupy its place.

The proposal is a mid-rise, mixed-use development accommodating residential, ground floor retail, commercial, food and beverage uses.

A new pocket park sits on the corner of George Street and St. Andrews Street to offer community focused dwell space and that is framed by ground floor active uses. This approach shifts the sense of centre towards the core of the study area and addresses the issues along Loch Street and the interface with the Bon Accord Centre.

This scenario achieves circa 250-300 residential dwellings.

Development Approach:

1. Demolition of Norco House and extension to create new residential led neighbourhood of scale along the southern extent of George Street. Approximately 201 residential dwellings accommodated.
2. Assumes residential development across all floors but could facilitate some non-residential uses on ground floor along George Street to animate the surrounding streets and public realm;
3. Combination of 3-12 storey blocks in locations which create new gateway features as well as respecting the established ridge and shoulder heights of historic buildings along St. Andrew Street;
4. Approximately 250-300 new residential dwellings created;
5. New east - west connection from George Street to Loch Street;
6. Internalised, private green space and residential parking enclosed with residential development and former Soup Kitchen forming part of the setting of the space.
7. Alteration to elevation of the Bon Accord Centre along Loch Street with potential for single storey cafe/restaurant/bar units;
8. Service area entrance to north west corner of the Bon Accord Centre re-located to enter / exit onto Harriet Street



Illustrative
layout

- Existing buildings
- Retained buildings
- Proposed new development
- Refurbished / re-purposed
- Enhanced public realm

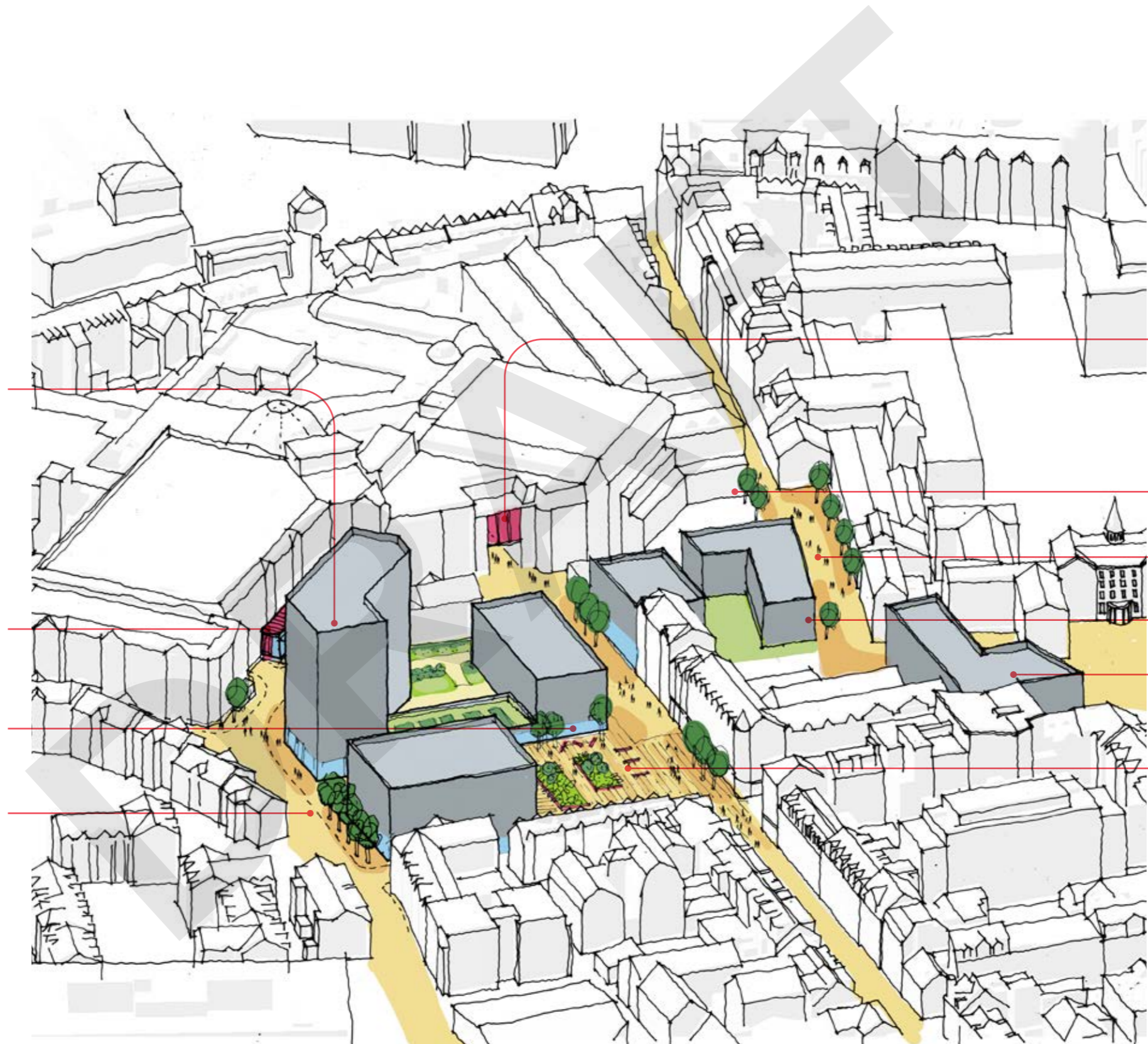
Illustrative layout showing how, if Norco House was demolished, the site could be redeveloped.

New build mixed-use development. Potential for retail, commercial, food and beverage on the ground floor. Residential accommodation above.

Alteration to elevation of the Bon Accord Centre along Loch Street with potential for single storey cafe/restaurant/bar unit

Active frontage onto George Street Square

Existing road infrastructure along Loch Street narrowed to create larger pedestrian space and pocket park



Facade alteration to Bon Accord to allow for better visibility into the shopping centre

Visual screening of the Bon Accord Centre Service area and car park ramp

New street trees and public realm improvements to Crooked Lane

Front doors onto Crooked Lane to provide overlooking

Infill mixed use development. Potential for commercial/retail on the ground floor and residential above.

George Street Square - Public realm pocket park at the corner of George Street and Saint Andrew Street. Active frontages onto the space to animate it.

Indicative sketch view of Scenario 3

◀

What If!
 A variety of residential housing typologies within a mixed use development could be created along George Street.

Precedents

Hammonds of Hull

A new store was designed in 1952 by T.P.Bennett, with further extensions added in 1954 and 1957. One Strikingly European in style, it married classicism and modernism with triple height stone columns on the corner facade and Art Deco wavelets in the glazing.

A local developer, Redefine Paragon Square Hull Ltd, took on the building in 2020 and, with the support of Hull City Council, converted the first floor into office space (fully let to a local contact centre business), with the 30,000 sqft ground floor opening as an artisan food hall, organic deli, bars and lounges in December 2021. With the complex rebranded as 'Hammonds of Hull, or 'HoH', there are now further plans for a rooftop bar and letting the remaining two floors out to office and commercial tenants.



The Barbican

The Barbican is a Grade II listed Brutalist icon and is one of the UK's architectural treasures. Designing and developing the Barbican Centre was part of a visionary plan from architects Chamberlin, Powell and Bon to radically transform how we experience buildings and cities.

Today, the Barbican Centre attracts almost 2 million visitors a year, as well as thousands of artists and creatives, and the wider Barbican complex is home to a community of around 4,000 residents. The Barbican houses art galleries, theatres, cinemas, school of music and drama and City of London School of Girls.

The Barbican Centre has undergone a phased program of refurbishment over the past 40 years. The reuse of this building illustrates the incredibly flexible nature of these Brutalist concrete structures to adapt to modern times and uses.



Northampton International Academy

A vibrant educational 2,200 pupil community accommodated within a former derelict brutalist Royal Mail sorting office on behalf of Northamptonshire County Council and East Midlands Academy Trust.

The largely windowless, industrial building was derelict since the 1970s and considered a local eyesore that attracted levels of anti-social behaviour. It has been transformed into an education hub, experiencing natural light and expansive internal views, creating a positive and inspiring environment both internally and externally.

The £30m redevelopment includes a 400 seat theatre, a rooftop 4 court sports Hall as well as integrated commercial and retail units along the ground floor.

As well as a raft of internal reconfigurations, major interventions into the façades provide new classroom windows as well as a new entrance plaza and highly polished mirrored veil, which reflects the sky and buildings of the surrounding local community. This veil has been perforated, derived from the local tradition of leather goods making and brogue patterns, giving glimpses through to the existing building.



Re-use of Brutalist Boots in Kensington

The Kensington Building is a mixed-use, regeneration project designed by Pilbrow & Partners on behalf of Ashby Capital. The building provides 11,974m² of office and retail space. Construction was completed in April 2022. This project is the same scale as Norco House, with a floor area of 1,800m².

The project started with a 1970s building. It had many shortcomings: its crude concrete façades detracted from its historic setting; its orthogonal, Brutalist massing eroded traditional street lines, and blank, inactive frontages at ground floor level created a hostile presence.

Yet the building had positive qualities that allowed it to be successfully refurbished. It had a regular and widely-spaced structural grid, good floor-to-ceiling heights and high live retail floor loadings.

The building was stripped to its frame and then extended the structure laterally to restore the historic building lines on the high street. Three levels of accommodation were added above, making use of the intrinsic high structural loadings of the existing building. These are set back behind richly landscaped garden terraces.



Original Brutalist building



Retrofit of Brutalist building completed in 2022

Appendix 2: Future Projects Action Plan

The following table provides a more detailed overview of the potential future projects identified in section 14 of the Mini Masterplan document.

The projects identified will need further discussions with the local community, business and stakeholders to deliver. It should also be noted that the Council will support both the local community and local businesses where possible to bring these projects forward.

Community Interventions

Objective	Intervention	Project	Lead & Partners	When	Where
Appearance and Character	De-cluttering the Streets	Removal of clutter & unnecessary signage, satellite dishes, pole signage etc	Local Community - Partners to be identified	Immediate	Focus on areas with proliferation of clutter e.g George Street and agree priority areas based on early implementation of public realm change to maximise positive impact.
		Residential front door enhancements - painted, restored, highlighted through public realm materials	Local Residents Groups	Short - Medium Term	For residential properties that open onto Local Access Streets and which have no front porch or threshold to the street
	Identity	Create an online neighbourhood presence	Community Organisations (to be identified)	Immediate	To cover the George Street Mini Masterplan as well as the wider George Street Community to the north
	Place Management	Appoint local champions for George Street who will focus on delivering agreed vision and strategies in the area	Local Community Groups with ACC	Short Term	To cover the George Street Mini Masterplan area (and ensure co-ordination with adjacent community initiatives / projects)
		Establishing a core group of businesses owners / residents to represent George Street	To be identified / connected if existing	Short Term	To cover the George Street Mini Masterplan area (and ensure co-ordination with adjacent community initiatives / projects)
Enhanced Pedestrian Experience	Security	Woman and Vulnerable Group Safety Audit	Local Community with ACC	Short Term	Area wide
	Lighting	Pop up street canopy / overhead lighting	Local community & arts groups	Immediate	Smaller lanes and pedestrian focused streets such as Jopps Lane as well as areas which host pop up events.
		Front door lighting for residential tenements	Local community / ACC / Aberdeen Inspired	Short Term	Focus on residential properties that open onto public streets and which have no front porch or threshold to the street. A priority area could be George Street
Tackling Inactivity & Vacant Space	Redefining Residential Streets - Urban Pilot Project	Customising existing streets to support healthier and sustainable urban life for residents - interventions could include designated bin storage, defined parking bays, EV charge points, street greening / communal gardens, play street elements, urban allotments, lighting, SuDS etc	Local residents supported by ACC	Medium Term	Focus on areas with density of residential accommodation eg. Charlotte Street and Craigie Street. Exact areas to be co-ordinated with community and developed in co-ordination with ETROs
	Reactivating alleys, lanes and back streets	Making use of and activating underutilised spaces in a creative way.	Local Community Groups, George Street Businesses and ACC, Arts Groups, Outreach Groups	Short Term	Focus on streets, vacant spaces, car parks where there are low levels of activation.
George Street as a Destination	Creating an Adaptable Neighbourhood	Using empty units for art exhibitions, book launches, College end of year exhibitions, temporary performance space, overspill exhibition space for the nearby Art Gallery, local street library etc	Local Community Groups, Arts Groups, Educational Institutions	Short Term	In areas vacant units that address primary or secondary streets to limit negative perceptions of void units. E.g Lower George Street and St. Andrews Street
	A multi-generational space	Consider the diversity of visitors and residents, ensuring facilities and amenities can provide for various ages and abilities - interventions could include temporary seating, drinking water stations, shade etc	ACC / Local Community	Immediate	Across areas with higher pedestrian footfall and near to local retail. Should be considered alongside parklets and spill out space being created.

Local Business Interventions

Objective	Intervention	Project	Lead & Partners	When	Where
Appearance and Character	Improved Street Appearance for People	Deep clean of existing paving, street furniture and building façades	ACC, Aberdeen Inspired, Local Shop Owners	Immediate	Areas to be identified by local community. Suggest focus on buildings where public realm interventions are proposed to maximise impact.
		De-clutter existing streetscape - combine highways and pedestrian signage, where possible and remove unnecessary items	ACC	Short Term	Focus initially where public realm interventions are proposed and prioritise pedestrian focused environments e.g Lower George Street
	Art & Colour	Commission Creative Placemaking and creative work onto pedestrian areas / Research the possibility of commissioning creative artwork on focussed areas	ACC, Other Art Institutions	Immediate	In pedestrian focused areas such as South George Street. Longer term this can be expanded to junction locations with improved pedestrian links
		Attractive visual screening across poor quality environments	Bon Accord Centre, Shop owners, private landlords, ACC	Short Term	Focus on areas where there are low levels of activation (see page 31) for example service yards / gable ends / blank elevation. Prioritise larger and most visible façades
		Street & pedestrian crossing colouring	ACC	Short Term	In pedestrian focused areas such as South George Street. Longer term this can be expanded to junction locations with improved pedestrian links
		Shop front creative interventions	ACC, or a Creative and Cultural Organisation/ Institution, or Culture Aberdeen	Short term	Along streets where majority of shops close after 17:00. Focus along George street, St Andrew Street and John Street to deliver co-ordinated impact.
		Commission a sculpture trail across the area	ACC, Creative and Cultural Organisation/ Institution, or Culture Aberdeen	Short - Medium Term	Area wide, beginning on George Street
Animating buildings / façades	Animating buildings / façades	Research Creative Commissions for the façades of buildings in George Street	ACC, Creative and Cultural Organisation/ Institution, or Culture Aberdeen	Immediate	Build from Jopps Lane in partnership with willing land / property owners. Community can help to determine priority areas.
		Early dialogue with owners of Bon Accord Centre to discuss enhancements to the north and eastern façades of the shopping centre and car park	ACC / Bon Accord Centre Owners	Short Term	Focus on the northern and eastern elevations of the Bon Accord Shopping Centre
		Uplighting and feature lighting to illuminate buildings	ACC / Business Owners / building owners	Medium Term	Primary focus on buildings of interest including Norco House and other historic buildings
	Signage & Fronts	Removal of clutter & unnecessary signage, satellite dishes, pole signage etc	ACC / Local Community	Immediate	Focus on areas with proliferation of clutter e.g George Street and agree priority areas based on early implementation of public realm change to maximise positive impact.
		Create a signage and wayfinding strategy including at key arrival points into the neighbourhood	ACC / Business Owners	Medium Term	Focus on edges of the neighbourhood where people travel into the area (gateway locations). Develop along main pedestrian routes that flow from those gateway locations.
		Improve quality & consistency of shop front signage	ACC, Aberdeen Inspired, Local Shop Owners	Short - Medium Term	Area wide, beginning on George Street
	Animating buildings / façades	Create active uses and frontages along Loch Street at ground level.	Bon Accord Centre	Longer term	Loch Street and George Street
Improve entrance to the George St approach by widening the openings to the building at ground floor					

Local Business Interventions (cont.)

Enhanced Pedestrian Experience	Street planting & urban greening	Installing Green Walls, Living Walls and other Urban Greening solutions as part of a neighbourhood wide strategy	ACC / Business Owners	Medium term	Focusing on large scale blank gable ends and façades that are orientated to support green walls. Secondary focus on smaller infill areas
	Improved Environmental Performance	Retrofitted rain gardens, SuDS, and planting which filters out pollutants. Programme could also be extended to existing buildings for retrofit for improved thermal insulation and reduced energy consumption.	ACC / National Govt, private occupiers, local businesses, local residents.	Medium - long term	Area wide intervention across existing streets
Tackling Inactivity & Vacant Space	Reactivating alleys, lanes and back streets	Encourage meanwhile uses such as pop ups, street closures, parklets etc to improve activity	ACC, Aberdeen Inspired, Local Shop Owners	Short Term	Area wide, beginning on George Street
George Street as a Destination	Alive after 5pm	Establishing a strategy to co-ordinate later opening times / weekends etc across various uses. E.g NESCOL & Robert Gordon's Colleges evening openings promoted to local restaurants, cafés, bars etc to encourage college patrons into the area. Introduce reward vouchers initiative etc to promote cross business patronage between retailers and other businesses as well as local residents' discounts.	ACC, Aberdeen Inspired, Local Shop Owners, Local Business Groups, NESCOL & Robert Gordon's College	Short Term	Across the neighbourhood
	Calendar of events	Curate a calendar of events for George Street and the immediate surrounds which encourage patronage across the area	ACC, Aberdeen Inspired	Immediate	Area wide
		Celebrate heritage and the ornate architectural diversity through commercial events, walking tours, online/apps and feature lighting.	ACC, Aberdeen Inspired	Immediate	Focusing on historic buildings of architectural interest and / or social and cultural significance.
	A Smart High Street	Encouraging local businesses are promoted on George Street apps / websites / social media etc and use a means to run promotions and special events.	ACC, Aberdeen Inspired, Local Shop Owners, Bon Accord Centre	Short Term	Primary retail focused areas
Creating an Adaptable Neighbourhood	Tap into local talent by providing space for start-ups / pop up events to encourage students to stay beyond their course.	ACC, Aberdeen Inspired, Educational Institutions	Short - Medium Term	Adjacent to Bon Accord Centre. Any new urban spaces created within Neighbourhood	

Aberdeen City Council Interventions

Objective	Intervention	Project	Lead & Partners	When	Where
Appearance and Character	Improved Street Appearance for People	Develop a palette of materials and street furniture to help celebrate George Street character (to be developed alongside public realm detail design stages)	ACC	Medium Term	Across streets which are undergoing interventions to increase pedestrian space
		Refurbish and restore existing street bins, bollards, cycle stands	ACC	Medium Term	Area wide but focus firstly on John Street, St. Andrews Street, George Street and Gallowgate
		Introduce bin storage or shelters where bins are required to be stored on street	ACC / Aberdeen Inspired	Short Term	Residential locations and pedestrian focused areas e.g Craigie Street & St. Andrews Street
Enhanced Pedestrian Experience	Improved Street function for People	Street redesign to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carriageway narrowing • Footpath build out at junctions / junction improvements • Pedestrian prioritised crossing points • Footpath widening • On-carriageway bus stops to prioritise public transport and slow cars • Spill out space for businesses • Seating and rest points • Cycle parking and repair stations 	ACC	Medium - Long Term	Area wide but focus firstly on John Street, St. Andrews Street, George Street and Gallowgate.
	Increasing dwell time	Coordinated palette of street furniture including provision for elderly, range of physical abilities, visually impaired and cyclists	ACC	Short - Medium Term	Area wide but focus firstly on John Street, St. Andrews Street, George Street and Loch Street
	Security	Improved CCTV coverage	ACC?	Medium term	In areas where community and local businesses report most Anti-social behaviour incidents
	Lighting	Lighting strategy for George Street - for both wayfinding & security	ACC	Medium term	Area wide as part of wider public realm strategy
	Street planting & urban greening	Street trees and planting	ACC	Medium term	Area wide as part of wider public realm strategy
	Making primary routes work harder	Inclusion of cycle lanes along key routes	ACC	Medium term	Along streets identified within the Mini Masterplan cycle accessibility strategy
George Street as a Destination	Smart High Street	Visitor and residential information points - these could be pop up kiosks / interactive stands / live cycle counters / air quality readings etc	ACC, Aberdeen Inspired	Short - Medium Term	Area wide, beginning on George Street and along cycle routes
	Necessities	Consider provision of basic services, public toilets, 'changing spaces' toilets, and disabled access points.	ACC	Short - Medium Term	Along streets with pedestrian activity and along local access streets.
Reducing Vehicle Dominance	Making primary routes work harder	More flexible use of parking spaces - creating PARKlets which reclaim parking bays for socialising, play and dwell time. Create a PARK(ing) Day which could bring a festival of parklets to the area.	ACC	Short Term	Focus where the type of existing businesses can benefit from adjacent spill out space / dwell space i.e cafes, bars, community uses and along reduced traffic streets (ETRO locations)
		Better provision and / or quality of cycle parking in convenient locations	ACC	Short Term	Prioritise anchor locations such as Bon Accord Centre, NESCOL and George Street as well as at arrival gateways / bus stop locations.
		Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) 1 - retain the 2-way operation of Berry Street but for car-park access/egress only	ACC	Short Term	Berry Street, Loch Street and St Andrew Street. (Note existing small central reservation exists along Berry Street which will need some minor amends to implement ETRO).
		ETRO 2 - Reduce and restrict speed of traffic by narrowing carriageway with temporary build-outs and signage. If successful restrict access to local access only.	ACC	Short Term	Charlotte Street between Spring Garden and John Street
		ETRO 3- Remove general traffic along Blackfriars St northbound, creating more freedom for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.	ACC	Short Term	Blackfriars Street
	Prioritising Sustainable Travel	Reconfiguring current bus routes as well as provision of enhanced bus stops with interactive boards / wifi / charging points to encourage greater use and improved passenger experience	ACC	Medium - Long Term	John Street, St. Andrews Street, George Street and Loch Street (in liaison with bus operators).
		Ensuring there is adequate space for cyclists along key routes with cycle parking through the area would encourage more cyclists to use the area safely.	ACC	Medium - Long Term	Along streets identified as formalised and advisory cycle routes as per the Cycle Accessibility Strategy.



**George Street
Mini Masterplan (DRAFT)**
December 2022

Optimised Environments

86 Princess Street | Manchester | M1 6NG
t 0161 696 7550

Optimised Environments Ltd. Registered in Scotland SC359690.
Registered address: Quartermile Two | 2 Lister Square | Edinburgh | EH3 9GL

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George Street Draft Mini Masterplan Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report



September 2023

CONTROL SHEET

Client: Hub North Scotland Ltd
 Project Title: George Street Draft Mini Masterplan
 Report Title: Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report
 Document number: 13210
 Project number: 376431

Issue Record

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EnviroCentre Limited Office Locations:

Glasgow

Edinburgh

Inverness

Banchory

Registered Office: Craighall Business Park 8 Eagle Street Glasgow G4 9XA

Tel 0141 341 5040 info@envirocentre.co.uk www.envirocentre.co.uk

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NON- TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Introduction

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan has been carried out by EnviroCentre, on behalf of Aberdeen City Council.

A SEA is required for the draft George Street Mini Masterplan under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. The SEA has been carried out alongside the development of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan and seeks to ensure that, once adopted, the George Street Mini Masterplan contributes positively to the high level of environmental protection now expected by the Scottish Government. The SEA seeks to ensure that potential significant effects on the environment of implementing the George Street Mini Masterplan, and of reasonable alternatives, are identified, described, evaluated and taken into account before the George Street Mini Masterplan is adopted.

To support the public consultation on the draft George Street Mini Masterplan and the potential effects on the environment of its implementation, an Environmental Report, which documents the SEA process and outcomes, is required under the SEA legislation. This Non-Technical Summary of the Environmental Report is also required to facilitate wider consultation.

Consultation on Draft George Street Mini Masterplan

The Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report was issued to the SEA Gateway on **10 July 2023** for distribution to statutory consultees (Historic Environment Scotland, NatureScot and SEPA). Consultee responses were received on **23 August 2023** (refer to Appendix B)

Responses to the consultation on the draft George Street Mini Masterplan and its potential effects on the environment were sent to: nmcdowell@aberdeencity.gov.uk OR

Nigel McDowell,
Senior Planner,
Aberdeen City Council
Masterplanning, Design and Conservation
Development Management / Strategic Place Planning
Commissioning Marischal College
Broad Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1AB

Online Consultation August 9th August – 10th September 2023

In accordance with the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, Section 16 Consultation Procedures, a Notice advertising that the Draft Environmental Report, and associated non-technical summary, was placed in the Aberdeen Evening Express newspaper on Wednesday 8th August.

The Notice advised that for a period of four weeks, between 9th August and 10th September 2023 the documents would be hosted online using the Aberdeen City Council CitizenSpace webpage and interested party opinion was sought on the content of the Draft Environmental Report. The Environmental Report illustrates what are considered to be 'significant' environmental impacts to the environment of the masterplan area, or the mitigation measures considered necessary, should the recommended projects be implemented. The consultation did not generate any responses.

Background to the George Street Mini Masterplan

The George Street Mini Masterplan highlights the main issues for development in the George Street Mini Masterplan area and sets out scenarios for how these will be dealt with, including consideration of existing and new sites. The draft George Street Mini Masterplan sets out a Vision and a series of Objectives and Actions for regenerating the George Street area.

Integration of the SEA with the George Street draft Mini Masterplan - development process & engagement with stakeholders

Whilst the George Street Mini Masterplan's development process was not explicitly subject to SEA from the outset, several SEA type activities were undertaken by Aberdeen City Council and their consultants during the preparation of the George Street Mini Masterplan including community consultation and engagement. These activities played a key role in informing the early development of the George Street Mini Masterplan in advance of the formal SEA process.

The SEA process began in October 2022 and since then has been undertaken in parallel with the development of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan with the interaction between the SEA team and the George Street Mini Masterplan team.

SEA overview

The SEA aims to inform the draft George Street Mini Masterplan development process. It is important to note that the draft George Street Mini Masterplan is a high-level plan and as such, the approach taken to the SEA has been of a high-level assessment. This SEA is not intended to address issues that should be considered during the assessment of lower-level plans or complementary strategies which may support the implementation of the George Street Mini Masterplan.

SEA Screening

Aberdeen City Council screen plans to determine whether a SEA for the plan should be undertaken. When a plan is likely to have significant (i.e., negative, damaging, large or long-lasting) effects on the environment, the Council will undertake a SEA. (If the effect is not significant, no further action is taken and a pre-screening report would be prepared). In this case, it was determined by the Council that the environmental effects of the George Street Mini Masterplan will potentially be significant and therefore a full SEA is required, therefore, a formal Screening Opinion was not sought from the SEA Gateway.

Scoping the level of detail for the assessment

The approach to the SEA of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan initially involved determining the level of detail of the SEA to ensure it was appropriate to the draft George Street Mini Masterplan (called 'Scoping'). A SEA Scoping Report was produced and issued to SEA Gateway on 13th January 2023 for consultation. Consultee comments received 17th February 2023. The Scoping Report presented the findings of the initial consideration of the potential environmental effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan. It included information on the environment relevant to the development of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan (environmental baseline information) and a proposed approach to assessing the environmental effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan.

The responses to the Scoping Report were taken into account to inform and adapt the approach to the development of the George Street Mini Masterplan and the undertaking of the assessment of the George Street Mini Masterplan's potential effects on the environment (Appendix A). The responses to the Scoping Report consultation provided comments on an initial review of relevant plans, programmes, strategies and associated environmental protection objectives to which the George Street Mini Masterplan and the SEA would need to refer. A list of environmental protection objectives (termed 'SEA objectives') were identified under nine environmental topics, which would be appropriate for the George

Street Mini Masterplan to work towards. The SEA Objectives used as a framework for the assessment of the George Street Mini Masterplan are included below in Table 1.

Within Table 1 we have attempted to align air, noise and climate objectives as they are related in terms of sources and impacts and ideally should not be considered in isolation. Air quality is also considered under 'Population and Human Health' given it is a public health issue as well as an environmental consideration.

Table 1: Environmental Receptors, SEA Objectives and Questions

SEA Topic	SEA Objectives	Questions
Biodiversity (Flora and fauna)	Protect or conserve and, where possible, restore and enhance biodiversity and valued nature conservation habitats and species.	To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conservation objectives of International, National or local designations? • populations of protected species, their habitats and resting places or roosts? • wider biodiversity, i.e., non-designated/protected sites and species? • existing green network and habitat connectivity? • opportunities for enhancement or expansion of the green network and wider habitat connectivity? • the protection and enhancement of urban trees?
Population and Human Health	To protect and enhance quality of life, including maintaining and improving opportunities to access public open space and the natural and historic environment	To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the provision of housing and employment opportunities to meet identified needs? • the provision of appropriate services and community facilities to meet identified needs? • residential amenity, including noise? • access to open spaces, recreational facilities and active travel routes? • access to the historic environment?
Water	To protect and enhance the ecological status of the water environment	To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the ecological status of identified water bodies: • surface water run-off • flood risk in the local and/or wider areas?
Soil	To maintain or improve soil quality, quantity and function and prevent any further degradation of soils	To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contaminated land? • Impact on existing topsoil and/or subsoils?
Air	To improve or maintain air quality and reduce emissions of significant pollutants	To what extent will the Mini Masterplan be likely to reduce/increase air quality, in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • carbon emissions? • levels of Nitrous Dioxide (NO₂) and Particulate Matter (PM₁₀)?
Climatic Factors	To reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase resilience to the consequences of climate change	To what extent will the strategy or policy promote: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • renewable energy technologies and energy efficiency? • sustainable transport and active travel? • future-proofing of new development? • Green infrastructure provision?
Cultural heritage	Protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment.	To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Archaeological sites, Conservation Areas

		and Gardens and Designed Landscapes and their settings?
Landscape	Protect and enhance landscape character, local distinctiveness and promote access to the wider environment.	To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the landscape character and setting of settlements?
Material Assets	To reduce waste and promote the sustainable use of resources	To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • waste from new development? • the re-use of previously developed land and buildings? • the delivery of renewable energy development?

To set the context within which the draft George Street Mini Masterplan will need to operate, the SEA Objectives were used to support the identification of potential significant environmental issues and used as a framework for establishing the environmental baseline against which the effects of the implementation of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan would be assessed. Through this process, some initial monitoring indicators were identified for measuring the progress of the Draft George Street Mini Masterplan towards achieving the SEA Objectives.

Description of the Proposed Draft George Street Mini Masterplan

The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will serve as a strategy document used by Aberdeen City Council to guide the future development of the George Street area. The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will not be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance, but rather will be a Council-approved strategy, and will be assimilated into a recalibrated City Centre and Beach Masterplan. These documents will be material considerations in the assessment of any future planning applications for development within the George Street area.

It is proposed that, following the approval of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan by the Council, detailed planning applications within the George Street area would be submitted, while the public realm aspects will be progressed by the Council under statutory powers, as previously confirmed by Committees. It is important to stress that the draft George Street Mini Masterplan sets out principles and parameters to be followed and will not be 'set in stone' or represent a final design solution for the George Street area or any of the constituent developments. The document will outline a potential phasing strategy for the prospective developments and interventions within the George Street area. Chapter 3 of the main report contains a description of the content of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan, and the different Scenarios and alternatives considered.

Context of the Proposed Draft George Street Mini Masterplan

To guide the content of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan EnviroCentre has made use of high-level documents, statements and pieces of legislation to influence how the Council have prepared the draft Mini Masterplan which affects Aberdeen.

Appendix C of the SEA Environmental Report contains a list of all the relevant plans, programmes, strategies and policies which have a bearing on the draft George Street Mini Masterplan. contains a more detailed description of these.

Environmental Baseline

We have collected information on the key characteristics of the environment in Aberdeen and the George Street area where information is available, to provide a snapshot of the state of the environment in the George Street area of Aberdeen at this time (**Chapter 4 and Appendix D**). We have also identified

several environmental issues in Aberdeen, and what the role of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan might be in addressing these problems. The challenges we must deal with include:

- Aberdeen has air quality issues and the Council has implemented three Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's), the closest to the draft George Street Mini Masterplan area being the City Centre AQMA;
- Aberdeen releases significant amounts of CO₂ as a result of heating, driving vehicles among others. This is releasing CO₂ into the air and contributing to climate change;
- Past and present development have all affected soil and water quality;
- Dealing with waste also has implications for soils, water and climate;
- Aberdeen has a rich cultural heritage, but development could potentially put pressure on these resources;
- New development can put pressure on biodiversity; and
- The diversity of the Aberdeen population needs to be considered for future development. For example, there are a range of ages living in Aberdeen who seek services, retail facilities, open space and recreational facilities, therefore the draft George Street Mini Masterplan must cater for all, including people who live in the area.

The George Street neighbourhood is located towards the northern boundary of the City Centre & Beach Masterplan area. George Street itself runs North to South, forming a once historic key route between the city centre core and areas to the North of the city.

The area is defined to the south by the Bon Accord Centre, which does sever the historic connection to the City Centre. It is bounded to the south west by Robert Gordon College and Charlotte Street, by Gallowgate and North East of Scotland College (NESCOL) to the east, and Spring Garden to the north.

George Street hosts a diversity of uses which give the area its distinct character all of which sit within the wider context of Aberdeen's economy and cultural offer.

The main part of SEA is assessing the effect of the strategy, policies and supplementary guidance on the environment. A summary of our findings can be found in the table below:

SEA Topic	Impact of the Mini Masterplan
<p>Biodiversity (Flora and Fauna)</p>	<p>The overall effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan on biodiversity is generally positive and includes key "Design Principles" which indicate all new development will consider biodiversity. However, the demolition of the Norco House extension (Scenarios 1 and 2) and full demolition of Norco House and extensions (scenario 3) had the potential to disturb bats, therefore bat surveys are recommended before any works commencing.</p> <p>There are also potential biodiversity opportunities included within future potential interventions such as SUDs, blue/green infrastructure. There is also a commitment for tree and floral planting to enhance biodiversity (using native species where possible). Interventions include proposals for "green wall infrastructure", green pillars (stacked upright structures) etc.</p> <p>The Mini Masterplan also provides opportunities for bioretention verges and/or rain gardens with pollinator friendly perennial planting, semi-mature tree planting of pollution tolerant species.</p> <p>Removal of Norco House and/or the extension presents an opportunity to open up the area and provide additional green spaces.</p>
<p>Population and Health</p>	<p>The overall effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan on population and health are generally positive because the new development will provide access to retail/recreational/leisure facilities, improved infrastructure and potential new employment and economic opportunities.</p> <p>Traffic as a result of the Mini Masterplan will be managed to ensure the George Street area becomes a destination rather than a through route. Sustainable alternatives to car travel will be encouraged within the Min</p>

	<p>Masterplan, with active travel aiming to provide potential positive effects on human health.</p> <p>Promotion of sustainable travel will also aim to assist meeting City Centre air quality targets.</p> <p>There are opportunities for bioretention verges and/or rain gardens with pollinator friendly perennial planting, semi-mature tree planting of pollution tolerant trees with an upright habit such as <i>Tilia cordata</i> 'Geenspire' among others.</p> <p>The process of creating and delivering masterplan projects aims to create optimism, certainty, investment and improved general wellbeing. When founded in community engagement this should give greater place enjoyment, a sustainable place, and a liveable place.</p>
Water	<p>The overall effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan on water resources are also mixed. The "Design Principles" promote the use of Sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) and blue/green infrastructure. The provision of SUDS and blue/green infrastructure can provide opportunities for biodiversity gain. Flood and Drainage impact assessment will be required before development. It must be noted however, the area is historic and dense and therefore SUDS is a challenge to be assessed in context.</p>
Soil	<p>The Aberdeen City Council Contaminated Land Strategy (2016) states, "Regeneration of city centre sites and other brownfield sites throughout the existing built-up area for appropriate uses will be encouraged as an important part of the Plan's strategy."</p> <p>The Mini Masterplan covers the area as described above, and as such, previous land uses may have had the potential to leach contaminants into the surrounding areas. Without knowing how contaminated material, if any, was dealt with when the site was first developed, it is not possible to discount the possibility that contaminated material will be encountered on site.</p> <p>The draft Mini Masterplan does not contain any specific guidance on the protection or enhancement of soils, which would be undertaken with specific greenspace proposals, however, measures are included within future projects such as retrofitted rain gardens, SuDS, and planting which filters out pollutants.</p>
Air	<p>The effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan on the environment are generally positive.</p> <p>The draft George Street Mini Masterplan "Scenarios" could increase economic activity, recreational activity etc. in the area, and could result in an increased number of vehicles on the roads which emit greenhouse gases. However, the Mini Masterplan includes key "Design Principles" to promote sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport. The Mini Masterplan aims to ensure the George Street area becomes a destination rather than a through route. Sustainable alternatives to car travel will be encouraged within the Min Masterplan, with active travel aiming to provide potential positive effects on human health.</p> <p>The promotion of sustainable transport is also likely to benefit the Low Emission Zone (LEZ) the Mini Masterplan area sits to the north of the City Centre Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and LEZ, and the promotion of sustainable travel aims to assist meeting City Centre air quality targets and LEZ objectives.</p>
Climatic Factors	<p>The overall effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan are generally positive. The draft George Street Mini Masterplan sets out the approach, pathway, and actions towards meeting Net Zero and climate-resilient assets and operations by 2045. As such, energy-efficient designs can be incorporated alongside renewable and low-carbon energy sources, with consideration provided on how further decarbonisation could be achieved in the future.</p>
Cultural Heritage	<p>The effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan on cultural heritage are generally positive, particularly the appreciation of listed buildings. The loss of Norco House and/or extensions is mixed. Two of the three options look to preserve the iconic Norco House. It should be noted that Historic</p>

	<p>Environment Scotland have previously been asked to consider this structure for listing. Following an assessment using the selection guidance it was found that the surviving two principal elevations (to George Street and to St Andrew Street) of Norco House met the criteria of special architectural or historic interest. However, the decision was not to list the building because of ongoing development proposals. The Design Principles indicate that heritage will be protected, and people’s understanding and enjoyment of it enhanced through the new developments and interventions.</p> <p>The Mini Masterplan strengthens the sense of place being proposed and the opportunities for new business to support old provide an opportunity to support cultural heritage.</p> <p>There is also potential to gain provisional floorspace in Norco House which can provide overspill exhibition space for the nearby Art Gallery, which adds an additional cultural heritage link in the vicinity.</p>
<p>Landscape / Streetscape</p>	<p>The overall effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan on the surroundings are mixed. Large-scale development scenarios, such as the demolition of the distinctive Norco House and extension (Scenario 3), which can be seen from several locations, could have a potentially negative effect on views and scenery and the character of the George Street Area.</p> <p>Option three does, however, including potential biodiversity opportunities within potential future interventions such as SUDs, blue/green infrastructure. There is also a commitment for tree and floral planting to enhance biodiversity (using native species where possible). Interventions include proposals for “green wall infrastructure”, green pillars (stacked upright structures) etc.</p> <p>The Mini Masterplan also provides opportunities for bioretention verges and/or rain gardens with pollinator friendly perennial planting, semi-mature tree planting of pollution tolerant species.</p> <p>Removal of Norco House and/ or the extension also presents an opportunity to open up the area and provide additional green spaces.</p> <p>Additional potential effects include installing green walls, living walls and other urban greening solutions as part of a neighbourhood wide urban greening strategy. This could focus on large scale blank gable ends and façades that are orientated to support green walls, with a secondary focus on smaller infill areas.</p>
<p>Material Assets</p>	<p>It is important to recognise George Street itself is a material asset within the City Centre boundary, and is being taken forward within the City Centre and Beach Masterplan refresh.</p> <p>The overall effect of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan is mixed. There are, for example, positive effects associated with the re-use of previously developed land and buildings.</p> <p>Scenarios may involve demolition works which will increase waste, however, there are opportunities to improve the management of resources and construction waste through the programme of works for example, through the development of Site Waste Management Plans.</p> <p>Delivery of renewable energy use is not discussed in detail within the draft Mini Masterplan, however, at the detailed design stage, there will be opportunities to incorporate energy efficiency into individual buildings, which could involve the use of heat pumps, passive heating, low emissivity, thermally efficient double-glazing, photovoltaic panels or thermal panels.</p> <p>There are also potential opportunities to link into the Aberdeen Heat and Power district heat network.</p>
<p>In summary</p>	<p>The assessment process found that all three scenarios could easily be considered successful, high-quality, potential design solutions, but will require more detail as redevelopment proposals. Overall the draft George Street Mini Masterplan has the potential to provide significant positive environmental effects across all three scenarios, in addition to specific place projects identified to improve the overall environmental conditions. Where these are mixed (i.e. positive and negative effects) there are opportunities which could be positive if the process to development and future interventions are comprehensively undertaken.</p>

Chapters 5 and 6 of the SEA Environmental Report describe the approach to the assessment of the environmental effects and mitigation measures to help mitigate the negative (or enhance the positive) effects of the development Scenarios.

Chapter 7 Implementation and Monitoring the Draft George Street Mini Masterplan

Monitoring the significant environmental effects of implementing the draft George Street Mini Masterplan is a fundamental part of the SEA process. The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires the significant environmental effects of a plan or programme to be monitored and that the Environment Report (this report) should include a description of measures 'envisaged' for monitoring the implementation of the plan. Chapter 7 of the SEA Environmental Report explains how significant negative and positive effects of the plan and provides a description of what will be monitored, how this can be undertaken and how often.

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1 BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Environmental Report and key facts

To meet its legislative requirements under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 for the preparation of its draft George Street Mini Masterplan, Aberdeen City Council contracted EnviroCentre to prepare Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Scoping and Environmental Reports. Aberdeen City Council will take into account the consultation responses and prepare the SEA Post-adoption Statement for publication with the final adopted George Street Mini Masterplan.

This Report constitutes an Environmental Report in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act (2005).

This section describes the purpose of SEA and the Environmental Report (ER), the background on the Aberdeen City Council draft George Street Mini Masterplan, the structure and content of this Environmental Report and where to locate relevant SEA statutory requirements by ER chapter. The ER as a whole is split into two distinct sections:

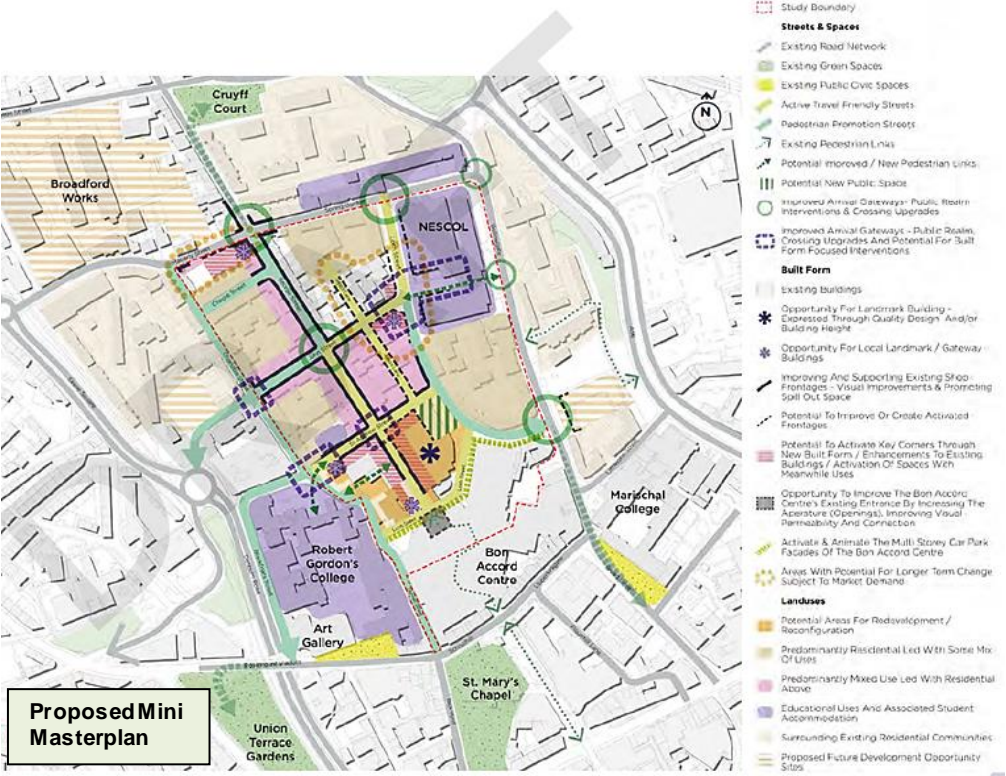
- **Chapters 1-3** provide information on the background to the draft George Street Mini Masterplan and describe the environmental, legislative and policy context within which it will operate once adopted. This contextual information informed the development of a bespoke approach to the assessment of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan's potential environmental effects. The approach taken to the SEA as a whole and, in particular, the assessment is described here also; and
- **Chapters 4-7** describe the outcomes of the assessment of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan, recommendations for improving its environmental performance and measures proposed to monitor its significant environmental effects.

In addition, there is a separate Non-technical Summary (NTS) which summarises the SEA of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan.

1.2 Key Facts

Table 1-1: Key Facts relating to the George Street Mini Masterplan

Name of Responsible Authority	Aberdeen City Council
Title of the of the Plan/ Programme/ Strategy (PPS)	Draft George Street Mini Masterplan
What Prompted the PPS	The purpose of the draft Mini Masterplan is to establish a clear vision, supporting objectives and set of development principles that will stimulate and support the delivery of incremental but transformational change for George Street, securing a range of economic, social and environmental benefits.
Subject	City Centre Masterplan Refresh & Beach Development Framework.
Period Covered by the PPS	Annual review of progress and delivery

<p>Frequency of Updates</p>	<p>This Mini Masterplan will ultimately form part of a wider recalibrated City Centre and Beach Masterplan which will be regularly reviewed to ensure Aberdeen City Council’s strategy for the City Centre and the Beach remains up to date and relevant, with a clear focus on delivery, for the portion of George Street identified.</p>
<p>Area covered by the PPS</p>	<p>The area identified for the Mini Masterplan is outlined below. The development of the masterplan will focus primarily within the study area.</p> <p>However, for wider benefits to be leveraged from the investment within the George Street area, the masterplan must acknowledge and respond to opportunities beyond the study boundary, understanding the influence of planned investment/development.</p> <p>The George Street neighbourhood is located towards the northern boundary of the masterplan area. George Street itself runs North to South, forming a once historic key link between the city centre core and areas to the North of the city. The area is defined to the south by the Bon Accord Centre, which serves the historic connection to the City Centre. It is bounded to the south west by Robert Gordon College and by Gallowgate, Spring Garden and North East Scotland College (NES).</p> <p>George Street hosts a diversity of uses which give the area its distinct character all of which sit within the wider context of Aberdeen’s economy and cultural offer.</p> 
<p>Purpose of PPS</p>	<p>The Mini Masterplan will put forward a strategy for the George Street area in the wider city centre context, complementing its existing strengths and building on recognised opportunities. The strategy for the area will be informed by a thorough understanding of place, with a strategy for change guided by a clear vision and objectives.</p> <p>It will focus predominantly on urban realm improvements but will also consider and suggest recommendations for more fundamental and widespread change (both physical and non-physical) across the study area informed by community and stakeholder consultations as well as in response to wider City Centre projects.</p> <p>It will set out regeneration projects identifying areas of change and supporting design aspirations. Supporting the Mini Masterplan is a list of projects that can be</p>

	<p>implemented, through a combination of public and private sector involvement to secure the vision and objectives of the Mini Masterplan.</p> <p>The Mini Masterplan will act as a tool to promote the following aspects;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider the appropriate policy, cultural and physical fit for change;• Engaging with the needs and ambitions of local residents, businesses and stakeholders;• Establishing development potential (in the form of indicative sketches and scenarios) for areas of change;• Mediating between a range of landowner and other stakeholder interests to realise areas of change;• Promoting a vision for change that can stimulate market action;• Celebrating and respecting the area's cultural heritage; and• Engendering a sense of cooperation and coordination between different agents of change to deliver on the Mini Masterplan's spatial vision.
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2 SEA APPROACH

2.1 Overview of approach

This section summarises the overall approach to the SEA of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan. It follows the relevant legislation and draws on guidance, especially the Scottish Governments SEA Toolkit (Scottish Government guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), 2013), but the approach has been tailored to meet the specific needs of the assessment of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan.¹ After Aberdeen City Council screened the draft George Street Mini Masterplan internally and made a decision that SEA was required, the main stages of SEA undertaken have been:

- Setting the context, developing SEA objectives, establishing the environmental baseline and deciding on the scope;
- Assisting in the development and refinement of strategic alternatives and assessing the environmental effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan; and
- Preparing the Environmental Report;

Further to consultation on this Environmental Report and the draft George Street Mini Masterplan consultation comments will be collated and accounted for in the final decision-making stages. Once adopted, the significant environmental effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan will be monitored. Table 2-1 summarises the key tasks in the SEA of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan.

Table 2-1: SEA Process summary

Stage	Purpose	Tasks
Screening	Establish whether SEA is required	Aberdeen City Council determined there would be a requirement for SEA and went straight to Scoping
Scoping	Establish an appropriate level of detail for, and approach to, the SEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify other relevant PPSs & environmental protection objectives • Collect baseline information • Develop SEA Objectives • Identify environmental problems and sensitive areas • Consult on the scope of the SEA
Assessment	To assess the likely environmental effects of the Plan and its alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test Plan objectives against SEA Objectives • Develop strategic alternatives • Predict and evaluate the effect of the Plan, including alternatives • Consider ways to mitigate adverse effects • Propose to monitor the environmental effects of the plan implementation
Reporting	Prepare an Environmental Report on the SEA	Report the SEA process including the likely significant environmental effects of the Plan and its alternatives for consultation with the draft.
Consultation & Decision Making	To consult on the likely significant effects of the Plan and the proposed monitoring plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult on the Environmental Report and Draft Plan • Assess significant changes • Decision-making and providing Information
Monitoring	To monitor the likely significant effects of the plan and the proposed monitoring plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop aims and methods for monitoring the significant environmental effects of the Plan • Respond to adverse effects of the Plan

¹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/strategic-environmental-assessment-guidance/> (Accessed 15/12/2022)

2.2 Relationship With Other PPS and Environmental Objectives

Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that the Environmental Report includes an outline of the draft George Street Mini Masterplans relationships with other relevant PPS.

During the SEA Scoping stage, a review of relevant plans, programmes and strategies (PPS) was undertaken to help identify potential constraints and synergies that outside factors may place on the development and implementation of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan and vice versa. For example, the draft George Street Mini Masterplan has the potential to work towards delivering national and local level health objectives by supporting development that improves access to and encourages outdoor recreation.

In addition, the review of other relevant PPS was instrumental in identifying potential SEA objectives, assessment criteria and baseline information. These were considered and, where appropriate, incorporated into the SEA framework. A summary of the relationships between the draft George Street Mini Masterplan and the most relevant PPS is provided in Chapter 4 Environmental Protection Objectives, Baseline and Context. A full list of the PPS considered is provided in Appendix C.

2.3 Environmental Baseline and Issues/Problems Relevant to the Mini Masterplan

To enable an accurate assessment of the effects which the draft George Street Mini Masterplan could have, a review of the current state of the environment and the environmental issues/problems relevant to the Mini Masterplan area was developed for the scoping report and subsequently updated for the Environmental Report (Refer to Appendix D).

2.4 Strategic Environmental Assessment Activities and Engagement to date

Table 2-2 summarises the SEA activities to date concerning the draft George Street Mini Masterplan. Appendix A shows the comments received from the Consultation Authorities on the Scoping Report and what has been done to address them.

Table 2-2: SEA activities to date

SEA Action/Activity	When carried out
Screening: to determine whether the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects	Not required, the draft George Street Mini Masterplan qualifies under Section 5(3) of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.
Early engagement with stakeholders	February/March 2022
Further engagement with stakeholders	Sept-Oct-Nov 2022
Assessing the relationships with other PPS through a PPS review and identification of the issues for the masterplan	November 2022
Identification of Environmental issues and environmental baseline data sets	November – December 2022
Developing the method for environmental assessment	November - December 2022
Scoping: Scoping sets out sufficient information on the draft George Street Mini Masterplan to enable the Consultation Authorities (Historic Environment Scotland, NatureScot and Scottish Environment Protection	Scoping report submitted to SEA Gateway 13 th January 2023

Agency) to form a view on the scope, level of detail and consultation period that would be appropriate.	Consultee comments received 17/02/2023
Environmental baseline established	December 2022 - January 2023
Review Scoping Consultation Comments	February 2023
Preparation of Environmental Report: An environmental assessment has been carried out on the issues and Scenarios set out in the draft George Street Mini Masterplan.	Environmental assessment carried out between January 2023 and Mid-February 2023
Publication and submission of Environmental Report to SEA Gateway	

The approach taken to stakeholder consultation and engagement involved both formal statutory consultation and also more informal consultation and engagement activities. The overall aim of the approach was to be as inclusive and transparent as possible given the timescales and other constraints.

As the development of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan unfolded, several consultation and engagement activities were undertaken. This was necessary to, on a more ad hoc basis, capture information, opinion and guidance from various stakeholder groups. Informal engagement and consultation was carried out using various approaches including presentations, workshops etc.

Refer to Chapter 2 of the draft *George Street Mini Masterplan* for details of Community and Stakeholder Engagement (Appendix H), and also Appendix I: “*George Street Mini Masterplan Consultation Analysis*”.

2.5 SEA Methodology

In October 2022 EnviroCentre was commissioned to undertake the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan.

2.5.1 Scoping the SEA

The scoping stage of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan SEA involved the following key tasks:

- Identifying how the draft George Street Mini Masterplan may influence and be influenced by other relevant Plans, Programmes and Strategies and environmental protection objectives;
- Collation of environmental baseline information related to the draft George Street Mini Masterplan and the environment likely to be affected;
- Developing SEA objectives, assessment criteria and significance criteria as a framework against which the potential environmental effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan were assessed;
- Identifying key environmental problems and sensitive areas relevant to the draft George Street Mini Masterplan and the George Street area; and
- Consulting on the proposed scope of the SEA.

2.5.2 Approach to scoping

Scoping is an iterative process and all tasks undertaken informed each other throughout their development and the early development of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan. Consultation on the SEA Scoping Report ran between 13th January 2023 and 17th February 2023 marking the point at which views were sought from the statutory Consultation Authorities detailed below on the proposed scope of the SEA.

- Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA);

- NatureScot; and
- Historic Environment Scotland.

The Scoping Report was produced by EnviroCentre Ltd in collaboration with Aberdeen City Council between November 2022 and January 2023. It was supported by engagement with representatives from Aberdeen City Council and Turner & Townsend Consulting Limited during November 2022, and the outcome of these meetings informed the development of scoping tasks.

Appendix A includes the SEA scoping responses and how the scoping consultation responses have been incorporated into the approach to the SEA.

2.5.3 Collation of environmental baseline information

An initial review of available environmental baseline data was undertaken during the scoping stage which sought to identify, as far as possible the following information (Refer to Appendix D):

- The current state of the environment;
- Past and likely future trends; and
- Key current environmental problems, sensitive areas and opportunities in the Aberdeen George Street area, particularly those of relevance to the development of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan.

The initial approach was to collate broad environmental information for all SEA topics:

- Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna;
- Population and Human Health;
- Water;
- Soil;
- Air;
- Climatic Factors;
- Cultural Heritage;
- Landscape; and
- Material Assets;

This informed the identification of key environmental issues and both these and the initial draft baseline were consulted on externally during the formal scoping consultation. As a consequence of the scoping consultation and subsequent informal engagement, potential environmental issues have emerged as being important in the area. The implications of these key issues are discussed in further detail in Section 3.

The SEA topics to be scoped in/out of this Environmental Report and the associated justification are provided in Table 2-3.

Table 2-3: SEA Topics for Scoping

SEA Topic	Scoped In	Scoped Out	Justification
Biodiversity, flora and fauna	✓		Development has the potential to positively and negatively affect habitats and species through loss of habitat and disturbance.
Population and human health	✓		The draft George Street Mini Masterplan incorporates open space, formal recreation and community facilities which offer potential benefits for the population such as employment, and health benefits.
Water	✓		Increased run-off from development areas may increase flood risk albeit SUDS/ green infrastructure measures are proposed.
Soil	✓		Without knowing the condition of the soils within the George Street area it is not possible to discount the possibility that contaminated material will be encountered on-site. Existing features such as car parking areas etc. could contain localised contamination and therefore any made ground encountered should be tested for chemical contaminants and dealt with accordingly.
Air	✓		New development may result in traffic at certain times of the day. These indirect effects may give rise to changes in local air quality and noise along affected routes.
Climatic factors	✓		Indirect effects on carbon emissions from increases buildings. The proposals offer an opportunity to build with very low carbon emissions through energy efficiency, insulation and microgeneration.
Cultural heritage	✓		There are listed buildings, within the area that the proposals have the potential to affect.
Landscape	✓		The proposed development has the potential for significant effects on landscape quality and character.
Material assets	✓		The proposals provide an opportunity for sustainable construction methods and materials to minimise waste. The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will enhance recreational and open space provision.

2.5.4 Alternatives

Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act (2005) requires that “reasonable alternatives” be considered. As the draft George Street Mini Masterplan included alternative scenarios, the assessment of reasonable alternatives was carried out at this stage and included in the Environmental Report.

2.5.5 Taking account of responses to the scoping consultation

The SEA Scoping Report was consulted on between 13th January and 17th February 2023. Consultation responses were received from the statutory Consultation Authorities; NatureScot, Scottish Environment Protection Agency and Historic Environment Scotland. Where practicable, these were accounted for in the revised approach to the SEA which is described in Appendix A which indicates how specific scoping responses were incorporated into the revised approach to the SEA.

2.5.6 Methodology for Assessing Environmental Effects

The framework for assessing the environmental effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan, both positive and negative, has been formulated from:

- the guidance in the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act (2005), specifically Schedule 3, which sets out the information required in the Environmental Report;
- the advice and example tables contained in the Scottish Government’s SEA Guidance (2013)
- the study of other Council plans, programmes and strategies that have been subject to SEA.

2.6 Predicting and evaluating the potential effects of the Draft George Street Mini Masterplan, including alternatives

The SEA Regulations require that the Environmental Report identifies, describes and evaluates the likely significant environmental effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan. The Environmental Report will also include measures to avoid, reduce or mitigate any significant effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan.

The draft George Street Mini Masterplan’s objectives and proposals will be assessed against the SEA objectives to be agreed through the scoping process. Significant environmental effects of the plan will be predicted to determine whether the draft George Street Mini Masterplan has negative, positive, uncertain or neutral effects.

In addition, the effects will further be evaluated to determine damage or otherwise to the receptors in relation to reversibility or irreversibility of effects, risks, duration (permanent, temporary, long-term, short-term and medium-term) and cumulative (direct, indirect, secondary and synergetic). Table 2-4 shows the assessment framework that will be used to assess the effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan. This will be reported in the Environmental Report.

Proposals will be assessed against the SEA Objectives, in accordance with the guidance in Planning Advice Note 1/2010

Table 2-4: SEA significance criteria

Score	Description
Major positive effect (++)	An action very likely to lead to significant improvement, or a series of long-term improvements, leading to large-scale and permanent benefits to the SEA objective being appraised. A major effect is also likely to have cumulative and indirect beneficial effects and is also likely to have positive transboundary effects.
Positive effect (+)	An action likely to lead to moderate improvement in both the short and long-term, leading to large-scale temporary, or medium-scale permanent benefits to the objective being assessed, Even when beneficial effects are felt to be temporary, they should not be easily reversible in the long-term (to detriment of the SEA Objective).
Neutral effect (0)	An action which is unlikely to have any beneficial or negative effects on the SEA objective being assessed in either the short or long-term. Neutral scoring should only be used when it is very unlikely that the effect will be neither positive or negative. A neutral score is not the same as uncertain where an appraiser is not sure if an effect is likely to be positive or negative, or 'mixed/. Where the appraiser feels that the effects are likely to be both positive and negative(see below for more details).
Negative effect (-)	An action is likely to moderate or loss in both the short and long-term, leading to a large-scale temporary, or medium-scale permanent negative effect on the objective. An action which may also have limited cumulative and indirect detrimental effects and/or limited degradation of conditions outside the specific strategy area. It is also likely that it will be possible to mitigate or reverse a minor negative effect through policy or project intervention.

Major negative effect (-)	<p>A scheme/measure is likely to lead to significant or severe damage or loss, or a series of long-term negative effects, leading to large-scale and permanent negative effects on the SEA objective being assessed.</p> <p>A scheme/measure which may also have significant cumulative and indirect detrimental effects and/or degrade conditions outside the specific scheme area so will have negative transboundary effects.</p> <p>A scheme/measure which is likely to threaten environmental thresholds or capacities in areas already under threat.</p> <p>The detrimental effects of a scheme/measure will be hard to reverse and are unlikely to be easily mitigated through policy or project intervention.</p> <p>Any damage or detrimental effect in or to environmentally sensitive areas, issues or landscapes which are recognised and/or protected locally, regionally, nationally or internationally.</p>
Mixed effect (++)/- +/- etc.)	<p>The effect is likely to be a combination of beneficial and detrimental effects, particularly where effects are considered on sub-issue, areas or criterion. For example, a scheme/measure may enhance the viability of certain protected species or habitats (such as native woodland) but through this, damage existing (non-native) habitats which may themselves be important. Such mixed effects will be hard to predict but could be significant in the long term, or when taken with others e.g., cumulative or synergistic which may have.</p>
Uncertain effect (?)	<p>The effect of an action is not known or is too unpredictable to assign a conclusive score. The appraiser is not sure of the effect. This may be the case where an action covers a range of issues, or where the manner in which the action is implemented will have a material impact on the effects it will have.</p>

The stages of assessment, including key aims and outcomes, are summarised in Table 2-5. These criteria were developed to take account of the requirements of Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act to include the following types of environmental effects:

- Secondary, cumulative and synergistic;
- Medium and long term;
- Permanent and temporary; and
- Positive and negative.

The following details the approach taken to assessment of potential environmental effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan. The assessment considered the potential environmental effects of:

- Draft George Street Mini Masterplan Vision and Objectives;
- Scenarios identified in the draft George Street Mini Masterplan; and
- Broad categories of George Street Mini Masterplan Projects.

Table 2-5: Staged Approach to Assessment

Assessment stage	Tasks	Key aims and outcomes of stage
Stage 1 Assessment of strategic elements of draft George Street Mini Masterplan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental commentary on strategic elements George Street Mini Masterplan: Vision and Strategic Focus (Section 5.1 and Appendix D) Compatibility analysis of George Street Mini Masterplan objectives and SEA objectives (Section 5.2 and Appendix E) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an environmental commentary on the George Street Mini Masterplan's vision and strategic focus to identify potential conflicts and synergies with environmental objectives. To focus the assessment of the George Street Mini Masterplan project categories on key issues and potential environmental effects
Stage 2 Assessment of alternative approaches to the draft George Street Mini Masterplan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and develop reasonable alternative approaches to the draft George Street Mini Masterplan (Section 6.1). Assess reasonable alternatives based on their potential environmental effects (Appendix F) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To inform the development of the George Street Mini Masterplan by providing information on the environmental performance of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan relative to other reasonable alternatives
Stage 3 Assessment of significant environmental effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Characterisation of the George Street area in terms of its key environmental and legislative constraints, vulnerabilities and opportunities (Chapter 4 and Appendix C and D) Assessment of potential environmental effects of George Street Mini Masterplan Scenarios and broad categories of proposed George Street Mini Masterplan projects (Appendix F). Develop mitigation measures for negative and enhancement measures for positive environmental effects (Appendix E, F, G). Assessment of potential cumulative environmental effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan as a whole (Section 6.4). Develop a framework for monitoring the significant environmental effects of George Street Mini Masterplan implementation (Chapter 7) 	<p>Overall aim: to ensure that the potential environmental effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan have been fully considered and accounted for before its adoption. Related aims and outcomes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To map and understand the key environmental and legislative constraints, vulnerabilities and opportunities in the George Street area. To predict and understand the potential environmental effects of broad categories of Scenarios in the draft George Street Mini Masterplan. Evaluate the significance of potential environmental effects of categories of projects in the draft George Street Mini Masterplan and groups of projects. Develop appropriate mitigation/enhancement measures and monitoring proposals for significant potential environmental effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan.

2.6.1 Characterisation of the George Street area

This task aimed to identify key environmental and legislative sensitivities, vulnerabilities and opportunities in the George Street area.

Publicly available data was sourced from, among others, Aberdeen City Council, Historic Environment Scotland, SEPA and NatureScot. This task was not undertaken as a feasibility study of potential draft George Street Mini Masterplan project locations, rather it identified which parts of the George Street area are vulnerable, in environmental terms, to the effects of draft George Street Mini Masterplan

development to inform the assessment of significant environmental effects. Conversely, this task also identified several environmental opportunities in the George Street area (Refer to Chapters 3 and 4 and Appendix D Environmental Baseline Appraisal).

2.6.2 Compatibility analysis of Draft George Street Mini Masterplan objectives and SEA objectives

This was done using a compatibility analysis approach. The compatibility analysis aims to identify potential areas of conflict or support between what the draft George Street Mini Masterplan aims to achieve, and the aspirations for the environment encapsulated in the SEA objectives.

Compatibility analysis informed the early development of the SEA and draft George Street Mini Masterplan by:

- Identifying areas where the plan lacked support for the SEA objectives;
- Identifying aspects of the environment that may be more vulnerable to the potential environmental effects affected by the draft George Street Mini Masterplan; and
- Focusing the assessment of effects on key issues.

A summary of the compatibility analysis was presented in an assessment matrix with the SEA headline objectives across the top and the draft George Street Mini Masterplan objectives on the left-hand side (Appendix E).

The key to scoring the compatibility of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan objectives with the SEA objectives is summarised in Table 2-6.

Table 2-6: Key to compatibility scoring

Score	Description of score
✓	Plan objective supportive of SEA objectives
X	Potential conflict between plan and SEA objectives
?	Uncertain whether the plan objectives conflict or support the SEA objectives
0	Plan objectives have no identified conflict or support of SEA objectives

2.6.3 Assessment of alternative scenarios

A list of key SEA Receptors organised by SEA topic and objectives identified as relevant to George Street are summarised and presented in Table 2-7. The key receptors and objectives will be considered throughout the SEA process and used to inform the development of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan at key decision-making stages.

Within Table 2-7, we have attempted to align air, noise and climate objectives as they are related in terms of sources and impacts and ideally should not be considered in isolation. Air quality is also considered under population and human health because it is a public health issue as well as environmental.

To assist with assessment against the objectives identified within Table 2-7, the following questions were considered in relation to site proposals (Refer to Appendix F).

Table 2-7: Key Environmental Receptors, SEA Objectives and Questions

SEA Topic	SEA Objectives	Questions
Biodiversity (Flora and fauna)	Protect or conserve and, where possible, restore and enhance biodiversity and valued nature conservation habitats and species.	<i>To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conservation objectives of International, National or local designations? • populations of protected species, their habitats and resting places or roosts? • wider biodiversity, i.e., non-designated/protected sites and species? • existing green network and habitat connectivity? • opportunities for enhancement or expansion of the green network and wider habitat connectivity? • the protection and enhancement of urban trees?
Population and Human Health	To protect and enhance quality of life, including maintaining and improving opportunities to access public open space and the natural and historic environment	<i>To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the provision of housing and employment opportunities to meet identified needs? • the provision of appropriate services and community facilities to meet identified needs? • residential amenity, including noise? • access to open spaces, recreational facilities and active travel routes? • access to the historic environment?
Water	To protect and enhance the ecological status of the water environment	<i>To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the ecological status of identified water bodies: • surface water run-off • flood risk in the local and/or wider areas?
Soil	To maintain or improve soil quality, quantity and function and prevent any further degradation of soils	<i>To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contaminated land? • Impact on existing topsoil and/or subsoils?
Air	To improve or maintain air quality and reduce emissions of key pollutants	<i>To what extent will the Mini Masterplan be likely to reduce/increase air quality, in terms of:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • carbon emissions? • levels of Nitrous Dioxide (NO₂) and Particulate Matter (PM₁₀)?
Climatic Factors	To reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase resilience to the consequences of climate change	<i>To what extent will the strategy or policy promote:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • renewable energy technologies and energy efficiency? • sustainable transport and active travel? • future-proofing of new development? • Green infrastructure provision?
Cultural heritage	Protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment.	<i>To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Archaeological sites, Conservation Areas and Gardens and Designed Landscapes and their settings?
Landscape	Protect and enhance landscape character, local distinctiveness and promote access to the wider environment.	<i>To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the landscape character and setting of settlements?
Material Assets	To reduce waste and promote the sustainable use of resources	<i>To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • waste from new development? • the re-use of previously developed land and buildings? • the delivery of renewable energy development?

2.6.4 Detailed assessment

The assessment was informed by the key issues identified through the draft George Street Mini Masterplan and supported by SEA objectives and assessment criteria (the 'SEA Framework'), maps, environmental baseline, key issues, trends and significance criteria.

A matrix has been developed for each of the scenarios under consideration. Each assessment was appraised against the significance criteria to attribute significance to potential environmental effects identified. At this stage, the assessment informed the identification of some generic measures to mitigate and enhance potential environmental effects. Comments columns/ rows on the assessment matrices were used to pull out significant issues related to the scenarios where appropriate (Refer to Appendix F and the Baseline Environmental Appraisal (Appendix D)).

2.6.5 High-Level Assessment of Potential Mini Masterplan Future Projects

The assessment of potential future interventions and measures engaged a 'high-level' assessment technique which utilised the SEA Framework. This was presented in an assessment matrix (Appendix G) with commentary in Section 6.3.

2.6.6 Cumulative Effects Assessment

As required by Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, the cumulative and synergistic effects of the strategies, policies and development opportunities in the Plan were assessed.

There are different types of cumulative effects, but what we were principally concerned with here was the overall combined effects of the whole plan and the multiple actions it contains on a single 'receptors', which could be a certain group within the population, the water environment or flora and fauna for example. Many impacts arising from the draft George Street Mini Masterplan are likely to be cumulative (e.g., emissions of air pollutants and greenhouse gases). From the assessment of the various parameters of the plan described in the section above, many effects that were already identified are cumulative in character. This was particularly emphasised where several aspects of the plan were predicted to impact upon the same or similar SEA issues e.g., water quality, designated sites, landscape etc.

At this stage, the most significant potential cumulative effects were identified, both positive and negative, which were predicted to occur due to the effects of several aspects of the plan on a particular issue or receptor or location. This was not intended to be an exhaustive list as predicting the interactions and additive effects is complex and uncertain, however, these cumulative effects were considered some of the most significant (Refer to Section 6.3).

2.7 Mitigation and Monitoring

2.7.1 Development of measures to monitor significant environmental effects

Monitoring is an integral part of SEA and the significant environmental effects of implementing the draft George Street Mini Masterplan should be monitored to check the predictions made during the assessment, identify any unforeseen adverse effects and undertake any remedial action required. A proposed monitoring framework was developed during the SEA which identified the significant environmental effects predicted and potential indicators for monitoring them (see Chapter 7). Ideally, this SEA monitoring framework will be integrated with the monitoring requirements for delivery of the finalised George Street Mini Masterplan and any other existing monitoring (e.g., undertaken by the Council or environmental regulators) to avoid duplication of effort.

The Environmental Report will consider measures to prevent, reduce or offset any significant adverse effects as far as possible before measures are considered to mitigate residual adverse effects. Mitigation measures could include changes to alternatives, changes to a specific proposal, inclusion of new provisions, technical measures to be applied, identifying issues to be addressed at a subsequent stage and proposals for changing other relevant plans, programmes or strategies.

The key monitoring tasks and their purpose are summarised below in Table 2-8.

Table 2-8: Monitoring tasks and their purpose

Monitoring Tasks	Purpose
1. Post-Implementation Review	To measure the environmental performance of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan to determine whether its effects are as anticipated, and thereby inform future revisions.
2. Learning about predictions	Ensure that the adverse effects identified inform future revisions of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan should they arise.

3 DRAFT GEORGE STREET MINI MASTERPLAN

3.1 Background to the assessment of strategic alternatives

During the development of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan, a range of Scenarios have been considered and consulted on with the local community and other stakeholders, especially as part of the development of earlier versions of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan and as part of the masterplanning process. This has resulted in the approach presented in the current draft George Street Mini Masterplan and the potential projects it contains.

Given the scale and importance of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan area, three Scenarios were developed to test out initial thoughts for the concept masterplanning approach for the George Street area. This testing process has been crucial in allowing the development of a preferred draft George Street Mini Masterplan approach, along with alternative Scenarios, which are viable, deliverable and which will maximise the potential of the area. This iterative process was undertaken by the design team alongside Aberdeen City Council to ensure the benefits and drawbacks of the potential design solutions were understood and the most appropriate proposal agreed upon by consensus.

In February 2022 Aberdeen City Council undertook a consultation exercise to understand local stakeholders' and community members' views and aspirations for the George Street area (Refer to Chapter 2 of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan (Appendix H). As part of the consultation exercise, a report was commissioned to detail the feedback and key themes arising (Appendix I).

Three questions were asked as a tool to provoke thoughts and ideas from participants. The questions were broad and qualitative and looked to understand people's general impressions of the place. The questions were:

- What do you think are the strengths / good aspects of the area?
- What do you think are the weaknesses / poor aspects of the area?
- What would you like to see changed in this area?

In addition to this, a further question was asked to establish people's understanding of how George Street relates to the rest of the city centre:

- Do you think of the George Street area as part of, and connected to, the rest of the city centre? Why do you feel this way?

The responses to this question largely suggested the area felt disconnected from the city centre. Of all the participants who responded, 41% of those believed that the disconnectedness was due to the severance caused by the John Lewis building and the Bon Accord Centre. However, looking more closely at the data of the 46 respondents who live in the area, 59% felt that the George Street area was part of the city centre.

3.1.1 Most reported strengths from the engagement.

- The most reported word or theme was around community. This relates to the offer of local business and some respondents had a sentimental connection to the area.
- The traditional architecture of George Street was commonly reported with the John Lewis building and stone buildings providing a distinct character.
- A large number of responses reported the diversity and multicultural offer of George Street as a key strength.
- Of the positive feedback, a common theme was seeing the potential of George Street and how welcome change in the area would be.

- Location. General comments were made on the location of the area within the city centre, being close to retail and leisure offers as well as being easily accessible by pedestrians.
- The mixed use of the area was raised as a strength throughout the feedback.
- A smaller number of responses commented on the cleanliness of George Street and the street art.

3.1.2 Most reported weaknesses from the engagement

- General safety, maintenance and security. Many people are concerned about anti-social behaviour and crime rates in the area and feel unsafe walking through at certain times of the day.
- Although a number of responses commented positively on the retail offer of George Street, the quality of the retail offer was seen as a weakness alongside vacant properties.
- There were a number of general comments on the overall aesthetic of the area that needed improving due to; foul smells, dirty façades, and litter.
- Traffic was raised as a concern in the area, with comments being raised on double parking and uneven pavements.
- The area lacks green spaces which are easily accessible.
- Only 15% of the respondents lived in the wider George St area and this is an issue to be addressed.
- A smaller number of responses highlighted seagull nuisance as a concern in the area.

3.1.3 Additional Engagement

A key part of continuing the conversation has been hosting a number of stakeholder workshops as well as a public consultation exercise. The following feedback has come from initial stakeholder discussions.

Stakeholder Feedback Summary

First reaction feedback during these sessions includes comments as follows:

- Lack of urban landscaping and green spaces;
- Feels busy and vibrant – but not alive after 5 pm;
- The historical connection severed by Bon Accord Centre – some connections are constrained;
- There is a real fragility of business – although George Street has survived Covid relatively well, its small independent businesses may be lost because of energy costs.
- The area doesn't feel overly safe at night – lighting is poor;
- Concern about transport and bus routes;
- George Street has become increasingly constrained with clutter;
- The only decent green space is on Hutcheon Street;
- Diversity is great - lots of ethnically diverse shops;
- Robert Gordon's College, Sandman and Finnies are all attractors. Estimate of 11,000 people potentially associated with all on a daily basis; and
- Broadford works really needs tackled – there are few big sites that could be real game changers.

Community Planning Feedback Summary

- There are several community organisations that are operating in the area, but what they do not have is a knowledge of what each other is doing and how they could support each other.
- Create a Community Network where groups, organisations and individuals would be asked to share ideas and take forward some actions.
- Add to the already developed and well-attended George Community Council
- Use of notice boards and a social media presence to promote what is going on.

- A small minority do not like the shops and would like to see a return of more traditional offer, such as butchers, bakers, or clothes shops.
- Accessibility issues with uneven pavement and minimal seating opportunities.

The feedback generated by the consultation exercise between February and March 2022 has identified clear themes and areas for intervention from those who use and visit the area on a daily basis. These themes should help inform a Design Brief for future development in the George Street Area. The Design Brief should set out a clear vision and objectives, key short-term interventions and 'quick wins', and longer-term physical interventions as well as exploring the future use options of the John Lewis building.

The Mini Masterplan should then advocate a preferred option for change within the context of the wider City Centre Masterplan which will identify key projects for future investment and delivery.

3.2 Draft George Street Mini Masterplan Scenarios and Potential Future Projects

The Mini Masterplan will set out regeneration projects identifying areas of change and supporting design aspirations. Supporting the framework is a list of potential Mini Masterplan projects that can be implemented, through a combination of public and private sector involvement to secure the vision and objectives of the Mini Masterplan, and SEA is an iterative process before masterplan adoption by Aberdeen City Council.

The Mini Masterplan is at an early stage of development and the following draft objectives are being developed, which are the themes from the Aberdeen Local Outcome Improvement Plan and guide all Aberdeen City Council strategies.

- Objectives for People
- Objectives for Place
- Objectives for Economy

In addition, a list of possible interventions to achieve the objectives and address identified problems and opportunities will be identified under each of the themes to be included within the following 3 scenarios:

Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act (2005) requires that "reasonable alternatives" be considered, these are:

Scenario 1 – Renovation and Rationalisation

Scenario 2 - A new residential scale; and

Scenario 3 – A mixed-use community.

3.2.1 Scenario 1 - Renovation and Rationalisation

This scenario explores the potential to demolish the later Norco House extension, retaining and refurbishing the brutalist and distinctive Norco House (Figure 3-1 and Figure 3-2)).

The demolition makes way for a new George Street urban civic space - Greyfriars Square (the name Greyfriars is a nod to a historic ward which encapsulated part of the study area).

A new glazed facade to the east of the building allows a greater amount of natural light into the building whilst providing an animated new, mixed-use address onto the square.

Figure 3-1: Scenario 1 – Renovation and Rationalisation

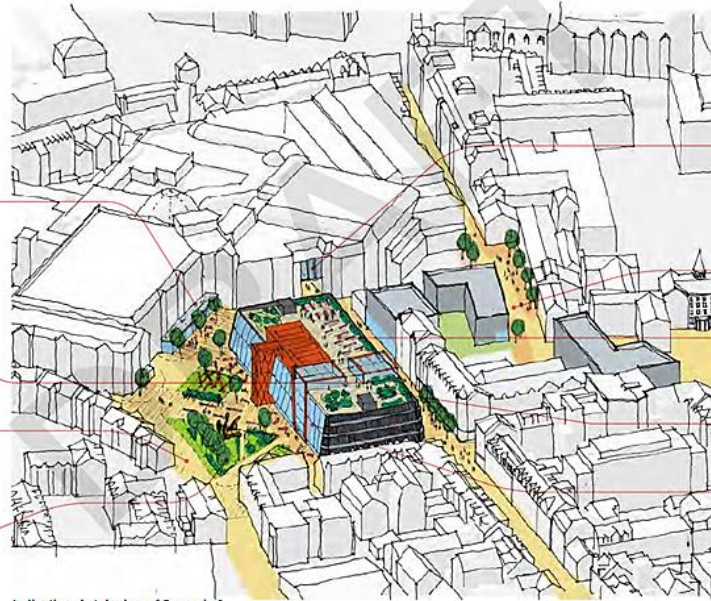
Scenario 1 - Renovation and Rationalisation

Alteration of Bon Accord Centre's elevation to provide single storey cafe/restaurant/bar units to create animation onto Loch Street

Atrium cut into the existing Norco House structure to provide natural light to illuminate the link between Greyfriars Square and George Street

Existing road infrastructure along Loch Street narrowed to create larger pedestrian space and pocket park

Greyfriars Square: Ground floor uses from the refurbished Norco House spill out onto the new park and create animation. Potential for sculpture park and external exhibitions.



Facade alteration to Bon Accord Centre to allow for better visibility into the shopping centre

Infill mixed use development. Potential for commercial/retail on the ground floor and residential above

New street trees and public realm improvements to Crooked Lane

Roof top public space

Infill mixed use development. Potential for commercial/retail on the ground floor and residential above

Making the most of roof space for solar collection, rainwater collection and sedum roofs

New glazed facade to Norco House onto the Loch Street pocket park. Glazing will allow for more natural daylight into the deep floor plan

What If?
 Norco House was re-imagined as a cultural, entrepreneurial, community and mixed use hub adjacent to a new civic space in the City.

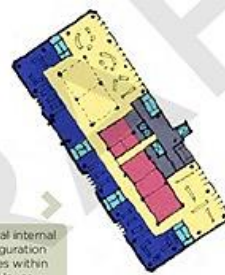
Figure 3-2: Norco House Potential Uses (Scenario 1)

Norco House Potential Uses



Ground floor plan
 The proposed ground floor looks to accommodate a number of different occupants and users within the floor plan. The open plan and large span between columns allows for the plan to be split up for different functions. The central yellow area is accessed from George Street and provides access to the lift core to the uses above. The areas in light pink could accommodate food and beverage operators bringing

day and evening activity to George Street. The dark blue spaces could be flexible workshop spaces for the community, entrepreneurs and start ups. Areas around the lift core and stair cores can act as back of house storage and plant for the different occupiers.



Typical upper floor plans
 The upper floors separate the uses based upon the amount of natural light that penetrates into the floorplan. The existing facade to George Street has mostly clerestory glazing. These locations could be occupied by focused workspaces or incubator workshops that don't require large amounts of natural light and views. The middle of the plan, with the lowest levels of natural light, could accommodate recording studios, photographic light rooms, storage

- Food + beverage
- Workshop/ incubator
- Flexible entrance space/co-working space
- Back of house
- Recording studio/ lightroom
- Vertical circulation

and plant rooms. The new glazed east facing facade could accommodate open plan co-working spaces, meeting rooms and cultural functions (e.g galleries / exhibitions) etc.
 There are four lift cores in the existing building and this allows the building to be let out to multiple operators on different levels of the building. For example, the external lift onto the park could provide exclusive access to the activities on the roof, including roof top cinema, urban allotments or community performance space.



Examples of how the new exposed building elevation can be celebrated and connect to a potential new public park adjacent

3.2.2 Scenario 2 - A new residential scale

This scenario explores the potential to introduce residential development as part of an integrated redesign of the Norco House site. It looks to demonstrate an approach that retains the most distinctive elements of Norco House whilst introducing a mix of residential typologies. It proposes to demolish the eastern extent of the 1980s Norco House extension, refurbishment of Norco House, additional residential floors to Norco House and a new build development of residential development adjacent (Figure 3-3 and Figure 3-4).

The new building element screens views of the Bon Accord Centre car park and alongside a new elevation to Norco House, frames and overlooks a small pocket park along St. Andrews Street.

This scenario explores the ability to deliver the potential for circa 150-200 new dwellings which could help to attract a different type of resident to the area, for example, graduates, young professionals or starter families who wish to access all that the City has to offer whilst being in walking distance to high-quality public spaces and a vibrant local community.

Figure 3-3: Scenario 2 – A New Residential Scale

**Scenario 2 - A
New Residential
Scale**

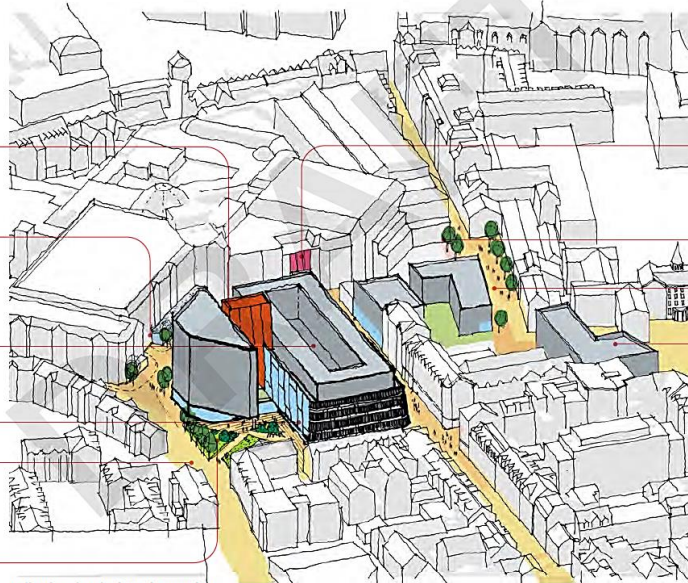
New lift core to serve both the residential accommodation within the refurbished Norco House and the new residential building to the east

Alteration of the Bon Accord Centre elevation along Loch Street to provide single storey cafe/restaurant/bar units to provide animation to Loch Street

Atrium cut into the existing structure of Norco House to provide natural light into the middle of the building and make it suitable for residential accommodation

New glazed facade to the east elevation of Norco House to allow for more natural light penetration
Existing road infrastructure along Loch Street narrowed to create larger pedestrian space and pocket park

Greyfriars Square. Ground floor uses from the refurbished Norco House and the new residential building development spill out onto the new pocket park and create animation and activity



Indicative sketch view of Scenario 2

Facade alteration to the Bon Accord Centre to allow for better visibility into the shopping centre

Visual screening of the Bon Accord Centre Service area and car park ramp

New street trees and public realm improvements to Crooked Lane

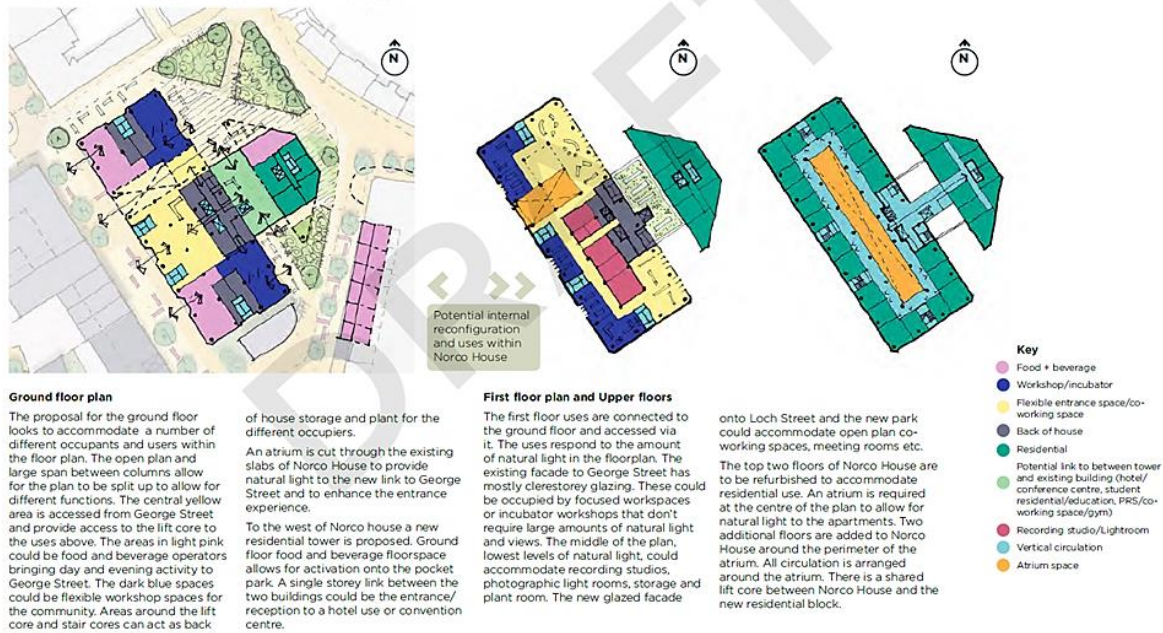
Infill mixed use development. Potential for commercial/retail on the ground floor and residential above

What If!

Norco House could be retained as part of a residential led, mixed use redevelopment of the site.

Figure 3-4: Norco House Potential Uses (Scenario 2)

Norco House Potential Uses



3.2.3 Scenario 3 - A mixed-use community

This scenario considers the full demolition of Norco House and the Norco House Extension to allow for a new residential led development to occupy its place (Figure 3-5).

The proposal is a mid-rise, mixed-use development accommodating residential, ground-floor retail, commercial, food and beverage uses.

A new pocket park sits on the corner of George Street and St. Andrews Street to offer community focused dwell space that is framed by ground floor active uses. This approach shifts the sense of centre towards the core of the study area and addresses the issues along Loch Street and the interface with the Bon Accord Centre.

This scenario achieves circa 250-300 residential dwellings.

Figure 3-5: Scenario 3 - A Mixed Community



The Mini Masterplan also identifies a number of potential future projects. The potential future projects list will continue to be co-developed by local stakeholders, community members and Council officers. It is intended to be a 'live' resource which can be updated and reviewed as opportunities emerge, so long as they support the vision and objectives of the Mini Masterplan. Potential projects are noted within Table 3-1 to 3-3

Table 3-1: Potential Community-Led Projects.

Potential Projects	Objective	Intervention
Using empty units for art Exhibitions, book launches, college and end of year exhibitions, temporary performance space, overspill exhibition space for the nearby Art Gallery, local street library etc.	George Street as a destination	Creating an adaptable neighbourhood
Consider the diversity of visitors and residents, ensuring facilities and amenities can provide for various ages and abilities – interventions could include temporary seating, drinking water stations, shade etc	George Street as a destination	A multi-generational space
Customising existing streets to support healthier and sustainable urban life for residents	Tackling inactivity & vacant space	Redesigning residential streets
Making use of and activating Underutilised spaces in a creative way	Tackling inactivity & vacant space	Reactivating alleys, lanes and backstreets
Create a stronger neighbourhood presence online. Appoint local champions for George Street who will focus on delivering the agreed vision and strategies in the area.	Appearance and character	Creating an identity
Removal of clutter & unnecessary signage, satellite dishes, pole signage etc Residential front door enhancements - painted, restored, highlighted through public realm materials	Appearance and character	De-cluttering the streets
Consider the experience of pedestrians in George Street.	Enhanced pedestrian experience	Security and lighting

Pop-up street canopies and overhead lighting make the public realm a pleasant place into the evening. Front door lighting for residential tenements Consider the safety of women and vulnerable groups using the public realm.		
Customising streets to support healthier and sustainable urban life for residents – designated bin storage, defined parking bays, EV charge points, street greening / communal gardens, play street elements, urban allotments, lighting, SUDS etc.	Enhancing Pedestrian Experience	Redefining residential streets - urban pilot project

Table 3-2: Potential Local Business Projects

Potential Projects	Objective	Intervention:
Establishing a core group of business owners/residents to represent George Street and appoint local champions for George Street who will focus on delivering agreed vision and strategies in the area Develop a George Street brand/identity. Introduce reward voucher initiatives etc to promote cross business patronage between retailers and other businesses as well as local residents discounts.	George Street as a Destination	Creating An identity, alive after 5 pm
Encouraging local businesses to be promoted on a George Street app/website/social media etc and use a means to run promotions and special events.	George Street as a destination	Creating a smart high street
Installing Green Walls, Living Walls and other Urban Greening solutions as part of a neighbourhood-wide strategy	George Street as a destination	Urban greening
Tap into local talent by providing space for start-ups / pop-up events to encourage students to stay beyond their course	George Street as a destination	An adaptable neighbourhood
Explore locations for rain gardens, SUDS and planting which filters out pollutants. Programme could also be extended to existing buildings for retrofit for improved thermal insulation and reduced energy consumption.	Appearance and character	Improved environmental performance
Improve quality & consistency of shop front signage. Shop front shutter art scheme Deep clean of existing paving, street furniture and building façades	Appearance and character	Animating buildings and façades
Reclaim parking spaces in front of businesses to encourage spill-out space into the public realm	Enhanced pedestrian experience	Improved street appearance
Encourage meanwhile uses such as pop-ups, street closures, parklets etc to improve activity Establish a strategy to co-ordinate later opening times/weekends etc across various uses. e.g. NESCOL & Robert Gordon's Colleges evening openings promoted to local restaurants, cafés, bars etc to encourage college patrons into the area. Using empty units for art exhibitions, book launches, College end of year exhibitions, temporary performance space, overspill exhibition space for the nearby Art Gallery, local street library etc	Tackling inactivity and vacant spaces	Alive after 5 & An Adaptable Neighbourhood

Table 3-3: Potential Aberdeen City Council Projects

Potential Projects	Objective	Intervention:
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Celebrate the heritage and the ornate architectural diversity through commercial events, walking tours, online/apps and feature lighting. Consider the provision of basic services, public toilets, 'changing spaces' toilets, and disabled access points	George Street as a destination	Smart high streets and necessities
Attractive visual screening across poor quality environments Coordinated palettes for street furniture, shop fronts and planting Improvements to street furniture, lighting and inclusion of temporary planters Increased CCTV Visitor and residential information points - these could be pop-up kiosks / interactive stands / live cycle counters/air quality readings etc	Enhancing the pedestrian experience	Safe and comfortable experience
Reconfiguring current bus routes as well as provision of enhanced bus stops with interactive boards / Wi-Fi / charging points to encourage greater use and improved passenger experience. Ensuring there is adequate space for cyclists along key routes with cycle parking through the area would encourage more cyclists to use the area safely	Reducing vehicle dominance	Prioritising sustainable travel
Introducing Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders. Better provision and/or quality of cycle parking in convenient locations Greater flexibility of on-street parking spaces, creating parklets which reclaim parking bays for dwelling, playing and socialising. Encourage carriageway narrowing, footpath widening and spill-out spaces	Reducing vehicle dominance	Making primary routes work harder
Encourage meanwhile uses such as pop-ups, street closures, parklets etc to improve activity. Establishing a strategy to coordinate later opening times/ weekends across various uses. Encourage future uses that support the vision and identity of George Street	Tackling inactivity & vacant space	Tackling the voids
Develop a palette of materials and street furniture to help celebrate George Street's character (to be developed alongside public realm detail design stages). Refurbish and restore existing street bins, bollards, and cycle stands. Introduce bin storage or shelters where bins are required to be stored on street	Appearance and character	Improved street appearance for people
Introduce a sculpture trail across the area - Street & pedestrian crossing colouring. Shop front creative interventions	Appearance and character	Art and colour

4 ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES, BASELINE AND CONTEXT

This section summarises the environmental baseline and key relationships between the draft George Street Mini Masterplan and other relevant plans, programmes and strategies and environmental protection objectives. Establishing the environmental baseline and context is key to understanding the relevant environmental problems, sensitivities and opportunities that the development of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan should consider. The environmental baseline and context have informed the development of the 'SEA Framework' against which the potential environmental effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan have been assessed and will be monitored.

4.1 Relationships with other plans, programmes, strategies and environmental protection objectives

A key requirement of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act is the consideration of relationships between the draft plan, programme or strategy (PPS) under development and other relevant PPS and environmental protection objectives. This supports the identification of the policy and legislative framework within which the draft George Street Mini Masterplan sits. In addition, it helps the Responsible Authority (in this instance Aberdeen City Council) to account for any potential constraints and inconsistencies and take advantage of any synergies or opportunities. The approach taken to the consideration of other relevant PPS and environmental protection objectives is described in section 2.2.

The review of relevant PPS, in conjunction with the collation of environmental baseline information, has been key to the identification of key environmental problems, threats and opportunities in the George Street area. Many of the local and regional level PPS reviewed (such as the Aberdeen City Council Local Development Plan) include specific targets, actions and objectives for George Street and the wider Aberdeen City environment. The process of collating environmental baseline information has, by definition, identified the current state of the environment relevant to the development of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan. Consideration of the environmental baseline in conjunction with environmental targets, actions and objectives from key PPS helps identify the environmental constraints within which the draft George Street Mini Masterplan must operate. In addition, it identifies key environmental opportunities and strengths of the area which the development of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan can capitalise on and build on.

Appendix C contains a full list of all relevant PPS considered as part of the SEA of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan. It highlights their relevance to the draft George Street Mini Masterplan and key opportunities, synergies and constraints. It identifies how the draft George Street Mini Masterplan may respond and its implications for the SEA.

4.1.1 Implications

As can be seen from Appendix C, there are a significant number of PPS which may influence the development of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan and *vice versa*. Some PPS will have more influence than others. For example, the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2017 establishes the land use and spatial planning framework for the City Centre and George Street area within which the spatial element of the regeneration of the area will need to operate i.e., what type of development can be pursued and where. Other, non-statutory PPS such as the ACC Open Space Strategy 2011-2016 and Healthy Cities Agenda will also have a significant influence on the development of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan and *vice versa*.

4.2 Environmental problems and opportunities identified

A requirement of the SEA Act is to identify key environmental problems relevant to the plan being developed. Given the potentially broad scope of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan, input from stakeholders and evidence in this environmental baseline and context chapter, this section has been expanded to incorporate consideration of environmental opportunities in the George Street area. Opportunities relate to potential synergies whereby protection and enhancement of the George Street environment can be delivered alongside socio-economic regeneration.

The main environmental considerations are outlined in Table 4-1 below. These issues are discussed in Chapters 5 and 6 of the Environmental Report.

Table 4-1: Data Sources for Providing Baseline Environmental Assessment

SEA Topic	Environmental Issue	How the Mini Masterplan contributes to tackling the problem?	Relevant Data
Biodiversity (Flora and Fauna)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential impact on nature conservation designations. • Potential impacts on protected species and priority habitats. • Potential loss of green linkages and wildlife corridors. • Pressure on Protected Species from new development through disturbance or loss of resting places and habitats. 	<p>National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) includes a new Universal Policy on the Nature Crisis for planning decisions to help achieve positive effects for biodiversity in association with development. NFP4 doesn't stipulate how biodiversity should be measured, however, the Mini Masterplan safeguard and enhance biodiversity where possible.</p>	<p>NatureScot Sitelink. https://sitelink.nature.scot/map</p> <p>Scotland's Environment. https://www.environment.gov.scot/</p> <p>UK BAP & LBAP priority habitats and species. https://www.nesbiodiversity.org.uk/ https://www.nature.scot/doc/scottish-biodiversity-list</p> <p>Scottish Ancient Woodland Inventory. https://map.environment.gov.scot/sewebmap/</p>
Population & Human Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to social and community facilities and the amenity of the area will have an impact on general wellbeing. The draft George Street Mini Masterplan can influence the relationship between facilities, amenities and the general vitality of communities. • The form and location of new development within the draft George Street Mini Masterplan area can contribute to social integration and improved wellbeing opportunities for the whole community. • The draft George Street Mini Masterplan proposals could change the noise levels compared to the existing situation due to changes in traffic flow on existing roads and new recreation facilities. 	<p>Promoting access to employment, supporting accessibility and health improvement.</p> <p>The Mini Masterplan vision of economy, people and place aims to identify open space to improve health through increased physical activity and reduce pollution by encouraging walking and cycling as an alternative to the car.</p> <p>Positive effects on mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will encourage minimising noise levels, for example, by encouraging sustainable alternatives to car travel</p>	<p>National Records of Scotland (NRS). https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/stats-at-a-glance/council-area-profiles</p> <p>Scottish Public Health Observatory (ScotPHO). https://www.scotpho.org.uk/</p> <p>Health and Wellbeing Profiles (life expectancy and mortality by cause) https://scotland.shinyapps.io/ScotPHO_profiles_tool/</p> <p>Access to outdoors / open space Sport and recreation participation Physical activity levels Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-index-of-multiple-deprivation-2020/</p> <p>Core paths Aberdeen City Council. https://map.environment.gov.scot/sewebmap/</p>

			https://noise.environment.gov.scot
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on existing water and wastewater infrastructure. The surface water management strategy for the draft George Street Mini Masterplan will be based on the principles of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and green infrastructure to incorporate best management practices for the treatment of surface water. Geomorphology and morphological erosion pressures. 	<p>Protection and enhancement of water status and avoidance of flood risk.</p> <p>It should be noted that the draft George Street Mini Masterplan area is historic and dense so SUDS is a challenge to be assessed in context.</p>	<p>SEPA flood maps. https://map.sepa.org.uk/floodmaps/FloodRisk/PostCode</p> <p>SEPA Water Classification Hub. https://www.sepa.org.uk/data-visualisation/water-classification-hub/</p> <p>Local water quality data. https://www.sepa.org.uk/data-visualisation/water-environment-hub/</p> <p>SEPA River Basin Management Plan Maps</p> <p>SEPA – RBMP Data.</p>
Soils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The potential for impact associated with existing soil contamination. Impact to existing soil (i.e. removal of topsoil or compaction of soils). 	<p>The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should ensure that soil quality is appropriate for the proposed site use.</p> <p>Should contaminated soils be identified they should be remediated where possible.</p> <p>Interventions within the draft Mini Masterplan area will better link future development to new and existing open spaces and all that the city has to offer and drawing in the ongoing regeneration around Marischal College.</p> <p>SUDS and green infrastructure are delivered in new development. It should be noted that the draft George</p>	<p>Aberdeen City Council Vacant and Derelict Land Survey (2018) https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2019-03/Scottish%20Vacant%20and%20Derelict%20Land%20Survey%202018_0.pdf#:~:text=Aberdeen%20City%20Council%20carries%20out,for%20vacant%20and%20derelict%20land.</p> <p>Contaminated land. https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/environment/contaminated-land#:~:text=This%20legislation%20requires%20the%20Local,Authority%20will%20arrange%20for%20re-mediation.</p> <p>Geology of Britain viewer, https://www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/bgs-geology-viewer/</p> <p>Scotland's Environment.</p>

		Street Mini Masterplan area is historic and dense so SUDS is a challenge to be assessed in context.	https://www.environment.gov.scot/ Scotland's Soils website https://soils.environment.gov.scot/
Air	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with national and international standards. • Road traffic movements. 	One of the main sources of nitrogen dioxide emissions is road traffic; road traffic is also a contributor to PM ₁₀ emissions. Sustainable transport will be a key issue for the draft George Street Mini Masterplan.	LAQM Annual Progress Report. https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/environment/air-quality-aberdeens/air-quality-reports Scottish Air Quality (website). https://www.scottishairquality.scot/
Climatic Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change could have different impacts on the environment including water resources, flooding, biodiversity, population and health and wellbeing. • Long-term climate trends for Scotland indicate hotter/drier summers and milder/wetter during autumn & winter, in addition to sea level rises. Issues such as flooding and landslips are potential issues. • The draft George Street Mini Masterplan has the potential to affect levels and forms of transport use and levels of energy consumption in buildings. • The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will include measures to enhance existing transport links and accessibility in the area through additional bus services, cycling and walking with associated infrastructure improvements. 	<p>The extent of the sites identified should seek to minimise contributions to the emissions of greenhouse gases and seek to avoid locations vulnerable to the effects of climate change.</p> <p>Ultimately the Mini Masterplan area has the core of a historic built environment, redevelopment opportunities will be place/context-specific and often follow existing urban form.</p> <p>The draft Mini Masterplan encourages sustainable alternatives to car travel which aim to reduce CO₂ emissions</p>	<p>Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/723c243d-2f1a-4d27-8b61-cdb93e5b10ff/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions</p> <p>Indicative SEPA river and coastal flood maps https://map.sepa.org.uk/floodmaps/FloodRisk/PostCode</p> <p>UKCP18 - https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/approach/collaboration/ukcp</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development will be laid out to allow direct and frequent connections throughout the area, to points of interest, neighbourhood centres and public transport. Opportunities for renewable energy provision and low/zero carbon technologies will be explored. 		
Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New development can potentially impact historical features. The draft George Street Mini Masterplan can contribute to the overall conservation of cultural heritage through the protection of listed buildings and sites of historic or archaeological interest conservation areas 	<p>The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should support the protection and enhancement of the cultural heritage resource, including through consideration of the locations and impacts on specific resources and the wider historic landscape.</p> <p>Aberdeen City Council as Planning Authority will govern these through statutory duties.</p> <p>Place and movement redesign is an objective for the draft Mini Masterplan</p>	<p>Buildings at Risk https://www.buildingsatrisk.org.uk/search/keyword/aberdeen</p> <p>Aberdeen City Historic Environment Record (HER) https://online.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/smrpub/master/mapquery.aspx</p> <p>Pastmap. https://pastmap.org.uk/map</p> <p>Aberdeen City Council https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building-standards/building-conservation-and-heritage/conservation-areas</p> <p>Scotland's Environment. https://www.environment.gov.scot/</p>
Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The area may have a direct impact on the quality of the landscape/townscape. Landscape character. Design quality and layout. Sites within the Mini Masterplan area will provide access to open space and recreation facilities and encourage walking and cycling through the 	<p>The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should seek to ensure that development takes account of the important landscape/townscape characteristics within the George Street area.</p> <p>Place quality improvements are a fundamental objective of the draft Mini Masterplan.</p>	<p>Local Development Plan.</p> <p>Landscape Character Assessment. https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2018-01/Landscape%20Character%20Assessment%20of%20Aberdeen.pdf</p> <p>https://www.nature.scot/doc/landscape-character-assessment-aberdeen-city-landscape-evolution-and-influences</p>

	<p>provision of designated paths and will thus contribute to health promotion.</p>		<p>Designated landscape areas. https://www.environment.gov.scot/</p> <p>Inventory and non-inventory Gardens and Designed landscapes. https://www.environment.gov.scot/</p>
<p>Material Assets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open space and recreational facilities. • Roads and pavements • Waste minimisation and management. • Drainage and wastewater capacity. 	<p>Waste disposal incurs significant transport implications. Support for increased levels of recycling and composting and waste minimisation.</p> <p>The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will ensure that maximum use is made of existing infrastructure where practicable (roads, pavements, water treatment, drainage). Where this is at capacity sustainable system will be put in place.</p> <p>SUDS will be encouraged, however, it is noted that the draft George Street Mini Masterplan area is historic and dense so may be a challenge.</p>	<p>Aberdeen City Council Action programme and monitoring https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building-standards/local-development-plan/aberdeen-local-development-plan/action-programme-and-monitoring</p> <p>Open Space Audit and Strategy 2011-2016 (amount/type of space). Core Paths. https://www.environment.gov.scot/</p> <p>Transport and infrastructure data.</p> <p>Cycle routes. https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/roads-transport-and-parking/cycling-aberdeen/cycling-maps</p> <p>SEPA data. https://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/waste/waste-data/waste-data-reporting/household-waste-data/</p>

5 ASSESSMENT OF DRAFT GEORGE STREET MINI MASTERPLAN VISION AND OBJECTIVES

5.1 Environmental commentary on draft George Street Mini Masterplan Vision

A primary role of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan is to ensure that its underlying principles support and complement those of the wider Aberdeen City Centre and Beach Masterplan.

The vision for improving the George Street area has been developed by the Council and set out in the draft George Street Mini Masterplan. The Mini Masterplan is a regeneration blueprint that is transforming the George Street area while conserving its proud heritage. In all the Council has a “Future Projects Action Plan” which seeks to support the established Vision and Objectives for George Street. Each intervention is delivered through projects (both physical and non-physical) which will have a positive impact on improving the vitality of George Street.

The Council can both stimulate change and deliver change in areas across George Street; however, the interventions highlighted will require collaboration, mobilisation and coordination across the community, private and a variety of other stakeholders to determine and deliver change.

From an environmental perspective, the focus of the vision placed on the importance of enhancing the environment is welcomed and supported. The quality of both the natural and built environment is central to achieving the regeneration aims for George Street. As the vision acknowledges, utilising the environmental assets of the area will need to be an important aspect of the strategy for the area as it is a very valuable asset and fundamental to George Street’s sense of place. Balance is required between achieving a “strong economy” and an “enhanced environment” and opportunities with a win-win outcome will be required, with all projects being delivered using best practices.

The vision of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan is to provide positive environmental improvements for the area and environmental thinking has been integrated into the Mini Masterplan.

As part of any successful “regeneration” strategy, it will be important to regularly assess the vision and plan and review it in light of changing circumstances. It would therefore be beneficial if the draft George Street Mini Masterplan set out an overview of how and when it will be reviewed. Whilst it is not appropriate to add this to the vision itself, it would be useful to include it somewhere in the draft George Street Mini Masterplan, for example, in Chapter 3 “Our Vision”.

Similarly to develop a common agenda for George Street, the “bottom-up” draft George Street Mini Masterplan should also link to community-led innovation in a manner which fosters community involvement. An overview of the role of the community and how they were included in the development of the Mini Masterplan is discussed in Appendix I of this report.

5.2 Compatibility analysis of draft George Street Mini Masterplan objectives and SEA objectives

The approach taken to the compatibility analysis of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan objectives and SEA objectives is described in the Environmental Report in section 2.6.2. The purpose of the compatibility analysis is to identify potential synergies and inconsistencies between what the Mini Masterplan is trying to achieve and relevant aspirations for the environment as summarised in the SEA objectives. In addition, the compatibility analysis has informed the scope of the detailed assessment by highlighting particular issues that have benefited from more detailed consideration.

The compatibility analysis has been summarised in a matrix which is provided in Appendix E.

The remainder of this section lists the draft George Street Mini Masterplan objectives and summarises the outcome of the compatibility analysis and recommendations made.

The Mini Masterplan will use the key objectives of the City Centre & Beach Masterplan which are categorised into three themes, and are taken directly from the Aberdeen Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP):

Economy

- Eradicating poverty ;
- Supporting residents into fair work; and
- Enabling 500 residents to upskill and move into economic opportunity.

People

- Child-Friendly City which supports all children to prosper and engage actively with their communities by 2026;
- Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026; and
- Increasing satisfaction and use of community facilities and green environment to increase the health and well-being of older people and people managing long-term conditions).

Place

- Increasing sustainable travel with 38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as their main mode of travel by 2026;
- Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen’s carbon emissions by 61% by 2026; and
- Addressing the nature crisis by protecting/ managing 26% of Aberdeen’s area for nature by 2026.

George Street’s Contribution

Building on the wider ACC key themes of Economy, People and Place, George Street can directly support and contribute to the success of the City. It will do this successfully by:

Economy	People	Place
Fully contributing to a more varied and dynamic local economy, where local businesses are supported, and where new ones and people with ideas are encouraged to start-up, to grow and to thrive.	Supporting a neighbourhood full of a diverse mix of people and communities, participating in all that our district has to offer in terms of culture, education, everyday activities, a place to call home and a bustling street-life.	Becoming a place that is vibrant, comfortable, inclusive, playful and inviting. Being part of the city, but with a sense of the local intact.

5.3 Summary commentary

Generally speaking, compatibility between the Mini Masterplan objectives and the SEA objectives indicates there was either no link between the two, or the Mini Masterplan objectives were generally compatible with the SEA Objectives. There were no obvious instances where the Mini Masterplan objectives were not compatible with SEA Objectives.

Key areas of potential synergy identified:

- **Major Long-Term Local Benefits:** The promotion of the area for economic opportunities could have beneficial effects on the population in terms of job provision and reducing poverty. The Mini Masterplan is likely to benefit the population through support of activity and vitality in the George Street area and improving the community environment whilst maintaining pedestrian links. Further benefits are possible for the local population if community facilities are put in place with health benefits as a result of traffic attenuation.
- **Minor long-term local benefits:** This would have additional benefits to their health as a result of improved opportunities for physical activity. Development is envisaged to be developed with more climatic resilience thereby benefiting climatic factors and the efficient use of existing resources leads to material asset benefits. The use of sustainable materials could have benefits to material assets whilst using vacant buildings in the first instance, allows for efficient use of resources. The Mini Masterplan is likely to have minor benefits to the landscape through the implementation of development which is more in keeping with its surroundings and traditional form.

Care should be taken when demolishing or reusing vacant buildings to ensure potential disturbance to bats is minimised, and where necessary mitigated.

The draft George Street Mini Masterplan is people/place/economy focused with a driver on stakeholder involvement to shape place projects. Going forward, stakeholders, including the private sector, the Council and the community will be crucial to the delivery of the interventions emerging from this Mini Masterplan. Section 9.2 of the Mini Masterplan states it is recommended that dedicated working groups are set up to drive specific short-term priority actions forward. The action-focused working groups will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating progress against key performance indicators and refining actions if agreed outcomes are not being met.

6 ASSESSMENT OF DRAFT GEORGE STREET MINI MASTERPLAN SCENARIOS

6.1 Environmental Assessment

The approach taken to the assessment has been evaluated to determine positive and negative effects on the environment in relation to reversibility or irreversibility of effects, risks, duration (permanent, temporary, long-term, short-term and medium-term) and cumulative (direct, indirect, secondary and synergetic).

Proposals have been assessed against the SEA Objectives, in accordance with the guidance in planning advice note 1/2010.

The assessment aimed to:

- Identify significant environmental effects (positive and negative) that the draft George Street Mini Masterplan may give rise to (Appendix F);
- Inform recommendations for amending the draft George Street Mini Masterplan to reduce the likelihood of significant negative environmental effects arising;
- Inform the development of mitigation measures for significant negative effects that cannot be avoided by amending the draft plan;
- Inform the development of measures to enhance positive environmental effects; and
- Inform the development of a framework for monitoring the significant environmental effects of the adopted George Street Mini Masterplan.

The remainder of this chapter summarises the assessments of each of the three George Street Mini Masterplan scenarios. Please refer to Appendices E for assessment matrices. The scoring used in the assessment matrices is based on the five-point significance scale based on Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act and described in Section 2.6. Each score has been informed by maps, environmental baseline information, key issues, and trends and based on criteria established through the SEA objectives and sub-objectives and significance criteria.

As the high-level assessment highlights, the proposed Mini Masterplan are likely to bring a range of positive environmental effects related to the full range of SEA Objectives. These include creating employment opportunities, creating new residential dwellings, limiting traffic growth, facilitating modal shift, improving accessibility to services and facilities, supporting enhancements to the public realm, promoting social inclusion and encouraging the use of healthier modes of travel.

Table 6-1 summarises the assessment of the three Mini Masterplan Scenarios (Refer to Appendix E F).

Table 6-1: Overview of Assessment Mini Masterplan Scenarios

Key		Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
✓✓	Major positive effect			
✓	Positive effect			
0	Neutral effect			
x	Negative effect			
xx	Major negative effect			
✓✓/x ✓/xx etc.	Mixed effect			
?	Uncertain effect			
S	Short-term effect			
M	Medium-term effect			
L	Long-term effect			
Imp	Effect will depend on how the draft George Street Mini Masterplan is implemented			
SEA Objective(s)	Analytical Questions	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
Biodiversity, flora and fauna <i>To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect:</i>				
Protect or conserve and, where possible, restore and enhance biodiversity and valued nature conservation habitats and species	conservation objectives of International, National or local designations?	0	0	0
	populations of protected species, their habitats and resting places or roosts?	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L	✓/x
	wider biodiversity, i.e., non-designated/protected sites and species?	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L
	opportunities for enhancement or expansion of the green network and wider habitat connectivity	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L
	the protection and enhancement of urban trees?	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L
Population and human health <i>To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect:</i>				
To protect and enhance quality of life, including maintaining and improving opportunities to access public open space and the natural and historic environment	the provision of housing and employment opportunities to meet identified needs?	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L
	the provision of appropriate services and community facilities to meet identified needs?	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L
	access to open spaces, recreational facilities and active travel routes?	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L
	residential amenity, including noise?	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L
	access to the historic environment?	✓/x	✓/x	✓/x
Water <i>To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect:</i>				
To protect and enhance the ecological status of the water environment	flood risk in the local and/or wider areas	✓/x	✓/x	✓/x
	surface water run-off	✓/x	✓/x	✓/x
	the ecological status of identified water bodies:	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L
Soil <i>To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect:</i>				
To maintain or improve soil quality, quantity and function and prevent any further degradation of soils	contaminated land?	✓/x	✓/x	✓/x
	Impact on existing topsoil and/or subsoils?	✓/x	✓/x	✓/x
Air <i>To what extent will the Mini Masterplan be likely to reduce/increase air quality, in terms of:</i>				
To improve or maintain air quality and reduce emissions of key pollutants	carbon emissions?	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L
	levels of Nitrous Dioxide (NO2) and Particulate Matter (PM10)?	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L
Climatic Factors <i>To what extent will the Mini Masterplan promote:</i>				
To reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase resilience to the consequences of climate change	renewable energy technologies and energy efficiency?	✓/x	✓/x	✓/x
	sustainable transport and active travel?	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L
	future-proofing of new development?	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L
	green infrastructure provision?	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L
Cultural Heritage <i>To what extent will the Mini Masterplan protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment.</i>				
Protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment.	Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Archaeological sites, Conservation Areas and Gardens and Designed Landscapes and their settings?	✓/x	✓/x	✓/x
Landscape <i>To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect:</i>				
Protect and enhance landscape character, local distinctiveness, and visual amenity and promote access to the wider environment.	the landscape character and setting of settlements?	✓/x	✓/x	✓/x
	visual amenity and key views?	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L
Material Assets <i>To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect:</i>				
To reduce waste and promote the sustainable use of resources	the re-use of previously developed land and buildings?	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L	✓ S-M-L
	waste from new development?	✓/x	✓/x	✓/x
	the delivery of renewable energy development?	✓/x	✓/x	✓/x

Whilst the assessment of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan has not specifically addressed individual projects in detail, the assessment was informed by consideration of potential key effects at the scenario level. Where an individual scenario was identified as having particularly significant effects, alternatives and/ or mitigation and enhancement have been suggested.

6.2 Scenarios Summary of Findings

Table 6-1 indicates that all three Mini Masterplan scenarios generally scored similarly, and there were only minor differences between the three scenarios. Overall, the three Scenarios are generally positive. The environmental effects which stood out relate to Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna, Population and Human Health, Cultural Heritage and Material Assets. These are discussed below. The full assessment is in Appendix F.

6.2.1 Biodiversity, flora and fauna

Objective: Protect or conserve and, where possible, restore and enhance biodiversity and valued nature conservation habitats and species

Question: To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect - populations of protected species, their habitats and resting places or roosts?

All three scenarios have the potential to cause disturbance to bats. Scenarios 1 and 2 involve the restoration of Norco House and demolition of the extension, while scenario 3 involves the full demolition of Norco House and the extension. All three scenarios also include the construction of residential dwellings. Scenario 1 comprises approximately 98 new residential dwellings being created, Scenario 2 introduces circa 150-200 new residential dwellings and scenario three circa 250-300 new residential dwellings.

As a result bat surveys will be required before any works commence.

Lighting should take the Institution of Lighting Professionals and Bat Conservation Trust Guidance Note 08/18 "*Bats and artificial lighting in the UK: Bats and the Built Environment series*" into consideration.

6.2.2 Population and human health

Objective: To protect and enhance quality of life, including maintaining and improving opportunities to access public open space and the natural and historic environment

Question: To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect - access to the historic environment?

All three scenarios include both potentially positive and negative effects with regard to access to the historic environment.

Positive effects on accessing cultural heritage by supporting the preservation of the historic environment in the George Street area. Conversely, this also means that there may be limitations in some places to fully implement all of the proposed greening interventions. The suitability of these will be determined though more detailed design testing through a combination of new build and retrofit.

Scenarios 1 and 2 comprise the demolition of the Norco House extension and the construction of circa 98 and 150-200 new residential dwellings respectively. Scenario three involves the demolition of Norco House and Extension and the construction of circa 250-300 new residential dwellings.

Creating high-quality new dwellings in an area well served by amenities is a strong positive. Regeneration of a site for an appropriate new use is very positive, inward investment is positive, and all scenarios will create a sense of place improvement, some scenarios illustrate greenspace which is deficient in the study area for recreation, biodiversity etc. The Planning Act controls built environment objectives in terms of appropriate redevelopment.

6.2.3 Cultural Heritage

Objective: Protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment.

Question: To what extent will the mini masterplan protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment.

The George Street area sits just north of the City Centre Conservation Area, with Harriet Street and Gallowgate connecting into the draft George Street Mini Masterplan area. There are several listed buildings within the draft George Street Mini Masterplan area:

- Category B listed 230 George Street And 34 John Street (3-storey, 4-bay Classical Bank);
- Category B listed 261-265 (Odd) George Street (former college building with prominent octagonal tower);
- Category C listed 46 Charlotte Street and Arched Gateway;
- Category C listed 26 John Street (3-bay warehouse with ornate Dutch gable to John Street elevation);
- Category C listed 119-127 (Odd Nos) George Street (5-bay commercial and residential building with distinctive wallhead stack and flanking crow-step gables); and
- Category C listed 111 Gallowgate.

Under scenarios 1 and 2 Norco House will be refurbished, however, the extension would be demolished. Designed by Covell Matthews Architects, the building is an example of brutalist, modernist architecture and intended to be a showpiece within the city's architectural make-up. The rippling, mound-like profile of the massing of the building was particularly striking and unlike anything within the George Street area. The exposed concrete strips take similar design language from other well-known brutalist buildings e.g. Preston Bus Station as well as examples from other department store facades in Europe. The building was taken over by John Lewis and renovated and converted in 1987. The department store was the organisation's northernmost store and was further expanded to the east in 1987 as part of the expansion of the John Lewis Partnership into Aberdeen. John Lewis has since closed (2021) and the building is now used by the NHS as a temporary vaccination hub on the ground floor.

It should be noted that Norco House was previously considered for listing in 2007 as part of a listing survey of Aberdeen city centre. The Brutalist ribbed concrete exterior elevations were found to be of special interest, but the building as a whole was not considered to meet the criteria for listing due to the extent of alteration.

Historic Environment undertook a further assessment in 2019 and it was found that the surviving two principal elevations (to George Street and St Andrew Street) of Norco House met the criteria of special architectural or historic interest for the following reasons:

- Its design quality, with expressive and sculptural use of concrete, makes it an outstanding example of Brutalist architecture in Scotland.
- For its dominant presence within a tight urban commercial city centre context, both contrasting and harmonising with Aberdeen's granite-building traditions.
- It is a major and architecturally distinctive example of post-war retail development in Scotland now represented by its remaining Brutalist elevations.

- For its social historical interest, reflecting the development and final expansion of co-operative societies in Scotland in the second half of the 20th century.

However, the decision was not to list the building because of ongoing development proposals.

Scenario 3 will see the influential Norco House and the Norco House extension being demolished and circa 250-300 residential dwellings built.

The Mini Masterplan aims to ensure that improvements to surroundings are compatible with the historic environment features and are compliant with national and local planning policy.

The Mini Masterplan should place a significant emphasis on high quality, sensitive design and appropriate siting of new signs and other street furniture to limit effects on the integrity of cultural heritage assets. It should also seek to support local distinctiveness and heritage interest.

The Mini Masterplan shall provide the parameters for this development and the Planning service can guide it through the process for consent.

6.2.4 Material Assets

Objective: To reduce waste and promote the sustainable use of resources.

Question: To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect - waste from new development?

Scenarios 1 and 2 will see the demolition of the Norco House extension, the removal and processing of construction waste and the redevelopment of the site would all produce carbon emissions, however, this will be less than for scenario 3. Scenario 3 considers the full demolition of Norco House and the extension to allow for a new residential led development to occupy its place. As for carbon emissions, demolition under scenario 3 will potentially result in higher embodied energy costs of demolition and rebuilding.

Reuse of the main Norco house could reduce the volume of demolition waste produced and associated carbon emissions.

- There will be opportunities for the reuse of buildings, demolition/construction materials and encouragement of the use of local materials.
- Improved management of demolition and construction waste through the programme of works e.g. implementation of Site Waste Management plans during demolition and construction works.
- There is an opportunity to implement efficient domestic waste collection measures.

6.3 Results of the High-Level Assessment of Potential Mini Masterplan Future Projects

The following provides a more detailed overview of the potential future projects identified in section 9 and Appendix 2 (Future Projects Action Plan) of the draft Mini Masterplan. The aforementioned sections of the Mini Masterplan identify suggestions and interventions to help deliver short, medium and longer-term change across the Mini Masterplan area.

The projects identified will need further discussions with the local community, businesses and stakeholders to deliver. It should also be noted that the Council will support both the local community and local businesses where possible to bring these projects forward, nevertheless, Appendix G presents a high-level assessment matrix for the 52 potential future projects included in the Draft Mini Masterplan.

The high-level assessment matrix is not a conclusive tool or model. Its main function is to identify whether or not the Draft Strategy interventions are likely to bring positive, negative or uncertain effects in relation to the SEA Objectives. A benefit of this approach is that a range of policies may be assessed, which can then be scrutinised in further detail if a significant number of uncertainties or potential adverse effects arise.

As the high-level assessment highlights, the proposed interventions for the George Street area are likely to bring a range of positive environmental effects related to the full range of SEA Objectives. These include limiting traffic growth, facilitating modal shift, improving accessibility to services and facilities, supporting enhancements to the public realm, promoting social inclusion and encouraging the use of healthier modes of travel. It should however be noted that the traffic/movement modelling has not yet been reported.

Whilst the majority of the proposed interventions support the SEA Objectives, five have uncertain effects against the SEA Objectives. These interventions are as follows:

- Uplighting and feature lighting to illuminate buildings could potentially have negative effects on bats. This would be developed in detail in respect of statutory lighting needs, visual impact, listed buildings, flora and fauna, neurodiversity etc. A lighting strategy is essential;
- More flexible use of parking spaces - creating parklets which reclaim parking bays for socialising, play and dwell time. Create a PARK(ing) Day which could bring a festival of parklets to the area, however, uncertainty remains as there is insufficient project detail available at this time;
- Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) 1 - retain the 2-way operation of Berry Street but for car-park access/egress only, however, uncertainty exists as modelling/evaluation has not yet been completed;
- ETRO 2 - Reduce and restrict the speed of traffic by narrowing the carriageway with temporary build-outs and signage. If successful restrict access to local access only however, uncertainty exists as modelling/evaluation has not yet been completed; and
- ETRO 3- Remove general traffic along Blackfriars St northbound, creating more freedom for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport, however, uncertainty exists as modelling/evaluation has not yet been completed.

Whilst the high-level assessment of the interventions provides a broad indication of some of the issues surrounding their likely environmental performance, it also highlighted interventions where it was unclear if there would be positive, negative or no likely effects against the SEA objectives.

Uplighting and feature lighting to illuminate buildings

Enhanced lighting maintenance has the potential to improve perceptions of security, however, it is uncertain if the project will have a positive or negative effect on biodiversity assets, particularly bats, in the George Street area. Any permanent lighting should be designed to be 'animal friendly' and should not illuminate habitats. Screening techniques and dark buffer zones are advised to reduce the impact on these habitats. Low or high-pressure sodium lamps instead of mercury and metal halide lamps are preferred for their UV filtering properties, reducing light spillage and pollution. 'Warm white' lighting also reduces the impacts of lighting on bats as well as other species².

More flexible use of parking spaces - creating parklets which reclaim parking bays for socialising, play and dwell time. Create a PARK(ing) Day which could bring a festival of parklets to the area

² <https://www.theilp.org.uk/documents/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>

There is not enough detail to determine what effect the project will have on the “air” objective, therefore it has been classified as uncertain at this stage.

Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) 1 - retain the 2-way operation of Berry Street but for car-park access/egress only.

There is not enough information to determine what effect the project will have on the “air” and “climatic factors” objectives therefore, it has been scored as uncertain at this stage.

ETRO 2 - Reduce and restrict the speed of traffic by narrowing the carriageway with temporary build-outs and signage. If successful restrict access to local access only

There is not enough information to determine what effect the project will have on the “air” and “climatic factors” objectives therefore, it has been scored as uncertain at this stage. However, it should be noted that one of the draft Mini Masterplan objectives is to reduce vehicular movement - this would have a significant positive impact on air quality, and place experience for residents.

ETRO 3- Remove general traffic along Blackfriars St northbound, creating more freedom for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport

There is not enough information to determine what effect the project will have on the “air” and “climatic factors” objectives therefore, it has been scored as uncertain at this stage.

6.4 Cumulative Effects

A key requirement of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act (2005) is the consideration of potential cumulative, secondary and synergistic environmental effects of draft plans. Previous sections of this report have described the potential environmental effects of individual elements of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan. This section takes a view of the plan as a whole and summarises its key cumulative effects on the environment.

In SEA, cumulative effects assessment should consider the effects of the draft plan in conjunction with other relevant plans outwith the geographical and temporal scope of the plan in question. In the context of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan, the majority of its effects are likely to be ‘internal’, that is they are likely to arise from the various elements of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan itself rather than from the draft George Street Mini Masterplan in combination with other plans and programmes (assuming that the City Centre and any subsequent revisions to the Local Plan are treated as all part of a single overall strategy for the area – if they extend or diverge from the contents of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan there is the potential for additional cumulative effects from these various plans in combination). Once formally adopted, the individual draft George Street Mini Masterplan projects will be subject to the planning application process through Aberdeen City Council, informed by the land use allocations in the current and/ or future Aberdeen City Council Local Plans. As part of this process, it is recommended that the cumulative effects of the project in question are considered in combination with other draft George Street Mini Masterplan projects, on a case-by-case basis and in the context of the wider Aberdeen area, by the Aberdeen City Council Planning Department.

The draft George Street Mini Masterplan present opportunities to improve the habitats through the planting of native trees, encouraging active travel, reducing speed on roads and carbon/energy efficiency measures provides in synergy, including carbon sequestration, hazard management, air pollution removal, recreation and amenity value.

The cumulative effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan have been identified based on:

- Similar environmental effects occur repeatedly from different activities within the draft George Street Mini Masterplan which individually may not be significant but are when in combination or the significance is increased by them occurring repeatedly.
- Individual receptors (e.g., water quality, a particular type of habitat etc) are being impacted repeatedly by potentially different effects from George Street Mini Masterplan activities.

Similar environmental effects occurring repeatedly.

The following is a list of environmental effects that have been identified as occurring repeatedly if the masterplan is adopted and enabled:

Positive cumulative effects

- Potential for tree planting under draft George Street Mini Masterplan activities has the potential to contribute to enhancing natural resources for carbon capture.
- Opportunity for habitat creation and enhancement by reconfiguring, improving and redefining the existing street network across the George Street area. This would create opportunities to introduce the features such as SUDS, mini habitats, street greening such as shrub planting, wild flowers, edibles and sensory planting) and vertical green wall features.
- Norco House would be refurbished/redeveloped.
- Provision of employment and community facilities, integrated transport links, environmental improvements, and contributions to regeneration including refurbishment/redevelopment of Norco House (scenarios 1 and 2).
- The George Street area under the Mini Masterplan could result in improvements to the general quality of surroundings.
- Energy-efficient designs could be incorporated alongside renewable and low-carbon energy sources, with consideration provided on how further decarbonisation could be achieved in the future.
- Given the scale and importance of the facilities and residential dwellings planned, the energy demands could be significant. Opportunities exist for area-wide intervention across existing streets, such as added robustness and security of energy supplies, improved thermal insulation and reduced energy consumption.
- The Mini Masterplan provide an opportunity for new green networks, particularly SUDS which could benefit biodiversity, with a focus on areas with density of residential accommodation e.g. Charlotte Street and Craigie Street.
- Opportunities to promote the reuse of buildings, demolition materials and encouragement of the use of local materials.
- Opportunity to improve the management of resources and construction waste through the programme of works e.g. implementation of Site Waste Management Plans and Construction Environmental Management Plans during demolition and construction works.
- There is an opportunity to implement efficient domestic waste collection measures.

Negative cumulative effects

- Increased jobs, residential development recreational/leisure facilities, commercial, etc. have the potential to result in increased GHG emissions (both through increased car use, demolition of Norco House and extension, energy use etc.). This could, however, be offset depending upon for example extent of sustainable travel options, access design etc.
- The site has the potential to increase vulnerability to climate changes i.e. increased number of residential properties etc. It should be noted that National Planning Framework (NPF) 4 (Policy 1) gives weight to encouraging, promoting and facilitating development that addresses the global climate emergency and nature crisis and ensures LDPs address the Global Emergency Climate and Nature Crisis. The outcomes of this policy should be Net Zero and Nature Positive Places. New development will be required to meet this policy and Policy 2 'Climate mitigation and adaptation' which encourages, promotes and facilitates development that minimises emissions and adapts to the current and future impacts of climate change.

- The draft George Street Mini Masterplan projects, during construction and operational phases, have potential to cause an increase in diffuse source water pollution i.e. spills during construction, run-off from roads, residential properties and commercial areas;
- Development may result in significant visual impact.
- The draft George Street Mini Masterplan projects have the potential to result in short-term disturbance impacts on biodiversity during demolition, construction and operational phases.
- Parts or all of, the iconic Norco House could be lost. It should be noted that Historic Environment Scotland undertook an assessment using the selection guidance and it was found that the surviving two principal elevations (to George Street and St Andrew Street) of Norco House met the criteria of special architectural or historic interest. However, the decision was not to list the building because of ongoing development proposals.
- Draft George Street Mini Masterplan development is likely to increase the production of demolition/construction waste., for example, the demolition of the Norco House extension, or the full demolition of Norco House and extension.

7 IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THE DRAFT GEORGE STREET MINI MASTERPLAN

7.1 Proposals for monitoring

Monitoring the significant environmental effects of implementing the draft George Street Mini Masterplan is a fundamental part of the SEA process. The SEA Act require the significant environmental effects of a plan or programme (and in the case of the Act, a strategy) to be monitored and that the Environment Report (this report) should include a description of measures 'envisaged' for monitoring the implementation of the plan. This may help identify opportunities for subsequent revisions of the George Street Mini Masterplan to contribute further to the environmental protection and enhancement of the George Street area.

As noted previously, assessment, mitigation/ enhancement recommendations and **monitoring proposals** outlined in this report will need to be re-visited after the consultation has been undertaken on the draft George Street Mini Masterplan and this Environmental Report to take account of any responses and significant changes that may be made to the plan. In addition, a comprehensive framework for monitoring the significant environmental effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan will need to be developed and submitted to the Scottish Government SEA Gateway within a statutory period after the draft George Street Mini Masterplan is adopted. As such, the monitoring proposals outlined in Table 7-1 are only a starting point. They may be subject to refinement and update once final changes to the draft George Street Mini Masterplan have been made.

Where possible, monitoring of significant environmental effects for SEA should be integrated with performance monitoring of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan and any existing monitoring regimes e.g., cultural heritage, public health and well-being, condition of protected species etc. The currently proposed monitoring in the draft George Street Mini Masterplan is not adequate to monitor progress towards the environmental goals it enshrines in its vision. We would recommend that Aberdeen City Council incorporate some environmental monitoring as part of its overall monitoring of output measures. Examples of monitoring for environmental performance might include improvements in the condition of the Townscape, the North East Scotland Local Biodiversity Action Plan NESLBAP habitats brought back into favourable condition, the number of developers endorsing sustainable construction/ demolition guidance etc.

Table 7-1 identifies several different types of potential indicators including contextual, outcome and significant effects indicators. Further information on these types of indicators is provided below.

- **Contextual indicators** monitor the background against which the draft George Street Mini Masterplan will operate once adopted. Examples of information collected under context indicators may include mortality rates, air quality and area of available open space.
- **Output indicators** monitor specific actions arising from the plan such as the number of flood defence schemes put in place or traffic management plans produced.
- **Outcome or significant effects indicators** facilitate an understanding of the actual nature of predicted effects. For example, monitoring the health impacts of increased traffic-related air pollution in Aberdeen City Centre might consider the additional number of asthma cases within the population of George Street.

Table 7-1: Monitoring Plan

Significant environmental effects	Potential monitoring indicators	Data Source	Who is responsible	Timescale	What remedial actions could be taken?
Biodiversity, flora and fauna					
Effects on various biodiversity receptors specifically bats, are likely as a result of the construction and operational impacts of development including disturbance, vegetation removal and land take.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impacts on protected species such as bats. Impacts on local natural heritage sites. Impacts on wider biodiversity, flora and fauna. 	NatureScot NatureScot data services Aberdeen City Council 'Biodiversity Duty Report'	Aberdeen City Council Environment Team, NatureScot, North East Scotland Biodiversity Partnership	Annually Every 3 years	Review of Supplementary Guidance on Natural Heritage Cognisance of issues and mitigation measures required.
Population and human health					
Recreation and access effects An increase in the size of the population, potentially over a short period of time, may increase pressure on existing infrastructure, recreational facilities, open space and other green infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on Open Space Provision Open space quality (Improve or degradation). Consultation (Feb 22) stated lack of greenspace as an area weakness 	Aberdeen City Council Open Space Strategy and Greenspace Network reviews	Aberdeen City Council Environment Team	Open Space Strategy Annual Monitoring	Review of supplementary guidance on open space and greenspace network. Time period - this will be allied to housing markets - of which there is no strong market demand at present.
Nuisance effects Significant short-term nuisance effects may arise during construction phases in relation to noise, dust, vibration and other disruption impacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of complaints for nuisance (within the George Street area per 6 months). 	Aberdeen City Council Environmental Health complaint procedure	Environmental Health	Annually	Responding to complaints. Construction methodology is standard for demolition/redevelopment works.
Water					
Water quality and pollution effects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased diffuse source water pollution including contaminated run-off from expanded urban areas and accidental discharges from the George Street area facilities can potentially negatively affect water quality. Treatment train is developed across the site by using strategic features as well as SUDS within the development areas. integral blue/green infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on water quality Reduce surface water input to Scottish Water infrastructure. Reduce levels of water pollution. Ensure sustainable use of water resources. Reduce (the risk of) surface water flooding. Typical situations within an urban environment. 	SEPA – Water Classification Hub Scottish Water Data	SEPA, Scottish Water Aberdeen City Council	Annually	Review supplementary guidance on flooding and drainage. The SUDS treatment train uses a logical sequence of SUDS facilities. This allows run-off to pass through several different SUDS before reaching the receiving watercourse or water bodies. By using the treatment train, run-off will encounter different passive treatment processes that are active in different types of facilities. The treatment train comprises four stages: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Prevention Source control Site control Local Regional control
Flood risk Aberdeen City Centre is vulnerable to flooding as noted in Appendix D.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on the number of flood events Adapt to climate change 	Aberdeen City Council Flooding Team Flood monitoring data from SEPA Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)	SEPA and Aberdeen City Council	As and when flood risk and pollution increase	Review supplementary guidance on flooding and drainage. Apply policy on water efficiency. Flood risk areas illustrated in Appendix D

Significant environmental effects	Potential monitoring indicators	Data Source	Who is responsible	Timescale	What remedial actions could be taken?
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Soil					
<p>Contaminated Land Without knowing how contaminated material, if any, was dealt with when the site was first developed, it is not possible to discount the possibility that contaminated material will be encountered on site.</p>	<p>Remediation of contaminated land</p> <p>Reductions in soil health/ quality.</p>	<p>Aberdeen City Council Contaminated Land Unit</p> <p>Aberdeen City Council - Aberdeen Adapts Climate Adaptation Framework</p>	<p>Contaminated Land Unit, SEPA</p>	<p>As and when</p>	<p>Prepare or revise supplementary guidance.</p> <p>No part of the study area is classified as contaminated land. Site remediation process would govern as part of demolition programmes.</p>
Air					
<p>Air quality and emissions to air Proposed development under the draft George Street Mini Masterplan has the potential to increase traffic in the area during construction (delivery vehicles/ heavy plant, increased congestion due to temporary traffic lights etc) and operation (increased leisure traffic, delivery traffic, fan traffic etc) and as a result, increased emissions of traffic-related air pollutants, including PM₁₀ and NO_x, are likely.</p> <p>Additional residential dwellings under all three scenarios have the potential to increase traffic, however, sustainable alternatives to car use are promoted within the Mini Masterplan.</p>	<p>Effect on Air Quality Management Areas.</p>	<p>Aberdeen City Council 'Local Air Quality Monitoring Progress Reports'.</p> <p>Monitoring of Active Travel.</p> <p>Local Transport Strategy Monitoring of modal shift in transport modes.</p>	<p>Environmental Health.</p> <p>Transportation.</p> <p>Transportation.</p>	<p>As part of the Air Quality Action Plan or as and when is necessary.</p> <p>Annually.</p> <p>Annual Progress Reports on the LTS.</p>	<p>Review Supplementary Guidance on Air Quality.</p> <p>Introduction of the LEZ and future consideration of its boundaries.</p> <p>Review Local Transport Strategy.</p> <p>No new car parking spaces would be created for new residential development per ALDP 2020 policy within the city centre</p>
Climatic factors					
<p>GHG emissions Increased numbers of residents, visitors and businesses and commercial properties in the George Street area can potentially result in significant increases in GHG emissions, mainly from the transport and domestic sectors.</p>	<p>Increase/decrease in Greenhouse Gas Emissions</p>	<p>Aberdeen City Council – Submission to Scottish Public Bodies Climate Change Reporting. The Climate Change Report uses BEIS UK local authority emissions data sets https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics</p>	<p>Aberdeen City Council Climate and Sustainability Policy Team</p>	<p>Annually</p>	<p>Prepare or revise supplementary guidance.</p>
<p>Energy consumption Increased numbers of residents, visitors, businesses and commercial properties in the George Street area can potentially result in increased energy consumption.</p>	<p>Energy Efficiency</p>	<p>Net Zero Aberdeen Routemap</p>	<p>Aberdeen City Council Environment Team</p>	<p>As updated</p>	<p>Prepare or revise supplementary guidance.</p>
<p>Climate change adaptation and vulnerability The proposed development has the potential to increase vulnerability to local climate change impacts including flooding.</p>	<p>Priorities, goals and action areas for city resilience.</p> <p>It also has the potential to mitigate through good design</p>	<p>Aberdeen City Council - Aberdeen Adapts Climate Adaptation Framework</p>	<p>Aberdeen Adapts team</p>	<p>Annually</p>	<p>Prepare or revise supplementary guidance.</p>

Significant environmental effects	Potential monitoring indicators	Data Source	Who is responsible	Timescale	What remedial actions could be taken?
Cultural Heritage					

<p>Nationally, regionally and locally important cultural heritage features Potentially insensitive development under the Mini Masterplan, including inappropriate design and/ or siting of projects, may negatively affect the site and setting of historic environment features.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The integrity of the site and setting of statutory historic environment features within the George Street area • The integrity of the site and setting of non-statutory historic environment features within the George Street area • Condition of statutory historic environment features within the George Street area per year 	<p>Masterplanning, Design and Conservation (MDC) team, Historic Environment Scotland</p>	<p>Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service, Historic Environment Scotland</p>	<p>Annually</p>	<p>Prepare or revise supplementary guidance.</p>
Landscape					
<p>Landscape Character Types Potential development activity under the draft George Street Mini Masterplan has the potential to negatively affect the townscape.</p>	<p>Condition of sensitive landscape/townscape within the George Street area.</p>	<p>Development Management and developers</p>	<p>Development Management and developers</p>	<p>Biannually</p>	<p>Review land allocations and/or prepare supplementary guidance</p>
Material Assets					
<p>Existing and planned utilities, infrastructure, transport, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new recreational/ commercial developments incorporating SUDS within the George Street area • Information on the City's larger developments 	<p>Monitoring of planning applications Aberdeen Development Activity Report</p>	<p>Development Management</p>	<p>Annually</p>	<p>Prepare or revise supplementary guidance.</p>
<p>Waste and resource management Increased numbers of residents, visitors, commercial properties and businesses in the George Street area have the potential to cause an increase in the production of waste during demolition, construction and operational phases.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of Municipal Solid Waste recycled or composted (within George Street area per year) • Percentage of Municipal Soil Waste sent to landfill • Number of developers endorsing sustainable construction using Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMPs)/ Site Waste Management Plans 	<p>Aberdeen City Council Waste and Recycling Team- Monitoring of Waste. No waste strategy review has taken place as yet – this should be undertaken to enable service improvement.</p>	<p>Development Management, Waste Team, SEPA</p>	<p>Annually</p>	<p>Prepare or revise supplementary guidance.</p>

APPENDICES

A CONSULTATION SCOPING OPINIONS AND TAKING ACCOUNT OF RESPONSES

Draft George Street Mini Masterplan SEA – Responses from Consultation Authorities on the Scoping Report.	
Summary of responses to SR and recommended changes for SEA from the Consultation Authorities	How response has been accounted for
Historic Environment Scotland	
Scope and level of detail	
We note that the historic environment has been scoped into the assessment and we agree with this. On the basis of the information provided, we are content with this approach and are satisfied with the scope and level of detail proposed for the assessment, subject to the detailed comments provided in the attached annex.	Noted
Consultation period for the Environmental Report	
We understand that a 6 week consultation on the environmental report and relevant documents is proposed and we are content to agree with this timescale.	Noted
Environmental Baseline	
We can confirm the accuracy of the environmental baseline information as it relates to designated assets. We also note the consideration given within the historic environment section of the report to Norco House. Historic Environment Scotland have previously been asked to consider this structure for listing. Following an assessment using the selection guidance it was found that the surviving two principal elevations (to George Street and to St Andrew Street) of Norco House met the criteria of special architectural or historic interest. However, the decision was not to list the building because of ongoing development proposals.	Noted
Environmental Characteristics	
We welcome the consideration given to the contribution played by both designated and undesignated historic environment assets within the area, including buildings which have townscape interest/character as well as character areas within and adjacent to the masterplan area.	Noted
Proposed SEA Objectives	
We welcome the identification of an SEA objective for the historic environment. We also note that questions have been identified in order to test the content of the masterplan and its reasonable alternatives. In light of the identification earlier in the scoping report of buildings which have townscape interest/character it would be beneficial if a question covering these assets is also included.	Noted – Refer to Appendix E, F and G of the SEA Environmental Report
Scoping of Likely Significant Effects	
We note that the historic environment has been scoped into the assessment and we agree with this.	Noted
Assessment Methodology	
A standard matrix system approach to reporting the identified effects of the masterplan is proposed. We would encourage the use of the commentary section to fully explain the reasoning underpinning the findings. Furthermore, when scoring the level of effect the report should make clear both the predicted level of effect prior to any mitigation and the predicted significance of effect following the successful implementation of proposed mitigation measures.	Noted – Refer to Appendix E and F of the SEA Environmental Report

Mitigation and Monitoring	
As the report notes, one of the key elements of mitigation is to inform changes to proposals contained within the masterplan as well as influencing decisions around available options.	Noted
Relationship with other PPS	
Simply for information National Planning Framework 4 was adopted on 13 February 2023 and it should be noted that the information given within the scoping report under National Planning Policy relates to the previous draft, with national policy now coming under the headings of Sustainable Places, Liveable Places and Productive Places.	Noted - Refer to Appendix C of the SEA Environmental Report
Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)	
Water	
The ER should include a detailed assessment of water in the urban environment of George Street and surrounds. This should include a detailed understanding of any existing SUDS and other above ground drainage, Scottish Water infrastructure below ground and any other below ground storage, drains and culverts including in the ownership of Aberdeen City Council or private.	Refer to Section 7 within Appendix D of the SEA Environmental Report
The ER should include an understanding of environmental problems relating to this surface water infrastructure including potential causes and with reference to climate change and surface water flooding particularly as a result of intense rainfall overloading drainage systems.	Refer to Section 7 within Appendix D of the SEA Environmental Report
Mitigation & Enhancement: references to retrofitting SUDS are already included but nothing actually shows water management yet. The ER/masterplan will require further details of water management proposals. Unless there are actual proposals it will not be possible to show mitigation and enhancement of the water environment as identified in Table 4-1.	Refer to Appendix E, F and G and Table 7-1 within the SEA Environmental Report
Examples of SEA water objectives for an urban environment: - To reduce levels of water pollution. - To ensure sustainable use of water resources - To reduce (the risk of) surface water flooding - To adapt to climate change - To reduce surface water input to Scottish Water infrastructure.	Table 7-1 within the SEA Environmental Report
Examples of mitigation & enhancement: - requiring the use of sustainable urban drainage systems employing a treatment train approach for all types of built development and urban infrastructure including retrofitting SUDS; - integral blue/green infrastructure	Table 7-1 within the SEA Environmental Report
NatureScot	
Scope of Assessment and Level of Detail	
We are content with the scope and level of detail proposed for the Environmental Report. The scoping report is well-structured, comprehensive and easy to follow.	Noted
Methodology	

We note that the use of SEA Objectives and an assessment matrix is proposed to assess for significant environmental effects. This is a tried and tested approach which we support. We have made some recommendations for minor changes below in relation to the SEA Objectives.	Noted
The inclusion of enhancement as well as mitigation measures in the assessment matrix is strongly supported as this will allow for the identification of precise enhancement measures such as biodiversity enhancement in line with the emerging National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4). We consider that SEA is a valuable tool in creating successful, nature-rich places and therefore we would like to see the George Street Mini Masterplan maximise on this opportunity.	Refer to Appendix E, R and G of the SEA Environmental Report
Consultation Period for the Environment Report	
We note that the proposed consultation period for the Environmental Report is 6 weeks which we are happy with.	Noted
Other Relevant Plans, Programmes and Strategies (PPS)	
Table 3-1: Name of Plan, Programme, Strategy or Environmental Protection Strategy (p. 18)	
We welcome the inclusion of Scotland's Biodiversity Strategy (2004), however, we recommend including the updated draft strategy 'Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to 2045: Tackling the Nature Emergency in Scotland' to ensure the information and baseline is up to date and relevant.	Added to Appendix C as recommended
3.7.17 Environmental Baseline Appraisal (p. 44)	
Table 3-11 which sets out the environmental baseline sources and how the Mini Masterplan seeks to tackle environmental issues in relation to the SEA topics is welcomed.	Noted
We strongly support the intention to provide biodiversity enhancement through the Mini Masterplan as well as protection. The SEA process will provide a valuable tool in assessing existing biodiversity assets and identifying specific opportunities in the George Street area. We look forward to the Environmental Report providing further detail on this and setting out specific biodiversity enhancement opportunities and measures which can be pulled through to the Mini Masterplan itself. We worked with Scottish Government to prepare the 'Delivering Scotland's Ambition to Secure Positive Effects for Biodiversity' report which could be of interest. Further guidance is expected to be prepared in due course to support National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4).	Refer to Appendix E, F and G of the SEA Environmental Report
In relation to Water, we welcome the intention to incorporate best management practices for SUDS and green infrastructure and suggest that the SEA is used to identify specific opportunities for precise habitat opportunities as well as wider multifunctional benefits which should directly inform the development framework. In line with the emerging NPF4, it would be useful to also consider opportunities for blue infrastructure elements.	Refer to Appendix E and F of the SEA Environmental Report
The consideration of active travel / recreation is welcomed under Climatic Factors. The intention to explore opportunities renewable energy provision and low/zero carbon technologies is also welcomed and should be suitably assessed through the SEA, including Landscape & Visual impacts.	Refer to Appendix E, F and G of the SEA Environmental Report
SEA Objectives and Questions (p. 51)	

<p>The use of SEA Objectives and Questions is a tried and test approach and we consider it appropriate for this SEA.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>Table 4-1 clearly sets out the SEA Topics, Objectives and Questions. The SEA Questions are well-worded and allow for consideration of the significance of any environmental effects. We support the intention to consider the key receptors and objectives throughout the SEA process and use them to inform the development of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan at key decision making stages. We note that the Objectives are in draft form and will be further refined in subsequent stages of the SEA process.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>We have made some recommendations for amendments to the SEA Objectives below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In line with the emerging NPF4, we recommend amending the Objective under Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna to <i>“Protect or conserve and, where possible, restore and enhance biodiversity and valued nature conservation habitats and species”</i>. • Under Landscape, we suggest amending to consider visual amenity. For example <i>“Protect and enhance landscape character, local distinctiveness, visual amenity and promote access to the wider environment”</i>. This should also be reflected in the SEA Questions which could, for example, be expanded to include <i>“To what extent will the site impact on visual amenity and key views?”</i> In line with the Landscape Objective, it would be useful to include a question on access to the wider environment, for example, <i>“To what extent will the Mini Masterplan promote access to the wider environment?”</i> <p>In relation to Climatic Factors, it could be useful to consider the quality of provision for example, active travel and green infrastructure provision. We also suggest including blue infrastructure alongside green infrastructure. As such we recommend amending the Climatic Factors questions to <i>“To what extent will the Mini Masterplan promote...sustainable transport and high quality active travel provision...high quality green and blue infrastructure provision?”</i></p>	<p>Refer to Appendix F of the SEA Environmental Report</p>
<p>Scope and Methodology</p>	
<p>We note that all SEA topics have been scoped into the SEA and we are content with this conclusion</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>Under 5.3 ‘Framework for Assessing the George Street Mini Masterplan’ we note that <i>“The Environmental Report will also include measures to avoid, reduce or mitigate any significant effects of the George Street Mini Masterplan”</i>. We consider the SEA process an excellent opportunity to also identify enhancement opportunities and suggest this is reflected throughout the SEA. As such, sub-task 5 in Table 5-2 (p. 54) should be amended to reflect this.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>Assessment Matrix (Table 5-4, p. 56)</p>	
<p>This is a tried and tested tool which is clear and well-structured in Table 5-5. We welcome the mitigation/enhancement column which will be an excellent opportunity to identify precise mitigation measures and enhancement opportunities to be delivered on-site, for example, biodiversity enhancements in line with the emerging NPF4. The commentary column is also welcomed. It would be useful to also include space for commentary on cumulative effects etc. which could be added in another row at the bottom of the table.</p>	<p>Noted. Refer to Section 6.4 of the Environmental Report</p>
<p>Monitoring (p. 57)</p>	

We are content with the outlined approach to monitoring.	Noted
6.1 Proposed Consultation Timescales and Method	
We note the consultation period of 6 weeks and are happy with this. The inclusion of the anticipated milestones is really useful.	Noted

B SEA ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT: CONSULTEE RESPONSES

C SUMMARY OF PLANS, PROGRAMMES AND STRATEGIES RELEVANT TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ABERDEEN DRAFT GEORGE STREET MINI MASTERPLAN

Other Relevant Plans, Policies and Strategies to be analysed in the Environmental Report for their Relationship to the Draft George Street Mini Masterplan

Level	Main Requirements of the PPS	Implications of the PPS for Draft George Street Mini Masterplan
International Level		
Nature Conservation		
Paris Agreement 2015	The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change. It was adopted by 196 Parties at COP 21 in Paris, on 12 December 2015 and entered into force on 4 November 2016. Its goal is to limit global warming to well below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels.	United Nations. The Agreement includes commitments from all countries to reduce their emissions and work together to adapt to the impacts of climate change and calls on countries to strengthen their commitments over time.
International UN Agreements - Kyoto Protocol (2005)	Commitment by industrialised countries to reduce four greenhouse gases (carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, sulphur hexafluoride) plus two groups of gases (hydrofluorocarbons and perfluorocarbons).	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC or FCCC) protocol aimed at fighting climate change.
UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) (Glasgow)	The COP26 climate change conference took place in Glasgow from 31 October to 12 November 2021. The main goal was to secure global net zero by mid-century and keep a maximum of 1.5 C degrees of warming within reach.	Net zero aligns with the aims of both the Scottish Government and Aberdeen City Council.
The Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC	Protects habitats and species. Gives basis to classify SACs and SPAs	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will aim to protect and enhance the natural habitats of associated flora and fauna.
The Birds Directive 2009/147/EC	Protection of wild birds and their habitats	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan is designed to protect and conserve ecosystems and biodiversity, specifically rare or vulnerable birds.
Water		
Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC	The purpose of the Directive is to establish a framework for the protection of inland surface waters (rivers and lakes), transitional waters (estuaries), coastal waters and groundwater. It will ensure all aquatic ecosystems and, with regard to their water needs, terrestrial ecosystems and wetlands meet 'good status'. Addresses groundwater pollution; flooding and droughts; river basin management planning.	Through the development of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan, account will be taken to protect water bodies from fragmentation, pollution and degradation.
Waste		

The Landfill Directive 99/31/EC	The Landfill Directive aims to reduce, as far as possible. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the negative effects of landfilling waste; and sets targets and timescales for reducing the amount of biodegradable municipal waste (BMW) sent to landfill 	The Mini Masterplan should reflect the needs of the Landfill Directive, including the infrastructure required to meet municipal biodegradable waste targets.
The Waste Framework Directive 2006/12/EC	Requires the planning system to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide policies and sites for waste disposal. Recover or dispose of waste without endangering human health and without processes or methods which could harm the environment. Liaison between planning authorities and SEPA. Provide the right infrastructure for the new thematic strategy on the prevention and recycling of waste. 	The Mini Masterplan should ensure it utilises waste management facilities identified under higher-tier plans whilst safeguarding the natural and built environment including designated areas, green belts, open countryside and the coast.
National Level		
Overarching Planning Policy		
Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997	This is the principle piece of legislation governing the use and development of land in Scotland.	The Council must adhere to the requirements of the Act in the preparation and production of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan.
Planning Etc (Scotland) Act 2006	Amends certain aspects of the 1997 Act, relating to both Development Planning and Development Management. Introduces a new development plan hierarchy: National Planning Framework; Strategic Development Plans; Local Development Plans.	The Council must take account of the requirements of the Act in the preparation and production of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan, in protecting and enhancing the environment and biodiversity and promoting low carbon economic growth.
National Planning Framework for Scotland 4 (NPF4) (2023)	NPF4 was adopted on 13 February 2023 and it should be noted that the information given within the scoping report under National Planning Policy relates to the previous draft, with national policy now coming under the headings of Sustainable Places, Liveable Places and Productive Places. NPF4 sets out the Scottish Governments priorities and policies for the planning system up to 2045 and how our approach to planning and development will help to achieve a net zero, sustainable Scotland by 2045. NPF4 differs from previous NPFs in two ways. It incorporates Scottish Planning Policy and the NPF into a single document and forms part of the statutory development plan.	With climate and nature forming the foundations of the NPF4 vision, these themes have influenced the spatial strategy as a whole, along with a range of policies that aim to improve people's lives by making sustainable, liveable, productive places. This includes a new 'overarching' policy which states that "significant weight will be given to the global climate and nature crises" when considering all development proposals. The emphasis is on reducing emissions as far as possible rather than eliminating all emissions and at this stage quantitative assessments are only expected for some national or major development proposals.

		<p>The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will take into consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy 1 – Tackling the climate and nature crises • Policy 2 - Climate mitigation and adaptation • Policy 3 – Biodiversity • Policy 16 - Quality homes • Policy 23 - Health and safety
National Planning Framework for Scotland 3 (NPF3) (2014)	<p>Provides a framework to guide sustainable growth and development of Scotland. Identifies priorities for strategic investment which will be a material consideration in making sustainable planning policy. It sets out key planning outcomes for Scotland:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A successful sustainable place – supporting economic growth, regeneration and the creation of well-designed places 2. A low carbon place – reducing our carbon emissions and adapting to climate change 3. A natural resilient place – helping to protect and enhance our natural cultural assets and facilitating their sustainable use 4. A connected place – supporting better transport and digital connectivity 	<p>The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to each of these planning outcomes: developing a more coordinated draft George Street Mini Masterplan will create well-designed places, such as regenerating natural and cultural assets, this should enhance the area and increase visitor numbers. Additionally, the role of green infrastructure, vegetation and water bodies will help create carbon sinks which contribute to the aesthetics of the natural environment and the variety of biodiversity.</p>
Scottish Planning Policy 2014	<p>Economic development should raise the quality of life of the Scottish people through increasing economic opportunities for all, on a socially and environmentally sustainable basis. The planning system should provide strong support for economic development, to both new and expanding businesses, where it is consistent with other national and local policies, in particular the promotion of social justice and sustainable development.</p>	<p>The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should take account of the principles set out in the SPP, and as a result, the draft George Street Mini Masterplan should incorporate elements of the SPP where appropriate.</p>
The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997	<p>Primary legislation sets out the legal requirements for the control of development and alterations that affect buildings that are listed, and the framework by which control is maintained.</p>	<p>If appropriate, the draft George Street Mini Masterplan should take account of this legislation in relation to Listed Buildings.</p>
Cross-Sectoral		
Transport (Scotland) Act 2019	<p>The Act aims to make Scotland’s transport network cleaner, smarter and more accessible by empowering local authorities and establishing consistent standards to tackle current and future challenges. The Act seeks to deliver a more responsive and sustainable transport system for everyone.</p>	<p>The draft George Street Mini Masterplan shall consider the requirements of the ACT.</p>

National Transport Strategy 2 (2020)	The National Transport Strategy sets out a vision for Scotland's transport system for the next 20 years. The vision is underpinned by four priorities: Reduces Inequalities, Takes Climate Action, Helps Deliver Inclusive Economic Growth and Improves our Health and Wellbeing, each with three associated outcomes.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should consider the integration of LTS objectives, actions and committed projects.
Getting the best from our land: A land use strategy for Scotland 2016-2021	Scotland's first land use strategy, which identifies key principles for sustainable land use which reflect Government policies on the priorities which should influence land use choices. Sets out a long-term vision towards 2050 with three clear objectives relating to economic prosperity, environmental quality and communities.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should aim to conserve Scotland's biodiversity whilst reducing resource depletion and encouraging responsible use of our natural resources.
Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019	The Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Act sets statutory targets for reducing fuel poverty, introduces a new definition which aligns fuel poverty more closely with relative income poverty and requires Scottish ministers to produce a comprehensive strategy to show how they intend to meet the targets. The statutory targets set by the Act are that in 2040: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no more than 5% of households should be in fuel poverty; • no more than 1% of households should be in extreme fuel poverty; and • the median fuel poverty gap of households in fuel poverty is no more than £250 in 2015 prices before adding inflation. 	Aberdeen City Council is committed to eradicating fuel poverty, and the Mini Masterplan should look to introduce measures to reduce energy consumption and improve energy efficiency.
Air and Climate Change		
Environment Act 1995	Provides the legal basis for the local air quality management (LAQM) regime, secondary legislation and the UK Air Quality Strategy	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should include measures to improve local air quality.
Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019	The Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019 sets targets to reduce Scotland's emissions of all greenhouse gases to net-zero by 2045.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should promote measures to reduce and minimise carbon emissions
UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022	The UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022 Evidence Report is the most up-to-date and comprehensive analysis of the risks and opportunities posed by climate change to the UK.	The Technical Report for the third Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA3) identifies sixty-one climate risks cutting across multiple sectors of society. In addition, identifies eight priority risk areas that require the most urgent UK-wide action over the next two years.

		The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should identify measures to reduce climate risks.
Heat in Buildings Strategy (2021)	This strategy addresses homes/ buildings in Scotland and sets out how to decarbonise our homes, and our commercial, industrial and public sector buildings, as part of setting a path to net zero by 2050.	Refer to and apply as practicable.
Climate Change Plan 2018-2032	This is the third report on proposals and policies (RPP3). It sets out the path to a low-carbon economy while helping to deliver sustainable economic growth and secure the wider benefits to a greener, fairer and healthier Scotland in 2032.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will contribute to delivering on the policies and proposals set out in the plan.
Climate Ready Scotland: climate change adaptation programme 2019-2024	The second Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme sets out policies and proposals to prepare Scotland for the challenges that we will face as our climate continues to change in the decades ahead. The Programme is a requirement of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 and addresses the risks set out in the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (UK CCRA) 2022, published under section 56 of the UK Climate Change Act 2008	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will reflect the sub-outcome of Scotland's buildings and places that are adaptable to climate change.
Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009	The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 is the Scottish Government's commitment to tackling climate change is set out in the Climate Change (Scotland) Act (2009). This sets Scotland's target at net-zero by 2045 (this means that by 2045 Scotland's emissions will be balanced by the amount removed from the atmosphere). There is also an interim target of a 75% reduction in emissions by 2030, relative to 1990 levels of emissions.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should identify measures to reduce climate risks."
Securing a green recovery on a path to net zero: climate change plan 2018–2032 - update	This update to Scotland's 2018-2032 Climate Change Plan sets out the Scottish Government's pathway to new and ambitious targets set by the Climate Change Act 2019. It is a key strategic document on Scotland's green recovery from COVID-19.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will incorporate the updates in the plan
UK Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (2011)	The Strategy sets several air quality objectives for pollutants to improve and protect ambient air quality in the UK including sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter, lead and ozone.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should provide actions that contribute to reducing air pollution and improving air quality.
Cleaner Air for Scotland 2 (CAFS2) strategy (2021)	Scotland's second air quality strategy, setting out how the Scottish Government and its partner organisations propose to further reduce air pollution to protect human health and fulfil Scotland's legal responsibilities over the period 2021-2026.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should include measures to reduce air pollution
Planning Advice Note 84 Reducing Carbon Emissions in New Development	Provides information on low and zero-carbon development through the use of energy-efficient and renewable energy systems	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should include measures encouraging new development to incorporate low-carbon and renewable sources of energy.

Scottish Energy Strategy Position Statement (2021)	The Energy Strategy position statement provides an overview of our key priorities for the short to medium-term in ensuring a green economic recovery, whilst remaining aligned with the Scottish Government's net zero ambitions.	Refer to and apply "Key Priorities For Energy" as practicable.
The Heat Networks (Scotland) Act 2021	The Act has set statutory targets for heat supplied by heat networks.	North East Scotland College (NESCOL) is within the heat network. Investigate opportunities to connect to the Aberdeen Heat & Power City Centre District Heating System
Heritage, Design and Regeneration		
Our Place, Our Future (2023)	Our Past, Our Future is Scotland's new strategy for the historic environment, setting out a national mission to sustain and enhance the benefits of Scotland's historic environment, for people and communities now and into the future.	The Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of Our Past, Our Future as required.
Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS 2019)	HEPS should be taken into account whenever a decision will affect the historic environment. This includes plans and policies that deal with funding decisions or estate management or other specific topics such as agriculture or energy. It is also a material consideration for planning proposals that might affect the historic environment and in relation to listed building consent and scheduled monument consent ('material consideration' means that decision-makers should take it into account when coming to a decision). Decisions on scheduled monument consent are made in line with Historic Environment Scotland's policy for determining consent at scheduled monuments.	The HEPS shall be taken into consideration when developing the draft George Street Mini Masterplan to ensure it serves to promote and improve the historic environment, where relevant.
Our Place in Time: The Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland (2014)	A high-level framework produced by the Scottish Government sets out a 10-year vision for Scotland's historic environment.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should consider the role of carrying forward this strategy at a local level to protect and/or enhance Scotland's historic environment, particularly listed buildings and other locally important sites.
Creating Places - A policy statement on architecture and place for Scotland (2013)	The policy statement sets out the Scottish Government's overarching position on architecture and place. Architecture and place have an established, strong relationship with planning. Therefore, the policies contained in the document are material considerations in determining planning applications and appeals.	The policy framework for how design issues will be considered in relation to development and the different ways of doing things. The design factors and overarching objectives will be considered when selecting sites for play, open space projects and coordinating green network developments as part of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan.
Designing Streets: A Policy Statement for Scotland (2010)	Sets the context for good street design and the policies for implementation, planning considerations and embraces the six qualities of successful places as promoted in Designing Places	The policy framework for how design issues will be considered in relation to development and the different ways of doing things. The design factors

		and overarching objectives will be considered when selecting sites for play, open space projects and coordinating green network developments as part of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan.
Green Infrastructure: Design and Placemaking (2011)	Provides practical guidance to help achieve successful places.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should promote the use of green infrastructure in development.
Soil		
Scottish Soil Framework (2009)	The main aim of the Framework is to promote the sustainable management and protection of soils consistent with the economic, social and environmental needs of Scotland	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of soil outcomes.
Landscape		
Scottish Landscape Forum: Scotland's Living Landscape, Places for People (2007)	Considers how to promote good management of all landscapes, to secure benefits for all. It provides seven key recommendations to the Scottish Government and other public bodies as first steps to delivering better care for Scottish landscapes.	Consider how the draft George Street Mini Masterplan can maintain and restore natural habitats to ensure biodiversity and landscapes
All Our Futures: Planning for a Scotland with an Ageing Population (2007)	The strategy covers topics such as the role of public services, increased opportunities for older people, better intergenerational relationships, improved health and providing lifelong learning opportunities.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should consider the needs of an ageing population.
Let's Make Scotland More Active: A Strategy for Physical Activity (2003)	Aims to increase and maintain the proportion of physically active people in Scotland setting out targets to 2022.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should promote physical activities.
Let's Get Scotland Walking – The National Strategy (2014)	Let's Get Scotland Walking - the National Walking Strategy sets out a vision where everyone benefits from walking as part of their everyday journeys, and everyone has access to welcoming and safe environments to walk in.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of the national walking strategy and improve opportunities to access both formal and informal greenspaces.
Cycling Action Plan for Scotland 2017-2020	The Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS), sets out a framework aiming to increase cycling across Scotland.	The should encourage cycling and improve opportunities to access cycling infrastructure.
A Long-Term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland 2030	This document sets out how we hope Scotland will look in 2030 if more people are walking and cycling for short, everyday journeys allowing us to reap the benefits of active travel.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should align with the objectives of the long-term vision where practicable.
Equality Act 2010	Sets out a framework which prevents individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a more equal society.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should build the needs of people with protected characteristics into its strategic actions.

Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005	Ensures that discrimination law covers all the activities of the public sector; and requires public bodies to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people. Aims to end the discrimination that many disabled people face and gives disabled people rights in the areas of employment, education, access to goods, facilities and services and buying or renting land or property.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should build the needs of disabled persons into its strategic actions.
Community Empowerment Act 2015	Provides a framework to increase community empowerment and engagement. Targets regeneration and community participation. Requires local authorities to produce a Food Growing Strategy.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should encourage and promote community involvement in the development of the framework, where appropriate.
Natural Conservation		
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)	The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 is the primary legislation which protects animals, plants and habitats in the UK.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of the Act.
The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004	The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 places a duty on public bodies to further the conservation of biodiversity and increases protection for Sites of Special Scientific Interest.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of the Act.
Developing with Nature (2023)	NatureScot has published Developing with Nature Guidance that aims to encourage developers and planners to deliver more for biodiversity as an everyday part of their development. The information in the Guidance is intended to provide an understanding of what common measures to enhance biodiversity are feasible to non-specialists.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of this Guidance.
Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to 2045: Tackling the Nature Emergency in Scotland	This biodiversity strategy sets out our clear ambition for Scotland to be Nature Positive by 2030 and to have restored and regenerated biodiversity across the country by 2045.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of this strategy.
2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity - A Strategy for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in Scotland (2013)	The 2020 Challenge is a supplement to the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy (2004), focused on desired outcomes for 2020. It shows how the Scottish Government, its public agencies, Scottish business and others can contribute to the Strategy's aims as well as supporting sustainable economic growth.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of this strategy.
The Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) Regulations 1994 (as amended)	In Scotland, the Habitats Directive is translated into specific legal obligations by the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will comply with the Regulations by not adversely

The Conservation (Natural Habitats) Amendment (Scotland) Regulations	The Habitats Regulations have been amended in Scotland, most recently in 2019 as a result of the UK leaving the EU. These amendments mean that we must continue to apply the requirements of the Habitats and Birds Directives to how European sites are designated and protected	affecting European sites or any species listed under the Directive.
Water		
Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011, as amended	Outlines the different levels of authorisations to allow for proportionate regulation depending on the risk an activity poses to the water environment. Some activities require authorisation including point source discharges, impoundments and abstractions.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of these regulations
Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003	Sets out the framework for protecting the water environment that integrates the control of pollution, abstractions, dams and engineering activities in the water environment.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of the importance of the water environment
Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009	Creates a framework in which organisations involved in flood risk management can co-ordinate actions to deliver sustainable and modern approaches to flood risk management	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan must take into account the provisions of the Act, in particular the assessment of flood risk and the preparation of flood risk management plans.
Scottish Planning Policy - Planning and Flooding	The central purpose is to prevent further development which would have a significant probability of being affected by flooding, or which would increase the probability of flooding elsewhere	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will contribute to meeting the overall aim of reducing the negative effects of all sources of flooding on the environment.
The river basin management plan for the Scotland river basin district: 2021-2027 (2021)	This river basin management plan aims to protect and improve the water environment in the places we live to benefit the health and wellbeing of Scotland's people and communities.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will support the protection and enhancement of water bodies.
Scottish Water Strategic Asset and Capacity Development Plan (2012)	Describes Scottish Waters processes and systems for calculating capacity available, at waste/ water treatment works in Scotland.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of the importance of the Plan.
SEPA Groundwater Protection Policy for Scotland v3: Environmental Policy 19 (SEPA)	This policy aims to provide a sustainable future for Scotland's groundwater resources by protecting legitimate uses of groundwater and providing a common SEPA framework to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect groundwater quality by minimising the risks posed by point and diffuse sources of pollution; • Maintain the groundwater resource by authorising abstractions and by influencing developments, which could affect groundwater quantity. 	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of the Policy.

Waste		
Scotland's Zero Waste Plan (2010)	The plan outlines Scotland's key objectives in relation to waste prevention, recycling and reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill on the journey to a zero-waste Scotland. The plan proposes targets for Scotland's waste	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of this plan and the importance of a circular economy in tackling climate change.
Cross-Sector Guidance		
PAN 60: Planning for Natural Heritage	Provides advice on how the land use planning system can contribute to the conservation and enhancement of Scotland's natural environment. It describes the planning system in Scotland as it was at the time when it was published and refers to the way that Natural Heritage is considered in both plan-making and decision-making.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to the conservation, enhancement, enjoyment and understanding of the natural environment.
PAN 61: Planning and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems	Describes how planning policy should set the framework for implementing Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) through the development control process.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should consider the role of sustainable urban drainage.
Planning and Waste Management Advice (2015)	The Planning Advice complements the National Planning Framework (NPF3), Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) and Scotland's Zero Waste Plan (ZWP). A low carbon place and 'circular economy' are alternatives to the 'make, use, dispose of' culture which means re-using products and materials continually and growing a low carbon economy. The advice provides step-by-step advice on development planning and development management.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should consider waste management from the inception process. It should promote integrated waste management.
PAN 65: Planning and Open Space	Planning Advice Note (PAN) 65 provides advice on the role of the planning system in protecting and enhancing existing open spaces and providing high-quality new spaces. Raises the profile of open space as a planning issue. Sets out how local authorities can prepare open space strategies and gives examples of good practices in providing, managing and maintaining open spaces.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan aims to improve the quality of open spaces in the city and will set out measures to improve the quality/quantity of publicly accessible open spaces.
PAN 75: Transport and Planning	The PAN aims to create greater awareness of how linkages between planning and transport can be managed. It highlights the roles of different bodies and professions in the process and points to other sources of information. Establishes linkages between planning and transport and how it can be managed.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should promote the use of existing transportation networks and develop new cycling and walking alternatives.

PAN 77: Designing Safer Places	Planning Advice Note (PAN) 77 provides advice on how planning can help to create attractive well-managed environments which help to discourage antisocial and criminal behaviour.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should safeguard safety.
PAN 78: Inclusive Design	Looks at how to improve the design of places so that they can be used by everyone - regardless of age, gender or disability. Makes it a legal requirement to consider the needs of disabled people under the terms of Disability Discrimination legislation	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should promote a high standard of design.
Regional Level		
Overarching Planning Policy		
Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan 2020	Creates a long-term sustainable framework of settlements in a hierarchy, which focuses major development on the main settlements in the North East. Sets the strategic context for Aberdeen City Local Development Plan which in turn sets the framework for land use development.	By setting the spatial development strategy and supporting policies at a regional level, the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan aims to achieve alignment with the Scottish Governments national outcomes and helps to direct and inform the local interpretation of planning. This will need to be fully reflected within the draft George Street Mini Masterplan.
Cross-Sectoral		
Regional Economic Strategy – Securing the Future of the North East (2015)	Sets the context for economic prosperity in the North East. The four key strands are investment in infrastructure innovation, inclusive economic growth and internationalisation.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should support sustainable economic growth.
The Economic Action Plan for Aberdeen City and Shire to 2025	Sets out objectives identifying actions to be undertaken towards the longer-term economic ambitions for Aberdeen City and Shire.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should support sustainable economic growth.
Nestrans 2040 Regional Transport Strategy (RTS)	The Regional Transport Strategy is a long-term strategy for the areas of Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire, which sets the vision and direction for transport in the region up to the year 2040.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to meeting objectives set out in the Regional Transport Strategy.
Nestrans Aberdeen Rapid Transit	A competitive, affordable and efficient mode of public transport, offering an alternative to private vehicle travel.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to meeting the objectives of Aberdeen Rapid Transit.
North East Scotland Flood Risk Management Plan 2022 – 2028	Flood Risk Management Plans are required under the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 and are updated every 6 years. The Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 requires the relevant responsible authorities to work together to produce a co-ordinated "Local Flood Risk Management Plan" to reduce the overall risk of flooding from all types of sources.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to reducing and managing flood risk.
Nature Conservation		

North East of Scotland Biodiversity Partnership - Action Plan	North East Scotland Local Biodiversity Action Plan (NESLBAP) takes action to conserve important species and habitats for our benefit and for future generations.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should promote and protect biodiversity.
River Dee Catchment Management Plan (2007)	The management plan records the current state of the Dee catchment, including water quality, the type and extent of habitats and species in the catchment, and important land management activities, identifies key issues and puts identifies potential solutions through a series of actions.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering the actions proposed in the Catchment Management Plan.
Local Level		
Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2022	<p>The local development plan is reviewed every five years. Aberdeen City Council intends the next local development plan to be the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2022.</p> <p>On 22 July 2021, Aberdeen City Council submitted to Scottish Ministers the Aberdeen Local Development Plan Proposed Plan 2020 to Scottish Ministers for examination. In November 2021 the reporter commenced the examination of conformity with the planning authority's participation statement as required by Section 19(4) of the Town and Country Planning Scotland Act 1997 (as amended).</p>	Future development associated with the draft George Street Mini Masterplan should be mindful of the policies set out within the LDP which are likely to have a direct influence on development.
Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2017	The Aberdeen LDP sets the framework for growth and development and establishes a presumption in favour of development that contributes to sustainable development as defined in Scottish Planning Policy.	The policies set out within the LDP have a direct influence on the development and implementation of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan in regard to connecting green networks and developing active travel routes.
Policy D2 - Landscape	Developments will have a strong landscape framework which improves and enhances the setting and visual impact of the development, unifies urban form, provides shelter, creates local identity and promotes biodiversity. To secure high-quality development, planning applications for new development must include a landscape strategy and management plan incorporating hard and soft landscaping design specifications. The level of detail required will be appropriate to the scale of the development.	Policy D2 as set out within the LDP has a direct influence on the development and implementation of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan in regard to landscape. The Mini Masterplan will aim to add a strong identity and townscape character to George Street
Policy NE1 - Green Space Network	The Council will protect, promote and enhance the wildlife, access, recreation, ecosystem services and landscape value of the Green Space Network, which is identified on the Proposals Map. Proposals for development that are likely to destroy or erode the character and/or function of the Green Space Network will not be permitted.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering Policy NE1

	<p>Where major infrastructure projects or other developments necessitate crossing the Green Space Network, such developments should maintain and enhance the coherence of the network. In doing so, provision should be made for access across roads for wildlife and outdoor recreation.</p> <p>Masterplanning of new developments should consider the existing areas of the Green Space Network and identify new areas incorporating Green Space Network. Masterplans will determine the location, extent and configuration of the Green Space Network within the area, and its connectivity with the wider network.</p> <p>Development which has a negative impact on existing wildlife habitats and connections, or other features of value to natural heritage, open space, landscape and recreation, should be mitigated through the enhancement of the Green Space Network.</p>	
<p>Policy NE3 - Urban Green Space</p>	<p>Permission will not be granted to redevelop any parks, playing fields, sports pitches, woods, allotments or all other areas of urban green space (including smaller spaces not identified on the Proposals Map) for any use other than recreation and sport. Exceptions will be made when an equivalent and equally convenient and accessible area for public space is laid out and made available in the locality by the applicant for urban green space purposes, for example through the replacement of school buildings. In all cases, development will only be acceptable provided that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is no significant loss to the landscape character and amenity of the site and adjoining area; 2. Public access is either maintained or enhanced; 3. The site is of no significant wildlife or heritage value; 4. There is no loss of established or mature trees; 5. Replacement green space of similar or better quality is located in or immediately adjacent to the same community, providing similar or improved health benefits to the replaced area and is accessible to that community, taking into account public transport, walking and cycling networks and barriers such as major roads. 6. They do not impact detrimentally on lochs, ponds, watercourses or wetlands in the vicinity of the development; and 	<p>The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering Policy NE3</p> <p>Carefully designed planting should be considered for bats to create natural screens and buffer zones to minimise disturbance, whilst providing a green network corridor.</p>

	<p>7. Proposals to develop outdoor sports facilities, including playing fields and sports pitches should also be consistent with the terms of Scottish Planning Policy.</p>	
<p>Policy NE4 - Open Space Provision in New Development</p>	<p>The Council will require the provision of at least 2.8ha per 1,000 people of meaningful and useful open space in new residential development. Please see the relevant Supplementary Guidance Open Space & Green Infrastructure, detailed below, for information on how to calculate open space requirements, as well as different types of provision and the expected accessibility and quality standards. Public or communal open space should be provided in all residential developments, including on brownfield sites. However, on some brownfield sites, it may not be possible to increase the amount of open space, for example where existing buildings on the site are being retained. In these cases, commuted sums towards off-site provision or enhancement of existing open spaces will be sought instead. In areas where the Open Space Audit has shown that existing open space is of poor quality, contributions may be sought to enhance existing provision instead of new provision being required</p>	<p>Policy NE4 does not only apply to residential developments but also covers green space networks and general open space in non-residential developments.</p> <p>Within Supplementary Guidance section 12 it mentions masterplanning/development frameworks that they should make use of the open space typologies set out in the Planning Advice Note 65 wherever possible. An open space plan with the functions and types could be useful.</p>
<p>NE5 - Trees and Woodlands</p>	<p>Trees are an essential element of our urban environment. It is widely recognised that trees provide many benefits and are a key component of urban infrastructure which make our cities a more attractive and pleasant place to live. Trees offer multiple benefits within our urban environment including health benefits, improvement of air quality, noise reduction, carbon storage and provide shelter for wildlife.</p>	<p>Native trees and woodlands should be planted in new development</p>
<p>Policy NE6 - Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality</p>	<p>Development will not be permitted if:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It would increase the risk of flooding: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) by reducing the ability of the functional flood plain to store and convey water; b) through the discharge of additional surface water; or c) by harming flood defences. 2. It would be at risk itself from flooding; 3. Adequate provision is not made for access to waterbodies for maintenance; or 4. It would require the construction of new or strengthened flood defences that would have a significantly damaging effect on the natural heritage interests within or adjacent to a watercourse. 	<p>The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering Policy NE6</p>

	<p>5. Development on the functional floodplain will only be permitted where its location is essential for operational reasons, and it must be designed and constructed to remain operational during floods and not to impede water flow. Applicants will be required to provide a Flood Risk Assessment where a development is likely to result in a material increase in the number of buildings at risk of flooding, or where it has been indicated in the opportunity sites schedule that one will be prepared. Windfall sites may also require a Flood Risk Assessment. Drainage Impact Assessment (DIA) will be required for new development proposals comprising 5 or more homes or 250 square metres of non-residential floorspace. DIA will also be required for developments of any size that affect sensitive areas. DIA should detail how surface water and waste water will be managed. Surface water drainage associated with development must:</p> <p>6. Be the most appropriate available in terms of SUDS; and 7. Avoid flooding and pollution both during and after construction.</p> <p>There is a presumption against excessive engineering and culverting of waterbodies. Natural treatments of floodplains and other water storage features will be preferred wherever possible. There will be a requirement to restore existing culverted or canalised water bodies to a naturalised state where this is possible. Where the Council agrees that culverts are unavoidable for technical reasons, they should be designed to maintain existing flow conditions and aquatic life. Any proposals for new culverts should have a demonstrably neutral impact on flood risk and be linked to long-term maintenance arrangements to ensure they are not the cause of flooding in the future. Connection to the public sewer will be a prerequisite of all development where this is not already provided. Private wastewater treatment systems in sewered areas will not be permitted. In areas not served by the public sewer, a private sewer treatment system for individual properties will be permitted provided that the developer demonstrates that there will be no adverse effects on the environment, amenities and public health.</p>	
NE8 - Natural Heritage	Development should seek to avoid any detrimental impact on protected species through the carrying out of surveys and	Bat surveys will be required at the project stage

	submission of protection plans describing appropriate mitigation where necessary.	
Policy NE9 - Access and Informal Recreation	New development should not compromise the integrity of existing or potential recreational opportunities including general access rights to land and water, Core Paths, other paths and rights of way. This includes any impacts on access during the construction phase of development. Applicants should provide detail on how public access and safety will be maintained during construction, for example through temporary diversions. Wherever possible, developments should include new or improved provisions for public access, permeability and/or links to green space for recreation and active travel.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering Policy NE9
Policy D4 - Historic Environment	The Council will protect, preserve and enhance the historic environment in line with Scottish Planning Policy, SHEP and its Supplementary Guidance and Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plan. There will be a presumption in favour of the retention and reuse of listed buildings and buildings within conservation areas that contribute to their character. High-quality design that respects the character, appearance and setting of the historic environment and protects the special architectural or historic interest of its listed buildings, conservation areas and historic gardens and designed landscapes, will be supported. The physical in situ preservation of all scheduled monuments and archaeological sites will be supported. Developments that would adversely impact upon archaeological remains, including battlefields, of either national or local importance, or on their setting will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, where there is no practical alternative site and where there are imperative reasons for over-riding public need. In any such case, the applicant must at their own expense: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take satisfactory steps to mitigate adverse development impacts; and • where the preservation of the site in its original location is not possible, arrange for the full excavation and recording of the site in advance of development and the publication/ curation of finding 	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering Policy D4

<p>Policy I1 - Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations</p>	<p>Development must be accompanied by the infrastructure, services and facilities required to support new or expanded communities and the scale and type of developments proposed. Where development either individually or cumulatively will place additional demands on community facilities or infrastructure that would necessitate new facilities or exacerbate deficiencies in the existing provision, the Council will require the developer to meet or contribute to the cost of providing or improving such infrastructure or facilities. Actions for delivering infrastructure are described in the Local Development Plan Action Programme. Infrastructure requirements and the level of contributions for other development will be assessed using the criteria set out in Supplementary Guidance. The precise level of infrastructure requirements and contributions will need to be agreed with the Council, in consultation with other statutory agencies where appropriate. The level of provision or contribution required will relate to the development proposed either directly or to the cumulative impact of development in the area and be commensurate to its scale and impact. Masterplans will be expected to reflect the infrastructure requirements and contributions identified and should include a Delivery Statement setting out details of how the proposed development and supporting infrastructure will be delivered. New infrastructure will either be provided by the developer or through financial contributions. It will need to be compatible with other Local Development Plan policies.</p>	<p>The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering Policy I1</p>
<p>Policy T2 - Managing the Transport Impact of Development</p>	<p>Commensurate with the scale and anticipated impact, new developments must demonstrate that sufficient measures have been taken to minimise traffic generated and to maximise opportunities for sustainable and active travel. Transport Assessments and Travel Plans will be required for developments which exceed the thresholds set out in Supplementary Guidance. The development of new communities should be accompanied by an increase in local services and employment opportunities that reduce the need to travel and include integrated walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure to ensure that, where travel is necessary, sustainable modes are prioritised. Where sufficient sustainable transport links to and from new developments are not in</p>	<p>The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering Policy T2</p>

	<p>place, developers will be required to provide such facilities or a suitable contribution towards implementation.</p> <p>Further information is contained in the relevant Supplementary Guidance which should be read in conjunction with this policy.</p>	
<p>Policy T3 - Sustainable and Active Travel</p>	<p>New developments must be accessible by a range of transport modes, with an emphasis on active and sustainable transport, and the internal layout of developments must prioritise walking, cycling and public transport penetration. Links between residential, employment, recreation and other facilities must be protected or improved for non-motorised transport users, making it quick, convenient and safe for people to travel by walking and cycling. Street layouts will reflect the principles of Designing Streets and meet the minimum distances to services as set out in the Supplementary Guidance.</p> <p>Existing access rights, including core paths, rights of way and paths within the wider network will be protected and enhanced. Where development proposals impact the access network, the principle of access must be maintained at all times by the developer through the provision of suitable alternative routes.</p> <p>Recognising that there will still be instances in which people will require to travel by car, initiatives such as car sharing, alternative fuel vehicles and Car Clubs will also be supported where appropriate.</p>	<p>The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering Policy T3</p>
<p>Policy T4 - Air Quality</p>	<p>Development proposals which may have a detrimental impact on air quality will not be permitted unless measures to mitigate the impact of air pollutants are proposed and agreed upon with the Planning Authority. Planning applications for such proposals should be accompanied by an assessment of the likely impact of development on air quality and any mitigation measures proposed. Supplementary Guidance sets out the likely circumstances in which applicants must submit an assessment of the potential impact of particular types of development on existing and future air quality, particularly in and around Air Quality Management Areas. It also guides the process of air quality assessment and how mitigation measures will be assessed and implemented.</p>	<p>The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering Policy T4</p>
<p>Policy T5 – Noise</p>	<p>In cases where significant noise exposure is likely to arise from development, a Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) will be required as part of a planning application.</p>	<p>The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering Policy T5</p>

	<p>There will be a presumption against noise-generating developments, as identified by a NIA, being located close to noise-sensitive developments, such as existing or proposed housing, while housing and other noise-sensitive developments will not normally be permitted close to existing noisy land uses without suitable mitigation measures in place to reduce the impact of noise. Development within or near to Candidate Noise Management Areas (CNMAs) and Candidate Quiet Areas (CQAs) will not be permitted where this is likely to contribute to a significant increase in exposure to noise or deterioration of noise conditions in these areas, or where this will reduce the size of, or cause an increase in the noise level within, the CQA.</p> <p>Further information on NIAs, CNMAs and CQAs, including maps of these areas, can be found in the relevant Supplementary Guidance which should be read in conjunction with this policy.</p>	
Aberdeen City Council City Centre Masterplan 2015	<p>The Aberdeen City Centre and Beach Masterplan (CCMBP) is a regeneration blueprint that is transforming the city centre while conserving its proud heritage. The goal is greater prosperity, a better quality of life for all, and encouraging people to walk or cycle more.</p> <p>The Masterplan was shaped following extensive public consultation and unanimously approved by Aberdeen City Council in June 2015. A Review was held in 2021 and agreed at Committee in May 2021.</p>	<p>At the June 2022 Full Council meeting, several decisions were made for different projects within the CCMP.</p> <p>This Mini Masterplan forms part of a wider City Centre and Beach Masterplan which will be regularly reviewed to ensure Aberdeen City Council's strategy for the City Centre and the Beach remains up to date and relevant, with a clear focus on delivery</p>
Aberdeen City Council Supplementary Guidance	<p>To guide policy implementation and forms part of the Development Plan and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.</p>	<p>Much of the Supplementary Guidance is relevant to the draft George Street Mini Masterplan. A full list can be found on the Aberdeen City Council website at https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/local-development-plan/aberdeen-local-development-plan/supplementary-guidance-and-technical-advice#995</p>
Destination Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire Tourism Strategy (2018-2023)	<p>Destination Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Tourism Strategy 2018-2023 outlines the region's tourism ambition.</p>	<p>The George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to Tourism Strategy.</p>

Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan	The Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan (CCMP) is a regeneration blueprint that is transforming the city centre while conserving its heritage. The goal is greater prosperity and a better quality of life for all.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering the actions proposed in the City Centre Masterplan
Aberdeen City Local Transport Strategy 2016 - 2021	Ensures the Local Development Plan takes full account of the environment, social and economic implications of transport; Promotes the maximisation of accessibility for all to services and jobs; sustainable and active travel, efficient resource use, as well as safety in delivering transportation.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should consider the integration of LTS objectives, actions and committed projects.
Aberdeen City Council Contaminated Land Strategy (2016)	The Aberdeen City Council Contaminated Land Strategy (2016) states, " <i>Regeneration of city centre sites and other brownfield sites throughout the existing built-up area for appropriate uses will be encouraged as an important part of the Plan's strategy.</i> "	The Mini Masterplan site is located in such an area, and as such may have had the potential to leach contaminants into the surrounding areas. Without knowing how contaminated material, if any, was dealt with when the site was first developed, it is not possible to discount the possibility that contaminated material will be encountered on site.
Aberdeen City Air Quality Action Plan	To reduce nitrogen dioxide within the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in Aberdeen City Centre, and to a lesser extent reduce particulates (PM ₁₀) through short, medium and long-term infrastructure and other projects.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering the actions proposed in the Action Plan to improve air quality with the AQMA and ensure land required to implement the Action Plan is provided timeously
Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan 2022-2025	Obesity is one of the contributing factors to the development of type 2 diabetes which can lead to other negative impacts on a person's health. Promoting a healthy diet and weight and increasing opportunities for physical activity will go some way to offset these effects.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will contribute to the encouragement of physical activity.
Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26	The vision is for Aberdeen to be 'a place where all people prosper'. Four themes are set out: Prosperous Economy, Prosperous People, Prosperous Place and Enabling Technology. It focuses on four priority areas for strategic partnership working: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen prospers • Children are our future • People are resilient, included and supported when in need • Empowered, resilient and sustainable communities • Creating a digital place 	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should support the themes and priority aims set out in the LOIP.
Aberdeen Socio-Economic Rescue Plan 2020/21	The Plan is an immediate and dynamic response to the impact of Covid19 and aligns with the LOIP strategic themes of Economy,	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of the Rescue Plan.

	People and Place. While it focuses on immediate actions, it informs the scheduled refresh of the LOIP in 2021.	
Net Zero Aberdeen Routemap - towards becoming a net zero emissions city by 2045	The Net Zero Aberdeen Routemap - towards becoming a net zero emissions city by 2045 outlines how the city will adapt to changing climate conditions in the coming decades, focusing on six key theme strategies: mobility; buildings and heat; the circular economy; energy supply; the natural environment; and community empowerment.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should support the theme strategies set out in the Net Zero Routemap
Aberdeen City Council Climate Change Plan 2012-25	The Plan sets out the approach, pathway and actions towards net zero and climate-resilient Council assets and operations, by 2045.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should support the themes and priority aims set out in the Climate Change Plan.
Aberdeen Adapts: Climate Adaptation Framework	Aberdeen Adapts is a framework for city-wide working on adaptation. Incorporating the views of local organisations and communities, it sets the direction to build long-term city resilience.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should ensure the Climate Adaptation Framework is considered.
Aberdeen Electric Vehicle Framework	The purpose of the EV framework for Aberdeen from 2020 to 2030 is to encourage and actively cater for greater uptake of electric vehicles in the city and will support relevant national, regional and local strategies.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should ensure the EV framework is considered.
Granite City Growing, Aberdeen's food-growing strategy	'Granite City Growing: Aberdeen Growing Food Together 2020' is Aberdeen's first food growing strategy and has been co-produced with a range of community groups and key stakeholders.	The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will consider the Granite City Growing strategy where practicable.
Aberdeen Nature Conservation Strategy	The strategy aims To conserve Aberdeen City's natural heritage for the benefit of our biodiversity, citizens and visitors, for current and future generations	The masterplan should identify opportunities for biodiversity gain where practicable.
Open Space Audit and Strategy 2011-2016	Aberdeen City's Open Space Strategy sets out a vision and aims to improve the quality of our open spaces in the city. There is growing evidence that quality and accessible open spaces contribute towards improving health, economy, environment and wellbeing. It promotes sustainable development and helps in mitigating the impacts of climate change such as flooding and air pollution and provides green networks by linking various habitats benefiting biodiversity.	Ensure that the draft George Street Mini Masterplan incorporates the findings of the Open Space Strategy audit and supports the aims of the strategy.
Aberdeen City Core Paths Plan (CPP)	The vision for Aberdeen's CPP is to "form a complete paths network throughout the City, encouraging healthy and sustainable access opportunities.	The objectives of the CPP should be considered in the draft George Street Mini Masterplan as opportunities to enhance local core paths and active travel routes. The Core Paths Plan identified core paths within the draft George Street Mini Masterplan boundary

<p>Landscape Character Assessment: Aberdeen City - Landscape Evolution and Influences</p>	<p>This document provides information on how the landscape of the local authority area has evolved. It complements the Landscape Character Type descriptions of the 2019 dataset.</p> <p>The original character assessment reports are part of a series of 30, mostly for a local authority area.</p>	<p>The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should take account of landscape character and promote good landscape design.</p>
<p>Aberdeen City Waste Strategy 2014-25</p>	<p>Sets out the long-term plans to reduce the social, economic and environmental consequences of waste. It aims for Aberdeen to see waste as a resource and not a problem, and for it to be a zero-waste city, providing long-term social, economic and environmental benefits to all.</p>	<p>The draft George Street Mini Masterplan could attract an increased quantity of visitors and tourists which makes it more prone to litter and waste. The draft George Street Mini Masterplan should be cognisant of the objectives outlined in the ZWS plan, and adapt accordingly to contribute to them.</p>

D ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE APPRAISAL

E COMPATIBILITY ANALYSIS

F ASSESSMENT OF PREFERRED AND ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS

G HIGH LEVEL ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL FUTURE MINI MASTERPLAN PROJECTS

H DRAFT GEORGE STREET MINI MASTERPLAN

I DRAFT GEORGE STREET MINI MASTERPLAN CONSULTATION ANALYSIS

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George Street Draft Mini Masterplan Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report: Non-Technical Summary



September 2023

CONTROL SHEET

Client: Hub North Scotland Ltd
Project Title: George Street Draft Mini Masterplan
Report Title: Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report: Non-Technical Summary
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EnviroCentre Limited Office Locations:

Glasgow

Edinburgh

Inverness

Banchory

Registered Office: Craighall Business Park 8 Eagle Street Glasgow G4 9XA

Tel 0141 341 5040 info@envirocentre.co.uk www.envirocentre.co.uk

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1 NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

1.1 Introduction

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan has been carried out by EnviroCentre, on behalf of Aberdeen City Council.

An SEA is required for the draft George Street Mini Masterplan under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. The SEA has been carried out alongside the development of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan and seeks to ensure that, once adopted, the George Street Mini Masterplan contributes positively to the high level of environmental protection now expected by the Scottish Government. The SEA seeks to ensure that potential significant effects on the environment of implementing the George Street Mini Masterplan, and of reasonable alternatives, are identified, described, evaluated and taken into account before the George Street Mini Masterplan is adopted.

To support the public consultation on the draft George Street Mini Masterplan and the potential effects on the environment of its implementation, an Environmental Report, which documents the SEA process and outcomes, is required under the SEA legislation. This Non-Technical Summary of the Environmental Report is also required to facilitate wider consultation.

1.2 Consultation on Draft George Street Mini Masterplan

Consultation on Draft George Street Mini Masterplan

The Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report was issued to the SEA Gateway on **10 July 2023** for distribution to statutory consultees (Historic Environment Scotland, NatureScot and SEPA). Consultee responses were received on **23 August 2023** (refer to Appendix B)

Responses to the consultation on the draft George Street Mini Masterplan and its potential effects on the environment were sent to: nmcdowell@aberdeencity.gov.uk OR

Nigel McDowell,
Senior Planner,
Aberdeen City Council
Masterplanning, Design and Conservation
Development Management / Strategic Place Planning
Commissioning Marischal College
Broad Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1AB

Online Consultation August 9th August – 10th September 2023

In accordance with the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, Section 16 Consultation Procedures, a Notice advertising that the Draft Environmental Report, and associated non-technical summary, was placed in the Aberdeen Evening Express newspaper on Wednesday 8th August.

The Notice advised that for a period of four weeks, between 9th August and 10th September 2023 the documents would be hosted online using the Aberdeen City Council CitizenSpace webpage and interested party opinion was sought on the content of the Draft Environmental Report. The Environmental Report illustrates what are considered to be 'significant' environmental impacts to the

environment of the masterplan area, or the mitigation measures considered necessary, should the recommended projects be implemented. The consultation did not generate any responses.

1.3 Background to the George Street Mini Masterplan

The George Street Mini Masterplan highlights the main issues for development in the George Street Mini Masterplan area and sets out scenarios for how these will be dealt with, including consideration of existing and new sites. The draft George Street Mini Masterplan sets out a Vision and a series of Objectives and Actions for regenerating the George Street area.

1.4 Integration of the SEA with the George Street draft Mini Masterplan - development process & engagement with stakeholders

Whilst the George Street Mini Masterplan's development process was not explicitly subject to SEA from the outset, a number of SEA type activities were undertaken by Aberdeen City Council and their consultants during the preparation of the George Street Mini Masterplan including community consultation and engagement. These activities played a key role in informing the early development of the George Street Mini Masterplan in advance of the formal SEA process.

The SEA process began in **October 2022** and since then has been undertaken in parallel with the development of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan with interaction between the SEA team and the George Street Mini Masterplan team.

1.5 SEA overview

The SEA aims to inform the draft George Street Mini Masterplan development process. It is important to note that the draft George Street Mini Masterplan is a high level plan and as such, the approach taken to the SEA has been of a high level assessment. This SEA is not intended to address issues that should be considered during the assessment of lower-level plans or complementary strategies which may support implementation of the George Street Mini Masterplan.

1.6 SEA Screening

Aberdeen City Council screen plans to determine whether an SEA for the plan should be undertaken. When a plan is likely to have significant (i.e., negative, damaging, large or long-lasting) effects on the environment, the Council will undertake an SEA. (If the effect is not significant, no further action is taken and a pre-screening report would be prepared). In this case, it was determined by the Council that the environmental effects of the George Street Mini Masterplan will potentially be significant and therefore a full SEA is required, therefore, a formal Screening Opinion was not sought from the SEA Gateway.

1.7 Scoping the level of detail for the assessment

The approach to the SEA of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan initially involved determining the level of detail of the SEA to ensure it was appropriate to the draft George Street Mini Masterplan (called 'Scoping'). An SEA Scoping Report was produced and issued to SEA Gateway on 13th January 2023 for consultation. Consultee comments received 17th February 2023. The Scoping Report presented the findings of the initial consideration of potential environmental effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan. It included information on the environment relevant to the development of the draft George

Street Mini Masterplan (environmental baseline information) and a proposed approach to assessing the environmental effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan.

The responses to the Scoping Report were taken into account to inform and adapt the approach to development of the George Street Mini Masterplan and the undertaking of the assessment of the George Street Mini Masterplan's potential effects on the environment (Appendix A of the SEA Environmental Report). The responses to the Scoping Report consultation provided comments on an initial review of relevant plans, programmes, strategies and associated environmental protection objectives to which the George Street Mini Masterplan and the SEA would need to refer. A list of environmental protection objectives (termed 'SEA objectives') were identified under nine environmental topics, which would be appropriate for the George Street Mini Masterplan to work towards. The SEA Objectives used as a framework for the assessment of the George Street Mini Masterplan are included below in Table 1.

Within Table 1 we have attempted to align air, noise and climate objectives as they are related in terms of sources and impacts and ideally should not be considered in isolation. Air quality is also considered under 'Population and Human Health' given it is a public health issue as well as an environmental consideration.

Table 1: Environmental Receptors, SEA Objectives and Questions

SEA Topic	SEA Objectives	Questions
Biodiversity (Flora and fauna)	Protect or conserve and, where possible, restore and enhance biodiversity and valued nature conservation habitats and species.	To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conservation objectives of International, National or local designations? • populations of protected species, their habitats and resting places or roosts? • wider biodiversity, i.e., non-designated/protected sites and species? • existing green network and habitat connectivity? • opportunities for enhancement or expansion of the green network and wider habitat connectivity? • the protection and enhancement of urban trees?
Population and Human Health	To protect and enhance quality of life, including maintaining and improving opportunities to access public open space and the natural and historic environment	To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the provision of housing and employment opportunities to meet identified needs? • the provision of appropriate services and community facilities to meet identified needs? • residential amenity, including noise? • access to open spaces, recreational facilities and active travel routes? • access to the historic environment?
Water	To protect and enhance the ecological status of the water environment	To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the ecological status of identified water bodies: • surface water run-off • flood risk in the local and/or wider areas?
Soil	To maintain or improve soil quality, quantity and function and prevent any further degradation of soils	To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contaminated land? • Impact to existing topsoil and/or subsoils?
Air	To improve or maintain air quality and reduce emissions of significant pollutants	To what extent will the Mini Masterplan be likely to reduce/increase air quality, in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • carbon emissions? • levels of Nitrous Dioxide (NO₂) and Particulate Matter (PM₁₀)?

Climatic Factors	To reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase resilience to the consequences of climate change	To what extent will the strategy or policy promote: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • renewable energy technologies and energy efficiency? • sustainable transport and active travel? • future proofing of new development? • Green infrastructure provision?
Cultural heritage	Protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment.	To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Archaeological sites, Conservation Areas and Gardens and Designed Landscapes and their settings?
Landscape	Protect and enhance landscape character, local distinctiveness and promote access to the wider environment.	To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the landscape character and setting of settlements?
Material Assets	To reduce waste and promote the sustainable use of resources	To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • waste from new development? • the re-use of previously developed land and buildings? • the delivery of renewable energy development?

To set the context within which the draft George Street Mini Masterplan will need to operate, the SEA Objectives were used to support identification of significant environmental issues and used as a framework for establishing the environmental baseline against which the effects of implementation of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan would be assessed. Through this process, some initial monitoring indicators were identified for measuring progress of the Draft George Street Mini Masterplan towards achieving the SEA Objectives.

1.8 Description of the Proposed Draft George Street Mini Masterplan

The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will serve as a strategy document used by Aberdeen City Council to guide the future development of the George Street area. The draft George Street Mini Masterplan will not be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance, but rather will be a Council approved strategy, and will be assimilated into a recalibrated City Centre and Beach Masterplan. These documents will be material considerations in the assessment of any future planning applications for development within the George Street area.

It is proposed that, following the approval of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan by the Council, detailed planning applications within the George Street area would be submitted, while the public realm aspects will be progressed by the Council under statutory powers, as previously confirmed by Committees. It is important to stress that the draft George Street Mini Masterplan sets out principles and parameters to be followed and will not be 'set in stone' or represent a final design solution for the George Street area or any of the constituent developments. The document will outline a potential phasing strategy for the prospective developments and interventions within the George Street area. **Chapter 4** of the SEA Environmental Report contains a detailed description of the content of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan, and the different Scenarios and alternatives considered.

1.9 Context of the Proposed Draft George Street Mini Masterplan

To guide the content of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan EnviroCentre has made use of high-level documents, statements and pieces of legislation to influence how the Council have prepared the draft Mini Masterplan which affects Aberdeen.

Appendix C of the SEA Environmental Report contains a list of all the relevant plans, programmes, strategies, and policies which have a bearing on the draft George Street Mini Masterplan. of the SEA Environmental Report contains a more detailed description of these.

1.10 Environmental Baseline

We have collected information on the key characteristics of the environment in Aberdeen and the George Street area where information is available, to provide a snapshot of the state of the environment in the George Street area of Aberdeen at this time (**Chapter 4 and Appendix D of the SEA Environmental Report**). We have also identified a number of environmental problems in Aberdeen, and what the role of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan might be in address these problems. The challenges we must deal with include:

- Aberdeen has air quality issues and have implemented three Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's), the closest to the draft George Street Mini Masterplan area being the City Centre AQMA;
- Aberdeen releases significant amounts of CO₂ as a result of heating, driving vehicles among others. This is releasing CO₂ into the air and is contributing to climate change;
- Past and present development have all affected soil and water quality;
- Dealing with waste also has implications for soils, water and climate;
- Aberdeen has a rich cultural heritage, development is putting pressure on these resources;
- New development can put pressure on biodiversity; and
- The diversity of the Aberdeen population needs to be considered for future development. For example, there are a range of ages living in Aberdeen who seek services, retail facilities, open space and recreational facilities, therefore the draft George Street Mini Masterplan must cater for all, including people who live in the area.

The George Street neighbourhood is located towards the northern boundary of the City Centre & Beach Masterplan area. George Street itself runs North to South, forming a once historic key route between the city centre core and areas to the North of the city.

The area is defined to the south by the Bon Accord Centre, which does sever the historic connection to the City Centre. It is bounded to the south west by Robert Gordon College and Charlotte Street, and by Gallowgate and North East of Scotland College (NESCOL) to the east, and Spring Garden to the north.

George Street hosts a diversity of uses which give the area its own distinct character all of which sit within the wider context of Aberdeen's economy and cultural offer.

The main part of SEA is assessing the effect of the strategy, policies and supplementary guidance on the environment. A summary of our findings can be found in the table below:

SEA Topic	Impact of the Mini Masterplan
<p>Biodiversity (Flora and Fauna)</p>	<p>The overall effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan on biodiversity is generally positive and includes key "Design Principles" which indicate all new development will consider biodiversity. However, the demolition of the Norco House extension (Scenarios 1 and 2) and full demolition of Norco House and extensions (scenario 3) had the potential to disturb bats, therefore bat surveys are recommended before any works commencing.</p> <p>There are also potential biodiversity opportunities included within future potential interventions such as SUDs, blue/green infrastructure. There is also a commitment for tree and floral planting to enhance biodiversity (using native species where possible). Interventions include proposals for "green wall infrastructure", green pillars (stacked upright structures) etc.</p>

	<p>The Mini Masterplan also provides opportunities for bioretention verges and/or rain gardens with pollinator friendly perennial planting, semi-mature tree planting of pollution tolerant species.</p> <p>Removal of Norco House and/or the extension presents an opportunity to open up the area and provide additional green spaces.</p>
<p>Population and Health</p>	<p>The overall effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan on population and health are generally positive because the new development will provide access to retail/recreational/leisure facilities, improved infrastructure and potential new employment and economic opportunities.</p> <p>Traffic as a result of the Mini Masterplan will be managed to ensure the George Street area becomes a destination rather than a through route. Sustainable alternatives to car travel will be encouraged within the Min Masterplan, with active travel aiming to provide potential positive effects on human health.</p> <p>Promotion of sustainable travel will also aim to assist meeting City Centre air quality targets.</p> <p>There are opportunities for bioretention verges and/or rain gardens with pollinator friendly perennial planting, semi-mature tree planting of pollution tolerant trees with an upright habit such as <i>Tilia cordata</i> ‘Geenspire’ among others.</p> <p>The process of creating and delivering masterplan projects aims to create optimism, certainty, investment and improved general wellbeing. When founded in community engagement this should give greater place enjoyment, a sustainable place, and a liveable place.</p>
<p>Water</p>	<p>The overall effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan on water resources are also mixed. The “Design Principles” promote the use of Sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) and blue/green infrastructure. The provision of SUDS and blue/green infrastructure can provide opportunities for biodiversity gain. Flood and Drainage impact assessment will be required before development. It must be noted however, the area is historic and dense and therefore SUDS is a challenge to be assessed in context.</p>
<p>Soil</p>	<p>The Aberdeen City Council Contaminated Land Strategy (2016) states, “Regeneration of city centre sites and other brownfield sites throughout the existing built-up area for appropriate uses will be encouraged as an important part of the Plan’s strategy.”</p> <p>The Mini Masterplan covers the area as described above, and as such, previous land uses may have had the potential to leach contaminants into the surrounding areas. Without knowing how contaminated material, if any, was dealt with when the site was first developed, it is not possible to discount the possibility that contaminated material will be encountered on site.</p> <p>The draft Mini Masterplan does not contain any specific guidance on the protection or enhancement of soils, which would be undertaken with specific greenspace proposals, however, measures are included within future projects such as retrofitted rain gardens, SuDS, and planting which filters out pollutants.</p>
<p>Air</p>	<p>The effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan on the environment are generally positive.</p> <p>The draft George Street Mini Masterplan “Scenarios” could increase economic activity, recreational activity etc. in the area, and could result in an increased number of vehicles on the roads which emit greenhouse gases. However, the Mini Masterplan includes key “Design Principles” to promote sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport. The Mini Masterplan aims to ensure the George Street area becomes a destination rather than a through route. Sustainable alternatives to car travel will be encouraged within the Min Masterplan, with active travel aiming to provide potential positive effects on human health.</p>

	<p>The promotion of sustainable transport is also likely to benefit the Low Emission Zone (LEZ) the Mini Masterplan area sits to the north of the City Centre Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and LEZ, and the promotion of sustainable travel aims to assist meeting City Centre air quality targets and LEZ objectives.</p>
<p>Climatic Factors</p>	<p>The overall effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan are generally positive. The draft George Street Mini Masterplan sets out the approach, pathway, and actions towards meeting Net Zero and climate-resilient assets and operations by 2045. As such, energy-efficient designs can be incorporated alongside renewable and low-carbon energy sources, with consideration provided on how further decarbonisation could be achieved in the future.</p>
<p>Cultural Heritage</p>	<p>The effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan on cultural heritage are generally positive, particularly the appreciation of listed buildings. The loss of Norco House and/or extensions is mixed. Two of the three options look to preserve the iconic Norco House. It should be noted that Historic Environment Scotland have previously been asked to consider this structure for listing. Following an assessment using the selection guidance it was found that the surviving two principal elevations (to George Street and to St Andrew Street) of Norco House met the criteria of special architectural or historic interest. However, the decision was not to list the building because of ongoing development proposals. The Design Principles indicate that heritage will be protected, and people’s understanding and enjoyment of it enhanced through the new developments and interventions.</p> <p>The Mini Masterplan strengthens the sense of place being proposed and the opportunities for new business to support old provide an opportunity to support cultural heritage.</p> <p>There is also potential to gain provisional floorspace in Norco House which can provide overspill exhibition space for the nearby Art Gallery, which adds an additional cultural heritage link in the vicinity.</p>
<p>Landscape / Streetscape</p>	<p>The overall effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan on the surroundings are mixed. Large-scale development scenarios, such as the demolition of the distinctive Norco House and extension (Scenario 3), which can be seen from several locations, could have a potentially negative effect on views and scenery and the character of the George Street Area.</p> <p>Option three does, however, including potential biodiversity opportunities within potential future interventions such as SUDs, blue/green infrastructure. There is also a commitment for tree and floral planting to enhance biodiversity (using native species where possible). Interventions include proposals for “green wall infrastructure”, green pillars (stacked upright structures) etc.</p> <p>The Mini Masterplan also provides opportunities for bioretention verges and/or rain gardens with pollinator friendly perennial planting, semi-mature tree planting of pollution tolerant species.</p> <p>Removal of Norco House and/ or the extension also presents an opportunity to open up the area and provide additional green spaces.</p> <p>Additional potential effects include Installing green walls, living walls and other urban greening solutions as part of a neighbourhood wide urban greening strategy. This could focus on large scale blank gable ends and façades that are orientated to support green walls, with a secondary focus on smaller infill areas.</p>
<p>Material Assets</p>	<p>It is important to recognise George Street itself is a material asset within the City Centre boundary, and is being taken forward within the City Centre and Beach Masterplan refresh.</p> <p>The overall effect of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan is mixed. There are, for example, positive effects associated with the re-use of previously developed land and buildings.</p>

	<p>Scenarios may involve demolition works which will increase waste, however, there are opportunities to improve the management of resources and construction waste through the programme of works for example, through the development of Site Waste Management Plans.</p> <p>Delivery of renewable energy use is not discussed in detail within the draft Mini Masterplan, however, at the detailed design stage, there will be opportunities to incorporate energy efficiency into individual buildings, which could involve the use of heat pumps, passive heating, low emissivity, thermally efficient double-glazing, photovoltaic panels or thermal panels. There are also potential opportunities to link into the Aberdeen Heat and Power district heat network.</p>
In summary	<p>The assessment process found that all three scenarios could easily be considered successful, high-quality, potential design solutions, but will require more detail as redevelopment proposals. Overall the draft George Street Mini Masterplan has the potential to provide significant positive environmental effects across all three scenarios, in addition to specific place projects identified to improve the overall environmental conditions. Where these are mixed (i.e. positive and negative effects) there are opportunities which could be positive if the process to development and future interventions are comprehensively undertaken.</p>

Chapters 5 and 6 of the SEA Environmental Report describes in more detail the approach to assessment of the environmental effects and mitigation measures to help mitigate the negative (or enhance the positive) effects of the development Scenarios.

1.11 Implementation and Monitoring the Draft George Street Mini Masterplan

Monitoring the significant environmental effects of implementing the draft George Street Mini Masterplan is a fundamental part of the SEA process. The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires the significant environmental effects of a plan or programme to be monitored and that the Environment Report (this report) should include a description of measures 'envisaged' for monitoring the implementation of the plan. Chapter 7 of the SEA Environmental Report explains how significant negative and positive effects of the plan and provides a description of what will be monitored, how this can be undertaken and how often.

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	11 October 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Annual Procurement Report 2022 – 2023
REPORT NUMBER	COM/23/309
DIRECTOR	Gale Beattie
CHIEF OFFICER	Craig Innes
REPORT AUTHOR	Mel Mackenzie
TERMS OF REFERENCE	24.14

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to present the Annual Procurement Report 2022-2023 (Appendix A) to Council.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Council: -

- 2.1 Note the Annual Procurement Report (Appendix A).

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 Section 18 of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 requires every Scottish Public Body with an annual spend in excess of £5,000,000 to publish an annual procurement report on its regulated procurement activities and outline performance against its Procurement Strategy. Regulated procurements are any procurement of goods and services with a value above £50,000 and works contracts with a value above £2 million.
- 3.2 The Annual Procurement Report (Appendix A) as appended to this report provide details of the performance of procurement activity across Aberdeen City Council. The report has been produced in accordance with the guidance issued by the Scottish Government and includes the required mandatory sections. The report covers all regulated procurements completed during the financial year 2022-2023; and anticipated future procurements covering the next two years (2023-2025).
- 3.3 The Scottish Government must also prepare an annual report on procurement activity in Scotland which is based upon all the published annual procurement reports.

3.4 The Council's procurement function is shared with Aberdeenshire Council and The Highland Council. The joint procurement strategy sets out how the authorities will ensure that procurement activity delivers value for money and contributes to the achievement of each authority's broader aims and objectives. The Strategy against which this Annual Report was prepared was published in 2017 and covers the period 2017 – 2023, the strategy has been revised and the Joint Procurement Strategy 2023-2026 goes live on 1 October 2023.

3.5 The high-level strategic priorities of the Joint Procurement Strategy focus on key themes of Efficiency, Governance and Improvement to underpin all procurement activity:

- Support the delivery of financial and non-financial efficiencies
- Deliver value and innovation
- Support the local economy
- Increased collaboration and standardisation

3.6 The Annual Procurement Report covers the following Sections: -

Title	Content
Introduction	
Section 1 – Summary of Regulated Procurements	Regulated procurements that have been completed in the reporting period.
Section 2 – Review of Regulated Procurement Compliance	Information on how regulated procurements have complied with the key objectives of the Joint Procurement Strategy
Section 3 – Community Benefit Summary	Community benefit requirements imposed as part of a regulated procurement.
Section 4 – Supported Businesses Summary	Steps taken to facilitate the involvement of supported businesses in regulated procurements.
Section 5 – Future Regulated Procurements Summary	Regulated procurement the authority expects to commence in the next two financial years.
Appendix 1 – Regulated Procurements - 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023	
Appendix 2 – Future Regulated Procurements 2023-2025	

3.7 The Annual Procurement Report 2022-2023 provides details of spend and percentage of spend with local suppliers, the current figure of local spend is 35% which is in excess of the target set of 30%. Within financial year 2023-2024, the programme of Supplier Development will be developed further to build upon current engagement with local and small to medium enterprises

which has an increased focus on future, actual contract opportunities (pipelines) across the main commodity categories, particularly where the local business community can help to shape/scope requirements to ensure competitiveness, a diverse marketplace and inclusive participation.

- 3.8 The Commercial & Procurement Shared Services are continually driving improvement in procurement activity through the provision of comprehensive guidance and training. An overview of improvement activity is provided within the Annual Procurement Report at Appendix A.

A look ahead to objectives for delivery in financial year 2022-2023:

- Development and implementation of a system to capture Community Benefits, Fair Work Practices, Sustainability and Climate data
- A comprehensive review and revision will be completed of the Procurement Manual, including a revision of all associated templates.
- A programme of events will be developed in conjunction with the Supplier Development Programme to facilitate involvement of the local supply chain linked to aims of Community Wealth Building
- A regional procurement group with other Anchor Institutions will be established to support the aims of Community Wealth Building, the group will identify opportunities for regional collaboration

- 3.9 In the reporting period, the approach to community benefits within procurement activity has been guided by the commitments and aspirations expressed in our Joint Procurement Strategy. Our “Mission Statement” commits to delivery of:

“ethical and sustainable value for money solutions that support the operational needs and wider strategic aims of the councils and the communities they serve to further local and national priorities to the fullest extent possible.”

Beyond mandatory (£4M) and regulated thresholds (£50K for goods and services/£2M for works) the partner councils routinely seek:

“leverage opportunities (including social, economic and environmental value) aligned to the needs and priorities of our communities”

Our themed approach to community benefits continues to evolve and improve in close alignment with the following local and national priorities, as detailed in the Community Benefits Analysis Summary as an organisation we have included, in process or delivered a total of 762 Community Benefits in this period.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic	No significant strategic risk.	Production and publication of Annual Procurement Report offers assurance around delivery against strategic aims and objectives	L	Yes
Compliance	No significant compliance risk.	Production and publication of Annual Procurement Report ensures Council is meeting legislative procurement duty.	L	Yes
Operational	No significant operational risk.	Mandatory procurement training for staff involved in procurement activity supplemented with documented guidance & support offers assurance around delivery of strategic aims and objectives	L	Yes
Financial	No significant financial risk.	Performance against savings targets reported on annually.	L	Yes

Reputational	No significant reputational risks.	Reporting performance through the annual procurement report to Members and in the public domain ensures transparency.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No significant environment or climate risk	Reporting performance through the annual procurement report to Members and in the public domain will demonstrate progress on reducing carbon in contracts, the data collected will also support the Council's Climate change return.	L	Yes

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2023-2024</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement <u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u>	The provision of information on outcomes achieved in the annual procurement report will allow for scrutiny of how activity supports progress against the Aberdeen City Council Policy Statements and the Council Delivery Plan.
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26</u>	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	The provision of information on outcomes achieved against the Joint Procurement Strategy in the annual procurement report will allow for scrutiny of how activity supports progress against the Aberdeen City Council Policy Statements and the Council Delivery Plan.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	
Regional and City Strategies	Procurement activity conducted in accordance with the Joint Procurement Strategy will deliver outcomes against several Regional and City Strategies, outcomes delivered against the Joint Procurement Strategy will be reported on annually in the annual procurement report presented to Council, allowing for scrutiny by members.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Not required, IIAs may be completed for procurement activity conducted throughout the year.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	N/A

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

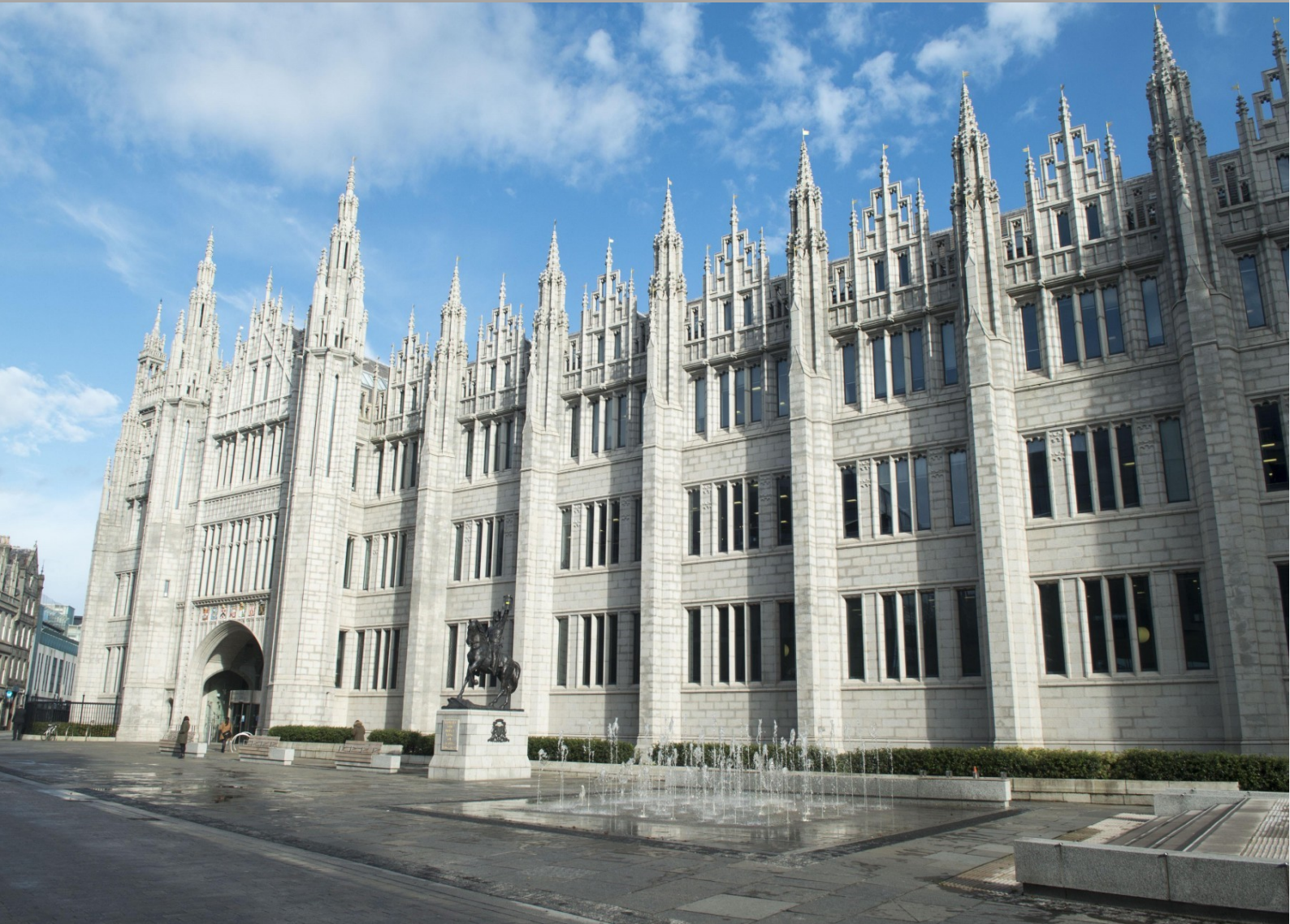
11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix A – Annual Procurement Report 2022 - 2023

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Mel Mackenzie
Title	Strategic Commercial Manager
Email Address	MeMackenzie@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	07795316388

Aberdeen City Council Annual Procurement Report



1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023



Commercial &
Procurement
Shared Service

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Introduction

The Aberdeen City Council Annual Procurement Report 2022 - 2023 covers the Council's procurement activity from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. The report includes anticipated future procurement activity over the next two financial years – 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2025.

The annual report records and publicises the Authorities performance and achievements in delivering its procurement strategy. This report has been produced in accordance with the guidance issued by the Scottish Government.

Aberdeen City Council's Procurement delivered under a shared service agreement with Aberdeenshire Council and The Highland Council, - the Commercial & Procurement Shared Service (C&PSS). A Joint Procurement Strategy 2017-2022 was published in November 2017, as required by the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014.

The high-level strategic priorities of the joint procurement strategy focus on key themes of **Efficiency**, **Governance** and **Improvement** which underpin all procurement activity.

- **Support the delivery of financial savings and non-financial efficiencies** through leverage of a combined contract portfolio.
- **Deliver value and innovation** by effective use of category and commercial management techniques and utilisation of spend analytic tools to enable smarter decision-making; identify collaborative opportunities and provide sector-specific market intelligence to inform decision making.
- **Support the local economy** by representing the North and East region as a single voice at national framework user intelligence groups to ensure the needs of the communities considered; maximise opportunities for the local supply chain, SMEs and third sector organisations
- **Increased collaboration and standardisation** without compromising governance/legislative compliance, the approach allows increased focus on Savings capture, Market management, Effective negotiation, Exploration of new business models/opportunities and Social value

The Joint Procurement Strategy end date was extended to 2023 to allow for a full review and in addition to the mandatory elements required under legislation the proposal is to include themes covering Community Wealth Building, Climate Change and Commercialisation, the revised Joint Procurement Strategy is anticipated to go live in quarter three of financial year 2023-2024 following consultation and approval in each of the three Partner Councils to the Shared Service.

The Commercial & Procurement Shared Service offers a range of strategic services with dedicated teams providing these services to the partners to the Shared Service agreement, the teams include:

- Category & Commercial Management Team
- Commissioning, Procurement and Contracts (Social Care) Team
- Commercial Legal Team
- Shared Insurance Service

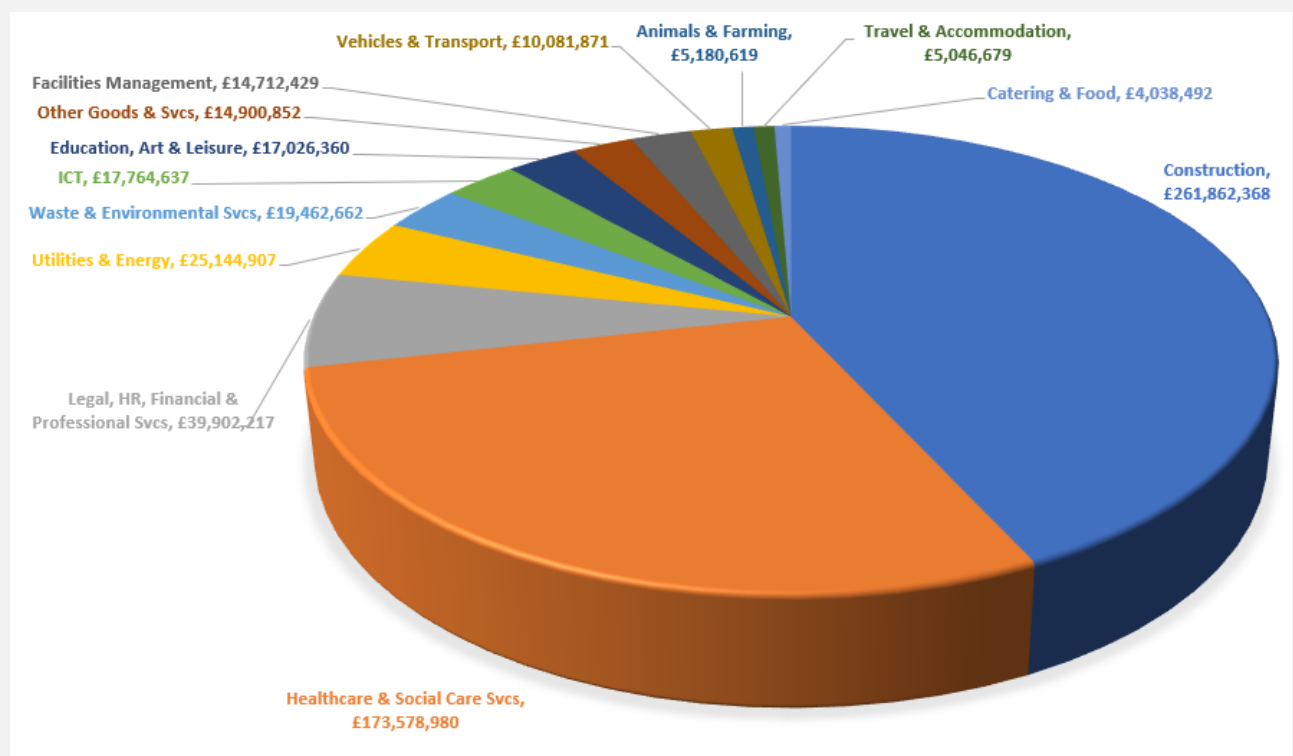
Category & Commercial Management Team

The primary role of the Category & Commercial Management Team is to enable the partner councils to achieve their strategic objectives through the delivery of goods, works and services procured externally and to deliver improved value/increased revenue opportunity.

The strategic services provided by the team are:

- Data management, performance, analytics and insight.
- Procurement strategy, legislation, policy and advice.
- Strategic Category Management (for all strategic categories of spend).
- Commercial Management – covering revenue opportunities

The below graphic shows the annual expenditure by Category area.



***A breakdown of the categories included in Other Goods & Services can be found below:**

Category	Spend	Category	Spend
Manufacturing & Machinery	£ 2,405,290	Retail & Wholesale	£ 385,727
Security Equipment & Services	£ 1,895,256	Stationery & Office Products	£ 314,867
Public Sector Bodies	£ 1,790,306	Clothing	£ 286,131
Economic Development	£ 1,536,777	Community Development	£ 277,709
Business Support Services	£ 1,400,975	Purchasing Services	£ 124,751
Marketing & Media	£ 1,218,826	Charitable & Religious Activity	£ 119,353
Government	£ 1,170,631	Personal Care	£ 75,069
Not Classified	£ 956,359	Judicial Services	£ 10,587
Laboratory	£ 926,246	Emergency Services	£ 5,993

The data is obtained from Spikes Cavell (Scottish Procurement Hub for publication of annual procurement related spend) and is based on the VCode Classification system, which classifies suppliers by their business activities and is specifically designed to allow public sector organisations a more accurate method of classification of suppliers.

Commissioning, Procurement and Contracts (Social Care) Team

Because of the complex nature of health and social care services, procurement and contract management are carried out by a dedicated Commercial and Procurement Shared Service team – the Commissioning, Procurement and Contracts (Social Care) Team.

The remit of the team is:

- Commissioning – supporting customers to develop and implement strategic commissioning plans
- Procurement – tenders; direct awards; compliance with governance
- Contract management – contract administration; routine monitoring; non-compliance activity; supplier relationship management

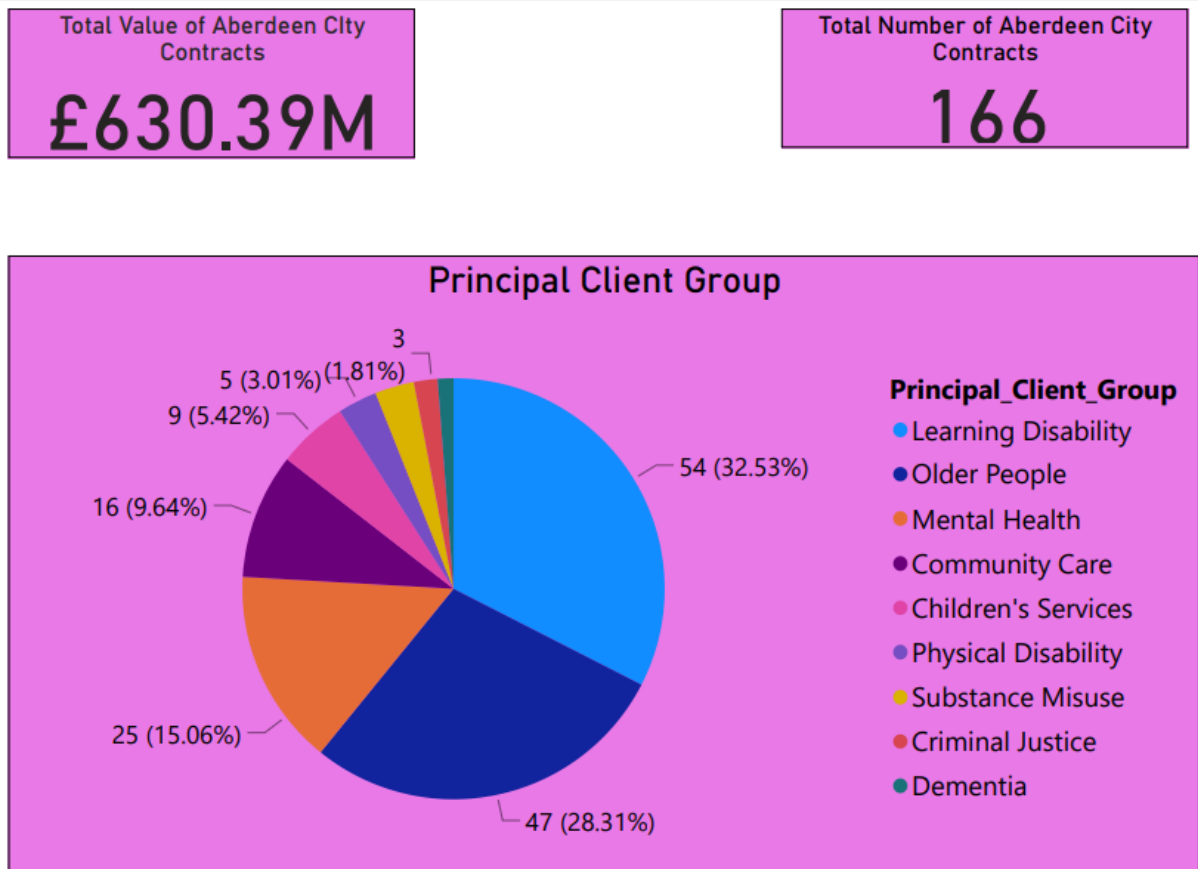
Social Care procurement of services is driven by strategic commissioning intentions for services listed under Schedule 3 – Social and Other Specific Services, of the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015. Together with Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire' Health and Social Care Partnerships the shared service social care team has established Commissioning and Procurement boards to create a clearer link between the programmes of work, the associated budgets, and the procurement work plan, in line with the Commissioning Cycle. Collaboration is central to the work of the social care team.

Similarly, the shared service social care team supports and manages the commissioning and strategic procurement of social care services for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council's Children's Services, Housing Services, and some Education provision.

The social care team's aim is to deliver innovative, cost effective and high-quality strategic procurement services that maximise best value from all commercial relationships, exploiting new opportunities, while ensuring a robust and effective governance framework in support of the wider strategic, financial, and operational needs of the individual Councils and their partners. We procure high quality services delivering the right services to people in Aberdeen City/Aberdeenshire and commission these in a lawful, fair, and transparent manner The Social Care team manages 166 Aberdeen City contracts spread across eleven different functions. The dashboard below shows the split:



The below graphic details the client groups for the 166 contracts – the majority are LD and Older People which are reflected in the spend (see below):



In this dashboard, you can see the split of the total contract spend of £630m:

TOTAL SPEND	
<p>Total Value of Aberdeen City Contracts</p> <p>£630.39M</p>	
<p>Total Number of Aberdeen City Contracts</p> <p>166</p>	
Description	Count of Description Total_Contract_Value
Residential	69 £296,970,255.65
Supported Living	35 £79,675,035.47
Support Service	25 £26,755,322.22
Care at Home	8 £208,254,381.00
Complex Care	8 £0.00
Training & Skills Development Service	8 £3,592,612.00
Housing Support	6 £6,031,864.00
Very Sheltered Housing	3 £6,989,095.00
Day Care	2 £2,012,743.00
Complex Care Nursing Home Individual Placement	1 £111,800.00
Dementia Advice & Support	1
Total	166 £630,393,108.34

Strategic Procurement Board

The Shared Service is overseen by the Strategic Procurement Board, the board is comprised of Senior Leaders from across the 3 partner Councils and has responsibility for:

- Oversight of the delivery of the services set out in the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the partners to the joint arrangement.
- Reviewing the performance of the service using Key Indicators (such as the following) and providing scrutiny and challenge, where appropriate:
 - Local Supplier Spend.
 - Collaborative Spend.
 - Community Benefits.
 - % of spend on and off contract.
 - Savings flowing from the joint arrangements.
- Oversight of a programme of digitisation of as many procurement processes as possible across the shared arrangement.
- Providing oversight of the roll out of a procurement capability programme across the shared arrangement.

Supply Chain Challenges

The COVID-19 pandemic has continued to have an impact on the Council's supply chain, as have the ongoing impacts of Brexit and more recently the impact of the invasion of the Ukraine. The effects on the global economy and financial markets have made for another challenging year for the Council and its supply chain.

The Commercial & Procurement Shared Service have worked collaboratively with Services and Suppliers throughout the financial year, identifying solutions to

challenges and minimising impacts of pricing increases as they have arisen (wherever possible), supporting delivery of vital frontline services whilst maintaining sustainability of our supply chain.

Covid-19 Pandemic – Supplier Relief

The social care team have continued to respond to the need of managing “Supplier Sustainability” for the shared service. To date there have been ten (10) iterations of the guidance since March 2020, ensuring that specific approaches and amendments have been highlighted whilst ensuring that the consistency in response is maintained.

Following a reconciliation of all the claims up to Period 34 there are around 650 applications out of a total 3,124 to be processed. The level of funding already made has exceeded £29m, with a further estimated £5.8m yet to be distributed. The forensic work done by the team has resulted in around 25% of the claims in applications rejected due to incorrect claims – without the detailed investigative work, many millions of pounds may have been incorrectly paid. The following table is a breakdown of the financial position for Aberdeen City Council

SUPPLIER SUSTAINABILITY APPLICATIONS - CITY									
Period Number	Completed			In Progress			Received		
	No. of Completed City	Total amount paid City	Total paid for completed claims	No. In Progress City	Total amount in Progress City	Total amount for claims in progress	Total Received City	Total amount claimed City	Total Amount
YE Apr 21 (P1 - P10)	594	8,358,309.70	FINAL FIGURE	ALL PROCESSED			594	8,358,309.70	FINAL FIGURE
Period 11	50	675,064.19	675,064.19	1	-	-	51	675,064.19	675,064.19
Period 12	42	592,162.54	592,162.54	9	179,947.34	179,947.34	51	772,109.88	772,109.88
Period 13	40	508,797.63	508,797.63	9	119,414.74	119,414.74	49	628,212.37	628,212.37
Period 14	43	485,843.11	485,843.11	8	85,494.62	85,494.62	51	571,337.73	571,337.73
Period 15	44	826,018.36	826,018.36	9	86,844.52	86,844.52	53	912,862.88	912,862.88
Period 16	42	510,577.76	510,577.76	9	70,107.35	70,107.35	51	580,685.11	580,685.11
Period 17	46	843,064.84	843,064.84	9	97,507.02	97,507.02	55	940,571.86	940,571.86
Period 18	38	430,995.52	430,995.52	14	145,674.11	145,674.11	52	576,669.63	576,669.63
Period 19	36	347,085.32	347,085.32	16	160,102.18	160,102.18	52	507,187.50	507,187.50
Period 20	36	617,497.52	617,497.52	18	213,987.51	213,987.51	54	831,485.03	831,485.03
Period 21	38	582,391.34	582,391.34	17	118,170.75	118,170.75	55	700,562.09	700,562.09
Period 22	32	512,874.75	512,874.75	22	207,740.99	207,740.99	54	720,615.74	720,615.74
Year Ending 2022	487	6,932,372.88	6,932,372.88	141	1,484,991.13	1,484,991.13	628	8,417,364.01	8,417,364.01
Period 23	24	392,269.49	392,269.49	26	321,474.71	321,474.71	50	713,744.20	713,744.20
Period 24	20	248,059.94	248,059.94	30	339,459.84	339,459.84	50	587,519.78	587,519.78
Period 25	20	282,885.03	282,885.03	30	373,203.40	373,203.40	50	656,088.43	656,088.43
Period 26	15	97,788.62	97,788.62	20	98,094.52	98,094.52	35	195,883.14	195,883.14
Period 27	13	75,381.33	75,381.33	13	30,263.52	30,263.52	26	105,644.85	105,644.85
Period 28	14	101,482.09	101,482.09	12	18,515.98	18,515.98	26	119,998.07	119,998.07
Period 29	5	39,857.98	39,857.98	17	14,197.62	14,197.62	22	54,055.60	54,055.60
Period 30	3	45,308.79	45,308.79	9	12,605.94	12,605.94	12	57,914.73	57,914.73
Period 31	3	45,989.59	45,989.59	7	54,420.39	54,420.39	10	100,409.98	100,409.98
Period 32	4	84,106.07	84,106.07	6	85,461.77	85,461.77	10	169,567.84	169,567.84
Period 33	5	54,396.55	54,396.55	5	55,649.92	55,649.92	10	110,046.47	110,046.47
Period 34	6	10,195.06	10,195.06	7	11,976.61	11,976.61	13	22,171.67	22,171.67
Year Ending 2023	132	1,477,720.54	1,477,720.54	182	1,415,324.22	1,415,324.22	314	2,893,044.76	2,893,044.76
	1,213	16,768,403.12	16,768,403.12	323	2,900,315.35	2,900,315.35	1,536	19,668,718.47	19,668,718.47

As the processing of applications enters its final stage the communication on a daily basis with providers has been invaluable in building better working relationships, in some cases making undeniable differences to the providers day to day operations. Positive feedback has been received on this process acknowledging the hard work of the team, and there has been a positive contribution to the community.

Section 1 – Summary of Regulated Procurements

Section 18(2)(a) of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 requires organisations to include: “a summary of the regulated procurements that have been completed during the year covered by the report”

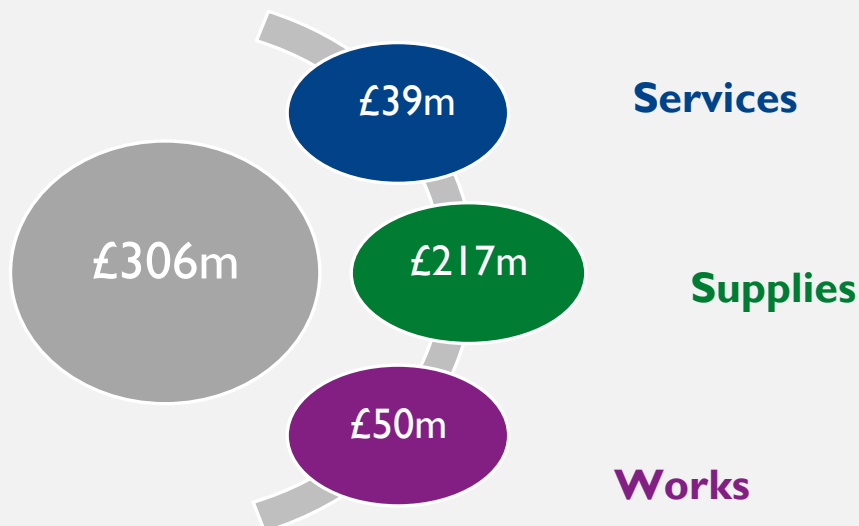
Regulated procurements are any procurement for goods and services with a value above £50,000 and works contracts with a value of above £2 million. A summary of the regulated procurements awarded within financial year 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023 is provided in the table below.

The information contained in the infographics below includes the award of mini-competitions or call-offs from established frameworks. The Council use several national framework providers including Scotland Excel and Scottish Government.

The Council maintains and publishes a contract register of contracts awarded on its website. The contract register provides information on current contracts and can be viewed by suppliers to identify any future opportunities they may be interested in.

A detailed list of the regulated procurements can be found in Appendix 1 – Details of Regulated Procurements.

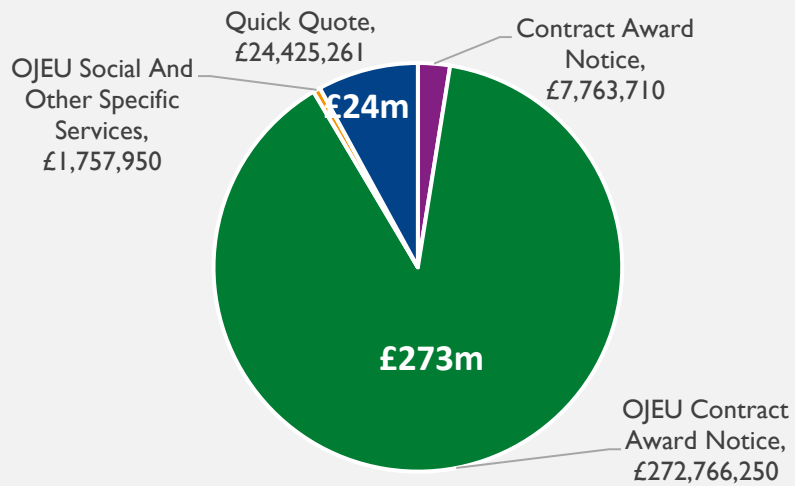
Value of Regulated Procurements Awarded by Category 1st April 22 – 31st March 23



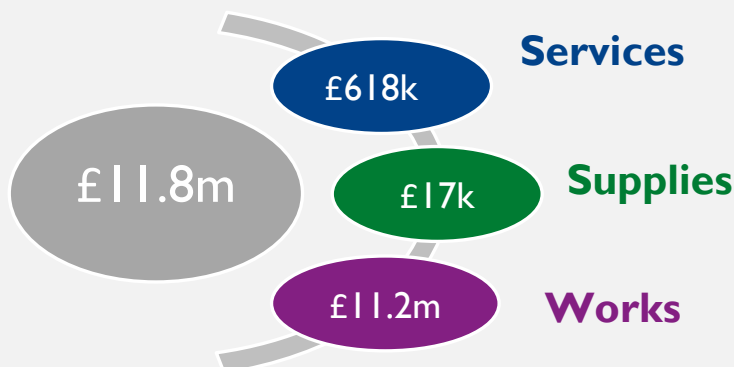
Number of Regulated Procurements Awarded by Category 1st April 22 – 31st March 23



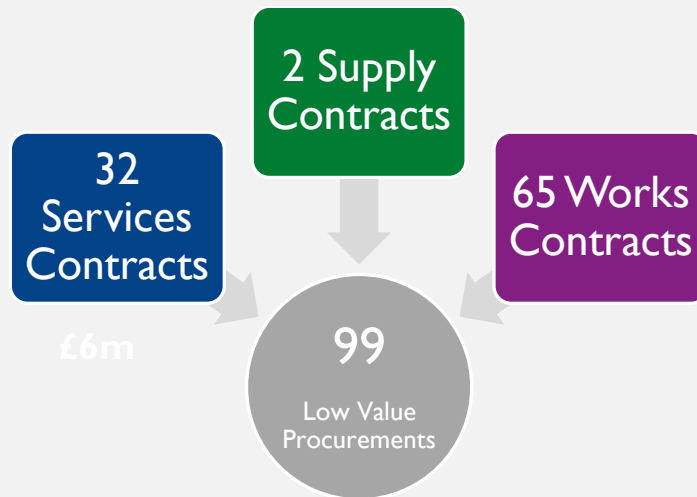
Value of Regulated Procurements Awarded by Notice Type 1st April 23 – 31st March 23



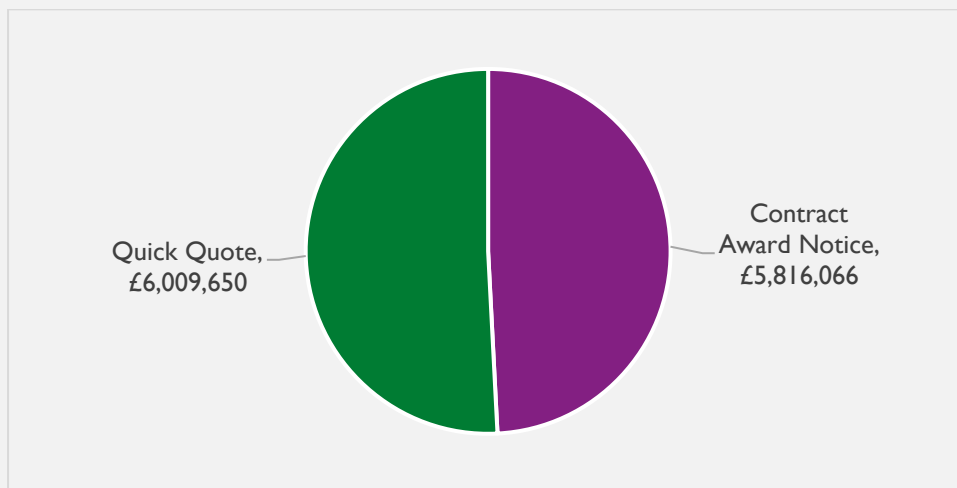
Value of Low Value/Non-Regulated Procurements Awarded by Category 1st April 22 – 31st March 23



Number of Low Value/Non-Regulated Procurements Awarded by Category 1st April 22 – 31st March 23



Value of Low Value / Non-Regulated Procurements Awarded by Notice Type 1st April 22 – 31st March 23



External Framework Use (Scotland Excel Membership) 1st April 22 – 31st March 23

Management information from Scotland Excel at the end of Quarter Four 22/23 shows that Aberdeen City Council participated in 59 out of 69 (86%) of the available framework agreements.

Local suppliers being available for use across these frameworks on 31st March 2023 are as shown below:



Total spend with these local suppliers under the frameworks from all Scottish Local Authorities and associate members of Scotland Excel totalled £28,000,000.

The Aberdeen City Council spend was £5,000,000 with local suppliers on Scotland Excel framework agreements, an increase of £1,000,000 on the Councils spend with local framework providers on the previous financial year.

Section 2 – Review of Regulated Procurement Compliance

Section 17 of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 requires that regulated procurements be carried out in accordance with the organisation's procurement strategy, so far as reasonably practical. Section 18(2) states that an annual procurement report must include, at 18(2)(b), "a review of whether those procurements complied with the authority's procurement strategy" and, at 18(2)(c), "to the extent that any regulated procurements did not comply, a statement of how the authority intends to ensure that future regulated procurements do comply".

The Strategy includes high level strategic priorities, which focus on key themes of Efficiency, Governance and Improvement which underpins all procurement activity: -

- Support the delivery of financial and non-financial efficiencies.
- Deliver value and innovation.
- Support the local economy.
- Increased collaboration and standardisation.
- Support the delivery of financial and non-financial efficiencies

C&PSS worked with Council Services and Suppliers to deliver cashable and non-cashable savings for the Council through delivery of new contracts, reduction of supply base; consolidation of spend; product rationalisation.

Deliver Value and Innovation and increased collaboration and standardisation

C&PSS enables a greater level of collaboration and standardisation across the 3 partner councils in the following areas: -

- Identification of consolidation and aggregation of spend opportunities to generate best value.
- Identification of product rationalisation and alternatives to generate best value.
- Sharing of best practice and processes to identify standardisation, consistency, efficiency and effectiveness.
- Identification and delivery of commercial opportunities, examples of current projects - Hydrogen Hub, Electric Vehicle Infrastructure and Heat Networks. Projects will also deliver significant Community Benefits, Environmental and Economic Outcomes
- Maximising the benefits of digital technology for example purchase to pay processes, electronic tendering, e-auctions and dynamic purchasing systems.

Financial Efficiencies

The Council experienced significant changes to the financial environment in the reporting period, challenges in 2022/23 included being unable to allocate out to Council services the procurement budget savings identified of £1m due to the market position for the majority of goods and services. The rate of inflation at a 40-year high affected the cost of goods and services to the Council, whilst the rate of inflation and RPI fell slightly in November 2022, the situation remained challenging as high inflation impacted on the costs of supplies and services, fuel, and energy.

Review of regulated procurement compliance

All regulated procurement in the Council is undertaken in accordance with a legal and procedural framework which ensures that each procurement is compliant with the Strategy. Legal requirements are set out in the Council's Procurement Regulations. Procedural requirements are set out in the Scottish Government Procurement Journey (for general procurement best practice) and through our Procurement Manual (used in conjunction with the internal Procurement Regulations/Scheme of Governance).

Processes, procedures and guidance are subject to regular review to ensure that all procurement activity is compliant with internal and external regulations. Within the continuous improvement section are details of improvement actions carried out in this financial year and planned activity for next financial year.

Social Care Contact Monitoring 2022/2023

The following details some of the outcomes from the contract monitoring:

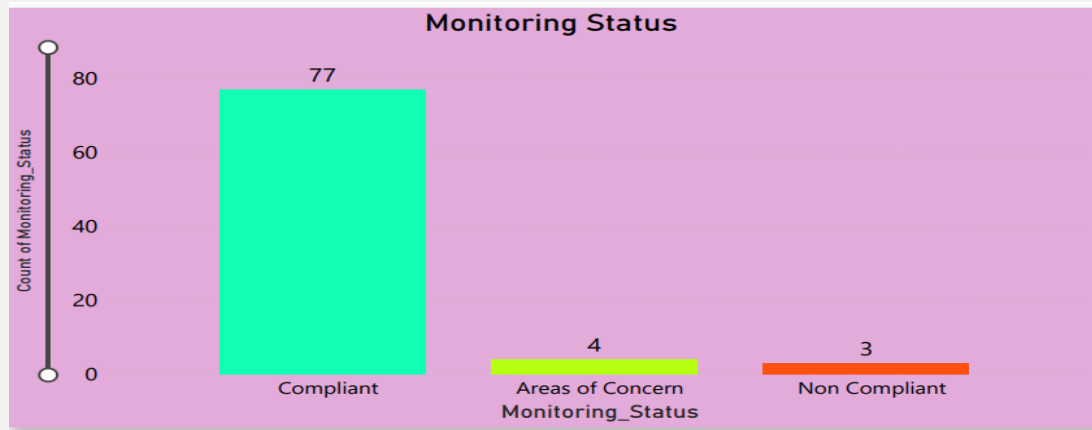
Data is provided below on the following service descriptors: Residential; Care at Home; Day Care; Supported Living; Training & Skills Development; Support Service; Housing; Very Sheltered Housing.

Contract Description

In total, **84 Aberdeen City contracts were included in this monitoring cycle.** Although we have 166 current contracts in the portfolio, a number were excluded for example, contracts with zero spend or where they were newly let in 2022/2023. Each contract is risk assessed in terms of financial and service risks. The following are highlights from the full report, which is available, on request:

Monitoring Status

The monitoring status of the contract tells us if there are any outstanding/current issues with the provider. These issues will be reported to the service managers who are the purchasers of services to inform their placing decisions.

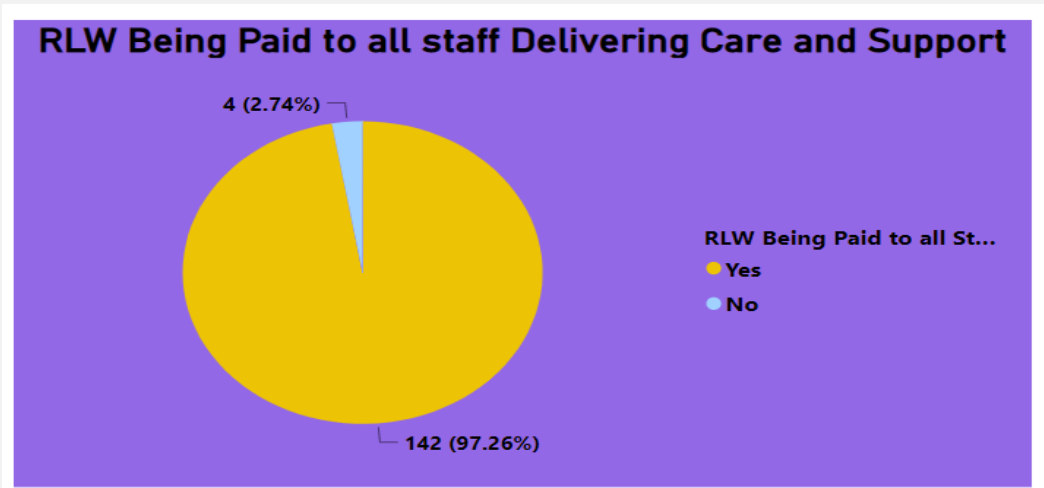


As you can see from the above, we have the following information:

- Nearly 92% of contracts are deemed “compliant”. This means the Contract Manager is assured that all reporting and all checks (including a credit check) have come back with no concerns. This suggests a solid working relationship between purchasers and providers. There are no current issues
- Four contracts (4.76%) are deemed areas of concerns.
- For the contracts under “areas of concern”, the provider has either failed to respond or failed to provide all the requested information. Information missing is either the Emergency Response/Business Continuity checklist, fire inspection letter, or the monitoring form. **As of the date of the report, all four contracts under “areas of concern” have been moved to “compliant”.**
- Three contracts are currently “non-compliant” and are separate from this process. They are services where there are serious issues and placements will currently be suspended until the appropriate action is taken to ensure high quality services are restored. In general (and in the case of these three contracts), these are care homes for older people.
- Overall, the response rate has improved each of the last three years and is now 100%. The response rate has improved partly down to a) providers being familiar with the ask and b) Contract Managers diligently chasing up and working with providers

Real Living Wage (RLW) being paid to all staff delivering care and support

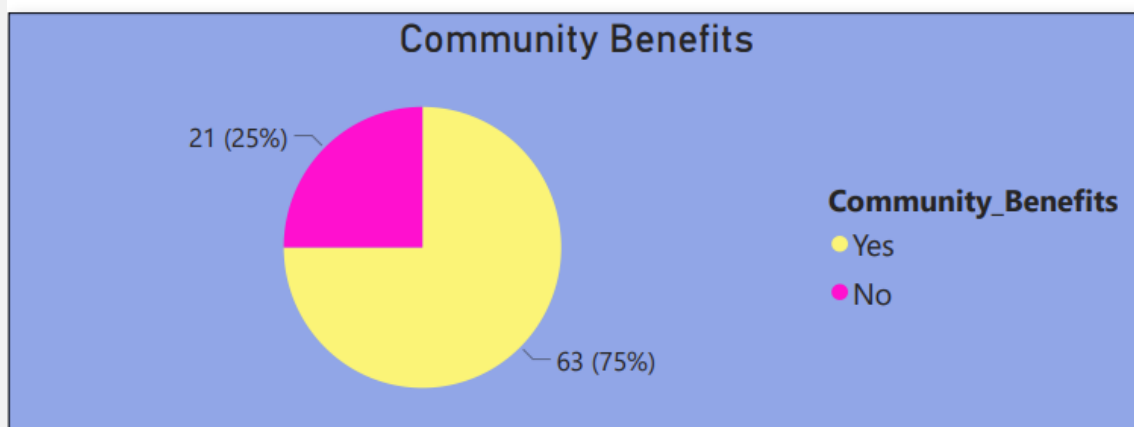
Over the last couple of years, there has been support from the Scottish Government, the local authority, the IJB, and the Social Care team to encourage providers to pay care staff at least the Living Wage which has been positively received and implemented by providers as shown below, the figure of 97% is an increase of 20% from the financial year 2020-2021.



- At the time of monitoring, there was one contract noted as “no” – however, this was an error by the provider and has not been rectified – all social contracts monitored are paying the Real Living Wage

Community Benefits

Over the last four years, we have been including Community Benefits into social care contracts in all procurement activity. Over time, that figure will improve further.



- This figure notes those providers that have agreed to offer community benefits under the contract. Those benefits are detailed in the contract.
- This figure does NOT reflect that any work has been done in terms of monitoring the actual community benefits offered against the contractual details
- In the monitoring form we asked the following: “Please detail below any Community Benefits that you have delivered under this contract” – we received several responses and in the main, the “innovation”, “case study”, “social”, “employment”, and “economic” sections were noted
- Expanded monitoring will be required to look closer at community benefits offered. Scotland Excel has taken tentative steps to looking at how best to

report on community benefits and we will do the same. We will endeavour to be creative around this area.

Please note that information provided on Community Benefits here is specific to Social Care Contract Monitoring, outcomes within these contracts are included in the overall Community Benefit position reported in Section 3.

What has this round of monitoring told us about the state of the social care market across Aberdeen City?

- Most contracts are compliant with their terms and conditions
- Only four contracts are noted as “areas of concern” (as noted above, are now under “compliant”. In 2020/2021, 35.5% of contract were in “areas of concern”
- Most contracts are classified as medium risk (based on financial value and service user vulnerability), with the rest being equally split between high and low risk
- A significant majority of contracts have demonstrated compliance with business continuity, insurance, and fire safety (where appropriate) requirements
- For the first time, we have evidence of over 70% of contracts delivering community benefits in the social care sector, including employment opportunities offered and types of employment contracts.
- 100% of social care contracts monitoring in 2022/2023 are paying the Real Living Wage to social care staff.
- Contracts Managers will continue to monitor all contracts, as appropriate

Continuous Improvement

The Commercial & Procurement Shared Services are continually driving improvement, through innovative approaches to delivery of projects and provision of comprehensive guidance and training, all members of staff involved in procurement activity across Aberdeen City Council are required to be approved to a certain Delegated Procurement Authority (or DPA) level, depending on the procurement tasks they perform - from low level purchases to full competitive tenders. Please see below for continuous improvement highlights for financial year 2022-23.

Go Awards

The GO Awards Scotland set out to recognise the achievement and successes of procurement teams from all aspects of the public, private and third sector organisations. The Commercial & Procurement Shared Service team in conjunction with colleagues involved in projects submitted entries for and were finalists in four categories for the event held on 27 October 2022:

- Best Net Zero Initiative Award – Hydrogen Hub Joint Venture
 - This Award recognises those organisations that are leading the way in addressing climate change through their procurement activity and the many suppliers who also contribute to achieving success in this area.

- Social Value Award – Hydrogen Hub Joint Venture
 - This Award is for those organisations which see social value as integral to their procurement activity – living and breathing it alongside their supply chain partners and instilling it into every contract they create and manage.

- Collaborative Procurement Initiative Award – Dynamic Purchasing System for Training (In partnership with Aberdeenshire and The Highland Council)
 - This Award recognises collaboration and that collaboration is a vital ingredient for successful public procurement, it also acknowledges that collaboration isn't always easy – so this Award is as focused on how organisations have overcome friction and cultural differences in their pursuit of better outcomes as it is on those for whom the whole concept of collaboration has been second nature.

- Procurement Team of the Year
 - Team working is vital to the success of public procurement and this Award recognises leadership, communication, innovation, collaboration, personal development and a collective team ethic and approach to deliver excellence in public services.

Everyone involved in the Hydrogen Hub Joint Venture were delighted to receive recognition for the Best Net Zero Initiative Award - Highly Commended in this category.

Other highlights of 2022/23 for the Category & Commercial Team include:

A programme of improvement actions was developed within the Category and Commercial Team with activity completed within the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 detailed below:

- Further development of Procurement Compliance reporting through the Aberdeen City Council Risk Board
- Development of a Procurement Blog, providing delegated procurers with regular updates/guidance
- Work to introduce a Commercial Strategy and Toolkit
- Inclusion of Supplier Development consideration in business case and procurement documents (support Community Wealth Building)

- Revision and consultation on the Joint Procurement Strategy (to be approved in 2023-24)
- Development of a C&PSS Website which will have both an external facing and internal facing section.
 - External facing – aimed at suppliers/public
 - Internal facing – delegated procurers within the 3 Councils

Overview of highlights of 2022/23 for the Social Care Team include:

- Development of a Team Plan
- Continuing to support providers through the “Covid-19 Pandemic – Supplier Relief” until its closure at end of March 2023
- Supporting the NHS in reducing delayed discharges by commissioning ‘NHS’ beds which relieved the pressure on the acute sector
- Extended contractual arrangements for four Suicide Prevention Services until 2024
- Supporting the transfer of the Riverside Care Home Contract to a new provider because of the incumbent provider (Craigard Care) entering administration.
- Retendering of the Alcohol and Drug Services provided in Aberdeen City to strive to reduce deaths in the city.
- Re-provisioning of Sheltered Housing Support in Castlehill/Sanctuary complexes following transfer of contracts from ACC Housing and subsequent end of contracts.
- Review of Very Sheltered Housing Support in VSA and Castlehill complexes to inform service specification and future commissioning.
- Part of the Scotland Excel Short life working group for the recommissioning of the residential, education, and short breaks framework and the NCHC UIG
- Work carried out in partnership with Cornerstone and operational staff in closure of Huxterstone Drive Learning Disability Residential Service following the withdrawal of the provider. All residents supported to move to alternative appropriate accommodation which resulted in positive outcomes for all.
- The Social Care Contracts Team developed a quality assurance system to ensure that the team continues to procure high quality services in a way which complies with procurement regulations and to contribute to the aims of Aberdeen City Council and the Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership. The aims of the quality assurance system are:
 - The necessary infrastructure is in place for the team to function effectively
 - Team members are suitably trained and motivated to do their jobs and feel job satisfaction
 - The system offers meaningful opportunities for team members to contribute
 - All policies and procedures are kept up to date
 - The work undertaken by the team complies with policies and procedures

- The system offers meaningful opportunities for customer engagement
- The system can become a model of good practice.

We have continued with the two 'streams' of auditing work: quality control in all aspects of the commissioning cycle; and team development in terms of skills and team plan to ensure alignment with the wider CPSS strategic plan. In relation to the former, we have carried out the following during 2022/2023:

QA04 – Peer review (another local authority)

QA05 – Contract end dates on BOrganised matching the contract Resulted in a process being put in place that as soon as the contract/variation is signed this should be uploaded onto BOrganised and at the same time the Contract Manager should be confirming that all end dates are correct on BOrganised.

QA06 – Team plan (concluded recently)

QA07 – Signed original contracts on BOrganised

Quality Assurance work underway:

QA08-annual and total contract values

QA09-document control

Good practice: The team has continued to develop the quality assurance process and have kept in touch with the Council's internal audit in their role as a 'critical friend'. We asked the internal auditor to review the work we had done during 2022 and they obliged and issued a briefing note on 23rd January 2023. The key points were:

Overall, the Service's internal quality assurance process was found to be effective, with robust arrangements in place for reviewing the subject areas highlighted above. Specific conclusions drawn from this testing are as follows:

- Clear, relevant objectives were established ahead of testing
- Sample sizes were appropriate
- The Service intend on developing a live document detailing outstanding recommendations for follow up purposes
- The reporting format was comprehensive and well structured.

Internal Audit suggest the following improvement actions to enhance quality assurance processes:

- Highlight all risks associated with each objective
- Identify specific timeframes and responsible officers for all recommendations made
- Introduce a traffic light system for determining the risk gradings of recommendations with associated expected action timescales
- Retain evidence of recommendations being implemented for record keeping purposes.

Adopting this partnership approach with internal audit means that we are on the “right lines” when it comes to developing our approach to our work. This is good for team morale and confidence and means we can continue to give a good quality service to our commissioning colleagues in these difficult times.

A look ahead to objectives for delivery in financial year 2023-24:

- Development and implementation of a system to capture Community Benefits, Fair Work Practices, Sustainability and Climate data
- A comprehensive review and revision will be completed of the Procurement Manual, including a revision of all associated templates.
- A programme of events will be developed in conjunction with the Supplier Development Programme to facilitate involvement of the local supply chain linked to aims of Community Wealth Building
- A regional procurement group with other Anchor Institutions will be established to support the aims of Community Wealth Building, the group will identify opportunities for regional collaboration

Supporting the local economy

Local Supplier Spend - The Accounts Commission (the public spending watchdog for local government) has a statutory power to specify information that councils must publish about their performance. They do this through statutory performance indicators (SPIs). Each Council collects and publishes its information.

The remit for SPI reporting requirement was amended during 2018-19; with a request that all local authorities report on spend with Core Trade suppliers only. Core Trade being defined as: Suppliers with whom over £1000 has been spent in a 12-month period, that have also been classified as a health, social care, arts, political, religious or trading organization.

Two SPIs relevant to the local economy and procurement related spend are - spend with local suppliers and local SMEs.

The procurement and commissioning of goods and services by local authorities and key anchor institutions is a crucial lever in the building of community wealth. Procurement is one of the five core principles of Community Wealth Building, which will be incorporated into the revised Joint Procurement Strategy for 2023-2026.

The Annual Procurement Report 2022-2023 provides details of spend and percentage of spend with local suppliers, the percentage of spend with local businesses is 35% which is a decrease from 38% in 2021/22, however the value of local spend has increased from £204m to £208m. The percentage remains comfortably above the target, and above the national average.

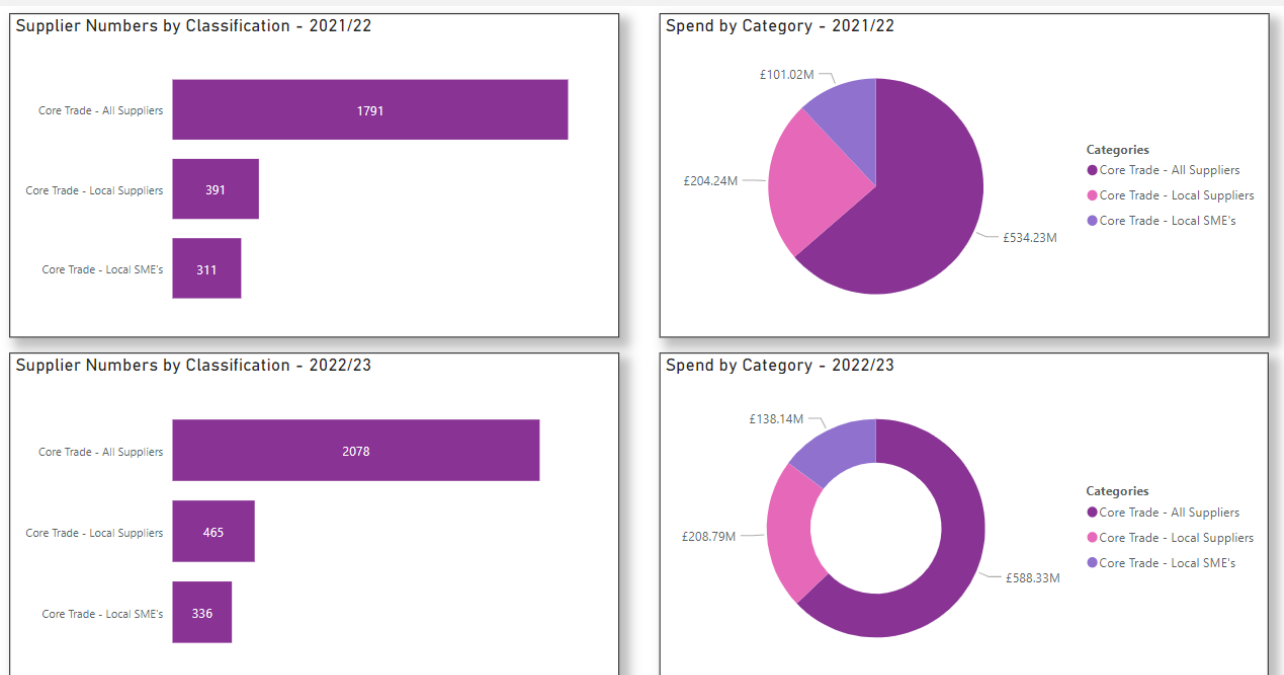
The Commercial and Procurement team have been working in collaboration with officers in City Growth who are leading the Councils Community Wealth Building Group to deliver the CWB Action Plan, this works includes working with the newly

appointed Procurement Development Officer to identify upcoming opportunities from the council's contract pipelines for targeted supplier engagement and support.

Engagement is planned around specific opportunities in the pipeline to encourage the local supply chain to explore public sector opportunities to support building wealth within the local and regional economy, as well as hosting of events providing general advice on how businesses can be supported, helped and grow by supplying the Council or wider public sector locally through direct or sub-contracting opportunities.

The Procurement Development Officer is working closely with local suppliers with support and input from the Commercial & Procurement Service, providing an invaluable service to suppliers locally with dedicated assistance and support on tendering for opportunities

The data on local supplier spend is obtained from Spikes Cavell (Scottish Procurement Hub for publication of annual procurement related spend) and is based on locality and size of business. The table below shows a comparison of core trade spend with local businesses and SME's in financial year 2022-23 and 2021-22:



Categories	21/22 (£)	22/23 (£)	21/22 (% of Total Spend)	22/23 (% of Total Spend)
Core Trade - All Suppliers	£534,234,805	£588,325,940	100%	100%
Core Trade - Local Suppliers	£204,235,014	£208,794,801	38%	35%
Core Trade - Local SME's	£101,017,243	£138,140,474	19%	23%

SME definition as per Spikes is:

Legend	Details
Small	Less than 50 employees, regardless of turnover, or, if the number of employees is unknown, then turnover of less than £5.6m will be taken as an indicator that it is a small enterprise.

Legend	Details
Medium	Between 50 and 249 employees, regardless of turnover, or, if the number of employees is unknown, then turnover of greater than or equal to £5.6m and less than £22.8m will be taken as an indicator that it is a medium enterprise.
Large	Greater than or equal to 250 employees, regardless of turnover, or, if the number of employees is unknown, then turnover of greater than or equal to £22.8m will be taken as an indicator that it is a large enterprise.

Spend in the annual report is based on spend by local authority area based on core trade creditors only; the Local authority areas as defined by the ONS (Office of National Statistics); Core-Trade: Suppliers with whom over £1000 has been spent in a 12 month period, that have also been classed as a trading organisation or as a non-trade social care provider.

Supplier Development Programme

The Supplier Development Programme (SDP) was established in 2008, and is a partnership of Local Authorities, Scottish Government and other public bodies that works together to bring free support in all aspects of tendering to Scottish-based SMEs, Aberdeen City have participated in or been supported in hosting the below events by the Supplier Development Programme in the period 01 April 2022 – 31 March 2023.

Tender Training Event - Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council & Highland Council Employability Services (Employability DPS) – 11th November 2022

In total, 45 suppliers pre-registered interest on the SDP website for the Employability DPS event. There were 28 actual attendees on the day. Of those, 24 attendees were from 20 unique Scottish SME businesses. Of those, 12 unique Scottish SMEs were based in Aberdeen City Council, 3 unique Scottish SMEs were based Aberdeenshire Council (No Highland City Council based businesses attended this event)

Tender Training Event - Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council & Highland Council Employability Services (Employability DPS) – 7th December 2023

In total, 24 suppliers pre-registered interest on the SDP website for the Employability DPS event. There were 14 actual attendees on the day. Of those, 11 attendees were from 10 unique Scottish SME businesses. Of those, 7 unique Scottish SMEs were based in Aberdeen City Council, 3 unique Scottish SMEs were based Aberdeenshire Council (No Highland City Council based businesses attended this event)

Meet the Buyer 2022 - Live Virtual Event 15th June 2022

In total, 1,248 suppliers pre-registered interest on the SDP website for the Meet the Buyer 2022, there were 728 actual attendees on the day, including both exhibitors and individual suppliers. 510 suppliers logged in during the Meet the Buyer 2022 event, and of those 322 were from 278 unique Scottish SME and supported businesses.

Meet the Buyer North 2022 – 7th September 2022

In total, 672 suppliers pre-registered interest on the SDP website for the Meet the Buyer North 2022 event. There were 345 actual attendees on the day. Of these, 238 attendees were from 192 unique Scottish SME businesses.

Section 3 – Community Benefit Summary & Community Outcomes

Statutory Requirement

Section 18(2) (d) of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 requires annual procurement reports to contain: *“a summary of any community benefit requirements **imposed** as part of a regulated procurement **that were fulfilled** during the year covered by the report”.*

Interpretation

“**Imposed**” has been interpreted to mean community benefit requirements **included** within regulated procurements published in the reporting period. Reporting is intended to capture community benefit inclusion at all stages of incorporation, implementation and fulfilment.

The point at which community benefit requirements are “fulfilled” can be a matter of interpretation. Some community benefits outcomes can take a period of years to complete. “Fulfilled” has been interpreted to include community benefits “**underway**” and “**in process.**” Maximum flexibility is offered to suppliers as to when community benefit requirements commence and are ultimately “fulfilled”. Community benefit requirements and quantities are commonly designed in terms of the total number of outcomes to be delivered over the entire contract term. Suppliers are held to their total community benefit commitments (imposed and volunteered) over the life of the contract

Reporting Period

In the reporting period, the approach to community benefits within procurement activity has been guided by the commitments and aspirations expressed in our Joint Procurement Strategy. Our “Mission Statement” commits to delivery of:

“ethical and sustainable value for money solutions that support the operational needs and wider strategic aims of the councils and the communities they serve to further local and national priorities to the fullest extent possible.”

Beyond mandatory (£4M) and regulated thresholds (£50K for goods and services/£2M for works) the partner councils routinely seek:

“leverage opportunities (including social, economic and environmental value) aligned to the needs and priorities of our communities”

Our themed approach to community benefits continues to evolve and improve in close alignment with the following local and national priorities, As detailed in the Community Benefits Analysis Summary as an organisation we have included, in process or delivered a total of 762 Community Benefits in this period 01 April 2022 – 31 March 2023.

Non-financial efficiencies Community Benefits (CB).

In total, **762** community benefit outcomes were included, are in process or were delivered in the reporting period

396 Community benefit outcomes delivered across Regulated contracts advertised in the reporting period

366 Community benefit outcomes imposed across regulated contracts advertised in the reporting period



17 of 18

Regulated contracts

(94%) included requirements relating to Fair Work Practices (including Real Living Wage).



17 of 18

Regulated contracts

(94%) included Community Benefit requirements

396

Community Benefits

Community benefit outcomes delivered across Regulated contracts advertised in the reporting period

15 Fair Work Practices
Real Living Wage
Gender pay gap




Living Wage Employer

32 Work Experience placements




78 Jobs Created by the Project)




24 Further & Higher Education Engagement Activities




19 School Engagement Activities



103 Developing the Workforce



20 Employability engagement Activities



10 Vacancy Sharing




24 Local Economic Development SME 3rd Sector (Duty to Report)



34 Environmental Wellbeing, Measures, Carbon Reduction, Fuel Poverty & Climate Literacy



8 Prompt Payment through the supply chain

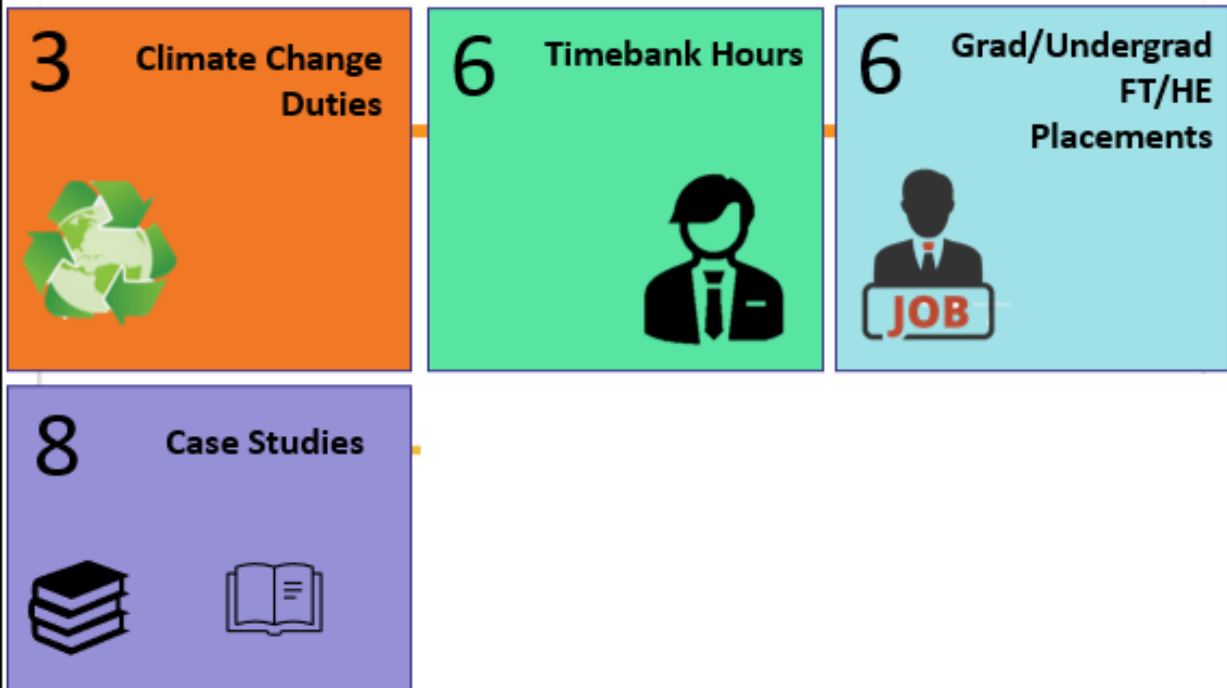


6 Promotion of Adoption and Fostering



Community Benefits

Community benefit outcomes delivered across Regulated contracts advertised in the reporting period



Highlights

- Significant high-quality job & apprenticeship opportunities underpinned by Fair Work considerations
- 364.5 hours of local community/3rd sector support delivered by suppliers in close collaboration with ACVO (Aberdeen's 3rd Sector Interface)
- Supplier donations of £16,200 + materials and equipment intended to benefit a significant number of local community initiatives

In 2022, as part of the community benefits commitments for the Aberdeen Hydrogen Hub project, Aberdeen City Council connected the joint venture team to local charity Scarf, which delivers energy efficiency advice and services to households and businesses across Scotland. Through this introduction, bp funded two full time and one part time frontline advisors for Scarf for a three-year period, delivering in home advice and support services to households in Aberdeen.

BP also funded a UK-wide pilot social innovation programme with Scarf and Energy Services Catapult in 2022 called 'Warm Home Prescription,' which helps people who struggle to afford energy and have severe health conditions made worse by the cold. The service allows them to stay warm and well at home, and out of hospital in winter whilst measures will be trialled to reduce the energy consumption and carbon emissions of their home for winter 2023/24. The programme was particularly successful in the Grampian region. Conversations are underway with Aberdeen City Council to utilise BP's dedicated employee volunteering portal – "WeVolunteer" – to share relevant ACVO opportunities in Aberdeen.

366

Community Benefits

366 Community benefit outcomes imposed across regulated contracts advertised in the reporting period

61

Fair Work Practices
Real Living Wage
Gender pay gap



9

Graduate/Undergrad
/FE/HE Placements



12

School
Engagement
Activities:
Gender/gender
pay gaps &
disability



18

School
Engagement
Activities



39

Work Experience
Placements



77

Developing
the
Workforce



15

Employability
engagement
Activities



61

Environmental
Wellbeing,
Measures,
Carbon
Reduction,
Fuel Poverty &
Climate Literacy



10

Local Economic
Development
SME 3rd Sector
(Duty to
Report)



24

Jobs Created
(Apprenticeships)



13

Community/3rd
Sector Support



10

Promotion of
Adoption/Foste
ring



Community Benefits

366 Community benefit outcomes imposed across regulated contracts advertised in the reporting period



Social Care Community Outcomes Summary 2022/23

The following is an initial step towards developing clarity on how our communities have benefitted from the regulated procurements in 2022/2023:

000-XNEV4856 Abergeldie Care Home: Due to an emergency the team coordinated (ongoing since July 2022) a council and partnership wide response to immediately safeguard individuals and continue to work with the provider to ensure lessons are learned and shared, and to ensure that the service is safe.

Various Care Homes: Enhanced Contract monitoring of providers experiencing difficulties has prevented providers from spiraling and ensured sustainability of the sector.

000-UDTN2484: Penumbra Intensive Housing Support Service In 2021 the Aberdeen Drugs and Alcohol Partnership carried out a series of engagement sessions with stakeholders, including health and social care staff, third sector providers and people with lived experience. Bids for CORRA funding were submitted in line with the themes developed as a result of these sessions, with a commitment from the ADP to match fund any successful projects. As a result, the Intensive Housing Support Service was developed by Penumbra, in partnership with the ADP. The new service was operational from 1 February 2023, providing non-clinical support to individuals and families who are engaging with the Integrated Drugs Team. The service is still in implementation phase, but the expectation is that it will enable people to achieve personal outcomes including positive changes to personal relationships and health and self-care, development of coping strategies and accessing life skills, financial stability and improving educational and employment prospects. The service will also work with families where there is problem drug/alcohol use to ensure issues do not escalate to a level where they are causing trauma and family breakdown, resulting in the necessity of removing children from their family home.

Mental Health and Learning Disability Supported Living Services: One of the outcomes of the review of Mental Health and Learning Disability Accommodation Based Support was *'The accommodation environment will be provided to enable people to live as independent a life as possible including, wherever possible, the location, the size and the type.'* It had been identified that some of the existing accommodation was no longer fit for purpose and was not meeting this outcome. One of these was Berryden Mills, a residential service operated by Archway. The service was experiencing several issues including; Increased levels of challenging and distressed behaviour by some of the residents who live there with evidence that some of them are no longer compatible to live with each other; Numerous and ongoing noise complaints from neighbours and the landlord due to the additional needs, and challenging behaviour of one individual in particular; Continuing issues with heat and ventilation; No easy access to outdoor space, resulting in isolation for the residents. Work was undertaken to develop two new supported living services, Huxterstone Drive (leased from Castlehill Housing Assn) and Cruikshank Court (purchased by Archway), where individuals' quality of life will be improved as a result of: having a safe outside area that will meet sensory needs; improved compatibility matching of individuals; active development of local community links ensuring a holistic person centred approach is used to meet all the individuals'

outcomes positively. The Huxterstone Drive service opened in December 2022 and individuals are due to move into Cruikshank Court in May 2023.

Training & Skills Development Services: Following a joint Aberdeen City/Aberdeenshire review of Training and Skills Development Services carried out in 2021, new contracts were put in place from 1 July 2022. A quarterly contract monitoring report template was developed, and a provider forum established, supporting providers to work in partnership, and develop outcome focussed services. Quarter 1 (October – December 2022) reporting showed that over 1,250 sessions were being delivered each week to 213 individuals. 50% of the services were linking into the community to support volunteering and employment goals and 40% of the services were offering trainee qualifications. The services also reported on ‘good news stories’ including service developments, well-being sessions being delivered, and individuals being involved in community activities.

Good Practice - Independent Advocacy Services: The current contract for Independent Advocacy Services comes to an end on 30 September 2023. To inform the future commissioning of this service the team supported the Partnership to undertake the following activity:

- Establishment of and support to the Project Group which carried out a review of the current service specification to ensure that it supported the Partnership to meet its statutory requirements with regards to the provision of advocacy services.
- Carried out stakeholder engagement via a questionnaire and face to face sessions, ensuring that the service specification reflected the views of stakeholders, including individuals who use advocacy services.
- Undertake a tender, in line with procurement regulations, to identify a provider of Independent Advocacy Services from 1 October 2023.

000-CTMK4331. Intensive support service for children, young people and families.
Includem

One of the aims of this contract was for the provider to be co-located with Aberdeen City Council staff and this has been achieved successfully with the provider operating out of Craigmyle family centre. The provider is active nationally on the campaigning scene and they continue to identify ways in which children and young people can have a meaningful say on the matters that affect them and to know that this achieves change. One young person from Aberdeen contributed to the development of a child friendly version of the National Child Protection Guidance.

000-LYDT4939 Scotland Excel Framework for the provision of residential care, education, short breaks, and day education: This is one of three large national frameworks which local authorities use for the provision of children’s services. Placing children in out of area placements (for residential care and education) is an unavoidable element of children’s social work and there are various pieces of legislation which cover placing children in residential establishments:

- Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- The Residential Establishments - Child Care (Scotland) Regulations 1996

- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

However, the outcome of the Independent Care Review and the strategic objectives set out in The Promise signal a shift in the balance of care and support from residential placements to investing in the family unit to allow children to remain in the family.

000-JMXR7365. Accommodation based housing support. Turning Point Services Scotland Ltd This service commenced on 1st April 2023 so not enough time has lapsed for any formal report of outcomes. The aim for this service is to develop into a gateway service. As the name implies the intention of the service is to provide a gateway through a supported tenancy to a mainstream tenancy. This approach is in keeping with the Council's own intentions of rapid rehousing of homeless applicants.

Section 4 – Supported Businesses Summary

Statutory Requirement

Section 18(2) (e) of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 requires annual procurement reports to contain: **“a summary of any steps taken to facilitate the involvement of supported businesses in regulated procurements during the year covered by the report”**.

Related Duties

- Engaging with those affected by our procurements;
- Ensuring regulated procurements contribute to the carrying out of our functions/achieving our purposes;
- Acting in a transparent and proportionate manner;
- Policy on the use of community benefit requirements;
- Compliance with the sustainable procurement duty.

Details of the total spend in 2022-2023 with supported businesses is shown below.

Contracted Supported Businesses



Contract with Passion4Social: IT services website design

*(*Contract for services to the Commercial & Procurement Shared Service covering Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Highland Councils)*



Report Images © Norman Rose, Audio Visual Content Officer, Aberdeen City Council

Section 5 – Future Regulated Procurements Summary

Appendix I – Regulated Procurements - 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

PCS Document ID	Description	Contract Type	Total Value	Supplier Name	Award Date
727553	Housing Support Service in Very Sheltered Housing	1 Services Contract	£2,291,358	Aberdeen Association of Social Service T/A VSA (GB)	29/03/2023
727545	Housing Support Service in Very Sheltered Housing	1 Services Contract	£2,291,358	Aberdeen Association of Social Service T/A VSA (GB)	29/03/2023
727381	Camphill Young Adults Project Day Service	1 Services Contract	£1,894,936	Camphill Rudolf Steiner School Ltd (GB)	28/03/2023
727375	Support and Advice for Adults with Huntington's Disease	1 Services Contract	£153,699	Scottish Huntington's Association (GB)	28/03/2023
727310	Supported Living Service	1 Services Contract	£7,133,766	Newton Dee Camphill Community Ltd (GB)	28/03/2023
723317	Marischal College Replacement of Internal Luminaires	2 Works Contract	£2,555,250	CHES (GB)	21/02/2023
722866	Award of Bridge of Dee Scour Protection	1 Services Contract	£104,624	Taziker Industrial (GB)	16/02/2023
722091	Award of MULTI TRADE FRAMEWORK - REWIRING TO BOILERS	1 Services Contract	£169,815	Graham Yeats & Son Builders Ltd (GB)	08/02/2023
721253	Supported Living Service	1 Services Contract	£7,133,776	Newton Dee Camphill Community Ltd (GB)	03/02/2023
721187	Digital Transformation Phase 3 Part 1	1 Services Contract	£961,224	Microsoft Limited (GB)	02/02/2023

PCS Document ID	Description	Contract Type	Total Value	Supplier Name	Award Date
721056	Award of Supply of Aluminium columns from the Scotland Excel Framework Street Lighting Materials...	0 Supply Contract	£113,759	Aluminium Lighting Company (GB)	01/02/2023
713715	Skip Hire and Disposal of Contents	1 Services Contract	£1,840,000	EIS WASTE SERVICES LTD (GB)	13/12/2022
715649	Award of Dynamics 365 CRM, Support and Maintenance Service	1 Services Contract	£360,000	Hitachi Solutions (GB)	02/12/2022
713497	Aberdeen City - Accommodation Based Housing Support Service	1 Services Contract	£653,950	Turning Point Scotland (GB)	14/11/2022
711818	SPECIALIST MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS FRAMEWORK	1 Services Contract	£2,902,710	Zip Water UK (GB) / Orbis Protect Ltd (formerly SitexOrbis Ltd) (GB) / Calpine Ltd (GB) / CAS DUNCAN (GB) / CLR Service and Sales Ltd (GB) / Lanes Group Plc (GB) / Drain Surgeon North East Ltd (GB) / Diamond Drainage Scotland Ltd (GB) / WM Donald Ltd (GB) / KEE Process Ltd (GB) / DAMM Environmental (GB) / Ryan Rainwater Systems Limited (GB) / SKYFORM (SCOTLAND) LTD (GB) / Nucore Group Limited (GB) / Realm Fire & Security Ltd (GB) / Realm Fire & Security Ltd (GB) / ADT Fire & Security (GB) / Aberdeen Technical Services (GB) / Chubb Fire & Security Ltd (Quick Quotes) (GB) / WCS Scotland Ltd (T/A William Carrol AV) (GB) / Northern Steeplejacks (Edinburgh) Ltd (GB) / Mackenzie Fire Protection (GB) / SPIE Scotshield Limited (GB) / WESTEND FLOORING SPECIALISTS LTD (GB) / General & Technical Flooring Services (GB) / FLC Property Services (GB) / WQS WONDERSEAL Ltd (GB) / Lumsden Security (GB) / M.N.Hamilton and Sons (GB) / MAS LTD (GB) / R B Wilson (Electrical) Ltd (GB) / ARROW Industrial Group Limited (GB) / FAAC Entrance Solutions (GB) / Abscaff Ltd (GB) / Aqua Leisure Ltd (GB) / NB ENGINEERING SERVICES (GB) / James Ritchie & Son (Clockmakers) Ltd (GB) / H E Weir & Son (GB) / Facultatieve Technologies Ltd (GB) / PHS Compliance Limited (GB) / Maclin Electric Ltd (GB) / RB Grant Ltd (GB) / Dyce Electrical Ltd (GB) / PHS Compliance Limited (GB)	04/11/2022
712299	Award of ITMC - Technology Equipment Partner	0 Supply Contract	£221,043	Softcat Plc (GB)	03/11/2022

PCS Document ID	Description	Contract Type	Total Value	Supplier Name	Award Date
710956	Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tags for communal and wheeled bins	0 Supply Contract	£190,000	c-trace Ltd. (GB)	21/10/2022
708963	Award of Supply and Distribution of Milk (SXL 05-21) - Aberdeenshire & Aberdeen City Council	0 Supply Contract	£566,233	Muller UK and Ireland LLP T/A Muller Milk & Ingredients (GB)	04/10/2022
708691	Award of Cashless Catering, Online Payments and Kitchen Management Solutions for Aberdeen City Co...	1 Services Contract	£610,954	ParentPay (GB)	03/10/2022
705455	Provision of specialist play schemes for children	1 Services Contract	£306,750	Autism and Neurodiversity North Scotland (GB)	08/09/2022
705904	Award of Direct Award - Multi Trade Framework - Lot 18 Lift Engineer	1 Services Contract	£75,000	ADL Lift Services Ltd (GB)	06/09/2022
705346	Clinterty Travellers Site-Construction Works	2 Works Contract	£3,346,887	MTM Construction Ltd (GB)	01/09/2022
703111	Award of Aberdeen South Harbour Link Road, DMRB Stage 2/3 and Outline Business Case	1 Services Contract	£1,062,527	Sweco UK Limited (GB)	10/08/2022
702685	Aberdeen Car Club	1 Services Contract	£1,077,000	Enterprise Rent-A-Car UK Ltd (GB)	09/08/2022
702680	Award of Provision of Pay on Foot Solutions for Multi Storey Car Parks	0 Supply Contract	£99,463	Scheidt & Bachmann UK Ltd. (GB)	08/08/2022
702534	Award of Supply of Compostable Food Waste Bags	0 Supply Contract	£251,499	Cromwell Polythene Ltd (GB)	05/08/2022

PCS Document ID	Description	Contract Type	Total Value	Supplier Name	Award Date
701844	Aberdeen Hydrogen Hub: Hydrogen for District Heat Networks	1 Services Contract	£79,900	Arup (GB)	29/07/2022
696892	Replacement Kitchens and Bathrooms Framework	2 Works Contract	£6,960,594	Everwarm Ltd (GB) / Belac Group Limited (GB) / MPS Housing Limited (GB) / Space Solutions (GB)	29/07/2022
700811	Intensive Support Services for Children, Young People, and Families	1 Services Contract	£1,104,000	Includem (GB)	20/07/2022
700154	Award of Digitisation of Parking - Pay and Display	0 Supply Contract	£205,000	Metric Group Ltd (GB)	12/07/2022
698933	Award of Intelligent Street Lighting CMS and Wireless Network Supply, Install and Management - Ex...	1 Services Contract	£414,090	North PB Ltd (GB)	30/06/2022
696535	Award of Provision of First Aid Training	1 Services Contract	£150,000	Grampian Training Services (GB)	10/06/2022
695593	Replacement Programmes of Secondary Construction Elements	2 Works Contract	£15,479,710	Space Solutions (GB) / North Group (GB)	02/06/2022
694886	Award of Community Active Travel project	1 Services Contract	£59,644	Sustrans Ltd (GB)	26/05/2022
694363	Award of Aberdeen Housing Street Lighting	2 Works Contract	£7,417,500	MTM Construction Ltd (GB)	24/05/2022
693639	Collection, Storage and Redelivery of Household Belongings Framework Agreement 2022	1 Services Contract	£280,000	Instant Neighbour (GB)	17/05/2022
693459	Award of Single Supplier Framework for Design and Build of Torry Heat Network (000-JUJU7448)	2 Works Contract	£10,169,802	Vital Energi Utilities Ltd (GB)	16/05/2022

PCS Document ID	Description	Contract Type	Total Value	Supplier Name	Award Date
692874	South College Street Junction Improvements (Phase 1)	2 Works Contract	£4,422,328	W M Donald Ltd (GB)	10/05/2022
691002	Award of Supply of Aluminium Columns	0 Supply Contract	£95,800	Mallatite Limited (GB)	22/04/2022
690992	Award of Supply of LED Lanterns - Aberdeen Phase 9	0 Supply Contract	£282,621	Orangetek Ltd (GB)	22/04/2022
690052	Provision of Counselling Services for Schools	1 Services Contract	£1,864,000	Mental Health Aberdeen (GB)	12/04/2022
689623	Aberdeen Hydrogen Hub Strategic Partnership	0 Supply Contract	£215,000,000	BP (GB)	07/04/2022
689745	Collection, Storage and Redelivery of Household Belongings Framework Agreement	1 Services Contract	£443,000	Instant Neighbour (GB) / Steven James MacDonald T/A SJM Removals & Storage (GB)	07/04/2022
672858	Transported School Meal Deliveries	1 Services Contract	£948,000	Sheridan Myers Management Services LLP (GB) / Kininmonth Cabs Ltd (GB) / Gus's Taxis (GB)	07/04/2022
689426	MULTI TRADE FRAMEWORK	1 Services Contract	£367,829	Graham Yeats & Son Builders Ltd (GB) / SKYFORM (SCOTLAND) LTD (GB) / Rae Brown & Co Ltd (GB) / Burns Construction (Aberdeen) Ltd (GB) / Space Solutions (GB) / M.N.Hamilton and Sons (GB) / Anderson Specialist Contracting (GB) / Angus Decorating Co. Ltd. (GB) / Richard Irvin FM Limited (GB) / Hutcheon Services (GB) / RB Grant Ltd (GB) / Dyce Electrical Ltd (GB) / Mitie Technical Facilities Management (GB) / Nucore Group (GB) / R B Wilson (Electrical) Ltd (GB) / Maclin Electric Ltd (GB) / Grange Energy Services Limited (GB) / Field Engineering Services Ltd (GB) / Orona Limited (GB) / ADL Lift Services Ltd (GB) / Oteac Fire & Security (GB) / Westend Glass & Glazing Ltd (GB) / Crest Glazing Ltd (GB) / MAS LTD (GB) / William Rae (Aberdeen)LTD (GB) / John G Baird Limited (GB) / A & B BUCHAN LIMITED (GB) / Briggs Amasco (GB) / Cromarty Firth Marine Services (GB)	07/04/2022
689083	Award of Multi Trade Framework: Lot 28 Rope Access - Housing	1 Services Contract	£439,448	MAS LTD (GB)	04/04/2022

PCS Document ID	Description	Contract Type	Total Value	Supplier Name	Award Date
689059	Award of MULTI TRADE FRAMEWORK: LOT 14 - REWIRES TO VOID PROPERTIES	1 Services Contract	£1,916,438	Maclin Electric Ltd (GB)	04/04/2022
689016	Event Production Services	1 Services Contract	£245,885	Live Event Management LTD (GB)	01/04/2022

Appendix 2 – Future Regulated Procurements 2023 - 2025

Contract Name	Type of Contract	Estimated Contract Notice Publication Date	Estimated Contract Value	Comments
Compostable Food Waste Bags Supply	Mini comp under SXL	01/06/2023	£57,906	
Oxygen Supplier incentive service	Direct Award	01/07/2023	£250,000	
Cash in Transit	Renewal	01/04/2024	£185,000	
Payment processing services	Direct Award	01/05/2023	£180,000	
Contract for the provision of legal services	Mini Competition	01/05/2023	£1,600,000	
Banking Services	Renewal	01/05/2023	£232,000	
Sherriff Officer	Renewal	01/11/2023	£1,500,000	
Treasury Management Services	Min-comp under ESPO	01/02/2024	£68,000	
Purchase Cards	Renewal	01/07/2024	-£24,000	
Groceries & Provisions	Call Off	01/11/2023	£2,400,000	
Keyholding and Out of Hours Emergency Response	Call Off	01/01/2024	£48,000	
Security Services - Customer Services (000-FRTV5558)	Extension	01/09/2023	£666,968	
Security Services - Housing (000-KFXX6234)	Extension	01/09/2023	£209,875	
Security Services - Taxi Marshalling (000-DCEV3581)	Extension	01/09/2023	£259,209	
Energy Efficiency Information, Support and Advice Service	Extension	01/03/2024	£600,000	
National Assistance Funeral Services	New Procurement	01/04/2024	£92,000	
Evacuation Chair Maintenance	Renewal	01/05/2024	£24,260	
Supply and Installation of an Integrated CCTV Control System for Aberdeen (000-WJYG9537)	Extension	01/08/2024	£412,000	
EV Charging Points (Public) (all Councils)	New Procurement	30/09/2023	£7,000,000	
Tyres and related services	Direct Award	01/10/2023	£234,000	
Breakdown Service, Maintenance & Repairs for vehicles	New Procurement	30/06/2023	£15,000	
Hydraulic Hoses	New Procurement	01/08/2023	£128,840	

Contract Name	Type of Contract	Estimated Contract Notice Publication Date	Estimated Contract Value	Comments
Livery	New Procurement	01/08/2023	£10,000	
TPMS - Wheely Safe Ltd	Renewal	01/08/2023	£14,000	
Food Waste Replacement Vehicle	Direct Award	31/08/2023	£205,000	
Purchase of Standard and Specialist Vehicles	Renewal	02/06/2023	£200,000	
Lord Provost's New Car	Renewal	01/10/2024	£27,000	
Bulk Print, Managed and Hybrid Mail	New Procurement	31/07/2023	£3,003,000	
Managed Print Fleet Service	New Procurement	31/07/2023	£3,967,000	
Operator - Torry Heat Network	New Procurement	01/09/2023	£5,000,000	
Voids DPS	Mini Competition	01/05/2023	£10,000,000	
Union Street Housing	Mini Competition	01/04/2023	£2,000,000	
Craigshaw Drive	New Procurement	01/06/2023	£900,000	
Tree Works_2022	New Procurement	01/12/2023	£500,000	
Inspection, Servicing and Maintenance of Technical Machinery and Equipment	Renewal	21/06/2023	£93,850	
Structural Engineering Consultancy	Renewal	01/08/2023	£1,520 000	
Mechanical and Electrical Engineering	New Procurement	01/10/2023	£2,000,000	
Structural Testing of Lighting Columns	Renewal	01/07/2023	£100,000	
Plants / Horticultural Supplies	New Procurement	01/10/2023	£100,000	

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COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	11 th October 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Council Delivery Plan, Annual Review Report 2022-23
REPORT NUMBER	COM/23/310
DIRECTOR	Gale Beattie
CHIEF OFFICER	Martin Murchie
REPORT AUTHOR	Charlene Flynn
TERMS OF REFERENCE	13

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To present the Council with an Annual Review Report which highlights progress with respect to the Council Delivery Plan for the year 2022/23, that was approved by the Council on 7 March 2022.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the Council note the report and provide comments and observations on the information contained in the Annual Review Report at Appendix A.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

3.1 As the Council, and our communities, have transitioned from the recovery phases of the COVID-19 pandemic, tackled cost of living pressures and provided material support for those adults and children displaced from Ukraine, the Council, as an organisation, has required to maintain a responsive and flexible approach to service delivery.

3.2. This is reflected in the inputs, outputs and outcomes captured within the Annual Review Report, and highlights where services have been enabled to deliver against Council Delivery Plan priorities whilst pivoting resource and effort to meet the additional challenge that had arisen over the course of 2022/23.

3.3 It is important to note that the detail and outcomes captured in this report reflect the policies and actions aligned with the 2022/23 Council Delivery Plan.

3.4 As such, it offers a retrospective overview of the work of the Council linking with those delivery priorities and objectives set out within the Plan, which were, as appropriate, subsequently overlaid with the current Aberdeen City Council Partnership Agreement, ‘Working in Partnership for Aberdeen.’

3.5 Council Delivery Plan development is part of a strategic planning thread that flows from, and brings together:

- Aberdeen City’s Local Outcome Improvement Plan
- The Council’s Policy Statements
- National, Regional and City Strategies
- Legislative and statutory delivery duties

3.6 Each of these strands establishes a range of commitments and requirements placed on the Authority, and the Council Delivery Plan identifies how the Council would meet these in the forthcoming twelve months.

3.7 The Annual Review Report summarises a snapshot of the deliverables for 2022-23 under these headings, along with outlining outcomes derived from the Council’s Commissioning Intentions, against which the Plan was a key element, and represents a statement on how the Council had delivered on its contribution to each.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising out of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct legal implications arising out of this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct environmental implications arising out of this report.

7. RISK

The assessment of risk contained within the table below is consistent with the Council’s Risk Appetite Statement.

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *Taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic	No significant strategic risks	Annual reporting against the Council Delivery Plan serves to mitigate against	L	Yes

		Strategic Risk through enhanced scrutiny and accountability for outcomes		
Compliance	No significant legal risks.	Publication of Council delivery performance information in the public domain ensures that the Council is meeting its legal obligations in the context of Best Value reporting.	L	Yes
Operational	None	N/A	N/A	NA
Financial	None	N/A	N/A	N/A
Reputational	No significant reputational risks.	Reporting of Council delivery to Members, and into the public domain serves to enhance the Council's reputation for transparency and accountability.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	None	NA	NA	NA

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Partnership Agreement	The detail reflected within this report overlaps with various commitments contained within the Aberdeen City Council Partnership Agreement which post-dated adoption of the Council Delivery Plan 2022/23.
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	The detail reflected within this report supports scrutiny of Council delivery against each of the Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The detail reflected within this report supports scrutiny of Council delivery against each of the Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes

Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	The detail reflected within this report supports scrutiny of Council delivery against each of the Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes
Regional and City Strategies	The report reflects outcomes closely aligned each of the regional and City strategies including National Improvement Framework for Education; Regional Economic Strategy, Local and Regional Transport Strategies and the Regional Skills Strategy, along with Local and Strategic Development Plans.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	It is confirmed by Chief Officer, Martin Murchie, that no Integrated Impact Assessment is required for this report
Data Protection Impact Assessment	A Data Protection Impact Assessment is not required for this report.
Other	No additional impact assessments have been completed for this report.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Council Delivery Plan 2022/2023 – CUS/22/059
Performance Management Framework – COM/23/168

11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Council Delivery Plan, Annual Review Report 2022/23

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Charlene Flynn
Community Safety Analyst, Data and Insights,
chflynn@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Council Delivery Plan

ANNUAL REVIEW 2022/23



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FOREWORD

This Annual Report provides an overview of progress made in implementing the Council Delivery Plan 2022/23.

The report reflects the situation of Aberdeen as a city in economic transition. A city which is well placed to manage the transition towards a low-carbon economy and is focused on diversity in its business sectors, but also one where the impact of national and international socio-economic factors is impacting on the city and its people.

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are still being understood, but it is clear that it has increased poverty across the UK, whilst the “cost of living” is putting further pressure on many of our citizens, both employment and unemployed. However, this report shows that the Council, together with the city’s communities and our partners, are working hard to mitigate these impacts.

The achievements highlighted in this report stand as a testament to the resilience and dedication of the staff of both the Council and our partner organisations, as well as to the people of Aberdeen themselves.

The Council Delivery Plan is a key element of our commissioning approach and brings together, at the beginning of each financial year:

- Details of the Council’s strategy framework
- Relevant new statutory duties being placed on the Council;
- Outstanding commitments arising from the Council’s approved Policy Statement and Partnership Agreement
- Council commissioning intentions, through which we express the services we will provide; and a summary of “How we do our business”.

Importantly, each of these elements of our Council Delivery Plan are aligned to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) and represent a statement of how the Council will deliver on its contribution to the implementation of the LOIP.



As this report shows, we have made significant progress in many key areas during 2022/23. Not least of these has been the ability of our staff to continue to deliver essential services and care to the people of Aberdeen as the impact of both the pandemic and the “cost of living” crisis continued to be felt, both operationally and through health, social and economic challenges experienced across the city. Specific highlights from 2022/23 include:

- the opening of Union Terrace gardens, following its refurbishment
- the launch of the ONE BioHub with laboratory space, office space, incubation facilities, hot desk & co-working space
- the launch of the National Subsea Centre, part of the Net Zero Technology Centre, in January 2023, providing advanced research to accelerate the transition to net zero
- the new Aberdeen South Harbour becoming operational, with the official launch planned by the end of September 2023
- £27million investment in ONE Seedpod to grow the north East Scotland food and drinks industry, with the aim to increase sector turnover by 5% per annum
- £1.9million allocated by the Council towards the Aberdeen Gift Card Scheme, resulting in 14,172 eligible citizens benefiting from £125 gift cards
- almost 19 thousand Scottish Child Payment Bridging Payments made by the Council, before the wider rollout of the Scottish Child Payment
- the opening of the new Countesswells School
- the introduction of Youth Workers, Family Learning and Money Advisors in all schools
- 65,840 free school meal vouchers delivered to eligible families; 14,564 chrome books; 500 Wi-Fi connections with dongles; and 210 data only SIMs
- welcoming over 300 children and young people who have been displaced by the war in Ukraine into the city’s schools
- the launch of the city’s cycle hire scheme in November 2022
- construction works completed for new council housing at Wellheads and Auchmill sites, with further ongoing construction at Summerhill, Kaimhill, Tillydrone and Cloverhill

POLICY STATEMENT UPDATES

The table below gives an update on progress with those elements of the Council’s Policy Statement, as it existed in March 2022, which were included within the 2022/23 Plan (others having been delivered in previous years). Many of these commitments have been delivered in collaboration with local and national partners.

ECONOMY

Policy Statement Commitments	Update
1. Assess the digital needs of the region, working with our partners to ensure the city has the required infrastructure	<p>This work has been taken forward through the £27m Aberdeen City Region Deal investment in Digital.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City Network was the first project to be initiated, now complete it transformed Aberdeen into a Gigabit City. The project saw a public sector investment of £2m and a private sector investment of £59m. Approximately 84% of homes in the city have been passed to date (this equates to 92,000 ready for service homes in the City Fibre network) with further roll out by CityFibre continuing to the end of financial year 2023. The benefits to residents also extend to more internet provider choices and market competition, which helps drive down costs. • The final site in the Full Fibre project was connected and handed over for service in March 2023, with the project now officially closed. The Full Fibre project was designed as a public sector anchor tenancy model, meaning that by connecting the public sector through an approved framework it could stimulate commercial investment into the city and region, to rollout fibre to homes and businesses. The focus will now be on working with NEOS and the Digital Stakeholder Engagement Team to maximise opportunities for offering fibre services to residents and business using their network footprint across the region. <p>Aberdeen City Council already operates a duct network (containing fibre optic cables) in the city, and this will be expanded to cover key economic areas. Initially this duct network will be used by the Council, followed by engagement with commercial organisations to encourage them to utilise the expanded network to enhance their fibre offering in Aberdeen City, consequently stimulating the market. Phase 1 was completed in October 2022, Phase 2 will be completed in August 2023, Phase 3 has been approved design works completed, construction underway and due to be completed in December 2024.</p> <p>A digital infrastructure gap analysis was undertaken which developed a business case for continued investment and intervention within the region. The full business case was approved at the Joint Committee in November 2022 with the following recommendations approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 5G Network at Aberdeen Harbour - The provision of investment to Port of Aberdeen to procure a private 5G infrastructure in the new Aberdeen South Harbour to increase productivity and reduce operational costs, making Aberdeen comparable with leading ports across the world. o 5G Network Huntly - The provision of investment to ScotEID/SAOS (www.scoteid.com) to facilitate the delivery of industry leading Agri-tech applications and services and environmental monitoring in rural Aberdeenshire using Huntly as an initial area. o 5G “pop up” network coverage in the region to enable companies to test applications in a real-life environment. <p>To further address the gaps in digital infrastructure across the Region it is prudent to wait to hear how Project Gigabit will be rolled out in Scotland. It is anticipated that Project Gigabit procurements in Scotland will be developed jointly by the UK Government and Scottish Government through a collaborative approach, in which it is expected that the Scottish Government will be the lead partner on implementation management.</p>



Image © Ian Georgeson

<p>2. Increase city centre footfall through delivery of the City Centre Masterplan, including the redesigned Union Terrace Gardens, Provost Skene House and Queen Street development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Aberdeen City Centre and Beach Masterplan was approved in August 2022 and is a “live” document which will be updated annually. The document contains a number of SMART objectives focused around the key themes of Economy, Inclusion, New Zero and Quality. In relation to City Centre footfall the objective is a 10% increase in the daily average in the City Centre by 2026. Union Terrace Gardens opened in December 2022 following its refurbishment Progress continues to be made on City Centre Streetscape projects, with detailed design work and key stakeholder consultation ongoing. An updated Business Case will be reported back to Council in December 2023. Queen Street – a Strategic Business Case was approved by the Council in December 2022 and included a short list of future options for the site. An Outline Business Case to allow selection of a preferred option will be reported to Council in September 2023. Aberdeen Market – McGinty’s Group confirmed as the preferred operator of the site. A revised planning application has been submitted following discussions with the preferred operator. If permission granted than the project will proceed to RIBA Stage 4 Technical Design to allow production of all design information required to construct the new building. Visitor figures continue to rise post-Covid, increased take up for venue based events, reflected in increase in spend in venue cafes and shops. Visits to city centre venues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provost Skene’s House = 28,388 Maritime Museum (closed for essential maintenance between December and April) = 49,618 Art Gallery = 212,663 The Union Street Empty Shops Action Plan was approved in December 2022 identifying short, medium and long-term interventions, some of which are targeted at increasing city centre footfall. Short-term interventions are being commenced. The Union Street Empty Shops Grant Scheme was launched in July 2023 to support the reconfiguration of currently vacant units for reoccupation and new uses, increasing vibrancy and footfall on the street.
<p>3. Support the Aberdeen Harbour expansion and work collaboratively to maximise tourism opportunities, including attracting high value cruises and energy transition activity in offshore renewables</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first cruise ship was welcomed 2nd May 2023, and it is anticipated to have a positive impact on venue visitor figures in the city Cruise-ready packages have been developed and a shuttle bus transport from South Harbour on a trial basis The construction work at the South Harbour was completed in August 2023 Ongoing support is being provided for Visit Aberdeenshire and Volunteer programme to welcome visitors arriving by cruise ships and assist in events across the city

<p>4. Review Council industrial estate to ensure it supports the Regional Economic Strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussions continue over land requirements for the Energy Transition Zone with a council decision anticipated in September 2023, following the adoption of the Local Development Plan. This will support the development of the Hydrogen Hub and Harbour expansion. The review of Council investment assets is an ongoing process with a number of assets being brought to the market in 2023
<p>5. Continue to deliver Aberdeen 365 an annual calendar of headline and feature events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2022 saw the end of Covid-19 restrictions and a return to ‘business as usual’ for the Event365 programme. 2022 also saw the successful return of recurring events and ACC’s core programme, including Aberdeen’s Highland Games, NUART, and Aberdeen Christmas Village. There were also significant national touring exhibitions at the Art Gallery, which included: The Galloway Hoard: Viking Age Treasure; The Book of Deer; Jerwood Art Fund Maker’s Open. Regionally focussed exhibitions and displays included: Aberdeen Artists’ Society Open; Cabrach Re-Connections; re-display of two collection galleries exploring Love, and Imagined Landscapes The Bloomberg Connects App was launched and further developed to provide guided tours of the Art gallery (now available in Scots Gaelic)
<p>6. Continue to maximise community benefit from major developments</p>	<p>Community benefits have been delivered from several projects across the city:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hydrogen Hub JVP (BP), NESS Energy from Waste (Acciona/Indaver), Summerhill and Tillydrone housing (CHAP), Cloverhill (Bancon), Flat Roof Frameworks (MAC Roofing), Torry Hub (Morrison Construction – Hub North Scotland), Replacement Riverbank School (Robertson), City Vision (Balfour Beatty, Robertson Construction – Hub North Scotland) Community benefits delivered include work experience placements, apprenticeships, community timebank hours, fair work practices, school engagement activities and promotion of adoption and fostering. As of May 2023, BP are sharing volunteering opportunities sourced via Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations (ACVO) on their We Volunteer Portal with staff. This forms part of their community timebank community benefit delivery. Project Officer (Community Benefits) is working closely with ACVO and Improvement Officer to promote the Aberdeen Responsible Business Network and event planned for early 2024.
<p>7. Open negotiations to secure funding for a second Aberdeen City Region Deal</p>	<p>The Secretary of State for Scotland has invited the Joint Committee chair of Aberdeen City Region Deal to take part in an internal Scotland Office review of UK Government’s regional and local economic growth initiatives. This will include sharing the vision for the region’s ideal economic future, including the role for the UK Government in supporting this.</p>
<p>8. Use business loans Scotland to help lift the finance barrier for small and medium enterprises</p>	<p>Business Gateway continued to promote Business Loans Scotland (BLS) and during the last financial year BLS supported three businesses in the City.</p>

<p>9. Work with both governments in order to unleash the non-oil and gas economic potential of the city</p>	<p>As part of the Regional Economic Strategy the City will continue to diversify into its key growth sectors including renewable energy, life sciences, food & drink, tourism and creative industries</p>
<p>10. Support the delivery of the three innovation hubs as part of the Aberdeen City Region Deal</p>	<p>Net Zero Technology Centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NZTC was recognised by Reuters in their first Top 100 Innovators Report Launched a new website which has increased engagement and dwell time by users Open Innovation Programme, aimed at technologies that will reduce offshore emissions, accelerate clean energy production and enable delivery net zero opened in January 2023 and winners will be announced September 2023 There were 12 game changing start-ups from the 2023 Clean Energy Start Ups <p>ONE BioHub:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ONE BioHub was formally launched in May 2023 with laboratory space, office space, incubation facilities, hot desk & co-working space and offers a space where academics and researchers can connect to the commercial world More than 200 people worked on the ONE BioHub and £17.4million was spent on the local supply chain <p>ONE SeedPod:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £27million investment to grow the north East Scotland food and drinks industry and aims to increase sector turnover by 5% per annum Construction began in late May 2023 and is due to open late 2024 It will create opportunities to pilot advanced manufacturing processes and technology, scale-up production and inspire new products

PEOPLE

Policy Statement Commitments	Update
<p>1. Completion of school estate review (P1) and development of estate strategy for next 5-10 years (P2)</p>	<p>A full set of proposals around the school estate was taken to the Education and Children’s Services Committee in September 2022 with an associated work plan. Work has progressed in keeping with the approved workplan and progress continues to be reported to Committee.</p>
<p>2. Development of four new primary schools - Tillydrone, Torry, Milltimber and Countesswells</p>	<p>The construction element of the new replacement Riverbank School has now been awarded which will allow works to progress over the next 12 months.</p> <p>The new Countesswells School welcomed pupils and staff in April this year and followed with the official opening in May.</p> <p>The new school at Torry has been renamed as Greyhope School and Community HUB, the project is planned to complete in Autumn 2023.</p>

<p>3. Incorporation of UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child)</p>	<p>A statutory Children’s Rights report was published in January 2022. In addition to a range of qualitative and quantitative data available to help review the impact of our work on the children’s rights agenda, a specific children’s rights survey was issued to children and young people in September 2022 to help determine progress and identify further priorities for action. Taking this holistic approach enabled ACC to triangulate evidence and more confidently report on progress and next steps. Their report cited a number of achievements including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved use of data to help us support the children and families most in need of our help Establishment of our multi-agency Fit Like Family Wellbeing Hubs Successful delivery of Holiday programmes in keeping with the self-reported needs of children, young people and families Establishment of our first Wee Green Forest Establishment of our Youth Network to improve youth engagement in strategic decision making and increase cohesion between pre-existing participatory groups for children and young people across the city The introduction of community walkabouts with children and young people working alongside officers and Elected Members to jointly identify and act on concerns in local communities The introduction of Youth Workers, Family Learning and Money Advisors in all schools 65840 free school meal vouchers delivered to eligible families The Provision of 14564 chrome books, 500 Wi-Fi connections with dongles and 210 data only SIMs during periods of school building closure Updated child protection practices in keeping with updated national guidance Successful bid to develop a neurodevelopmental pathway with partners Commissioned Mental Health Aberdeen to offer year-round counselling for our children and young people Children and young people have directly influenced city master planning Further development of The Children’s Rights Service Appointment of a Pupil Climate Change President
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<p>4. Support the implementation of Developing the Young Workforce, seek to gain the highest level of investors in young people accreditation and ensure there is a focus on supporting pupils to excel in STEM subjects</p>	<p>A number of areas have been successfully progressed over the year including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The roll out of phase 1 of ABZ Campus in June 2023. A set of quantitative and qualitative success measures have been set to determine progress and improvement. The ABZ Works website was developed to incorporate a section dedicated to ABZ Campus, enabling young people, parents and carers to learn more about the breadth of opportunities. Further improvements are being developed during Phase 2 and beyond now that the foundations are in place. • Six secondary schools within the local authority are at different stages in engaging with the support of the Excelerate programme, a community-connected learning initiative supported by the Wood Foundation. • The Aberdeen Computing Collaborative has been formed by Aberdeen City Council, in partnership with North East Scotland College, Robert Gordon University, the University of Aberdeen, and Opportunity North East. The collaborative’s focus is on improving computing science education in the city, in line with the recommendations made by the Scottish Technology Ecosystem: Review. • Outreach programmes are currently being aligned and opportunities for e-sports being expanded. We recognise the benefits of esports in education, including promoting teamwork, problem-solving, and strategic thinking. Esports can engage learners with technology and act as a gateway to interest in computing science and the tech sector. An Esports hub is being developed at St Machar Academy, which will deliver a new National Qualification in Esports at SCQF Level 4 and 5 from August 2023. Collaborative partner, North East Scotland College, will support this development . • To support professional development, ACC officers have created “grab and go” resources for staff supporting the youngest learners in our primary schools. A classroom teacher has been commissioned to continue production of these resources and will coordinate this development with partners. • To address the local shortfall in computer science teachers, Aberdeen City has entered a separate partnership with University of Highlands and Islands (UHI), to provide a distance learning Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (Secondary) to support those in the city with an interest in becoming a Computing Science teacher. Entrants to this course will be given placements in ACC schools to encourage them to seek employment locally when fully qualified.
<p>5. Explore how the successes of the Sistema project can be shared and spread across the city</p>	<p>A collaboration agreement has been put in place to enable Sistema to continue to support families in Torry by accessing non-financial supports from Aberdeen City Council. The agreement, which came into effect on 1st July 2023, will be subject to yearly review.</p> <p>After a few years of restrictions, the Music Service has now planned for the roll out of city-wide ensembles. In preparation, group performances at locality and city level resumed in 2022/23 with a Christmas concert at the Beach Ballroom involving over 500 learners and culminating in an exceptional finale. Our first Big Sing, organised in partnership with Robert Gordon’s College and involving every P4 pupil in the city, was held in Duthie Park in June. Plans are now progressing to build these events into our yearly calendar.</p>

<p>6. Commit to closing the attainment gap in education while working with partners across the city</p>	<p>Following an extensive development period, a new broad, general education tracker has been established and is now in use by schools. The tracker enables the interrogation of data at school and local authority level by group and by SIMD and allows school to clearly identify ‘the gap’ at school level.</p> <p>Work has also progressed to develop a consistent approach to the measurement of the added value of interventions put in place to help close the equity gap. Following engagement with other Local Authorities to learn from best practice and consultation with Head Teachers, the tool has been put in place for session 2023/24.</p> <p>Following the success of previous programmes (Summer of Play 2021, Easter of Play 2022, Summer in the City 2022, and Easter in the City 2023) the Council allocated resource for holiday programmes to be delivered over school holiday periods (summer and autumn 2023 and spring 2024).</p> <p>In line with the aims of the previous ‘In the City’ holiday programmes, the main focus remains to encourage participation and to maximise the positive opportunities available to young people and their families with a particular focus on those within the Tackling Child Poverty Plan priority groupings.</p> <p>The programme continues to engage with the widest demographics, providing opportunities for both priority families and those who do not identify as part of a priority group to take part. The programme will also continue to target the 5-14 years age group with some activities still being made available for those not in this age range. Bookable opportunities for priority families will take the form of short, family, half-day and full-day session.</p> <p>The Education Scotland Attainment Adviser has worked with an Education Support Officer to support 11 city schools’ involvement with the Children and Young People’s Improvement Collaborative (CYPIC) National Improving Writing Programme which aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve children’s writing attainment. • Spread a successful QI writing programme. • Equip class teachers with QI knowledge so they can understand and apply tools and techniques that have been rigorously tested and work <p>Phase 1 schools began the process in October 2022, with Phase 2 commencing in February 2023. Phase 1 schools are already reporting encouraging progress with their first cohort.</p> <p>Scottish Attainment Challenge funding has been used to support the provision of youth work and family learning workers. 2074 young people (aged 10-18 years) and 689 children (aged 5-9 years) have engaged in youth work this year with 1648 of those young people reporting improved mental health and wellbeing as a result of their engagement with the service.</p> <p>2,459 young people have engaged with the Saltire Awards in Aberdeen. These awards, which are for volunteers aged 12-25 and co-ordinated by ACVO, continue to contribute positively to employability skills. 56 children and 16 young people were supported to complete nationally recognised awards.</p>
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Over 100 young people identified as unlikely to secure a positive destination benefited from targeted and carefully tailored youth work programmes.

The poverty-related attainment gap, which is measured by comparing the outcomes of learners in quintile one (Q1) and quintile five (Q5), has reduced from 2020-21. The gap decreased from 28 percentage points (pp) to 21 pp in 2021-22. This demonstrates a 7-percentage point improvement and is the local authority's best performance in this measure since comparisons between Q1 and Q5 learners were introduced. This latest figure is lower than the national attainment gap by 10.8 percentage points which outlines the considerable improvements which have been made when compared to 2020-21 data.

Financial inclusion advisors have been attached to schools as part of our approach to education recovery. Helping families achieve; financial gains, assisting households with debt issues, providing full benefit checks, assisting households to claim benefits and assisting households to challenge being turned down for benefits. The service continues to be promoted to ensure all parents have access to advice and support.

The Armed Forces Covenant was initially a 'promise' between the Nation and its people to ensure that military personnel who are serving, or have served, and their families, do not suffer any disadvantage as a result of their service. This agreement, recognised across all nations of the United Kingdom, was signed by all 32 local authorities in Scotland.

The Armed Forces Covenant legislation places a new duty of 'due regard' for the Covenant on **all** Scottish local authorities and health boards. It is important to note that the terms of the new Act are compatible with the existing body of Scottish educational law and existing statutory responsibilities. The Council is proactively reviewing current systems to help determine how to strengthen our response to the Covenant.

Over the course of 2022/23 our schools have welcomed and supported over 300 children and young people who have been displaced by the war in Ukraine. Most of these families have been living within hotel accommodation, ranging from at maximum 8 hotels, now reduced to 3 hotels either within the city centre or at Dyce. One of our primary schools welcomed over 110 children across all stages and one of the secondaries almost 50 young people. Almost all of these children have settled and remained within the schools they initially enrolled in throughout the session. In May 2023 some movement is now being seen with families being housed in more settled accommodation across the city. Early indications are that almost all families are choosing to remain in Aberdeen with their feedback on support from our schools and education providers being very positive.

7. Continue to promote diversion activities for youths and adults in our city with enhanced focused on our three locality areas

Mastrick Outdoor Hub continues to attract young people from the surrounding areas and antisocial behaviour has declined during the time the hub has been up and running. In addition to the activities provided by Street Sports young people are benefitting from their engagement with youth workers. A need was identified for children who were too young to attend the hub and from this a club for P6's and 7's was set up. In April this year club members took part in a residential at Cromdale Outdoor Centre during which they took part in activities such as canoeing and cycling.

Attendance at the Kincorth P6 and 7 group is at maximum most weeks. Group members can take part in activities such as art and crafts, games and baking or they can come along and just hang out with friends. Steet Sports visited the group to promote the new sessions they were setting up in Kincorth; these sessions are now being delivered and are an addition to the offer for children and young people in Kincorth.

Youth Workers continue to support the drop-in which takes place at Northfield Community Centre. As the older attendees move on a new and younger cohort has started coming along. The drop-in was set up to provide a safe and welcoming environment for young people to hang out in and in response to the lack of things for them to do in their area. Useful connections between the drop-in and the youth work staff at Northfield academy have been made.

PLACE

Policy Statement Commitments	Update
1. Build up our existing strength in hydrogen technology	The development of the joint venture with bp has continued and planning permission for the plant and solar farm with has been achieved. The Final Investment Decision (FID) is planned for September 2023 and production in April 2025. Other project activities in relation to mobility are ongoing and we are looking at opportunities in relation to H2 use for heavy goods vehicles, maritime, heating and exports. This is being undertaken with partners.
2. Support efforts to develop the inward investment opportunities including Energetica corridor	Working with a range of partners the activity of Invest Aberdeen seeks to build on the assets of the region including Energy Transition, Clean Energy, City Centre opportunities. This is targeted at both businesses looking to locate and institutions looking for investment opportunities. Using the offices of Scottish Cities Alliance to attend events as part of a Team Scotland approach to seeking Green Investment partners.
3. Refresh the local transport strategy, ensuring it includes the results of a city centre parking review; promotes cycle and pedestrian routes; and considers support for public transport	The draft Local Transport Strategy is now prepared and is due to be reported to the August Net Zero, Transport and Environment Committee for approval to go out for public consultation in the Autumn.

4. Cycle hire scheme	The cycle hire scheme was formally launched in November 2022, with officers now working with the operator to support ongoing growth and expansion
5. Continue to invest to resurface damaged roads and pavements throughout the city	All projects proposed in 22/23 were fully delivered
6. Build 2,000 new Council homes and work with partners to provide more affordable homes, ensuring future developments address the needs of a changing population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction work complete at Wellheads and Auchmill sites. • Ongoing construction at Summerhill, Kaimhill, Tillydrone and Cloverhill sites. • Design updates for Kincorth and Craighill sites in progress. • Planning Permission in principle progressing for Greenferns and Greenferns Landward sites. • We have engaged with a preferred contractor to proceed with 206 Union Street, likely to proceed Spring 2024. • Buy backs are continuing. • Planning permission granted for 8 complex care units at the former Stonewood school site in Dyce. • Currently engaged with 3 contractors to deliver 600 voids back to housing to meet the new lettable standard.



COMMISSIONING INTENTIONS

Supporting delivery of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan through Council commissioning intentions

As part of our commissioning cycle, the Council Delivery Plan sets out a series of commissioning intentions which define the contributions which the Council will make to the delivery of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and which frame the ask of our commissioned services.

These commissioning intentions define the Council's contribution, from a single agency perspective. It should be noted that partners will also have single agency intentions to meet their obligations derived from the LOIP.

The Council Delivery Plan also shows measures for each of the commissioning intentions. This annual report highlights progress against many of these measures and up to date progress is shown against all of the LOIP and Council Delivery Plan measures in the Aberdeen Outcomes Framework which can be accessed at: <https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/outcomesframework>

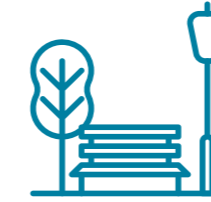


ECONOMY

KEY DRIVERS

- Mitigating the causes of immediate and acute poverty
- Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families and groups
- Poverty affecting those with protected characteristics and in specific communities
- Supporting labour market to recover from impact of Covid-19 on employment
- Increasing the number of people in Aberdeen in sustained, fair work
- Promoting inclusive economic growth for our most disadvantaged communities
- Ensuring access for all employers to skilled labour

ECONOMY HIGHLIGHTS



Union Terrace Gardens
reopened after over
2 years
of refurbishments



Aberdeen Arts Gallery & Museums saw
291,396 in-person visits
in the first full year of operation since
the Art Gallery's refurbishment and the
Covid pandemic



More than **3,900** individuals
and almost **1,000** businesses
were supported through the **North
East Economic Recovery Fund**



The Scottish Government funded
Long Term Unemployed (LTU)
scheme was **successfully delivered**,
supporting **94 people** who had
been unemployed for a year or more

PROGRESS MADE DURING 2022/23

SUPPORT THE ATTRACTION OF VISITORS TO THE CITY AND INCREASE FOOTFALL

Union Terrace Gardens re-opened in December 2022 following over 2 years of refurbishment. The Aberdeen City Centre and Beach Masterplan was approved in August 2022 and is a “live” document which will be updated annually. The first annual update was presented to Members at the adjourned Full Council meeting in September 2023. The document contains a number of SMART objectives focused around the key themes of Economy, Inclusion, Net Zero and Quality.

Queen Street – a Strategic Business Case was approved by the Council in December 2022 and included a short list of future options for the site. An Outline Business Case was reported to the adjourned meeting of Council in September 2023 and Option 5 (urban park with landscaping to north-west development area and development to south-east on site of former Police HQ) was selected as the preferred option to move to the next stage of design development, with an update to be reported back to Council in December 2023.

Aberdeen Market – McGinty’s Group confirmed as the preferred operator of the site. A revised planning application has been submitted following discussions with the preferred operator. If permission granted than the project will proceed to RIBA Stage 4 Technical Design to allow production of all design information required to construct the new building.

Beachfront - A Development Framework for Phase 1 of the Beachfront area was approved by Aberdeen City Council in May 2023, and was informed by both public and stakeholder consultation. A Development Framework for Phase 2 has been instructed and a draft will be reported back to Members before the end of 2024. Individual projects outlined within the Phase 1 Development Framework are currently being progressed, with an instruction given at the adjourned meeting of Council in September 2023 to proceed with appointments to deliver a number of medium-term interventions, including Beach park, Events Park and improvements to Broadhill.

Streetscape - Progress continues to be made on City Centre Streetscape projects, with detailed design work and key stakeholder consultation ongoing. An updated Business Case will be reported back to Council in December 2023.

Aberdeen Arts Gallery & Museums (AAGM)

Aberdeen Art Gallery has opened 7 days/week between April 2022 and April 2023 (excepting Christmas / New Year, Good Friday and the Coronation). This has been the first full year of operation since closing for redevelopment in 2015.

Aberdeen Maritime Museum opened 7 days/week from April to November 2022, with a closure period for essential maintenance over winter, reopening April 2023. Provost Skene’s House has opened 7 days/week between April 2022 and April 2023 (excepting Christmas / New Year, Good Friday and the Coronation). This has been the first full year of operation since closing for site redevelopment in 2014. Visitors were able to visit for free and take part in free concerts, talks, special exhibitions and events.



Work continues behind the scenes to enhance FREE digital access to collections, images, information and educational opportunities including publication of the entire gallery and museum collection online, additional archive records now online, blogs, films exploring stories, online exhibitions and downloadable school resources.

The gallery promoted free and inclusive access over the winter as part of the council’s Warm Places offer. All AAGM locations registered as Safe Spaces this year with staff training provided.

Work with partners WeToo! and Sound Play Projects has increased what we can offer for neurodivergent children and adults for free, and the dementia friendly sessions Our Aberdeen and Musical Memories continue to grow, supported by our volunteer team.

Major exhibitions:

- The Galloway Hoard: Viking Age Treasure (free entry, fully partnership funded)
- The Book of Deer (free entry, fully grant funded)
- Jerwood Art Fund Maker’s Open (free entry, grant supported)

This year we have had over 1 million visits to AAGM, this includes both in-person and online:

- 291,396 in-person
- 939,764 via social media
- 436,486 AAGM web page views
- 16,260 Aberdeen built ships page views

A marketing campaign was devised with particular focus on the Galloway Hoard - Viking-age Treasure exhibition.

VisitAberdeenshire boosted PR activity via London-based PR representatives to reach travel and lifestyle media in conjunction with promotion via a digital campaign, they also shared to their existing database and social media following. The campaign exceeded forecast expectations, the digital campaign achieved 442,013 impressions, there were over 39,000 social impressions and a 44.47% click through rate of their newsletter.

VisitScotland campaign - Publishing partnerships were established with The Stylist magazine where an Aberdeen advertorial was in circulation of 350,000 copies. A partnership email was also distributed along with cross promotion on various digital platforms, including a quiz highlighting Aberdeen’s cultural offering. Working with BBC History Extra - a podcast advert achieved 733,000 impressions, and a native advertorial achieved 16,034 views and 936,000 impressions. Digital displays and social media promotion was also conducted via Pinterest, Quantcast and Contextual Intelligence to target an audience in London, South East and North East England. This included promotion at key transport hubs, shopping centres, museums and targeting an audience who enjoys eating out or short breaks.

Events 365

The Events 365 returned to its full programme following Covid-19. Key highlights in 2022/23 were SPECTRA, which saw its highest footfall to date; the Tour of Britain Grande Depart and the associated Get About Aberdeen Cycling Festival, which picked up the Best Sporting Event award at the EventIT E Awards. As well as these, Aberdeen City Council approved the refreshed Event 365 strategy in February 2023, capturing the successes of the original plan and setting the strategic objectives for the future. This saw the commitment to deliver the European Pipe Band Championships in 2023 and the Tall Ships in 2025.



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYABILITY

Developing the Young Workforce

The roll out of phase 1 of ABZ Campus in June 2023 will see 37 courses be offered as part of ABZ Campus 23-24 with a total of **970** places across this course offer.

A set of quantitative and qualitative success measures have been set to determine progress and improvement.

As of April 2023, **843** young people had registered for the courses. The ABZ Works website was amended to incorporate a section dedicated to ABZ Campus, enabling young people, parents and carers to learn more about the breadth of opportunities.

Successful implementation of Phase 1 will lay the foundations by establishing systems which enable measurement of impact and build confidence in the young people, parents and carers and staff. Further improvements are being developed during Phase 2 and beyond now that the foundations are in place.

A pilot employability pathway is included in Phase 1 which includes a small number of pupils from 3 academies who have enrolled on this course to undertake a range of key skills workshop to prepare for the world of work, followed by a work experience placement with a specific area of the council. On completion of the course pupils will achieve an accredited qualification and a guaranteed interview for any apprenticeship opportunities / entry level roles with the Council.



Six secondary schools within the local authority are at different stages in engaging with the support of the Excelerate programme, a community-connected learning initiative supported by the Wood Foundation. This programme has included a number of collaborative visits to the XP Academy in Doncaster, and study visits to the Academies of Nashville. Supported by Excelerate, each school using their own unique context to identify the areas they seek to progress. These areas include Project Based Learning, Crew, School Leaver Profiles and Oracy to name but a few. A sharing event was held in May 2023 which allowed schools to showcase the impact of the programme. The event, which was learner focused and learner led, was well attended by staff from across Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

The Aberdeen Computing Collaborative has been formed by Aberdeen City Council, in partnership with North East Scotland College, Robert Gordon University, the University of Aberdeen, and Opportunity North East. The collaborative's focus is on improving computing science education in the city, in line with the recommendations made by the [Scottish Technology Ecosystem: Review](#).

The collaborative aims to support a coherent, innovative, and skills-based computing science curriculum from early learning to senior phase and beyond. This includes creating multiple pathways for all learners to maximize access to computing science learning and qualifications in and out of school. Focussing on the development of computer science skills will ensure that pupils across Aberdeen City are well positioned to benefit from post school opportunities.

The collaborative plans to increase opportunities for young people, develop the skills of staff and promote the sector through engagement, curriculum support and professional learning. The collaborative held a successful launch event in September 2022, at ONE Tech Hub, which was attended by over 250 pupils and teaching staff. The event included practical computing science workshops and professional development discussions for teaching staff. Feedback indicates that almost all children and young people attending were more likely to consider a computing science career following the event.

Delivery of Employability Action Plan to support employment pathways

A Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for the procurement of employability services has been developed and tested, enabling a rapid response to emerging issues in the city. This has attracted new providers and broadened the range of activities available. A lessons learned exercise was carried out, with feedback gathered from providers and appropriate adaptations made. We are now in the midst of a full procurement exercise, with 17 mini-comps offered for the provision of a range of employability services.

[The Local Employability Partnership \(LEP\) Delivery and Action Plan](#) was approved by City Growth and Resources Committee and agreed by Aberdeen Prospers and Scottish Government in summer 2022. The LEP has identified target groups for support. These include women, parents, young people refugees, and people with disabilities. Delivery work is ongoing, the Action Plan has been updated with new actions, while several actions are complete. Quarterly reports are submitted to Aberdeen Prospers. Completed actions include creation of a Training Allowance for 16-17-year-olds, launch of an Employer Recruitment Incentive scheme, and development of the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS).

The Aberdeen Employability Training Providers Forum (ETPF) now has a representative on the LEP and in its own right has recently established a strategic group and an operational group, with a view to working collaboratively and feeding into the LEP. The ETPF are engaged in delivery of the actions identified in the Delivery Plan. Positive progress is being made towards a more aligned and strategic approach to employability services across the city. The inaugural ABZ Works Conference in April was used to map gaps, opportunities, and emerging needs. Provision mapping of activity across the city is underway, including grass roots activity.

A broad range of employability activity was commissioned so that support in finding work was available to city residents no matter their age (working age, 16-67), background, barriers faced or their level of work readiness. For young people, training providers including Aberdeen Foyer, Barnardo's, SHMU, Volunteering Matters and Working Rite delivered programmes offering activities such as 1:2:1 confidence building, group work, sector specific courses, accredited training, work experience and supported volunteering.

Young people aged 16-17 engaging in ABZ Works employability activity benefited from the Young Person's Training Allowance, a payment of £55 per week to incentivise participation and to mitigate the impact of the cost of living crisis.

A series of pilot employability projects was developed by the ABZ Works employability service and delivered in regeneration areas. These projects are in the evaluation stage, however the success of some has been so immediately obvious that they are being either rolled out more broadly or mainstreamed and offered via the DPS.

Focus support towards groups (women, young people and people from ethnic minority backgrounds) that have been disproportionately disadvantaged by the pandemic

The LEP has identified priority groups for employability support and a considerable amount of work has been undertaken to support them. This includes the delivery of pilot projects, co-designed with participants, in the regeneration areas; creation of a paid internship programme within the Council for care experienced young people; delivery of a transition into work grant for lone parents; a broad range of support for refugees and displaced people and publication of a report detailing the Council's employability response to the huge influx of displaced Ukrainians, alongside refugees and asylum seekers; delivery of a Year of Disabled Workers events to encourage recruitment of people with disabilities and follow-up jobs fair for people with disabilities; and commissioning activity.

A Fit Next programme for school leavers without a positive destination was rapidly developed to ensure available provision for young people, in the absence of commissioned services due to grant delays, over summer. This includes visits to training providers to support joint working and explore next steps for young people. Scottish Government has provided significantly increased Parental Employability Support Fund (PESF) monies to tackle child poverty and a programme has been developed, with work underway.

The North East Economic Recovery and Skills Fund (NEERSF) projects have been successfully delivered. More than 3,900 individuals and almost 1,000 businesses were supported, and more than 1,500 short university courses provided. The NEERSF final report is due to be published by Scottish Government imminently, with lessons learned and recommendations detailed within it and the associated evaluation report.

A series of jobs fairs have been delivered over the year, including generic events open to all city residents, a jobs fair and redundancy support event for people affected by the Arjo Wiggins and Belmont Cinema closures, and we delivered Scotland's first jobs fair for refugees, displaced people and asylum seekers in partnership with the Refugee Employment Network.

Two 12-week paid work experience schemes offering incrementally increasing numbers of hours during the placement, paid at Real Living Wage rate have been launched. The first offers opportunities in the health and social care sector and includes a guaranteed job interview at the end of the placement. The second offers supportive placements within the authority for care experienced young people in roles they have expressed an interest in.

Aberdeen Hydrogen Hub

Work with the Aberdeen Hydrogen Hub is ongoing. The Energy Transition Zone (ETZ) Jobs and Skills Plan has been published, with input from Council officers and this in turn is being considered as part of the hub skills action plan. This includes working with city schools, and a mapping exercise to establish who is doing what in employability and skills terms in this space, with a view to the adoption of an aligned and collaborative approach across the city.



Work continues with BP on the Skills Action Plan linked to the Hydrogen Hub. A Jobs and Skills Action Plan for the Energy Transition Zone has been developed, providing a framework for future skills development and job creation, including for those further removed from the labour market and in line with Fair Work Principles.

Long Term Unemployment (LTU) Scheme

The Scottish Government funded Long Term Unemployed (LTU) scheme was successfully delivered, supporting 94 people who had been unemployed for a year or more, to engage in immediate labour market opportunities of up to six months in duration. Just over half of the participants were working within the Council, in a variety of roles across the organisation, with the rest securing opportunities in one of 10 third sector organisations taking part. Of the 94 participants, 80 successfully completed their placement developing confidence, knowledge and recent work experience to include on their CV and 37 of those sustained employment beyond their placement. The remaining 14 withdrew from their placement early and were offered ongoing support from employability keyworkers.

A Community Wealth Building Action Plan was approved by Finance and Resources in December and work on delivery of this is ongoing.

Seed funding was provided to 8 people through No One Left Behind, Parental Employability Support Fund and Young Person Guarantee to support them to start up their own businesses.

An Employer Recruitment Scheme has been launched, providing up to £6,000 of funding to an employer taking on eligible individuals, including young people and those meeting NOLB and PESF criteria. This includes a premium rate for employers paying Real Living Wage rate or more.

An employer skills survey has been launched to identify skills and training gaps needs across the North East.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS, INCLUDING EMPLOYABILITY BENEFITS

Contractors are supported to deliver community benefits, including employability benefits, such as attendance at ABZ Works Jobs Fayres, sharing vacancies and work experience placements. Closer working between Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations (ACVO) through meetings every two weeks have led to more opportunities to increase the value of community benefits donations and timebank hours to third sector groups and charities. For example the We Volunteer Portal and BP's Hydrogen Hub community benefits.

Construction on ONE SeedPod began in late May 2023 and is due to open late 2024. ONE SeedPod has received £27 million in investment to grow the north east Scotland food and drinks industry and expected to increase sector turnover by 5% per annum.



The ETZ Jobs and Skills Plan sets a framework for job retention and creation. It was published in March 2023 and noted by the Finance and Resources Committee.

Six weekly meetings have been scheduled between Project Officer (Community Benefits) and Communications and External Affairs Manager (Social Performance) at BP to support the development and delivery of Hydrogen Hub JVP community benefits action plan. The CWB Action plan was approved by Finance and Resources Committee in December. It is being taken forward by the CWB Working Group with members from Procurement, City Growth, Communities and Corporate Landlord. The key pillars we are focusing on in the short term is Spending, Workforce and Land and Property. A recommendation was approved at the Community Planning Aberdeen Board to integrate a Community Wealth Building approach into the refresh of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP).

Regular meetings to support delivery of community benefits from the Hydrogen Hub JVP ensure monitoring and support with benefits including school and further and higher education activities. Opportunities for delivery of employability benefits such as mock interviews for clients in the 'Fit Next' Project have been shared with BP, with staff set to participate in upcoming sessions.

SUPPORT BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN THE CITY

The ONE BioHub was completed April 2023 and formally launched May 2023. More than 200 people worked on the ONE BioHub and £17.4 million spent in the local supply chain.

The National Subsea Centre, part of the Net Zero Technology Centre, launched in January 2023, will provide advanced research to accelerate the UK's transition to net zero.

The new Aberdeen South Harbour is now operational with official launch planned by the end of September 2023. In June 2022 a consultant was commissioned to undertake the next phase of the Transport Links to Aberdeen South Harbour, namely the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) and Scheme Assessment where the preferred corridor is going through a more detailed design process. Following a Stage 2 Options Workshop the consultants (SWECO) have submitted a draft of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Stage 2 Route Options Assessment report for review, the initial draft of the Outline Business Case (OBC) is currently being finalised, and a Structures Options Report has been submitted for approval.



The Digital Gap Analysis Business has been undertaken and 3 projects are now in progress; 5G in Aberdeen Port, Rural 5G and ONE are operating a 5G 'Pop-Up' to allow for testbeds. To further address the gaps in digital infrastructure across the Region it is prudent to wait to hear how Project Gigabit will be rolled out in Scotland. It is anticipated that Project Gigabit procurements in Scotland will be developed jointly by the UK Government and Scottish Government through a collaborative approach, in which it is expected that the Scottish Government will be the lead partner on implementation management. The Digital Engagement Team, funded by Aberdeen CRD, continue to support resident and help them apply for the connection voucher scheme. To date Aberdeen CRD has had the highest take-up.

The Full Fibre project has been completed and Duct Network Phases 1 & 2 have been completed and Phase 3 has begun.

Two Live Labs projects are now in progress, these are Hydrogen Refuellers (Aberdeenshire) and Transport Mobility Hubs (Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire).

The Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP) 2023 was adopted on 16 June 2023. The ALDP 2023 identifies three areas of land (OP56, OP61 and OP62) under Policy B5 – Energy Transition Zone and highlights the need for a joint Masterplan to cover the three sites. A Draft Masterplan for the Energy Transition Zone has been prepared by a consultant team on behalf of ETZ Ltd on this basis. The Draft Masterplan was endorsed by the Planning Development Management Committee in June 2023 for public consultation, with the final report expected to be reported back to Committee later in 2023.

A joint venture was established with BP in March 2022. The site for the hub and solar farm were identified and an application for planning approved by Council. Wider impacts in relation to supply chain, skills and employee benefits have commenced. A report setting out the baseline for skills activity was published in May 2023 and a supply chain action plan is being developed.

High Potential Opportunity (HPO) was developed in conjunction with a range of partners including Department of Business & Trade, Scottish Development International, ETZ, Scottish Enterprise and published during 2022. Subsequently distributed to all UK Government and Scottish Government offices to support investment propositions and discussions.

Regional Economic Strategy was reviewed and updated and to be adopted by partners in August/September 2023.

SUPPORT THE CITY TO BECOME A “SMART CITY”

Digital Infrastructure Programme

The Full Fibre project was completed in March 2023 and has now been closed with a presentation given to the City Region Deal Joint Committee demonstrating the numerous benefits to the Region.

Phase 2 of the Duct Network Extension will be completed in August 2023 and works have now begun for Phase 3. This project is intended to help enable traffic systems to be connected and provide a testbed for new technology.

Following completion of the City Network Extension CityFibre are continuing their private investment into Aberdeen City, investing an additional £19million into the city.

The Gap Analysis Business Case has been completed and was presented to City Region Deal Joint Committee. A further two projects are now about to be undertaken, 5G in Aberdeen Harbour as well as testing 5G solution for agri-tech. Further details are required to be known as to R100 North before undertaking any works to fill potential gaps.

IoT (Internet of Things) Programme

Aberdeen City Council is continuing to expand our Internet of Things network. This includes a pilot Water Monitoring project in two schools, the devices are due to be connected in August 2023. Officers are also investigating Life Ring Sensors which can help maximise resource time and notify Officers of vandalism to Life Rings.

Smart City Strategy and Action Plan refresh

During 2022/23 Aberdeen City Council procured Connected Places Catapult (CPC) to help benchmark our Smart City journey as well as create a Roadmap. The CPC is the UK's Innovation Accelerator for Cities, Transport and Place Leadership. They provide impartial 'innovation as a service' for public bodies, businesses and infrastructure providers to catalyse economic growth. The road map was completed in June 2023 and will be presented to Corporate Management team in quarter 3 this year.

PEOPLE (CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE)

KEY DRIVERS

Child Poverty

- Mitigating the causes of immediate and acute poverty
- Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families, and groups
- Poverty affecting those with protected characteristics and in specific communities

Early Years

- Ensuring that families receive the parenting and family support they need

Education – Improving Health and Wellbeing

- Ensuring that families receive the parenting and family support they need
- Keeping young children safe
- Improving health and reducing inequalities
- Improving timely access to support
- Increasing children's knowledge and understanding of their own physical and mental wellbeing and take an early intervention and prevention approach.

Education – Employability & Positive Destinations

- Improving pathways to education, employment and training for identified groups (including disability, ASN, term time leavers and those from priority localities)

Children's Social Work

- Improving education outcomes for care experienced children and young people
- Supporting attainment of balance of care where children are able to remain more often at home and or with kin

Child Friendly City

- Child friendly city where all decisions which impact on children and young people are informed by them

Youth Justice

- Young people receive the right help at the right time to improve outcomes for young people at risk of becoming involved in the Justice System

PEOPLE (CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE) HIGHLIGHTS



39,000 bookable opportunities were made available through the 'In the city' programme



The Easter in the City was given a **9.7 out of 10 enjoyability rating** by those who attended



2763 children & young people have **engaged** in youth work activity



8706 participants accessed Bookbug sessions



50% increase in the number of care experienced parents taking up eligible 2s places for their own children



PROGRESS MADE DURING 2022/23

REDUCING CHILD POVERTY

The child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 set a clear agenda for tackling child poverty. There is a duty for local authorities and health boards to report annually on activity they are taking, and will take to reduce child poverty. Some of the key achievements in the 2022/23 Child Poverty Action Report include:

- £1.9M allocated by Aberdeen City Council towards the Aberdeen Gift Card Scheme, resulting in 14,172 eligible citizens benefiting from £125 gift cards
- A 21% increase in the number of employers paying the real living wage in the last year, now covering 42,800 employees
- Year on year increase in the uptake of Best Start Grants and Foods
- 992 pupils active in Duke of Edinburgh Award Schemes across the city
- 2074 young people (aged 10-18 years) and 689 children (aged 5-9 years) have engaged in youth work activity
- 2314 adults have been engaged in adult learning activity and the city-wide family learning offer provided 250 activities to 481 adults (and their 389 children/young people)
- Our ABZ Works Employability site has received 6000 hits since the start of 2023 and 691 people have received employability support from the team
- 965 boxes of free sanitary products have been delivered to schools since January 2023
- The Fairer Aberdeen Programme funded 38 initiatives across community learning and development providers, tackling poverty and supporting 35,610 people. Allocated funding to support the distribution of 622 tonnes of free food (the equivalent of 1.72M meals)
- As of January 2023, over 22,500 young people have applied for and obtained a National Entitlement Card with free bus travel and are benefiting from this service

18,998 Scottish Child Payment Bridging Payments have been made by the Council. These payments ceased after the Winter payment in 2022 with the wider rollout of the Scottish Child Payment, administered by Social Security Scotland, from mid-November 2022.

Vouchers were provided during holiday periods for all families in receipt of free school meals due to low income and this is continuing. In the year to date, vouchers provided were equivalent to the value of £343,964 in school meals.

The Community Planning Partnership has worked hard to increase the uptake of social security and benefits in kind. There is a need to carefully track uptake so that corrective action can be taken if required.

Financial inclusion advisors have been attached to schools as part of our approach to education recovery. Over the period April 2022 to March 2023 the enhanced Financial Inclusion Team's advisors helped families achieve the following:

- Financial Gains of £1, 077, 325.24
- Assisted/Assisting 194 households with debt issues
- Helping with total debts of £1, 129, 447.58
- 381 household were given full benefit checks
- Assisted 57 households to claim benefits
- Assisting 12 household to challenge being turned down for benefits



The service continues to be promoted to ensure all parents have access to advice and support.

The number of children registered for free school meals has increased from 8277 in 2020 to 12,721 in 2022 (including those who are now automatically entitled in P1-P5). While there have been increases at schools in priority neighbourhoods, increases have been seen across schools in the city, including those in areas out with priority neighbourhoods.

All core curriculum charges have now been abolished. There is evidence that increasing numbers of young people from areas of deprivation are now accessing free instrumental music instruction. Uptake across Associated Schools Groups previously ranged from 1% (in areas of deprivation) to 25% (in more affluent areas). The range currently sits at between 5 and 9%. Data will continue to be closely monitored as we continue to address the equity agenda.

There is a collaboration agreement in place to support long term delivery of the Sistema programme in Torry.

The 'In the city' programmes for children and young people have continued to run and in 2022/23 thus far has provided 39,000 bookable opportunities, including weeklong/multiday camps and childcare camps, day long and short activities being offered, as well as numerous drop-in activities in parks, museums and galleries and local communities as well as bespoke programmes for those with complex additional support needs. The enjoyability rating as provided by children and young people for the most recent programme (Easter in the City, 2023) was 9.7 out of 10.

Aberdeen City Council has been successful in securing £309,000 capital investment in our out of school care facilities from Scottish Government. Three projects, in our 3 priority Associated School Groups (ASGs) – Lochside, Northfield and St Machar, will see outdoor spaces developed in order to increase capacity and offer holiday provision, supporting working families. A fourth project will see our flagship Additional Support Needs provision greatly enhanced, indoors and outdoors, again supporting working families who require wrap around provision.

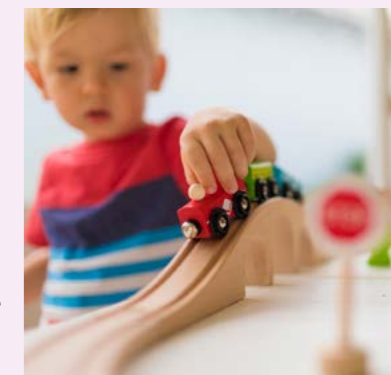
EARLY YEARS

Encouragingly there has been an increase in the uptake of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) in the city with 94.74% of our eligible population placed in 2022/23 compared to 91.22% in 2021/22. There has also been a 50% increase in the number of eligible 2s placed. In line with national policy, we will consider how best to extend provision for some aged 1 and 2 and consider how best to develop the provision of wrap around childcare for others of primary age.

There continues to be evidence that some young learners have gaps in early language skills and schools continue to address this through language interventions. The work undertaken in implementing the Circle Framework has ensured that schools are focussed on environment for learners at all levels. This work will be continued next session to ensure there are opportunities to share approaches to support schools working together to maximise impact of resources.

A number of schools and ELC settings helped those in care homes celebrate the coronation of King Charles by providing bunting and decorations.

A more proportionate model of quality improvement is helping to secure more positive inspection outcomes.



RAISE ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT

Two pilot schools have been signed up to participate in the ACC transformation project with Microsoft. Early adopters will begin to use Microsoft tools from August 2023 with the remainder of staff and learners in schools onboarding in January 2024. All learners to be provided with Microsoft devices. All data will sit in the same digital environment for both staff and learners and support the implementation of a device per learner. Currently all learners P7, S1, S2 S4, S5 and S6 have chromebooks.

Following an extensive development period, a new broad, general education tracker has been established and is now in use by schools. The tracker enables the interrogation of data at school and local authority level by group and by SIMD and allows school to clearly identify 'the gap' at school level.

Work has also progressed to develop a consistent approach to the measurement of the added value of interventions put in place to help close the equity gap. Following engagement with other Local Authorities to learn from best practice and consultation with Head Teachers, the tool has been put in place for session 2023/24.

Implemented from September 2022, the ACC National Improvement Framework Plan for 2023/24 will take account of further refinements introduced for the new school session.

Improvements in school tracking and more robust evaluation of the impact of interventions being tested to help improve our decision making around commissioned services. This will be mainstreamed across the Council over the next year.

The Education Scotland Attainment Adviser has worked with an Education Support Officer to support 11 city schools' involvement with the Children and Young People's Improvement Collaborative (CYPIC) National Improving Writing Programme which aims to:

- Improve children's writing attainment.
- Spread a successful QI writing programme.
- Equip class teachers with QI knowledge so they can understand and apply tools and techniques that have been rigorously tested and work

Phase 1 schools began the process in October 2022, with Phase 2 commencing in February 2023. Phase 1 schools are already reporting encouraging progress with their first cohort.

ASN (Additional Support Needs) and Outreach Services

Following analysis of the effectiveness of ASN and Outreach services, the education service began transforming the management and delivery models of ASN and outreach services around 3 years ago. A generic request for assistance form was developed to function as a single access point for all ASN and Outreach services including the School Nursing Service, Children's Social Work, Autism Outreach, and the virtual school.

The data is used at three levels; at whole system level to help us determine the success of our current approaches, at category of need level to help shape approaches and at individual pupil level to help inform individual planning for children and young people. This approach is proving helpful in identifying emerging risks. This live data helps us target groups easily to help mitigate risk.

The system has helped transform working practices, resource allocation and our commissioning of internal services and is now being extended to include all services for children as we design our model of Family Support.

TRANSITION TO POSITIVE DESTINATIONS

A review of attainment data identified 3 problems to be addressed through ABZ Campus. These included the need to:

- map and direct courses towards the growth and volume sector industries for the North-East of Scotland to improve longer-term employability.
- shift the shared focus away from the most academically minded and develop a more inclusive offer to support young people to access a range of courses across different Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels
- Address restrictive secondary timetables to enable closer collaboration.

What did we do? Secondary Head Teachers:

- Aligned secondary timetables so that young people can access courses in different schools easily in order to have access to a broader range.
- Reviewed courses available to ensure that new courses were aligned to the growth and volume sector industries of Construction, Digital & Entrepreneurship (incorporating Financial & Business Services), Early Learning & Childcare, Energy, Health & Social Care, Life Sciences, and Tourism & Hospitality.
- Convened Further and Higher Education and partners to consider how best to progress as a whole education system.
- Interviewed young people to learn from their lived experience. Young people told us that:
 - o the quality of course information and publicity could be improved.
 - o they would welcome a greater measure of consistency in the application process for courses.
 - o that course and location induction was really important in giving them confidence.
 - o that they are keen for greater consistency in the quality of feedback, tracking and reporting of progress

A set of cross-city working groups were created to develop citywide pathways across a large range of abilities and curricular areas. A set of Higher National Certificate (HNC) courses was agreed with partners North East Scotland College (NESCOL) at Level 7. These courses offer entry into year 2 of local universities for those planning to progress into Higher Education. A broader set of Higher and Advanced Higher courses were mapped to be delivered across a number of 'host' schools.

A group of Foundation Apprenticeships with partners NESCOL, Bon Accord Care and Aberlour Futures were planned, as well as an Employability Course organised in partnership with the Council's City Growth and People and Organisational Development services to provide opportunities for work placements and a guaranteed job interview upon successful completion.

[Family information](#) as made available from February 2023. Promotional material is being housed in a new section of the [ABZ Works website](#) so that young people and adults have a one-stop shop solution to find out about and apply for ABZ Campus courses.



There is a commitment to equity contained within the plans for ABZ Campus. All courses offered will carry an opportunity based on merit rather than where the young person has their 'home' school. There was also a recognition of a 'gap' in support for young people who are care experienced or on the edge of care. It was agreed that identifying a key member of staff to provide signposting, tracking and support around future course choices to help realise a positive destination would help ensure that those who are care experienced are well positioned to take advantage of ABZ Campus and to achieve at the highest level possible. In order to address this a new role of Pathways Advocate was designed. Secondary schools began internal recruitment of Pathways Advocates in October 2022 and many schools now have these staff members in place, working on a 0.2FTE basis alongside partners in school.

An incredibly positive outcome of the work on timetable alignment is that there now exists an opportunity for schools to work together to provide even greater access to young people through a 'clearing' system. As young people make their choices during March 2023, schools will share where there is capacity in their schools and, if a course in one school is over-subscribed, it is possible that the same course will have spaces in another school and could be accessed by the young person. Clearing will take place after the usual choice process window closes in April and will continue into May prior to courses starting in June.

As part of thinking towards how ABZ Campus could be further developed in phase 2, a pilot connection has been made with a school in Aberdeenshire to open up access to some of the courses on offer.

CLOSING THE ATTAINMENT GAP

Scottish Attainment Challenge funding has been used to support the provision of youth work and family learning workers. 2074 young people (aged 10-18 years) and 689 children (aged 5-9 years) have engaged in youth work this year with 1648 of those young people reporting improved mental health and wellbeing as a result of their engagement with the service.

2,459 young people have engaged with the Saltire Awards in Aberdeen. These awards, which are for volunteers aged 12-25 and co-ordinated by ACVO, continue to contribute positively to employability skills. 56 children and 16 young people were supported to complete nationally recognised awards.



Over 100 young people identified as unlikely to secure a positive destination benefited from targeted and carefully tailored youth work programmes.

617 referrals for youth work have been received from across all secondary schools. Of those referrals:

- 26% sought support with health and wellbeing
- 20% sought support to manage relationships
- 16% sought support to improve communication with others
- 13% sought support to improve self-awareness

178 individual 1-2-1 sessions were delivered along with 421 group sessions.

Several Scottish and UK publications acknowledge the impact of the periods of lockdown on our children and young people. Of the 236 requests, Child's planning support received requests for assistance from 172 learners with communication difficulties. Use of the CIRCLE framework continues to support consideration of environmental factors and pedagogies to support learners.

As part of the Community Learning and Development Service for Aberdeen City Council, Family Learning are a 23 strong team, including 18 Development Workers aligned to each Associated School Group, Pupil Equity Funded primary schools, Edge of Care Pilots within two Aberdeen Secondary Schools, and a core city-wide provision. The service is also partially aligned with the Fit Like Family Wellbeing Service and has two Duty Workers dedicated to this referral pathway. The investment in Family Learning through the Education Recovery Fund, Pupil Equity Fund and Scottish Attainment Challenge has resulted in 275 learner activities in the year 2022/23, with a total of 542 participants and 12,043 total learner hours, an increase of 197% on 2021/22. Our evaluations, measuring health and wellbeing outcomes, show that 92% of our registered learners agreed that their confidence levels have increased since working with Family Learning, and 97% had gained new knowledge and skills.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The health and wellbeing of children and young people continues to be of local and national concern and the service has maintained and enhanced the range of interventions and approaches available. We are beginning to see a positive impact of these approaches in some areas as evidenced through the Health & Wellbeing Surveys undertaken by children & young people in November 2022, which gave us comparable data to those undertaken in March 2022.

As part of the work of the Children & Young People's Mental Health Task & Delivery Board, as a local authority we are currently piloting the 'One Good Adult' project. This allows us to focus on the voice of children and young people at the heart of our recruitment processes. This was an agreed approach at the Health and Wellbeing Summit in October 2022 and is now established within our recruitment processes for all education staff. This is to be extended to other services within the local authority and partner agencies for those supporting children and young people in their daily positions.

All schools continue to engage with the Compassionate and Connected Communities (CCC) programme. We have built the capacity of 11 further members of staff to act as trainers for the programme. Taking this approach of on-going training for trainers ensures that we maintain a full 64 trainers across the city with a trainer available in each city school when there is staff movement or retirement. This ensures an on-going focus on trauma informed practice.

SHINE

We continue to work with SHINE (Scottish Health Improvement Research Network) to undertake mental wellbeing surveys with learners from P6-S6 so that we can address any emerging needs within our schools and across the city. This year we have increased the level of reporting and now have access to reports at school, ASG (Associated School Group) and sector specific levels with additional reports focusing on affluence levels and gender reporting. This alongside the physical wellbeing survey, both undertaken in November 2022, have provided us with a clear picture at 2 data points, showing areas of improvement and highlighting some areas for further consideration. Outcomes from these surveys continue to be shared with the Mental Health Collaborative, established following the Mental Health Summit in October 2022 and the PEPAS (Physical Education, Physical Activity & Sport) Group established in April 2021, to support multi-agency decision making and areas of focus through the Children's Services Plan.

'Fitlike Aberdeen'

'Fitlike Aberdeen' continues to offer wellbeing supports to families, with one to one, group work and activities available to help address early indicators of distress in children and families. In April 2023 401 young people/families were engaging with the service and **146** of the 401 are families who were being supported for the first time. We see a higher number of males (229) being supported by Fitlike with current numbers of females lower (163) and 9 young people who identify as non-binary, transgender or gender fluid. Reasons for presenting also vary here, however greater support is required for those presenting with low mood, anxiety, emotional literacy/regulation and wider family support needs.

We are currently working in partnership with Fitlike Aberdeen and CAMHS colleagues to further develop our supports in LIAM (Let's Introduce Anxiety Management). This multi-agency collaboration will continue to build on the current supports we have in place across many schools in order to strengthen the universal offer to children and families. All school nurses are currently trained to deliver LIAM, as are a team of Fitlike staff and currently we have staff in **25** schools trained to deliver this support. A further round of training will take place in June increasing the number of trained staff by a further 23 individuals.

A range of additional interventions above and beyond the school curriculum continue to be in place. We continue to commission Mental Health Aberdeen to support all children from age 10+ with counselling support where required. This can be through referral by school staff or self-referral. Through our last reporting period October 2022 – December 2022, **330** young people were being supported and **100% of the 103** children who had completed an end of session questionnaire at that time, reported an improved wellbeing outcome following this support. Counselling has a higher percentage of females being supported with this approach and the divide between male and female is 225/96 with 9 young people who identify as transgender or non-binary receiving this support. Reasons for seeking support vary, however a high number of learners are receiving support for anxiety, bereavement, low confidence/self-esteem, low mood and relationship issues.

We currently have a small number of Primary schools building a partnership with Place2Be through a pilot project. Place2Be offer in person supports within the primary school setting for children aged 3 and up, families and staff. The impact of this new initiative will be evaluated in due course.

The pilot of DBI (Distress Brief Intervention) has extended to 6 Secondary Schools in partnership with CAMHS and Penumbra focusing on learners aged 14-16. This programme offers more targeted support for young people who have been identified or self-identify the need for support and helps some of our most vulnerable learners to access trained staff and a pathway to support through Penumbra and CAMHS if required. We are beginning to see early signs of improvement through our data report in relation to the Who-5 wellbeing index, which may suggest that earlier responsive intervention is supporting young people previously indicating low mood.

Educational Psychology Service (EPS)

Our EPS support schools through [Early Intervention Consultations](#) (EICs), which take place between staff at all levels of the school and the EPS. **424** EICs took place last year, and this academic year to date, **338** have taken place.

Other Programs

Between November 2022 and February 2023 all schools were visited in order to undertake an audit of Physical Health provision. This covered several areas including Free Period Products, Relationships, Sexual Health & Parenthood, Physical Education curriculum, extracurricular activities as well as physical space and resources.

Findings from these visits included low staff confidence in the teaching of PE and in particular the area of gymnastics. This is being addressed through our current professional learning offer and continues to inform the work of the Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (PEPAS) Group. Free period product awareness and provision was good in almost all schools with a small number receiving support to improve marketing with learners and parents.

25% of schools were taking significant steps to improve food and nutrition provision, ranging from free breakfast offers to bespoke cooking facilities. All schools were provided with individualised feedback and further analysis of visit findings will be supported directly by the Education Support Officer Team before the end of school session 2023/24.



SUPPORTING CARE EXPERIENCED AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

** Care Experienced is the collective term for anyone who has been or is currently in care or from a looked-after background at any stage in their life*

*** Looked After refers to children/young people who are currently 'legally' looked after.*

Support to care experience children is always delivered on a collaborative and partnership basis. Self-evaluation of progress is underway and will be reported to CPP Aberdeen in the later part of 2023.



Engagement with the Promise Scotland team recognises local progress with some areas being held up nationally. It is however recognised that on a multi-agency basis there is more we need to do to deliver on the aspirations of The Promise.

The number of LAC continues to gradually reduce. A focus on supporting children to remain within their family continues to be a partnership priority. Given the costs (financial and personal) 'shifting the balance of care' is always a consideration when assessing whether a children can safely remain within their family.

ADP (Alcohol and Drug Partnership) funding is supporting the provision of early and preventative support to young people who are exhibiting early concerns in relation to alcohol or drug use. These roles engage directly with schools to support the PSE educational input for young people. They are also moving to support the deployment of a Family Resource Worker (FRW) within the addiction service to better recognise the holistic needs of parents with addiction challenges.

A review of MCR is ongoing and will be reported to Committee in September. This is likely to recommend making some improvements to data collection approaches and planning a further evaluation to inform next steps in terms of a sustainable model.

In recognition that online access is increasingly viewed as a key utility, the planning for all young people who leave our care includes how we enable them to have online access.

Our contract with Who Cares Scotland has come to an end by mutual agreement. Work is progressing to develop internal capacity to lead our participatory approaches with young people with experience of care.

Growth in relation to the use of the Mind of My Own app has continued although not at the pace hoped for. Staffing and operational challenges have been barriers to progress.

Events to celebrate Care Day and Care Week continue to be planned. This year's event was well attended by partners and young people.

There has been a growth of UASC (Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children) arriving in Aberdeen through the National Transfer Scheme (NTS). Community partners (sport & activity as well as learning needs) are continuing to support UASC adjust to life in Aberdeen.

The Housing protocol for young people with experience of care is well established. It is currently being refreshed to take account of learning and changing demography.

RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

All school staff engaged in professional learning on the UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) in August 2022 and children's rights feature in all school improvement plans.

The children's rights report details the increasingly diverse approaches used to elicit the voices of children and young people. 100% of school improvement plans prioritise embedding a child rights approach. Engagement with children and young people is at the heart of our Children's Services Plan.

Play Parks

The Scottish Government funding for play parks has been welcomed and has allowed further capital investment in Aberdeen's play areas. The 22/23 play area refurbishment programme saw 6 play areas successfully refurbished. Work has begun on 23/24 refurbishment programme and the funding in place will allow for play area investment over the next 2 years. This work will include children being consulted and working with the team on how their local play areas can be developed and improved.

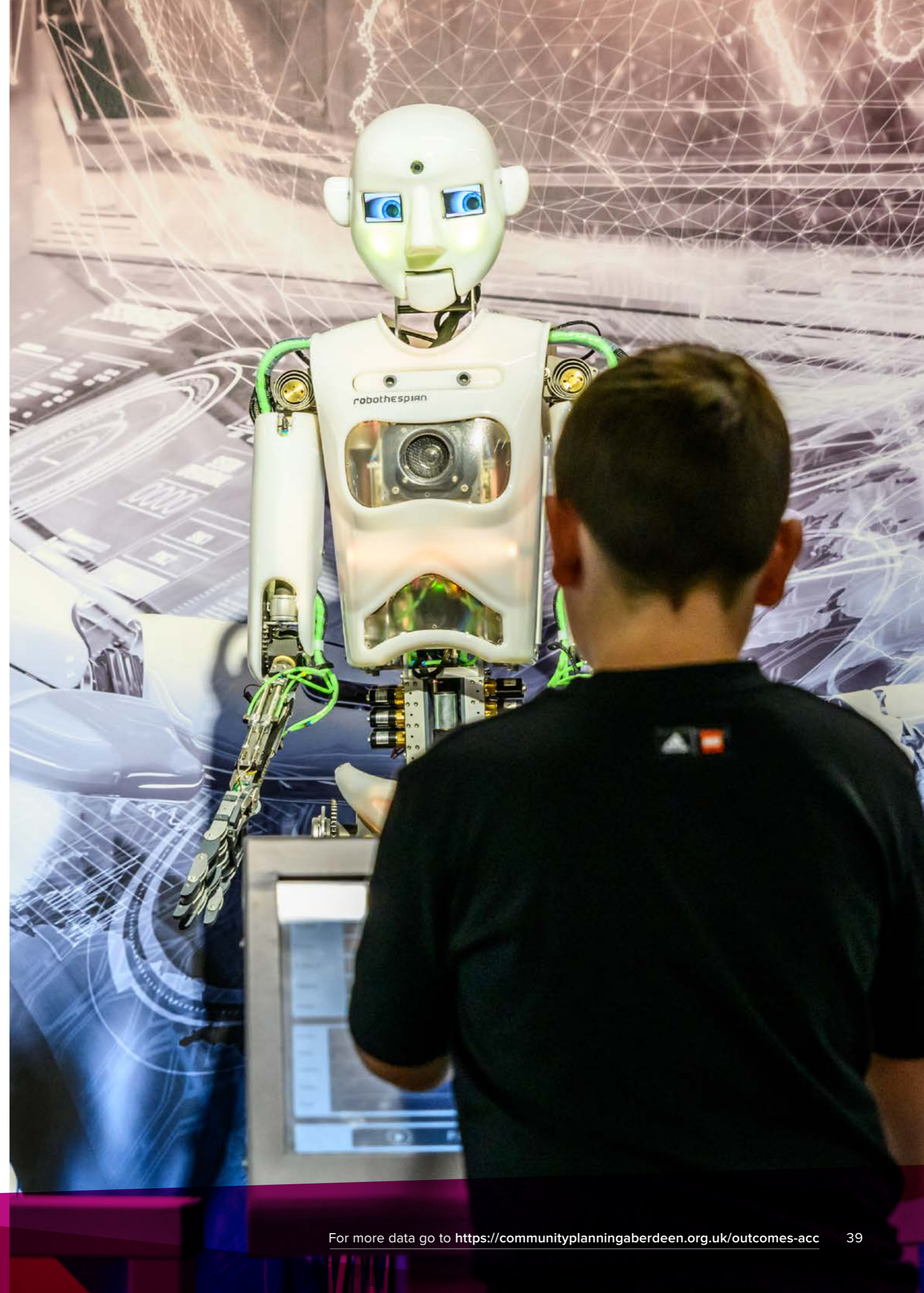


PREVENT CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE ENTERING THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

All LOIP charter work under the Youth Justice Improvement Group were successfully completed in 2023. New aims and objectives are set out in the CSP and associated LOIP Stretch Outcomes.

Children referred to the reporter on offence grounds has seen reduction, we also have had no children going to a hearing on offence grounds for over a year. Children referred on offence grounds where there is assessment that compulsory measures may be required have gone to hearing on other, welfare based grounds. This is in recognition of the needs of this group of children and how we best support those needs to prevent any further conflict with the law. We continue to see most children jointly reported being retained within the hearing system, including our 16/17 year olds. This is attributed to the development work that was undertaken to ensure that children were supported in appropriate systems, the children's hearing systems rather than court system.

Charter work will continue to explore diversion from prosecution for under 18's, and will also look at assessments for children on initial court appearance from custody or on undertaking. We also continue with preparation work for the Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Bill, which is currently at Stage 2.



PEOPLE (ADULTS)

KEY DRIVERS

- Mitigating the causes of immediate and acute poverty
- Ensure those experiencing in-work poverty have access to all appropriate benefits
- Ensure 100% of people presenting as homeless have a full financial assessment and access to all appropriate benefits by 2023
- Poverty affecting those with protected characteristics and in specific communities
- Tackling antisocial behaviour in problem areas with appropriate and effective interventions
- Those who are convicted are supported to engage with relevant services and reduce re-offending
- Changing attitudes about domestic abuse in all its forms and ensuring victims receive access to the right support
- Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families and groups
- Provide individuals and communities with the social resources needed to make informed decisions about health and lifestyle
- Encourage adoption of healthier lifestyles through a whole family approach
- Reduce levels of harmful alcohol consumption across the whole population through “making every opportunity count” approaches
- Enhance early intervention and preventative treatment for those at greatest risk of harm from drugs and alcohol

PEOPLE (ADULTS) HIGHLIGHTS



40% increase in the number of young people accessing domestic abuse support



Staff knowledge and confidence in identifying the signs of domestic abuse and knowing how to respond appropriately has **increased to 92%** compared to 30% last year as a result of in-depth training



5.4% decrease in antisocial behaviour complaints received by Aberdeen City Council



489 units of affordable housing **delivered** by ACC and our RSL partners



PROGRESS MADE DURING 2022/23

REDUCING OFFENDING AND CONVICTIONS

Domestic Abuse (Protection) (Scotland) Act 2021

The Domestic Abuse (Protection)(Scotland) Act 2021 is a welcome piece of legislation which will further enhance and contribute to the current Domestic Abuse Council Housing Policy that ACC has in place. Our own policy allows families subject to domestic abuse to remain in the family home should they choose to do so with the perpetrator being removed if willing to do so. The Act introduces new forms of protection with Police Scotland and the courts being given powers to protect those who are most at risk by issuing Domestic Abuse Protection Notices (DAPNs) and Domestic Abuse Protection Orders (DAPOs). Senior members of the police now have the power to issue a DAPN as a short-term, emergency protection where they have reasonable grounds to believe a partner or ex-partner has been abusive. Section 5 of the Act sets out an exhaustive list of prohibitions and requirements that may be imposed by a DAPN and these include stopping an abuser from entering the home of the person they have abused. The Act will also allow Social Landlords to remove perpetrators from a tenancy even when they are not willing to engage with support.

Refuge and Outreach Service for Women and Children Experiencing Domestic Abuse

Currently women fleeing domestic abuse can seek refuge accommodation from Grampian Women's Aid. Alternatively, safe accommodation can be offered via ACC's housing team in the form of temporary accommodation or discretionary moves. Recently, Aberdeen City Council Domestic Abuse Team increased its staffing from five Support Workers to seven. The purpose of increasing the staff was to allow the DAT workers to work more closely and collaboratively with our Housing and Support Teams. The Housing and Support Team has been designed to identify need and risk earlier and prevent escalation in need. By redesigning the domestic support service delivery to be integrated within the existing teams the aim is to identify and offer support before the need to rehouse individuals and before there is a risk of harm. This redesign is in the early stages and we will therefore be able to report on outcomes in next year's report.

"Safe & Together" project

40 staff have completed the Safe and Together E-Learning Core Training. Feedback is being sought at the moment. 1 staff member has now completed the Safe and Together Certified Trainer programme. They are now in a position to deliver Overview and Core training. Another staff member has recently completed the Certified Trainer programme with a further 2 staff members beginning the training in September.

In house Core Safe and Together training took place in May with 9 staff members attending. Further sessions are being organised for September and October.

Feedback from the S&T Core training was very positive with practitioners commenting the following:

'The training was fantastic. I've really reflected on my own practice, recognising my use of mutualising language and failure to hold the perpetrator responsible. It is so refreshing to be promoted to really highlight survivor strength and to partner with them. This training has really prompted my thought process with assessing and planning where domestic abuse is being perpetrated.'

'This is a practice changing and much needed. Using a child centred model is so useful in working with perpetrators and avoids much of the challenges of working with domestic abuse. It also keeps the child at the centre. The use of language and holding perpetrators accountable is also very useful.'

Further Core and Overview training will take place in September and October this year.

Reducing Anti-social Behaviour

The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) continues to play a key role in tackling antisocial behaviour across the city. The partnership is supported by the wider functions of each of the key organisations (Aberdeen City Council, Police Scotland and Scottish Fire & Rescue Service (SFRS)). Partners meet daily responding to existing or emerging harms. The partnership is supported by Tactical and Strategic oversight with a prevention focussed approach to tackling underlying causes of community harms that ensures safer, stronger and cohesive communities.

There is a strong linkage between the partnership and the Outcome Improvement Groups overseen by Community Planning Aberdeen. There have also been a number of successful 'Test of change' projects completed through the Youth Justice Improvement Group, including the formation of the 'Tesco Hub' which saw high levels of Antisocial Behaviour reduced significantly within its area of operation. Using the Hub as a base, young people in the area quickly gravitated towards the facilities available there, allowing for adult led interventions and mentorship at that location.

Other 'tests of Change' under this project saw the Streetsport project more closely align to the partnership and strong co-ordination to work within areas of high ASB.

There has been a 5.6% decrease in Community Safety contacts received through the partnership in 2022-23 compared to last year and a 5.4% decrease in ASB complaints received by ACC.

Work continues to target key areas of anti-social behaviour in order to make our communities safer this includes work on a youth hub in Northfield, a new Improvement Project aimed at reducing by 15% the number of instances of youth anti-social behaviour calls to Police Scotland by 2025 which is in the early stages of planning and additional operations/projects within city centre.

HOUSING

Increasing the supply of affordable housing

Affordable housing continues to be delivered across the city which includes both ACC new build and our Registered Social Landlord (RSL) partners. In 2022/23 the following was delivered:

Location	Developer	Type	No. of units
Council Buy Backs	ACC	Social Rent	109
Auchmill Road	ACC	Social Rent	92
Summerhill	ACC	Social Rent	186
Countesswells	Hillcrest	Social Rent	59
Falkland Avenue	Hillcrest	Social Rent	28
May Baird Avenue	Places for People	Mid-Market Rent	8
Charleston, Cove	Grampian Housing	Mid-Market Rent	1
Dubford Mews	Grampian Housing	Mid-Market Rent	5
Newton of Charleston	Muir Homes	Low-Cost Home Ownership	1
Total			489

We are continuing to incorporate adaptations into new build housing and are currently working towards the 15% target of all affordable new homes to be delivered as fully wheelchair accessible set out in the Strategic Housing Investment Plan.

The Housing for Varying Needs review is nearing completion with only a small number of outstanding items to be addressed with decisions needed regarding future models of care and support.

Work is ongoing with the council house new build programme. Summerhill, Craighill and Kincorth are on site and delivering new homes. Greenferns and Greenferns Landward are at the Masterplan stages. There is also discussion ongoing with local Registered Social Landlords in the city regarding increasing the number of lets to households experiencing homelessness and Section 5's.

Improve the quality of housing

In 2022/23 77% of ACC properties passed the Scottish Housing Quality Standards (SHQS), 3% of properties were exempt from SHQS and 6.4% were considered abeyance. Looking at those which failed we are prioritising those under element 45 – Safe electrics and are putting a plan in place alongside our Building Services team to ensure all EICR(Electrical Installation Conditions Report) are up to date for the current year.

Reduce Homelessness

There is ongoing work with the Centre for Homelessness Impact who were one of the bid partners in Aberdeen's expression of interest to be part of The Royal Foundation's Homewards programme.

Aberdeen City Council commission Turning Point Scotland to deliver a Housing First city in the service.

The Private Landlord Support Officer has been liaising with landlords when tenant complaint forms are submitted. This has helped encourage landlords to action property repairs. If a tenant contacts the team regarding issues such as no tenant deposit returned, the Officer is then able to provide suitable advice to the tenant on how to proceed.

Particular areas of re-occurring issues have been highlighted in Landlord Newsletters to help raise awareness amongst landlords of rights and responsibilities. Examples include any changes in legislation, signposting tenants for Financial advice.

The Private Landlord Support Officer and Private Sector Housing Manager have presented to various Letting Agents across Aberdeen to raise awareness of tools that are available to tenants, especially providing details of the Financial Advice Team if a tenant cannot afford to pay rent/bills. Highlighting agencies that Agents can direct tenants to for money advice, may be one of the avenues that reduces the likelihood of a landlord serving a Notice to Leave and the tenant is then at risk of homelessness.

The Private Landlord Support Officer has been in contact with the Housing Options Team and a link has been created where landlords can be contacted regarding rights and responsibilities.

All households entering temporary accommodation are currently getting a check of their benefits on entry.

Aberdeen City Council has continued to support people to convert their temporary accommodation to permanent accommodation at the same property where it is appropriate to do so.



Youth Homelessness

Youth homelessness increased by 26% for 16/17 year olds in 2022/23 compared to 21/22. There were 95 applications received for the 16/17 year old population, this is the highest recorded since 2010/11. A 22% increase was reported among those aged 18 – 24 years old.

The increase in youth homelessness was impacted by a change in policy concerning care experienced young people where all planned referrals are now being managed under the legislative homeless framework.

Applications among care experienced young people known to be under the care of Aberdeen Youth Team increased from 6 in 2021/22 to 20 in 2022/23.

Applicants becoming homeless from the parental/family home were still most common in 2022/23. The increase last year could be a consequence of any protracted demand caused by the ending of Covid regulations.

Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council have jointly commissioned a Nightstop service run by Aberdeen Foyer to reduce the risk of young people coming into temporary accommodation. A small number of hosts have been identified and we have started a soft launch of the pathways with referrals able to come from our Housing Options Officers.

We have also recruited a further Housing Options Officers to support young people who leave the homeless process to ensure they find a sustainable next step in their housing journey.

Community Learning and Development (CLD)

Our CLD teams continue to deliver learning across our communities through youth work, adult learning, family learning and healthy minds. This year we have significantly increased the total learner hours across groups, 164% increase across youth work, 332% increase in adult learning and 350% increase in family learning. These significant increases are as a response to changing need and the addition of fixed term funding.



PLACE

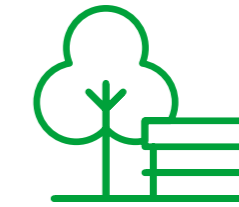
KEY DRIVERS

- Reducing emissions across the city through delivery of Aberdeen's Net Zero Vision & Route-map
- Provide individuals and communities with the social resources needed to make informed decisions about health and lifestyle
- Encouraging adoption of healthier lifestyles through a whole family approach
- Supporting different ways for active travel in everyday journeys, using partners and volunteers to address safety, infrastructure, fitness, wellbeing and confidence
- Increasing the diversity, quality and use of the Aberdeen's green spaces by facilitating community participation in them to restore nature and increase people's satisfaction, health, and wellbeing
- Increasing the area of public, private and community land managed for nature, in recognition of the nature crisis and in alignment with global and national ambitions to protect 30% of land and 30% of water by 2030 (30-30-30)
- Provide individuals and communities with the social resources needed to reduce feelings of loneliness and social isolation
- Contributing to the delivery of Aberdeen Adapts by developing a bottom up approach to community resilience to encourage greater ownership and independent action towards understanding communities' risks from climate change and adapting to them
- Mitigating the causes of immediate and acute poverty

PLACE HIGHLIGHTS



E-bike rental scheme launched with **200 e-bikes** available across the city



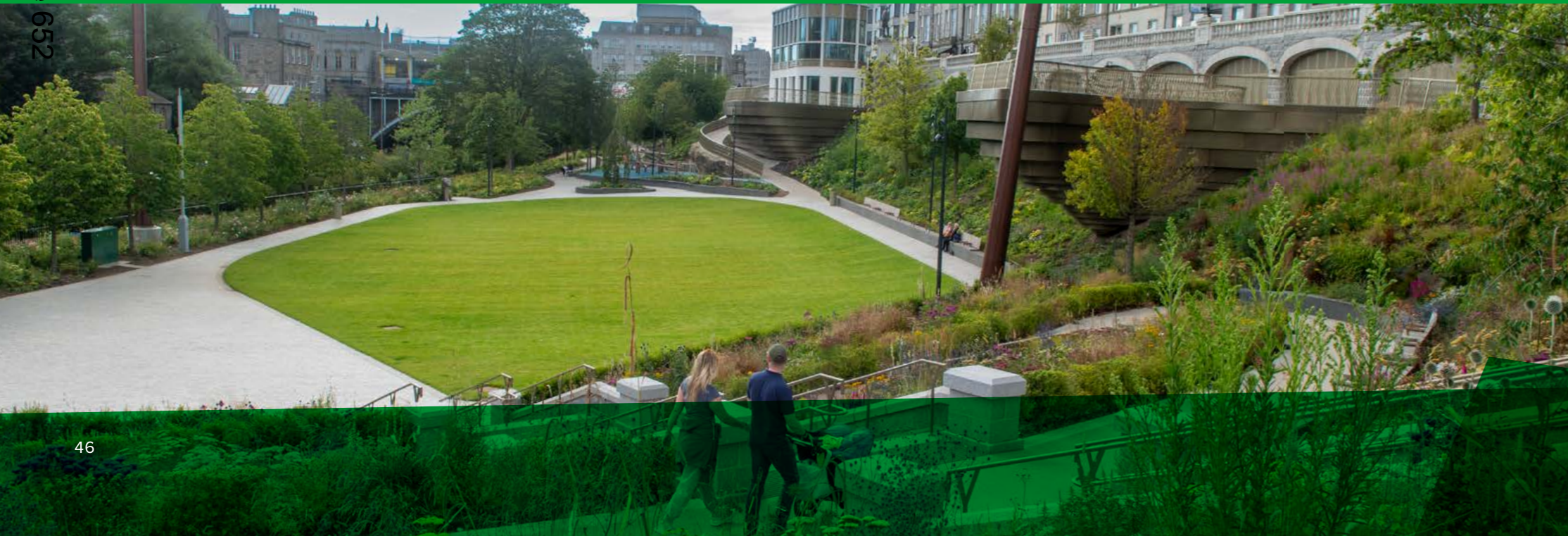
289 community groups involved in community run **green spaces** across the city



7082 trees replanted at Carnie Woods, Hazlehead



9 Green Flags awarded to the city for its **open spaces**



MOBILITY AND TRANSPORT

Reducing emissions

Air quality continues to improve throughout the city, although there are still some areas where pollution levels are above or near to objective limits.

A City Centre Low Emission Zone was declared in 2022, with enforcement due to commence from June 2024. A revised Air Quality Action Plan is being developed which will identify further actions to improve air quality and hopefully result in the revocation of the Air Quality Management Areas during the life of the Plan.



A programme of transport corridor studies are underway looking at opportunities for improved bus priority measures on key radial corridors between the AWPR and the city centre. These are currently at varying stages of the options appraisal and business case process, and are informed by the regional vision for Aberdeen Rapid Transit (ART), a proposed high-frequency and high-capacity bus-based rapid transit solution.

All consultations on implementation of the bus related provisions of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 have been responded to and the regulatory provisions are in the process of being introduced by the Scottish Government.

The Council further considered the provision of Local Authority Bus Services and agreed not to introduce such measures at the present time and to develop Bus Service Improvement Partnerships and for Local Authority operated bus services to be assessed when implementing supported bus services.

Bus Service Improvement Partnerships (BSIPs), are currently being progressed through the North East of Scotland Bus Alliance and the implementation of measures under the ongoing transport corridor studies and [Bus Partnership Funding](#).

Delivery of the transport elements of the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan is ongoing, with traffic restrictions introduced on Union Street Central and Schoolhill/Upperkirkgate from Summer 2022. Further restrictions on Market Street, Guild Street and Bridge Street to create a bus priority route (and therefore improve bus journey times and reliability) are to be introduced later in 2023, while work is underway looking at improved walking and cycling provision and Union Street and between the city centre and beachfront.

First Aberdeen have introduced 'Tap On, Tap Off', using contactless payment to allow passenger to simply Tap on and off when boarding and alighting and the fare paid will be capped to the best value ticket for the journey, day or week. This is speeding up boarding times and in turn will contribute towards reduced bus journey times as the scheme grows.

Actions to support carbon reduction were progressed including:

- In the last few years, the transition of the Council fleet from fossil fuels, to low and zero carbon alternatives has included conversion of several large fleet vehicles to hydrogen – diesel hybrids (H2ICEd). Learning from this will inform the planning for further fleet transition.
- Continued roll out of the street lighting LED replacement programme.

Delivery of net zero and climate resilience actions for Council assets and operations continued through the Council Climate Change Plan. At city scale, to support the delivery of the place-based Net Zero Aberdeen Routemap and Aberdeen Adapts: Climate Adaptation Framework, refreshed governance proposals for city net zero and climate adaptation were approved in February 2023. In addition, an Aberdeen Climate and Nature pledge was launched in November 2022 encouraging wider commitment from organisations and individuals to acting on climate change and joining the collective journey towards net zero and climate resilience expressed in Net Zero Aberdeen and Aberdeen Adapts.

A preferred option for improved transport connectivity to and from Aberdeen South Harbour has been identified, with an Outline Business Case currently in development.

The cycle hire scheme was formally launched in November 2022, with officers now working with the operator to support ongoing growth and expansion. The scheme has expanded to offer around 200 e-bikes for use at 58 parking zones and these numbers are increasing as operations dictate.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Currently officers are reviewing the Local Nature Conservation Sites (LNCS) within the city to assess if they are still appropriately designated sites. The review started in September 2022 and aims to be finished in 2024. Sites are currently being reviewed with a scientific panel and this will form the basis of the final assessments. The scientific panel includes local experts, county recorders, researchers and NESBReC (North East Scotland Biological Records Centre).

We currently have 3,191.59 hectares of protected land and sea in Aberdeen. This covers the full range of formal protections/designations for nature from international (E.g. Special Area of Conservation), to local (E.g. Local Nature Conservation) sites.

In December 2022 70% of respondents to the City Voice survey reported that they were satisfied with their local greenspace this was a 5% increase from March 2020.

Open Spaces

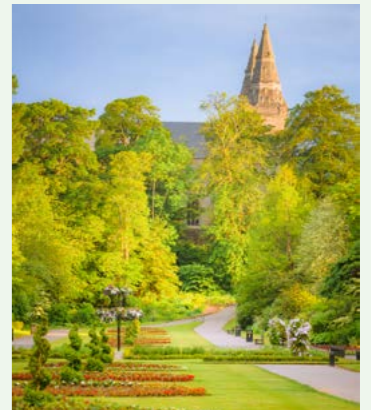
Environmental charity Keep Scotland Beautiful presented Aberdeen with nine Green Flag Awards in recognition of its quality open spaces in July this year. The nine flags exceed the seven awarded in 2022, with Westfield Park the recipient of its first flag, and Cove Woodland, managed by the Cove Woodland Trust, another new winner.

Seven others retained their green flag status: Hazlehead Park, Seaton Park, Victoria Park, Johnston Gardens, Slopefield Allotments, Garthdee Field Allotments and Duthie Park.

Keep Scotland Beautiful is an international project which highlights clean, safe, and well-maintained parks and green spaces across the country.

Bio-blitz events

Aberdeen City Council held two Bio-blitz events this year, these were free events held at Seaton Park and Duthie Park and are a fun & interactive way for wildlife lovers of all ages and abilities to come together to discover and identify creatures living in our parks. The Bio-blitz events are part of the Aberdeen Flagship Parks for Pollinators Project which aims to create and improve wildflower areas, woodland, wetland and pond areas for wildlife, focusing particularly on pollinating insects. Pollinators include bumblebees, bees hoverflies, butterflies, moths, flies and various other insects and beetles.



Trees

Thousands of trees have been planted across Aberdeen as part of a plan to replenish and grow the city's woods and other green areas. The Environmental Services team have been involved in many projects including; The Community Planting Scheme, Street Tree Planting, The Queen's Green Canopy Champion City and Woodside Wee Forest as well as storm recovery work.

It was estimated more than 15,000 trees were felled across the city during the storm in November 2021. There was a particular devastating impact on Carnie Woods at Hazlehead and the woodland surrounding Aberdeen Crematorium. We have now replanted a total of 7,082 trees at Carnie Woods these include a variety of species; Norway Spruce, Scots Pine, European Larch, Gean, Silver Birch, Rowan, Hazel and Oak. The work at Carnie Woods is part of the recovery and replanting of trees taking part across the city.

The Tree and Woodland Strategic Implementation Plan was approved by the former Operational Delivery Committee in June 2022. Work is currently ongoing to deliver Priority 2 of the Plan which aims to identify the best and most suitable sites for woodland creation in the city.

WASTE AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Progress has been hampered due to the fire at Altens East in July 2022 which has affected all services. However, recycling rates in the city are still above the Scottish average.

Highlight of the year was the opening of the Re-Use Shop at Hazlehead Recycling Centre which has increased awareness and availability of re-use activity and how it relates to waste reduction.



13 organisations attended 3 facilitated online Net Zero Aberdeen Circular Economy Workshops, in March 2023. The workshops were hosted by Zero Waste Scotland in collaboration with Aberdeen City Council. The aim was to build shared understanding of a circular economy and develop Project Programmes to deliver the Net Zero Aberdeen, Circular Economy Strategy by identifying circular economy initiatives in the city and opportunities for new circular economy projects. The workshops covered: Valuing our Resources, Business and Jobs for a Circular Future, Maximising Product Life.

The Ness Energy Facility began accepting the city's residual waste in February 2023 and is moving towards full services in autumn of 2023. Almost all of the city's residual waste is now being delivered to the energy from waste facility at East Tullos.

Installation of RFID tags to all communal bins is nearing completion and will allow for better vision and management of the way communal bins are used to allow better measurement of the performance of this service and to allow a more targeted approach to awareness raising in these traditionally lower performing areas.

The construction of new segregation bays at Sclattie Waste Transfer Station will also allow for improved recycling and segregation of bulky wastes collected at the HWRCs and kerbside bulky uplift service for re-use, recycling or recovery. These are due for completion in autumn 2023.

The Re-Use Shop, RFID tags and Sclattie Bay projects have all been funded from the Recycling Improvement Fund.

HEAT NETWORKS

There are currently 3966 households connected to the existing heat network, of which 3673 are Aberdeen City Council properties and 26 public buildings also connected. We are continuing to grow our networks with the final 170 properties at Summerhill due to be added to the Stockethill Network and 83 at Harris Drive due to be connected to the Tillydrone Network. The Sillerton Lane energy centre is almost complete with the Kincorth and Craighill residential sites to be added in due course. The new Riverbank Primary School is currently being connected to the Tillydrone EC as well as the Lighthouse family Centre.

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Full Council
DATE	11 October 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Aberdeen City Population Needs Assessment 2023
REPORT NUMBER	CUS/23/312
DIRECTOR	Gale Beattie, Commissioning (Chair of Community Planning Aberdeen Management Group)
CHIEF OFFICER	Martin Murchie, Data and Insights
REPORT AUTHOR	Anne McAteer, Research Officer
TERMS OF REFERENCE	24.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report presents the 2023 Population Needs Assessment (PNA) for Aberdeen City. The PNA is a key source of evidence which informs the key priorities for Community Planning Aberdeen and Aberdeen City Council and provides an updated evidence base for the next refresh of the 2016 Local Outcome Improvement Plan.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- That Council :-
- 2.1 note the Population Needs Assessment 2023 as contained at appendix 1.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 In 2021, Community Planning Aberdeen published a Population Needs Assessment to provide a comprehensive picture of Aberdeen City as seen through a broad range of data sets. The document was used as the evidence base for identifying the shared priorities for public services in Aberdeen and updating the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) 2016-26 and Locality Plans (2021-26) approved in July 2021.
- 3.2 The revised Population Needs Assessment (PNA) for 2023 provides an updated evidence base for the next refresh of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and Locality Plans due in April 2024. The document provides an overview of the situation at this point in time which the Community Planning Partnership's Outcome Improvement Groups will now use to consider whether the priorities within the LOIP and Locality Plans remain relevant and focussed on addressing the City's areas of greatest need. The data sets included in the PNA are monitored on an ongoing basis through our online [Outcomes Framework](#) and any new data released between now and April will be flagged and also considered as part of the LOIP and Locality Plan refresh process. For example, this document includes Scotland's Census 2022 rounded population estimates published on 14 September 2023 but further data is scheduled to be released in spring 2024.

3.3 As in previous years, the Population Needs Assessment (PNA) has been aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs recognise that ending poverty must go hand in hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality and support economic growth in a way which does not compromise the climate and nature. These are issues at the core of our Local Outcome Improvement Plan.

3.4 A new addition to the Population Needs Assessment (PNA) for 2023 is the inclusion of a population health commentary, provided by colleagues from Public Health, NHS Grampian. This commentary provides a helpful summary of the PNA findings, drawing out key points and issues to be considered fully as part of the LOIP refresh process.

3.5 The Population Needs Assessment (PNA) is a key source of data for all community planning partners to utilise in their own organisations to inform their individual strategic plans. This includes the Council’s Corporate Delivery Plan.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendation of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendation of this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendation of this report.

7. RISK

Category	Risk	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
Strategic Risk			
Compliance			
Operational			
Financial			
Reputational	There is a risk that the Population Needs Assessment does not accurately reflect the needs of the population which may	L	Colleagues across the Community Planning Partnership have contributed to the development of this Population Needs

	have a negative impact on the public's perception of the Council and Partnership working.		Assessment. It has been signed off by the Community Planning Partnership Outcome Improvement Groups and CPA Management Group as an accurate reflection of needs across the City based on the data currently available.
Environment / Climate			

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
Impact of Report	
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	The Population Needs Assessment is a key source of evidence to understand the needs of the population and informs the key priorities for Community Planning Aberdeen and Aberdeen City Council.
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	The revised Population Needs Assessment provides an updated evidence base for the refresh of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and potential identification of new priorities under this theme.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The revised Population Needs Assessment provides an updated evidence base for the refresh of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and potential identification of new priorities under this theme.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	The revised Population Needs Assessment provides an updated evidence base for the refresh of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and potential identification of new priorities under this theme.
Regional and City Strategies	
	The revised Population Needs Assessment provides an updated evidence base for the refresh of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and can be utilised by Partners when reviewing regional and city strategies.
UK and Scottish Legislative and Policy Programmes	
	The revised Population Needs Assessment provides an updated evidence base for the refresh of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and aligns to the requirements placed upon the Partnership by the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 ("CEA").

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Stage 1 Assessment has been completed.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	N/A

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Aberdeen City Population Needs Assessment 2021

10.2 Online Outcomes Framework

<https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/outcomesframework/>

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix 1 PNA 2023

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Anne McAteer
Title	Research Officer
Email Address	amcateer@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	01224 522182



Aberdeen City Population Needs Assessment

October 2023

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Community Planning
Aberdeen

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Population Health Commentary

Assessing the needs of a population is not an exact science. Rather, it is a process by which we can better understand the types of things that will bring benefit to people and explore how that can be related to the services and interventions that are being provided. In this report, we start this process by considering the data that is available to us. This can focus on significant life events or the lived experiences of people, it can tell us about what services have been providing and how they are performing, and it can also tell us something about what we could be doing differently. In all these cases, there is a need to recognise that all the data we use requires interpretation.

This document provides Community Planning Aberdeen with an important foundation to work, together with the people of Aberdeen, to better understand the city and its communities and take collective action, through our Local Outcome Improvement Plan and Locality Plans, underpinning our approach to community planning and improving local outcomes. It is this process that provides the opportunity for the interpretation to take place and a population need assessment to be completed.

Our Economy

A healthy economy is an inextricable link to a healthy population. It is clear that the ways in which economic circumstances affect people can both enhance or reduce their health and wellbeing. Simply put, people who experience economic inequalities have poorer health and wellbeing. People who are economically secure, have better health and wellbeing.

The data included within the population needs assessment regarding our economy presents a picture of an area that is experiencing an economic transition toward a low-carbon economy. The analysis suggests that we are well placed to manage that transition with a clear focus on developing greater diversity in our business sectors. Energy remains a key component in this, though more on developing the renewables sector, with tourism and financial and business services sectors also important in the mix. Even if the wealth gap between the region and Scotland as a whole is narrowing, in 2021 we were still wealthier per head of the population than Scotland.

Against this background, there are still grounds which urge caution. Employment in the city is at its lowest level since 2016, with roughly 1 in 4 of the working age population economically inactive. In 2021 it was estimated that 1 in 7 Aberdeen households had no one within the household working, but households with low income, or likely to be experiencing financial instability, are also important. Data for the city relating to households where there is at least one person in work but are still experiencing relative poverty is not included in the PNA, but indicators of relative poverty in Scotland suggest that about 3 out of 5 (57%) experiencing relative poverty will be within working households, an observation echoed in the data for child poverty. The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are still being understood, but the general view is that it has increased poverty across the UK, with women, children, and those in minority ethnic communities more likely to be effected. All of these indicators suggest that there is a real potential for family / household financial insecurity of a type that is being put

under further pressure by the visible fuel and food poverty that is being experienced by local people.

From a population health perspective, it is the ability for the local economy to help create and maintain health and wellbeing which is important. This means practically that it can sustain, high quality employment, that helps people to live in homes suitable to their needs and which can be kept warm and dry. A local economy that can help people and families maintain the types of financial security to put food on the table and to afford the other day to day necessities of everyday life. Beyond the home, the local economy helps to sustain places and communities socially and environmentally in a way that can promote wellbeing.

Taken together, whilst there are encouraging signs within the economic landscape of Aberdeen, there is also evidence that we continue to have factors that are likely to be feeding into household-based, financial instability and economic inequalities. That these can and will feed into health and social inequalities is clear. We need to be addressing the economic inequalities and supporting financial security if we wish to prevent loss of health and wellbeing.

Our People: Demography

To understand the health and wellbeing of our population, the essential starting point is an understanding of the population itself. The relative composition of the population by age, sex, ethnicity, how it is changing over time, and the personal, social and economic circumstances of people are all factors which can tell us much about the types of need which must be met. Changes in the overall health of the population as a whole are also important to understand how to promote or maintain population health.

The population of Aberdeen City peaked in 2015 (230,350) falling slightly to 2021 (227,430). Based on an assessment from 2018, the population is projected to return back to the 230,000+ level by 2028, care is needed here in that this projection suggests that most of this will be due to net inward migration to the City (though this is something which has not been observed 3 of the last 5 years to 2020-21). The total number of births within the City has been lower than the number of deaths for both 2021 and 2022. The current age and sex structure of the population is predominantly made up of people of working age (16 to 64 years (y)) comprising just over 2/3rd of the population. The remaining 1/3rd is roughly equally divided between those under 16y and those of pensionable age. The population projections suggest that by 2028, the proportion of the oldest groups will have increased by over 10% (65-74y – 14.4%, 75+y – 16.1%). For all other groups the projected changes are 5% or under. As might be expected, the increasing proportion of the over 65y population is reflected in a projected increase in the proportion of households where the main householder is over 65y. Overall, even accepting that the population projects may be prone to error, it is likely possible to conclude that any changes in the overall population size will be modest, and most likely to be driven by migration.

Indicators can also tell us something about the health of the population in the round. When considering these within the PNA, we can say that for both women and men increased life expectancy has stalled and that healthy life expectancy is declining. We can say that both life

expectancy and healthy life expectancy vary across Aberdeen, with people from areas with higher deprivation having shorter lives and being more likely to live with poorer health for longer. Whilst this can be difficult to interpret, these indicators suggest that the future health of individuals born in Aberdeen during 2019-21 can expect to live around 20% of their lives in poor health. Here and now we know that 1 in 4 adults describe themselves as having a limiting, long-term illness.

Our People: Children & Young People

Creating good population health and wellbeing starts before birth and continues as the child and young person develops. Ensuring that a child starts well, and is supported as they develop into young people, is essential in creating good population health and wellbeing throughout life. Early support to the child – and to their families or principle care givers – will have a real impact on the future and lifelong physical and emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people. Because of the way in which deprivation affects health, the lower someone's social position is, the worse their health. So early action can help to reduce health inequality.

During the period from before birth to the start of school, the indicators recorded in the PNA present something of a mixed picture. Five indicators relating to the health of babies before and at the time of birth have been included. Of these the most striking is the continued fall in the rate of babies born who have been affected by maternal drug use. This is now at its lowest level ever, even though the actual level of maternal drug use during pregnancy is higher than that seen across Scotland as a whole. At the same time, recorded maternal smoking at beginning of pregnancy remains at about 1 in 8 pregnancies. The other two indicators – which deal with the health of the baby at birth – remain relatively stable. Premature births are similar to the levels seen in Scotland and overall 85% of children are born at a healthy weight. Of course, this means that 15% of children are both with either low, very low, or high birthweights – all of which can be associated with developmental problems. Thankfully the crude infant death rate (which covers deaths of babies and infants up to 12 months) remains low. Once the child has been born, they are entered into the Child Health Surveillance and the Immunisation programmes. From this area, another five indicators are presented covering the period from birth to school-entry. From these indicators three themes emerge. Firstly, and perhaps most importantly, it is clear that the rates of pre-school immunisation by 24 months remain below the national target of 95% coverage. The second area relates to the variation in breastfeeding rates across the City, which are masked by the overall breastfeeding rate which is better than that reported for Scotland. Continuing the important work already underway to address these risks to child health is key. At the same time, this focus on identified issues should not lead to taking a lesser interest in areas which the indicators are either static or only gently declining.

Once children have started a school, the emphasis on health indicators tends to switch more towards maintaining health through managing risk factors. These focus on physical health and mental wellbeing. Physical health indicators of school age children in the PNA consider healthy weight, physical activity, oral health and, early pregnancies. For healthy weight, physical activity, and oral health the issue of interest is not simply the rates observed, but it is the variations that are seen across the City or in different settings. In all three cases, there is clear room for improvement in promoting healthier children, but reducing the variation in

local communities, or settings should also be a significant consideration as these reflect health inequalities that will lead to poorer health in the longer term. The rate of pregnancy amongst girls aged 13 to 15y in the City continues to fall.

We are fortunate in Aberdeen City to have good data relating to the mental health and wellbeing of school-age children. The indicators are based primarily on a schools-based survey and – now that we have two iterations of the survey – we can begin to have more confidence in how we interpret them. The data in relation to children in primary 6 & 7 classes suggest that, on the whole, they feel that they are healthy and that this is improving. Affluence within the family is clearly a factor as the more affluent the family, the more likely the child reported being healthy. Three indicators relating to mental wellbeing explore happiness, wellbeing, and self-confidence in P6 and P7 children. This suggests that the children were broadly happy about most things, though low happiness with “appearance” was noted. In a similar way, reported wellbeing was good for 3 in 4 and feeling self-confident reported by just short of 3 in 5 children. As with general health, there was an effect associated with family affluence that highlighted that children in less affluent families had lower wellbeing and self-confidence rates. Gender was also an issue. Taken together, these data indicate that there are clearly high levels of happiness, wellbeing and self-confidence amongst a majority of P6 and P7 children. However, it would be easy to overlook the observation that this masks a proportion of children who report a less positive experience. And for all, the effects of gender and family affluence should be considered.

For those in secondary 1 through 6 classes, general health was also reportedly high, though the gradient noted for P6 and P7 children relating to family affluence remained. The experience of these young people relating to mental wellbeing are more complex. The low level of happiness with “appearance” was also noted, with a second area of lower happiness seen regarding “school”. That said, the position on both these indicators was seen to be improving (meaning that fewer children were unhappy in relation to “appearance” and “school”). Generally, the rates for wellbeing are also improving, though the impact of family affluence on the wellbeing of secondary school children needs to be explored further. This relationship – where family affluence / deprivation impacts on children’s experience – is the most striking feature of the indicators included for educational attainment and positive destinations post school education.

The message is clear. The life circumstances of children affect their educational attainment. These are the types of educational inequality that can lead into health inequalities in early adulthood and beyond.

Our People: Adults

The health of individuals within the adult population is a complicated area for assessing need. As people age and their life circumstances change, their health will change. In population health terms these changes across the life-course are an important consideration when we think about need and how that translates into the types of health and care services required. As we get older, we tend to need more health and social care support. This is due to a range of reasons including developing long term conditions, or diseases that require ongoing management, or simply a result of increasing frailty. Preventing disease progression or

reducing adopting healthier behaviours is therefore an important element of health and health care amongst adults.

In regard to health behaviours, smoking, obesity, and being physically active are reported in the PNA. These are important as they are closely related to a range of diseases where preventing smoking and obesity or being physically active can help prevent disease. Given that over half of the deaths in Aberdeen City in 2022 were associated with cancers and circulatory diseases, for which smoking, obesity, and physical inactivity are risks, the main message for Aberdeen City is that there is still work to be done promoting healthier lifestyles.

Alcohol and drug misuse is well explored in the PNA with a range of indicators drawn from surveys and service activity. For alcohol, the prevalence of people using alcohol above the recommended weekly guideline was recorded at 1 in 4 of adults in the 5 years 2017-21. The rates at which people are being admitted to hospital due to alcohol have continued to decline and the rate of alcohol-related deaths has been relatively stable over the last few years, although this increased in the most recent data. A different picture is presented in the comparable indicators for drug misuse. Even though the rates for drug-related hospitalisation observed in the City are lower than for Scotland as whole, the drug-related death rate has increased substantially in recent years, with the most recent data being the first to show a decrease since 2010-2014. Continuing to reduce the serious consequences of alcohol and drug misuse will remain a priority for Aberdeen City and its Alcohol and Drug Partnership. However, we also need to recognise the impacts that alcohol and drugs have on the health and wellbeing on the families, friends, and wider communities around those who misuse substances should not be under-estimated.

The data for selected diseases – cancer registrations, coronary heart disease, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease – are all indicative of the demands that are being placed on health care services. However, in all cases it is important to note the variation in the indicators across the City. There is unlikely to be a single cause of these health inequalities and we need to understand that such health inequalities happen as a result of wider inequalities experienced over time. As a result, these types of health inequality are challenges not only for treatment here and now, but reflect a need to place a greater emphasis on future disease preventative intervention happening at the same time. Such wider approaches to early intervention are also going to be important in considering health and care demand in a range of settings, especially for those who are in older age. The indicators included around hospitalisation show that emergency admissions are reducing, including for older people with multiple needs. However, they also show that for a range of care settings outside of hospital, there are high levels of use, which may suggest that there are pressures in the system which need to be managed.

General population indicators of mental health and wellbeing in adults suggest that most people are not experiencing poor mental health or loss of mental wellbeing. However, two indicators suggest that around 1 in 6 adults self-report dissatisfaction with their mental health and around 1 in 7 could be at risk of suffering a mental illness. Against this background, health indicators for the City suggest that more people are being prescribed drugs for anxiety and depression than ten years ago, though the rate of people being in hospital for mental illness has fallen. Deaths from suicides is also falling. None of these indicators take into account the

full effects of the cost of living crisis, suggesting that mental health and wellbeing may deteriorate in the near future. As with physical illness, these indicators emphasise the need for treatment continuing and that a greater emphasis on public mental health promotion is required. Again, early intervention is needed. For example, addressing the number of people feeling socially isolated and for whom local community spaces and opportunities to socialise are perceived to be limited.

Our Place

In population health, it is acknowledged that where we live, where we work, and where we spend our time has an important influence on our health and wellbeing. We refer to “place” to mean the buildings, streets, public and natural spaces that make up the physical environment around us, and to “communities”, (the people, social groups, and the support networks that make up our social environment). How places are designed and built, how they develop and are kept in good order are really important in creating health and sustaining wellbeing for individuals, for families, and for communities. In the chapter of the PNA on place, all of the areas included have an influence of population health and wellbeing and this is reflected in how people talk about the places in which they live and what they hope for their communities.

Having somewhere to live which is affordable, warm, and secure is an essential part of having wellbeing. Indicators relating to the availability of housing, by type, for what relative cost, by the tenure of the property, and how available they may be are included in the PNA. However, these figures can miss some of the factors that affect people’s health. For example, the number of households that are experiencing fuel poverty, or those who – for a range of reasons – are without a secure place to live. The data included also relate to crime and criminal behaviour, describing the actual levels of crime, anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, and diversion from prosecution. It can be difficult to generate a sense of how indicators such as these directly relate to health, but we do know that such factors affect how you feel about a place and how safe you feel being there. Feeling safe within your place and your community are important factors in wellbeing too, so low risk of house fires and being safe when using roads are important.

The natural environment, sustainability and climate change forms a significant element of the chapter with indicators relating to greenhouse gas emissions, extreme weather events, flood risk, and adaptation to climate change. These are all important in the context of human health as climate change is already beginning to affect human health alongside planetary health. Direct health effects associated with climate change include increased mortality and ill-health associated with excess heat and cold and mental health and wellbeing loss associated with flooding and buildings damage to properties to name just two. At the same time climate change has indirect effects to health and wellbeing which happen as climate change makes health inequalities associated with air pollution, access to greenspaces, fuel poverty and food poverty worse. Of course these effects take time to happen. So data associated with – for example – greenhouse gas emissions now will take time for this to translate into effects on the climate that then effect human health. So, as with other things discussed above, what is happening now is a reminder that we have to act now, to prevent future poorer health.

The PNA does include data on environmental factors that have a direct impact on current health. In particular it is good to know that outside air pollution has remained within legal limits at the six, city-wide monitoring sites for particulates for over 6 years. Active travel is increasing with nearly 1 in 4 people using bicycle or walking to work or school. It is recommended that for good health and wellbeing people need to be able to access a green space within 300m of their home, so it is good to see that access to greenspaces and woodland is being protected and that the quality of local blue spaces (water and river sides) is being monitored for its health. These indicators are important as they tell us about the potential that there is for promoting human health and wellbeing, it remains up to individual, families and communities to be encouraged and supported to make use of the City's green and blue spaces.

An ability to participate within ones community is a key element in creating and maintaining wellbeing and being a protection against loss of health. It is good therefore to see the opportunities that there are for participating in community approaches to build assets and participate in local planning and decision making. Of particular interest from a population health perspective is the use of the Scottish Place Standard tool which captures how a community sees itself in relation to many of the factors discussed here that relate to health and wellbeing. There is clearly a real willingness to participate, ensuring that we build on this further will be essential to building better, healthier places and communities across Aberdeen.

Phil Mackie
Consultant in Public Health,
Public Health Lead for Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership
NHS Grampian

Introduction

1. Introduction

1.1. What is a Population Needs Assessment?

The Population Needs Assessment is a high-level analysis of key groups, priorities, and challenges across public services, including service performance and information available on the customer perspective. The PNA will identify areas where more detailed analysis is required to ensure a greater understanding of existing and potential provider strengths and weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement.

This PNA will update the information provided in the [Population Needs Assessment](#) which was carried out in 2021.

The PNA will include aggregated data under the headings of Economy, People and Place. Whilst it is intended that the PNA will provide a comprehensive overview of the state of Aberdeen across a wide range of indicators, there will be areas which are identified as out of scope for the initial assessment. Where there is an identified need for more detailed analysis, this will be planned for the future. For example, data drilling down into specific communities, service provider or market.

1.2. Data used and limitations

Much of the data presented in this document comes from official statistics provided by, for example, the Scottish Government, National Records of Scotland, Public Health Scotland, ONS and NOMIS. Additional data has been provided by Council services and Community Planning Partners.

In general percentages and rates presented have been rounded to one decimal point. Some of these (e.g. life expectancy) will have a degree of error associated with them because of the way they are generated. Technically, these results should be presented with their associated Confidence Interval (usually $\pm x\%$). Differences are said to be statistically significant if confidence intervals do not overlap. However, for ease of presentation, confidence intervals are not shown. A degree of caution is therefore required when interpreting some of the data – particularly for smaller geographies such as neighbourhoods or intermediate zones where there is likely to be greater imprecision around estimates and confidence intervals are likely to be broader.

1.3. Consultation

Within this Population Needs Assessment information on the Customer and Citizens perspective has been included. In most cases, this has been done using Aberdeen City Voice. Aberdeen City Voice is Aberdeen’s citizens’ panel. There are over 800 citizens on the panel who have agreed to give their views on a range of issues. Full access to the questionnaires and reports can be found at [Aberdeen City Voice](#).

1.4. Layout

The layout follows the LOIP themes – Economy, People and Place. Section 2 focuses on Economy, Section 3, 4 and 5 relate to People, with Section 3 giving a demographic overview of the City, Section 4 covering Children and Section 5 looking at Adults. Section 6 focuses on Place.

1.5. Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the United Nations in 2015. They recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality and support economic growth which doesn’t compromise the climate and nature – issues at the core of the Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan. The goals serve as a framework to cross check against our population needs assessment to help identify any gaps.

Scotland made a commitment to the SDGs in 2015 and there is alignment with Scotland’s National Performance Framework . The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) sit above a raft of detail (169 targets and 130 indicators) to drive and measure progress towards 2030. A summary table presenting the data in the PNA through the lens of the Sustainable Development Goals is shown in Appendix 1.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Our Economy



2. Our Economy

During the 2010s, the region embarked on economic diversification, actively seeking and attracting investments in other industries such as renewable energy, food and drink, and life sciences. The 2020s mark a period of growth and diversification for Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire's regional economy. Positioned favourably for the transition to a low-carbon economy, the region boasts numerous innovative businesses in the renewable energy sector.

Recent economic indicators for Scotland paint a complex picture. In April 2023, Scotland's GDP experienced a decline of 0.5%. The entire UK faced significant inflationary pressures due to high energy prices and supply chain disruptions, resulting in an inflation rate exceeding 10% in the spring of 2023. Consequently, concerns have arisen about the cost of living across the UK. Projections suggest a real earnings drop of 1.5% across Scotland for the year 2023-24, reflecting the impact of the ongoing cost of living crisis. Aberdeen, was particularly negatively impacted, with average salaries decreasing by £129 per month (in real terms) in October 2022 compared to the previous year – the third largest drop in monthly earnings in any local authority in Scotland and the sixth largest in the UK. However, despite these challenges, average monthly earnings in Aberdeen still outpace the Scottish and UK averages. Looking ahead, Skills Development Scotland forecasts that Aberdeen will grow at an average rate of 0.5% between 2022 and 2025, in contrast to the broader Scottish average growth rate of 1.2%. [1]

2.1. Economy

Gross Value Added (GVA): In 2021 Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire had a GVA per head of £31,823 (constant prices) showing a slight increase from the previous year (£30,249).

The gap between the wealth of the North East region and both Scotland and the UK has been progressively narrowing since 2015. In 2015, the GVA per head in the North East was 50.8% higher than the Scottish average and 40.4% higher than the UK average. In 2021 GVA per head in the North East was 23.7% higher than Scottish average and 10.6% higher compared to the UK average.

Growth sector enterprises: Scotland's Economic Strategy recognises the importance of key industries in the continued growth of the country. The Strategy has identified six sectors where Scotland has a distinct comparative advantage – Food and Drink (including fisheries and agriculture), Creative Industries (including digital), Sustainable Tourism, Energy (including renewables), Financial and Business Services, and Life Sciences. In 2022 there were 4,030 growth sector enterprises in Aberdeen City with almost half of these (48.8%) being financial and business services. Between 2019 and 2022, the number of growth sector enterprises has decreased by 830. In 2021, total employment in growth sector enterprises was 52,630 – down from 60,890 in 2019 [1].

Oil and Gas: In the North East of Scotland, the oil and gas industry has been at the core of the region's economy for over five decades, contributing to the region's prosperity and higher average earnings compared to other parts of the UK. However, in the North East, direct employment in the sector declined from its peak of 30,600 in 2015 to 21,000 in 2021. Nevertheless, the oil and gas sector continues to be a significant employer, directly and indirectly (i.e. within the wider supply chain) supporting around 60,000 jobs in the North East. The region is now embracing an economic diversification strategy, transitioning to new forms of renewable energy and supporting the growth of high-value jobs in non-energy sectors. The Energy Transition Zone (ETZ), the largest dedicated energy transition complex in Scotland, has been allocated £53 million by the UK and Scottish Governments to facilitate the shift from oil and gas jobs to green energy. With over 90% of the UK's oil and gas workforce equipped with medium to high skills transferability, the North East emerges as a key energy transition region, well-positioned to adapt to adjacent energy sectors. As the region moves towards renewable energy and the growth of non-energy sectors, the emphasis on diversification aims to pave the way for a more resilient and sustainable economic future.

Tourism: In Aberdeen City, the tourism sector has witnessed a revival, with positive trends indicating significant growth. The city welcomed an estimated 160,000 international visitors in 2022, with over 1,241,000 nights spent—a record high since 2018. This increase in tourism led to an impressive expenditure of £134 million by international visitors, setting a new record and resulting in an average spend of £838 per visit [2]. Furthermore, the arrival of cruise ships at Aberdeen South Harbour is set to bring over 8000 passengers to the city in 2023, expected to boost the economic Gross Value Added (GVA) by more than £750k. **Air passengers:** In 2022 there were 1.96 million terminal passengers through Aberdeen Airport. This is up from 1.08 million in 2021 and 0.99 million in 2020, but lower than the 2.91 million passengers in 2019 [3]. **Rail passengers:** In 2021-22 there were 1,536,720 entries and exits at Aberdeen train station. This is down from 2,497,108 in 2019-20 (numbers dropped to 393,982 during 2020-21) [4]. Despite facing challenges during the pandemic, including revenue drops of 60% to 80% for hotels reliant on business or corporate trade, the resilience and promising recovery of Aberdeen's tourism sector indicate a bright outlook for the city's economic growth and continued appeal as a vibrant destination.

2.2. Businesses

Business Outlook: The North East of Scotland stands as a thriving hub for business activity, boasting over 20% of Scotland's leading businesses. With 568 businesses per 10,000 adult residents, the region surpasses the Scottish average of 393. Notable companies, including FirstGroup, Ayr, Karro Food, Balmoral Group, Chivas Brothers, Enquest, and Wood, have their headquarters or host major operations in the area. Aberdeen City showcases its commitment to innovation, with business expenditure on research and development more

than double the Scottish average. The region consistently ranks among the top 10 in the UK for foreign direct investment, while also leading Scotland in patent applications per capita since 2015. Furthermore, North East Scotland's international exports per head are more than double the national average, representing 23% of Scotland's total international exports. Emphasizing its dedication to advancing renewable energy, the University of Aberdeen is an integral part of the National Decommissioning Centre partnership for the Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult, a significant Innovate UK initiative. As signs of optimism emerge, the latest Fraser of Allander Scottish Business Monitor report (Q1 2023) reveals that business sentiment has risen to its highest level since 2021, reflecting the region's resilience and promising economic outlook.

Rateable Value Change: As of April 2023, Aberdeen was one of the biggest beneficiaries of the revaluation with the city's total rates bill down by 17%. Aberdeen had been experienced big increases in the 2017 revaluation, which reflected buoyant local economic conditions in the 2015 tone date. Business rate bills for Aberdeen shops fell by 19% and Aberdeen's hotels saw valuations fall by 20%.

As of April 2023, every empty unit on Union Street saw a reduction in its rateable value, at an average of a 26% drop, increasing their appeal to prospective tenants.

Businesses: In 2022 there were 7,930 enterprises and 10,590 local units in Aberdeen City ¹. This is down from 8,390 enterprises and 11,140 local units in 2021. In 2020, most enterprises (85.7%) were classified as Micro (employing up to 9 people), 11% were small (10 to 49 people), 2.6 were medium (50 to 249 people) and 0.8% were large (employing over 250 people) [5].

Business births and deaths: In 2021 there were 860 new businesses in Aberdeen City – a slight increase from 830 in 2020. Between 2015 and 2020, the number of business births each year was broadly stable (between 1065 and 1100) before dropping in 2020. In 2021 there were 1,185 business deaths – higher than 1,035 in 2020. One-year survival rates of 2020 business births was 94.6% in Aberdeen compared to 94.2% in Scotland. Five-year survival rates of 2016 business births was 39.1% in Aberdeen compared to 40.7% in Scotland [6].

Business Gateway start-ups: In 2022-23 there were 411 Business Gateway Start-ups – up from 391 in 2021-22. This is equivalent to a rate of 180.7 per 10,000 population – higher than the rate for Scotland of 143.3 per 10,000 population [7].

2.3. Labour market

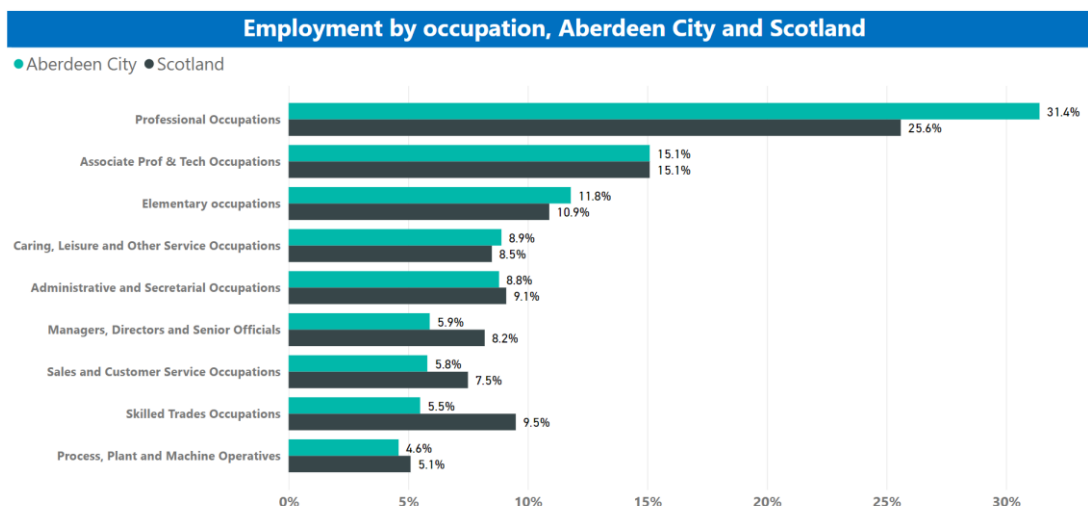
Labour Market Outlook: The labour market in Aberdeen has witnessed both challenges and positive developments in recent times. In 2022, the employment rate fell to 71.2%, marking its lowest level since 2016, while Economic Inactivity reached a record high of 24.9%. One particularly affected group has been young people, with the youth employment rate (age 16-24) falling by over 40 percentage points to just above 30% during the pandemic, although it has since recovered to over 50%. Prior to the pandemic, Aberdeen's youth employment rate stood among the highest rates of all local authorities in Scotland, at over 70%. Younger workers, who are over-represented in industries severely affected by lockdown restrictions,

¹ An enterprise is the smallest combination of legal units (generally based on VAT and/or PAYE records) which has a certain degree of autonomy within an Enterprise Group. An individual site (for example a factory or a shop) in an enterprise is called a local unit.

such as retail and hospitality, experienced significant disadvantage. Despite these challenges, North East Scotland enjoys one of the highest densities of private sector employment in all of Scotland. Throughout the pandemic, Aberdeen experienced a slower recovery in job postings compared to other major cities and the overall Scottish average. However, since August 2022, Aberdeen has surpassed its pre-pandemic level of job postings, reaching a recent high in June 2023. The region's recovery efforts and vibrant private sector offer potential for continued growth and resilience.

Employment and employment sectors: In 2021, there were an estimated 158,000 jobs in Aberdeen City (down from 170,000 in 2019) of which 110,000 (69.6%) were full-time and 48,000 (30.4%) were part-time. The most common sectors/industries were Human Health and Social Work Activities (17.1 % of jobs), Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities (12.7%), Mining and Quarrying (11.4%) and Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles (11.4%) [5].

Employment by occupation: In the year April 2022-March 2023, almost a third (31.4%) of those in employment in Aberdeen City were in Professional Occupations compared to 25.6% in Scotland. The proportion of those employed in other occupations is similar to or lower than Scotland, with the exception of those in elementary occupations and those in caring, leisure and other service occupations which are higher in Aberdeen City than in Scotland [5].



Source: NOMIS Labour Market Profile, Aberdeen City. Updated August 2023. (Percentage is a proportion of all persons in employment.)

Economic activity²: In the year from April 2022-March 2023, 76% of Aberdeen’s working age population (16-64 years) was classified as economically active compared to 77.4% in Scotland. A slightly higher proportion of males (76.7%) than females (75.3%) were economically active. The proportion of females who are economically active is the same as Scotland (75.3%), while the proportion of males who are economically active is lower than that of Scotland (79.6%).

² Economically active refers to people who are either in employment or unemployed. Economically inactive refers to people who are neither in employment nor unemployed. This group includes, for example, all those who are looking after a home or retired.

In the same period, 71.9% of Aberdeen City’s working age population were in employment (compared to 74.7% in Scotland). A higher proportion of males were in employment (72.5%) than females (71.3%). The employment rate for ethnic minorities was 63.8% [5].



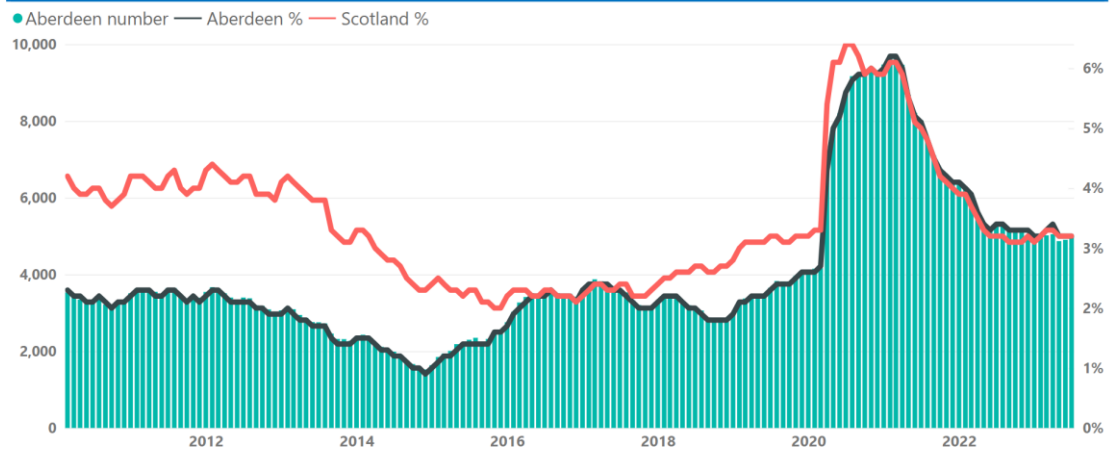
Economic inactivity: In the year from April 2022-March 2023, 24% of Aberdeen’s working age population were economically inactive. A slightly higher proportion of females (24.7 %) than males (23.3%) were economically inactive. The proportion of males who are economically inactive is higher in Aberdeen City than in Scotland (20.4%). Of those who were economically inactive, 39.4% were students, 23.9 % were long-term sick, 15.6% were looking after home/family and 8.1% were retired. Over three-quarters (76.4%) of those who were economically inactive did not want a job [5].

Claimant count³:

In July 2023 there were 4,995 claimants in Aberdeen City. This is equivalent to a rate of 3.2% which is the same as the rate for Scotland. More claimants in Aberdeen City were male (2,935) than female (2,060) and most (3,000) were aged 25-49 years. 905 claimants were aged 16-24 years and 1,090 claimants were aged 50+ years [5].

³ Claimant Count is the number of people claiming benefit principally for the reason of being unemployed.

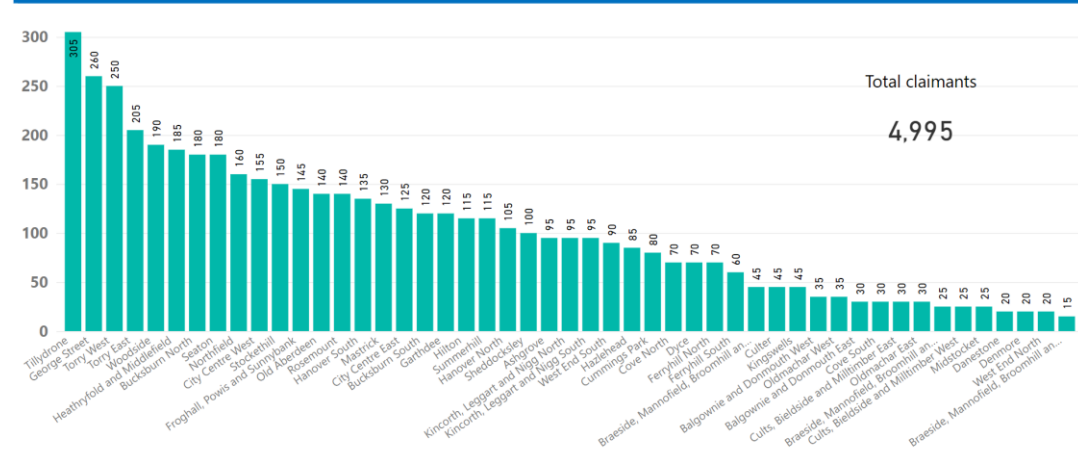
Number and rate of claimants, Aberdeen City and Scotland, Time Series



Source: NOMIS Labour Market Profile, Aberdeen City. Updated August 2023.

The number of claimants varies across the City (Intermediate Zones), being highest in Tillydrone (305 claimants) and lowest in Braeside, Mannofield, Broomhill & Seafield South (15). [5].

Number of claimants by Intermediate Zone, Aberdeen City



Source: NOMIS Labour Market Profile, Aberdeen City. Updated August 2023 (claimant numbers rounded to the nearest 5). (Note: totals may not match the total for the city due to rounding).

Unemployment (model-based): In the year from January to December 2022, the (model-based) unemployment rate in Aberdeen City was 4.3% - higher than the rate for Scotland of 3.5% [5].

Employability pipeline: In 2021-22 there were 2,611 unemployed people assisted into work from council employability programmes – up from 149 in 2020-21. This is equivalent to a rate of 59.3% (of the number of unemployed people based on the model-based unemployment count) compared to a rate of 19.7% in Scotland [7].

Workless households: In January to December 2021 there were an estimated 10,700 workless households (i.e. households where no-one aged 16 years or over is in employment) in Aberdeen City – an decrease from 12,500 in 2020. This is equivalent to 13.8% of all households compared to 18.6% in Scotland. In Scotland (no data available for Aberdeen City), it is estimated that 12% of children are in workless households [5].

Job density: In 2021 there were an estimated 172,000 jobs in the City – equivalent to 1.12 jobs per person aged 16-64 years (compared to 0.81 for Scotland) [5].

Qualifications: In January to December 2021 (no data available for 2022), compared to Scotland, Aberdeen City had a higher proportion of its workforce who are qualified to NVQ4 and above (54.4% in Aberdeen and 50.0% in Scotland) [5].

Modern apprenticeships: In 2022-23 Q4, there were 1,076 Modern Apprenticeships currently in training (compared to 1,085 in 2021-22 Q4). The percentage of leavers successfully achieving a Modern Apprenticeship fell slightly from 72.6% in 2021-22 Q4 to 71.8% in 2022-23 Q4 [8]. In 2022-23, there were 700 starts, down slightly from 709 in 2021-22 [9].

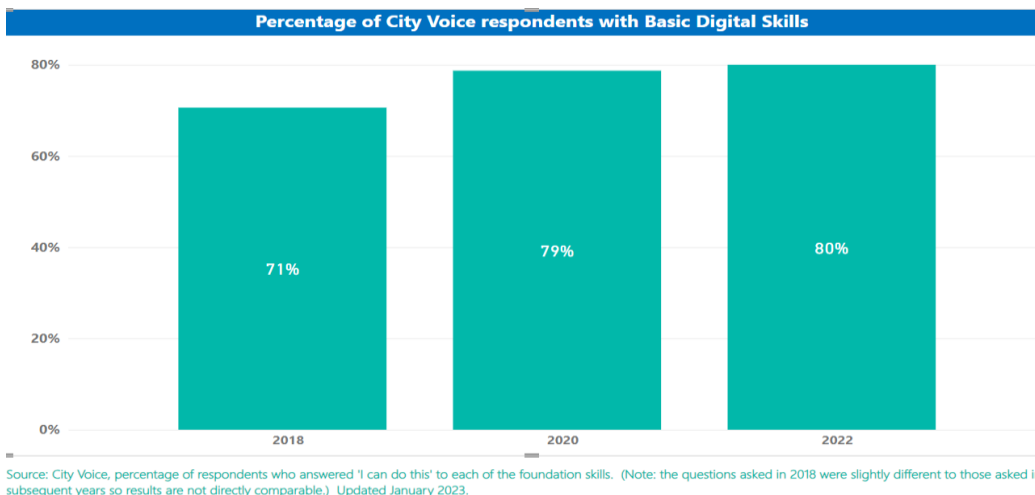
Graduate apprenticeships: In 2021-22, 60 people in Aberdeen City enrolled in a Graduate Apprenticeship – up from 49 in 2020-21 [10].

Digital skills: The digital technology sector is growing rapidly and is a key contributor to economic growth – creating an unprecedented demand for skills with employers across all sectors. Skills Development Scotland reports that annual vacancies in ICT in Scotland are projected to average 15,600 per annum, a 20% increase on previous estimates, and that employers report that they find it difficult to recruit employees with the right technical skills or experience [11].

In Scotland, between 2008 and 2018, the number of teachers whose main subject is Computing Science fell by almost 23%. Similarly, data from the SQA Annual Statistics Report shows that between 2017-21, National 5 participation in Computing Science fell by 15%. Participation in Higher Computing Science fell by 24% over the same period. Most of the pupils who take Computing Science are males. By the time pupils take the Higher Computing Science qualification, only 17% of them are female on average; an imbalance that continues as they move on through university and into industry [12]. In Scotland, 79% of those undertaking Computing Science courses were males and in 2017, only 23% of digital technology roles were held by women [13].

According to the Department for Digital, Culture and Sport [14], in 2021 half (48%) of businesses were recruiting for roles that required data skills. The most common type of data role sought by businesses was a data analyst (12%). One in ten (10%) were recruiting for a Head of Data, with similar proportions recruiting for a Data Manager (9%), a Chief Technology Officer (8%) and a Data Protection Officer (8%). The need for data skills is not confined to people in specialist data roles; virtually all white-collar workers increasingly need to have a basic understanding of data. As mentioned in the Analytic Britain report, “The data revolution has implications...for the entire workforce. We all need to become more data literate to operate successfully in increasingly ‘data-rich’ environments” [15].

Digital technologies are also part of daily life for most people. Reliance on digital technologies became even more apparent during the pandemic – working from home, connecting with friends and family, and undertaking basic everyday tasks such as shopping and banking. A series of questions relating to digital technology have been asked in the City Voice survey. In December 2022, when asked about access to digital tools, 79% of City Voice respondents reported having access to a laptop or PC, 88% to a smart phone and 68% to a tablet. Overall, 96% of respondents reported having access to at least one of these devices. This is an increase from 2018 when 90% of respondents reported having access to at least one device, with the largest increase being in access to smartphones (increase from 71% in 2018 to 88% in 2022). 91.4% of respondents reported having household access to internet at home. City Voice respondents were also asked a series of questions about their ability to perform digital tasks. Based on responses, 80% of respondents were identified as having ‘basic digital skills’ – an increase from 71% in 2018 [16].



2.4. Earnings

Average weekly wage: In 2022, the median gross weekly pay for full-time workers living in Aberdeen City was £637.90 – slightly lower than the equivalent for Scotland of £640.30. As in Scotland, the median weekly pay was higher for males (£644.90) than for females (£629.70). The gap between male and female wages has closed in recent years – in 2019 the difference in average weekly wage between males and females living in Aberdeen City was £102.20 compared to £15.20 in 2022. While male full-time workers living in Aberdeen City earned less than those in Scotland (£675.10), female full-time workers earned more (£604.70 in Scotland). [5].

Living Wage: In 2022 an estimated 6.7% of employees in Aberdeen City were earning less than the Living Wage compared to 9.0% in Scotland and down from 13% in 2021 [17]. In May 2023, there were 85 employers in Aberdeen City who were signed up to the Real Living Wage – up from 69 in May 2022 [18].

2.5. Poverty and deprivation

Cost of living crisis overview:

While all households in Scotland will be affected by increases in the cost of living, a report by the Scottish Government suggests that it is those with lower incomes and little or no savings who will be most impacted as they spend a higher proportion than average on energy, food and transport and they therefore have less flexibility in their budget to cope with price rises. Low income households with particular characteristics are likely to fare worse. This includes larger families; households in receipt of means-tested benefits (and those narrowly ineligible for means-tested benefits); households who rent their homes; disabled households; households with an unpaid carer; gypsy/travellers; rural and island households; single person households and single parent households. Certain groups are over-represented in these households, most notably minority ethnic groups and women. [19].

More than 8 out of 10 children in relative poverty in Scotland are in at least one of these priority groups:

- lone-parent families
- a household where someone is disabled
- families with three or more children
- minority ethnic families
- families with a child under one year old
- families where the mother is under 25 years of age

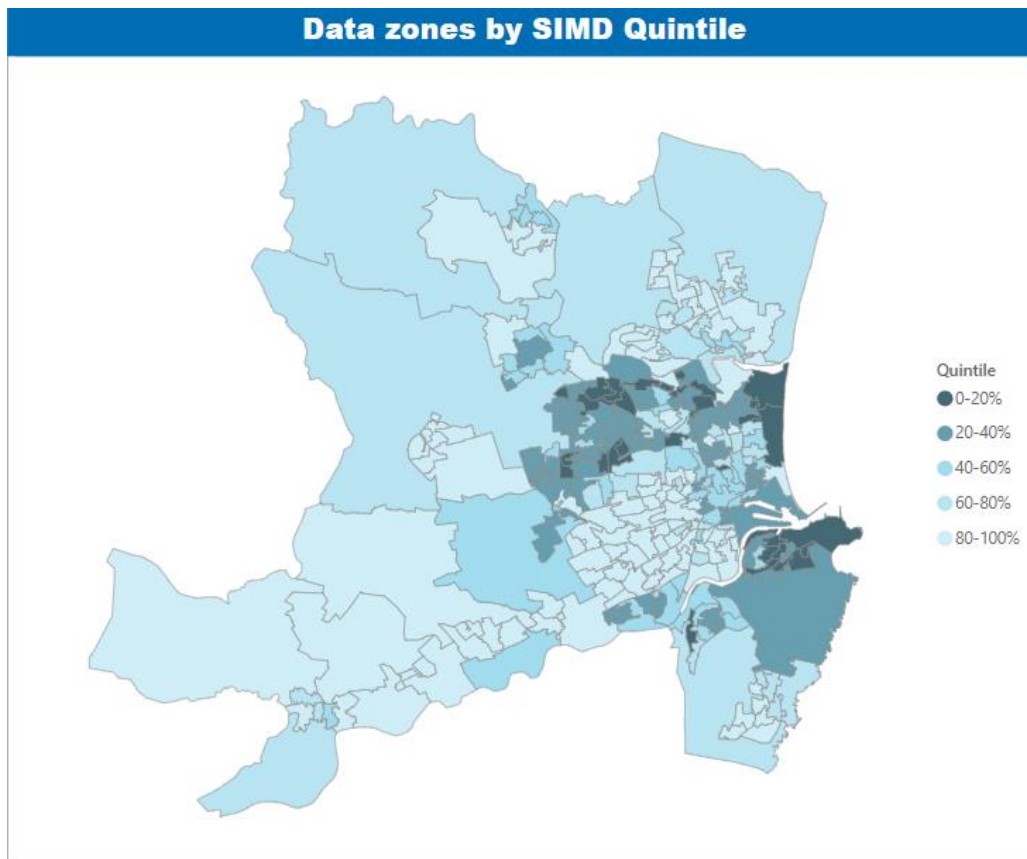
While there has been support for people with the cost of energy, people and families have been affected by the increase in inflation and locally there has been an increase in demand for emergency food provision. Support to mitigate some of the impacts locally has included:

- Increased financial advice provision
- Increased support through Scottish Welfare Fund
- Procurment of suitable food to increase supply of emergency food
- Provision of fuel vouchers
- Provision of Warm Spaces during the winter period to alleviate cost of heating homes

Linked to a rise in poverty is growing financial insecurity. Research by the Money and Pensions Service (November 2022) suggests that one in six UK adults have no savings and a quarter of UK adults have less than £100 put away [20]. More recent research (January 2023) suggests that as many as one in five adults are borrowing to pay for food and other essential bills, with half doing so for the first time [21].

Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD): The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation is a relative measure of deprivation. If an area is identified as ‘deprived’, this can relate to people having a low income but it can also mean fewer resources or opportunities. SIMD looks at the extent to which an area is deprived across seven domains: income, employment, education, health, access to services, crime and housing. SIMD ranks all data zones in Scotland from most deprived (ranked 1) to least deprived (ranked 6,976).

The most recent SIMD release was in 2020. Based on overall rankings of deprivation (i.e. All Domains), Aberdeen City’s position worsened between 2016 and 2020. The number of datazones in the 20% most deprived areas of Scotland (SIMD Quintile 1) increased from 22 (out of 283) in 2016 to 29 in 2020, and the number of datazones in the 20-40% most deprived areas of Scotland increased from 57 to 65. This means that the proportion of datazones in the 40% most deprived areas of Scotland has increased from 28% to 33.2%. Conversely, while lower than in 2016, Aberdeen City still has a relatively high number of datazones in the 20% least deprived areas of Scotland with 104 (36.7%) datazones in this category [22]. At mid-2021, there were 21,696 people in Aberdeen living in the 20% most deprived areas, of which 3,969 were children [23]. (It should be noted that SIMD is an area-based measure of relative deprivation - not everyone living in a deprived area is deprived, and not everyone who is deprived lives in a deprived area.)



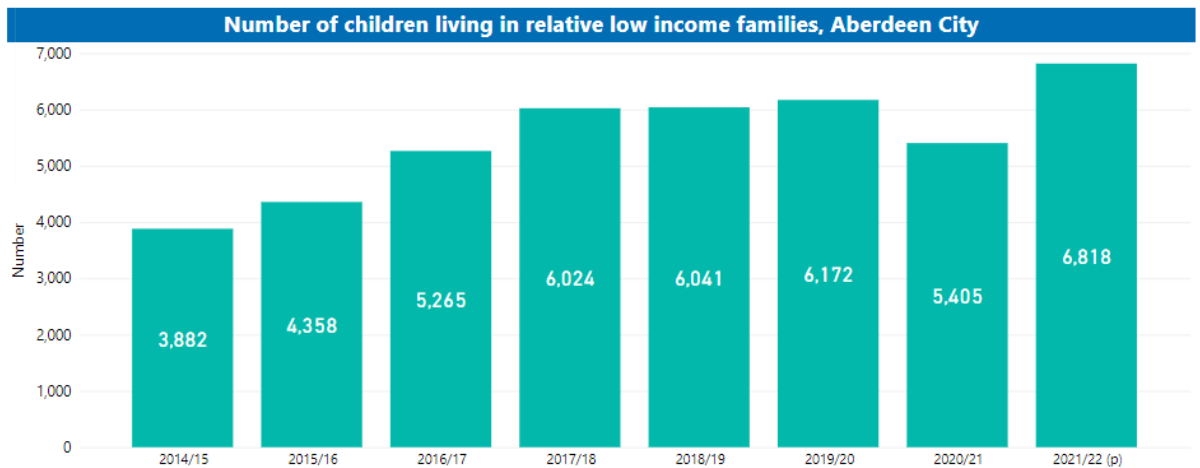
Source: Scottish Government, Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020V2 [22]

Relative poverty: In Scotland in 2019/22 an estimated 21% of people were living in relative poverty (below 60% of median income) after housing costs and it is estimated that 57% of those in relative poverty are in working households (i.e. households where at least one person is working). It is estimated that 24% of children in Scotland are living in relative poverty after housing costs [24].

Children in Low income families: Provisional data for 2021/22 estimates that 6,818 children in Aberdeen City are living in Relative Low Income families⁴ - up from 6,172 in 2019/20. Almost two-thirds (62.7%) are in working families and 27% are under 5 years old. Over half (55.6%) of children living in relative low income families are in lone parent families [25].

The number of children in relative low income families varies across the city ([intermediate zones](#)) ranging from a low of 12 in Braeside, Mannofield, Broomhill & Seafield South to a high of 443 in Heathryfold. (Note: Data collection for FYE 2021 and 2022 was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is advised that additional caution should therefore be exercised when making comparisons to previous years.)

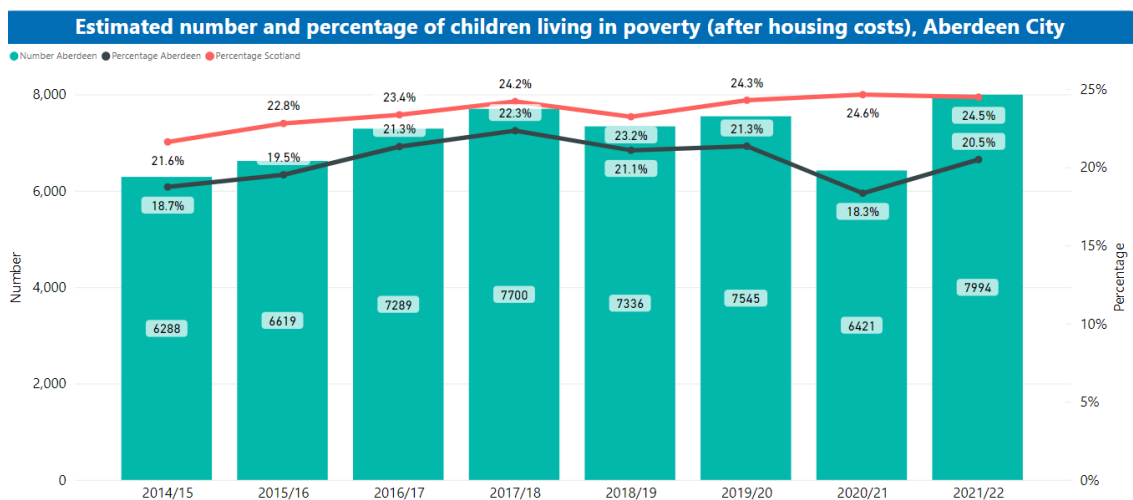
⁴ Relative low-income is defined as a family in low income before housing costs (BHC) in the reference year. A family must have claimed one or more of Universal Credit, Tax Credits or Housing Benefit at any point in the year to be classed as low income in these statistics. A person is defined as a child if they are under 16 years old. A person will also be defined as a child if they are 16-19 years old and not married/in a civil partnership nor living with a partner and living with parents/responsible adult and in full-time non-advance education or in unwaged government training.



Source: Stat-Xplore, Children in Low Income Families, Relative Low Income Dataset, Updated April 2023.

Note: Relative low-income is defined as a family whose equivalised income is below 60 per cent of contemporary median income. Gross income measure is Before Housing Costs (BHC) and includes contributions from earnings, state support and pensions. A child is defined as an individual aged under 16 years. A person will also be defined as a child if they are 16-19 years old and are not married nor in a civil partnership nor living with a partner; and they are living with parents/responsible adult; and in full-time non-advance education or in unwaged government training. Data collection for FYE 2021 and FYE 2022 was affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Additional caution should therefore be exercised when making comparisons with previous years.

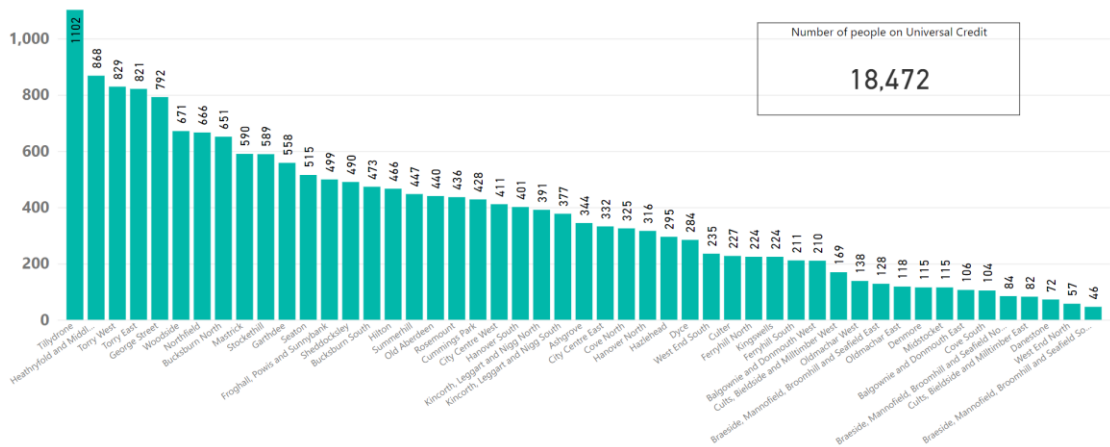
Child poverty: Research published by the End Child Poverty coalition reported that in 2021/22 an estimated 7,994 children (0-15 years) in Aberdeen City were living in poverty (below 60% median income after housing costs). This is equivalent to 20.5% of children compared to 24.5% for Scotland and 18.3% in 2020/21 [26]. (Note: Data collection for FYE 2021 and 2022 was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is advised that additional caution should therefore be exercised when making comparisons to previous years.)



Source: End Child Poverty, Child poverty in your area 2014/15-2022/22. Updated June 2023. (Children 0-15 years.) Data collection for FYE 2021 and FYE 2022 was affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Additional caution should therefore be exercised when making comparisons with previous years.

Universal credit: In July 2023 there were 18,468 people on Universal Credit in Aberdeen City – up from 17,375 in July 2022 (however as people may be transferring to Universal Credit from the old system, caution is advised in interpreting figures as increases may be due to this). In June 2023, 38.1% (6,962) of those on Universal Credit were in employment [27]. The number of people on Universal Credit varied across the City (Intermediate Zones) from a low of 46 in Braeside, Mannofield, Broomhill & Seafield South to a high of 1,102 in Tillydrone. (Note: the total for Intermediate Zones may not match the totals for Aberdeen City due to disclosure controls applied to the data.)

Number of people on universal credit by Intermediate Zone, Aberdeen City



Source: Stat-Xplore, Number of people on universal credit. Updated August 2023. (Figures are a count of the number of people on Universal Credit on the second Thursday of each month. Figures for the most recent month are provisional. Note: the total for IZs may not match the totals for Aberdeen City due to disclosure controls applied to the data).

Food poverty: Questions around Food Security have been asked in the City Voice each year from 2018 to 2022. Specifically, the questions ask if during the last 12 months, there was a time when, because of lack of money or other resources:

- You were worried you would not have enough food to eat?
- You were unable to eat healthy and nutritious food?
- You ate only a few kinds of food?
- You had to skip a meal?
- You ate less than you thought you should?
- Your household ran out of food?
- You were hungry but did not eat?
- You went without eating for a whole day

While most respondents did not report concerns around their ability to access healthy or nutritious food due to money or lack of other resources, in December 2022, 18.6% of respondents reported they ate only a few kinds of food, 11.6% that they were unable to eat healthy and nutritious food, 10.6% that they ate less than they thought they should and 8.4% that they were worried they would not have enough food to eat. Since 2021, the proportion of respondents who answered ‘yes’ has increased in most categories, with the largest increase being in the proportion who reported they ate only a few kinds of food (from 12.3% to 18.6%) [28].

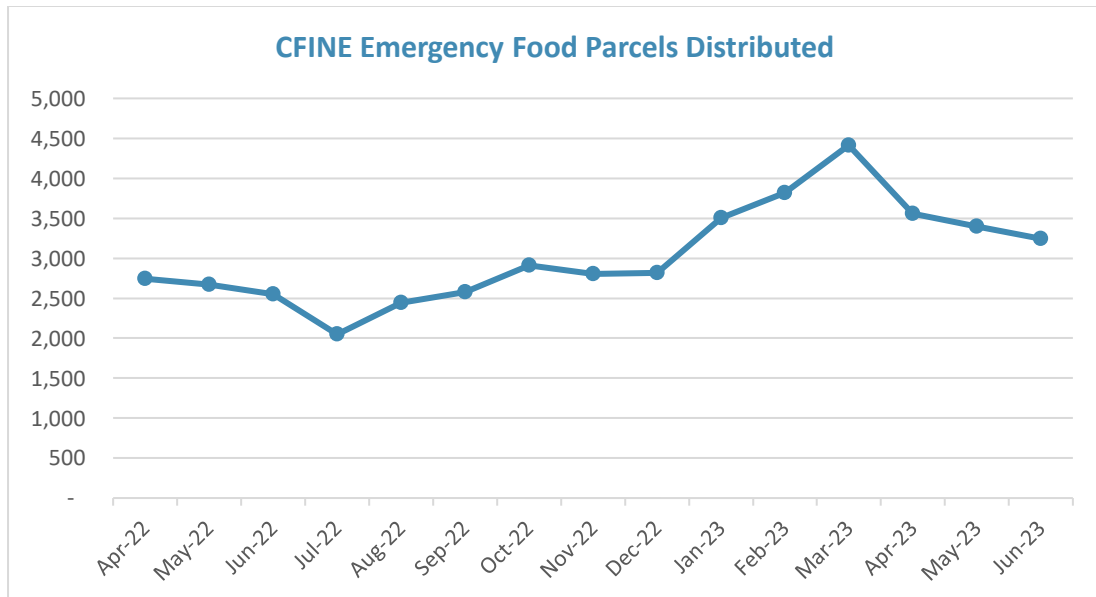
Food security: Percentage of City Voice respondents who answered 'yes' to the question: during the last 12 months was there a time when, because of lack of money or other resources you:



Source: City Voice. Updated January 2023.

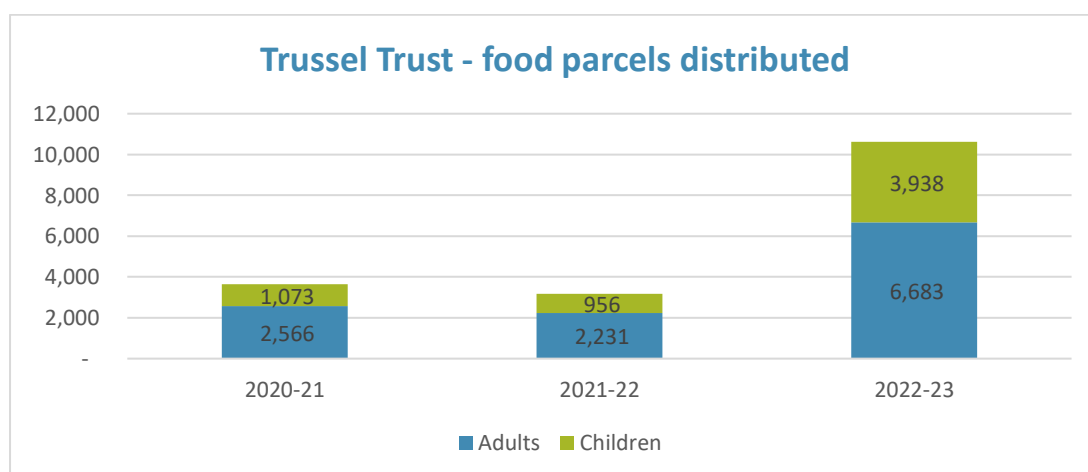
Foodbank use: There is currently no single source of data on foodbank use in Aberdeen City. Data for this document has been provided by a four of independent organisations (CFINE, Trussel Trust, Instant Neighbour and Inchgarth) who provide emergency food parcels. Across these four organisations, almost 62,000 emergency food parcels were distributed in 2022/23, averaging over 5,000 parcels every month.

CFINE: In 2022/23, CFINE distributed 35,307 emergency food parcels – an average of 2,942 per month. The monthly distribution of emergency food parcels increased sharply in the first three months of 2023, peaking in March when 4,414 parcels were distributed. In the first three months of 2023/24 a total of 10,197 food parcels have been distributed – an average of 3,399 per month.

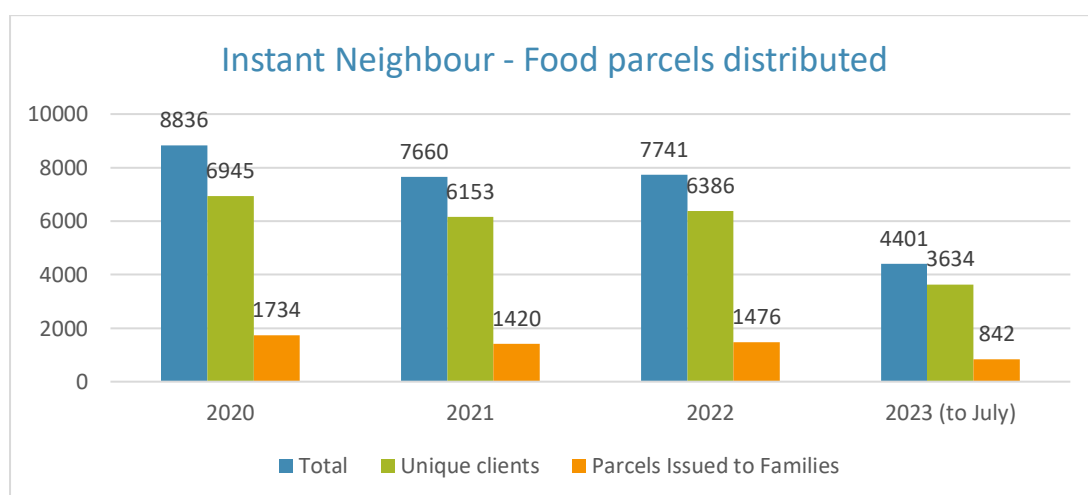


Trussel Trust: In 2022-23 Trussel Trust distributed 10,621 food parcels in Aberdeen City – more than double the amount in 2021-22 when 3,187 parcels were distributed (a 233% increase). There were 1,740 unique clients (some people will have received more than one parcel a year) with an average of 2.5 vouchers (referrals) per client. The most common household types were receiving parcels in 2022-23 were single people (38.4%) and families (30.7%) followed by couples (15.7%) and single parent families (12.3%).

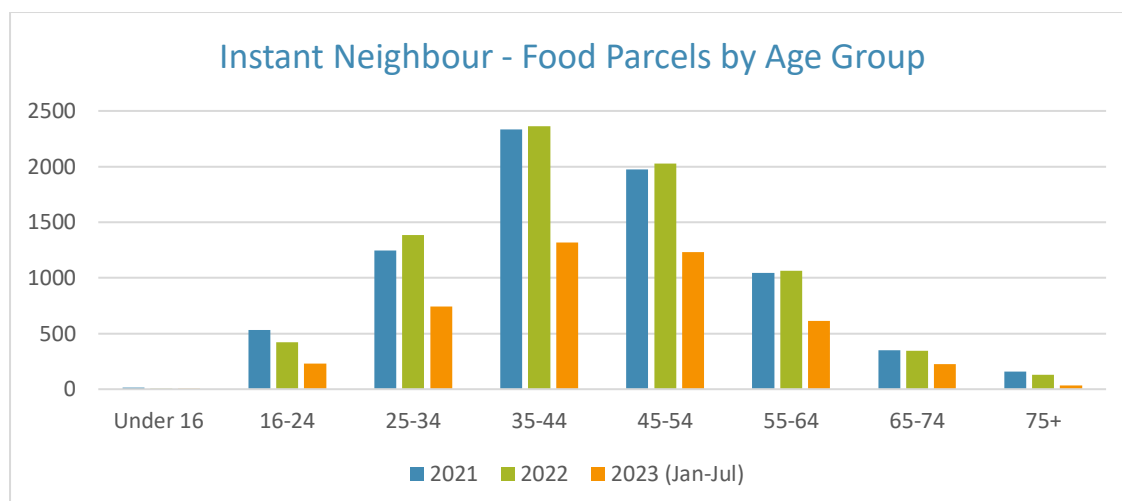
The most common reason for referral was ‘low income’ (3,027 referrals for this reason). The second most common reason was ‘no recourse to public funds’ (490 referrals). Analysis by the Trussel Trust reports disproportionately high levels of no recourse to public fund (NRPF) referrals in Aberdeen. In 2022-23, NRPF referrals across Scotland was the 9th highest reason for referral across all food bank referrals. In Aberdeen, it was the second highest. Furthermore, of all the NRPF referrals across Scottish food banks, 15% came from Aberdeen City.



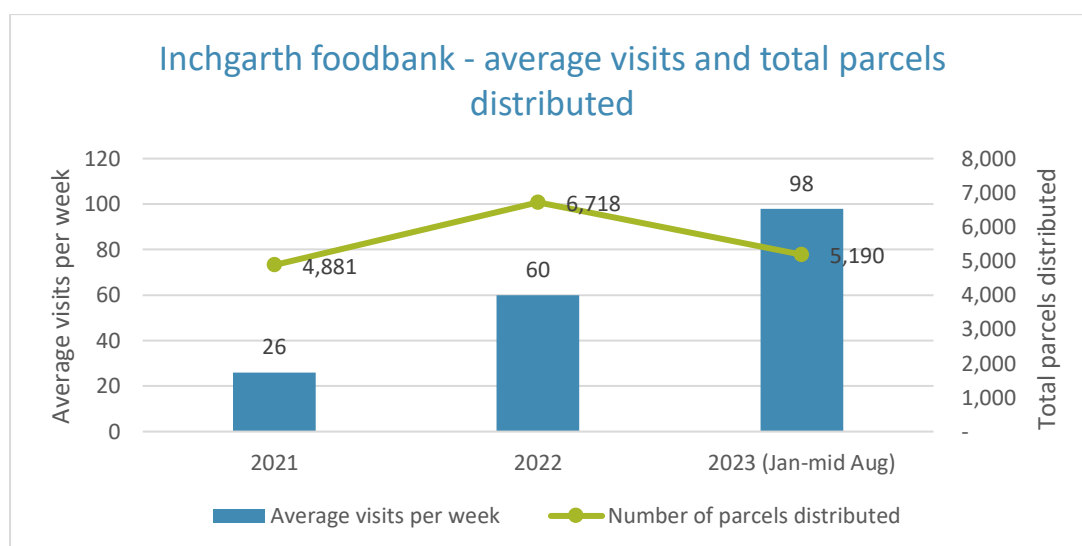
Instant Neighbour: In the first seven months of 2023, Instant Neighbour distributed 4,401 (average of 629 per month) food parcels with 842 of these being to families. Most clients visited the foodbank once in a month (unique clients) with the remainder visiting more than once. Up to July, there were on average 48 new clients each month in 2023. Around 7,700 parcels a year were distributed in both 2021 and 2022.



The age-groups most commonly using Instant Neighbour foodbanks were 35-44 years and 45-54 years.



Inchgarth Foodbank: To date in 2023 (January to mid-August), a total of 5,190 food parcels have been distributed to a total value of £98,439. On average there are 98 visits to the foodbank every week – higher than the average of 60 visits per week in 2022.



Community Pantries: Mitigating food poverty through increased memberships of community pantries was highlighted as an area where people could be offered dignity and choice rather than the foodbank offer of crisis provision. While food banks provide vital support to those suffering financial hardship, they do not represent a sustainable means of accessing food. Pantries offer those on low incomes to set up a yearly membership and pay a minimal weekly fee. In March 2023, there were 853 Community Pantry members – up from 487 in April 2021.

Recognising the challenges people can face attending one of our fixed food pantries, a mobile food pantry was launched in September 2021 to increase accessibility within our priority neighbourhoods and widen the reach. The positive response to the mobile pantry has continued throughout this year and is now available in 10 neighbourhoods on a bi-weekly

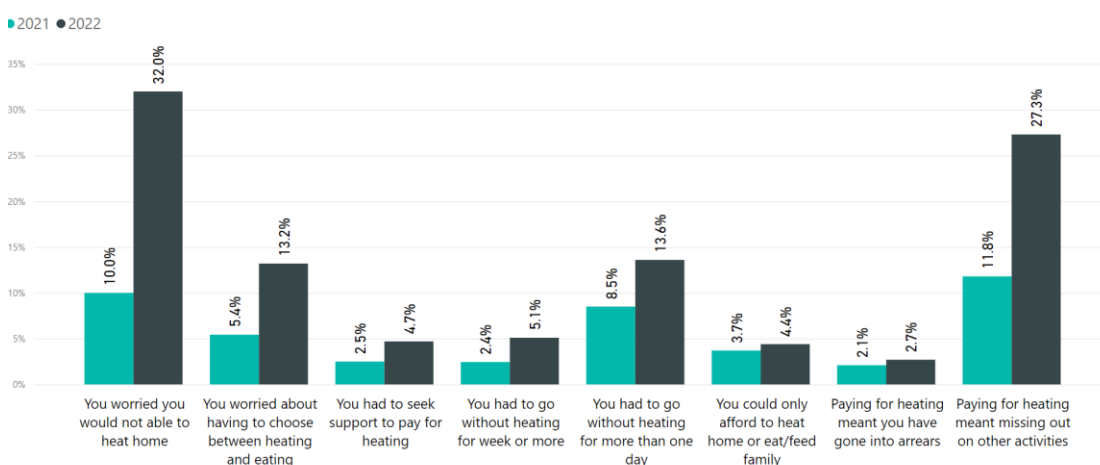
basis, a 67% increase. The areas are: Middlefield, Sheddocksley, Kincorth, Torry, Tillydrone, Seaton, Northfield, Quarryhill, Bucksburn and Hilton. Across all 10 areas there has been a total of 2088 shops at the mobile pantry, a 454% increase since 2021/22 and representing 20% of all pantry shops across the city. This increase has also been seen across the two other food pantries, with an overall increase in the total number of shops across all food pantries from 5,726 in 2021/22 to 10,234 in 2022/23.

Allotments: The allotment waiting list continues to grow: 793 households were waiting in 2021, by March 2023 this had risen to 1,047 households [29].

Fuel poverty: Official statistics for fuel poverty are now relatively dated with the most recent being for 2017-19 (data collection for the Scottish House Condition Survey was affected by COVID-19 with new local authority figures not expected to be available until early 2026). In 2017-19 an estimated 26.1% of households were in fuel poverty⁵ – up from 23% in 2016-18 and higher than the rate for Scotland of 24.4%. A higher proportion of those in social housing were in fuel poverty than those in owner occupied housing (46.2% compared to 12.9%). In 2017-19 an estimated 12.8% of households were in extreme fuel poverty [30].

A series of questions around ability to heat your home were asked in City Voice 45 (August 2021) and City Voice 46 (December 2022). In December 2022, almost a third (32%) of respondents reported being worried they would not be able to heat their home – up from 10% in August 2021. Over a quarter of respondents (27.3%) said that paying for heating meant missing out on other activities (compared to 11.8% in 2021) [28].

Your heating: Percentage of City Voice respondents who answered 'yes' to the question: during the last 12 months was there a time when, because of lack of money or other resources:



source: City Voice. Updated January 2023.

Homeless applications: In the year 2022-23, there were 1,762 applications under the Homeless Persons legislation in Aberdeen City Council. This is up from 1,404 in 2021-22 – an increase of 25%. There were 50 applications where at least one member of the household experienced rough sleeping the night before their application. In March 2023, 399 households

⁵ A household is in fuel poverty if, in order to maintain a satisfactory heating regime, total fuel costs necessary for the home are more than 10% of the household's adjusted net income (after housing costs), and if after deducting fuel costs, benefits received for a care need or disability and childcare costs, the household's remaining adjusted net income is insufficient to maintain an acceptable standard of living. For extreme fuel poverty a household would have to spend more than 20% of its adjusted net income (after housing costs) to maintain a satisfactory heating regime.

were in temporary accommodation (up from 264 in March 2022), 45 of these households had either pregnant women or children in them (down from 65 in March 2022) with a total of 85 children in temporary accommodation(down from 110 in March 2022) [31].

Our People



3. Demography

3.1. Population

Population: The first release of data from the 2022 Census was published on 14th September 2023. This is a limited release and reported rounded population estimates for Scotland and all local authority areas. At March 2022, Aberdeen City had an estimated population of **224,000** [32]. This equates to 4.1% of Scotland’s total population. In terms of population size, Aberdeen City is the 8th largest local authority in Scotland. There were more females (114,600) than males (109,400) in the city with females making up 51.2% of the population. Compared to Scotland, Aberdeen city has a higher proportion of people aged 16-64 years (68.2% compared to 64.6%) and a lower proportion of people age 65+ years (17.1% compared to 20.1%) and under 15 year-olds (14.7% compared to 15.3%). Between 2011 and 2022, the population in Aberdeen City grew by 0.5% (from 222,793) compared to an increase of 2.7% for Scotland as a whole.

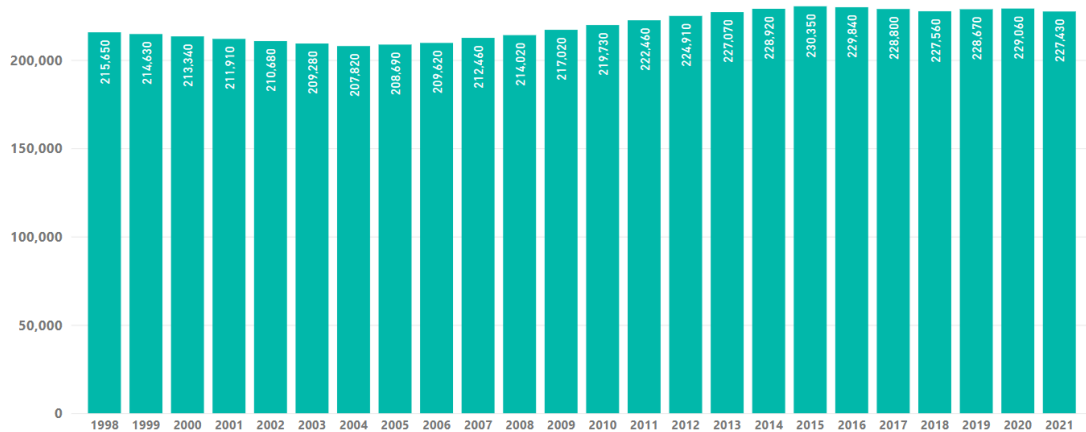
As yet, there is no Census data available for smaller areas of the city. However, based on 2021 mid-year estimates, the population varies considerably by [neighbourhood](#), ranging from a low of 1,745 in Cummings Park to a high of 13,554 in Braeside, Mannofield, Broomhill and Seafield [23].

Population change: Note: the following data does not include the recently released Census data. It is likely that the mid-year population estimates (provided by National Records of Scotland) for the years between the 2011 Census and the 2022 Census will be recalculated and revised in the coming year. (So while the pattern of change is likely to be similar, the numbers will probably change.)

Following an 11-year period of year-on-year increases, Aberdeen’s population peaked in 2015 (230,350) and decreased in each of the 3 subsequent years before increasing again between 2018 (227,560) and 2019 (228,670). The population fell again in 2021 to 227,430 – its lowest level since 2013. The drop in population between June 2020 and June 2021 was consistent with that seen in other large cities which saw their populations fall during the pandemic while some rural areas saw their populations rise⁶.

⁶“As well as people moving long term out of cities and into the surrounding areas, there may have been students who have moved back to their parents’ addresses temporarily during the pandemic. Another factor could be people who had previously moved updating their address with a GP to make sure they received their COVID-19 vaccination letters. Address information from GPs feeds into our migration estimates. Future reports will tell us if the areas which have gained population sustain those levels in the years ahead.” National Records of Scotland, [City Populations fall in latest estimates](#).

Population of Aberdeen City, Time Series



Source: National Records of Scotland, Population Estimates Time Series Data. Updated July 2022.

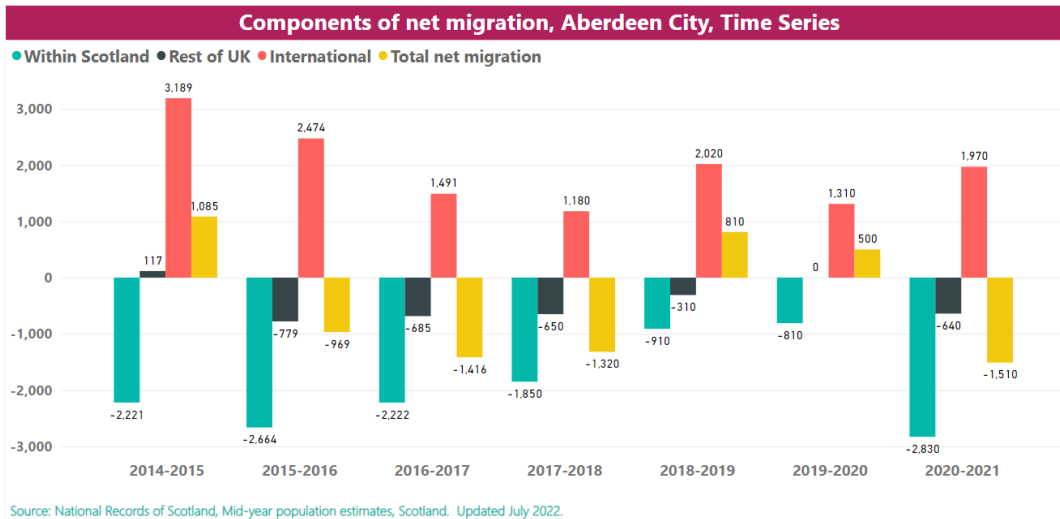
Age structure: Compared to Scotland, Aberdeen has a relatively young population. In 2021, the median age in Aberdeen was 38.3 years compared to 42.2 years for Scotland. Comparison of broad age structures showed that Aberdeen had a higher proportion of working-age people (68.9% compared to 65%) and a lower proportion of under 16 year-olds (15.8% compared to 16.6%) and people of pensionable age (15.4% compared to 18.4%) than Scotland [33]. Within Aberdeen, however, the age structure varied considerably by neighbourhood. The proportion of children (0-15 years) ranged from 8.2% in City Centre to 24% in Middlefield. The proportion of 16-64 year-olds ranged from 59.5% in Dyce to 84.5% in City Centre and the proportion of people aged 65+ years ranged from 7.3% in City Centre and Froghall, Powis & Sunnybank to 25.5% in Danestone [23].

Country of birth and Ethnicity: Aberdeen City has a diverse population. The most recent figures (year ending June 2021) available from National Records of Scotland estimate that 22.5% of the City's population was born outside the UK (compared to 9.7% for Scotland). Of those, it is estimated that 58.8% are from EU countries and 43.1% from non-EU countries (compared to 50% for both groups in the year to end December 2019). The estimated proportion of those born outside the UK has fluctuated in the last few years, from 24% in the year ending June 2017, down to 19% in year ending June in both 2018 and 2019, before rising again to 24.7% in the year to end June 2020 and down to 22.5% at end June 2021 [34]. At the time of the 2011 Census, Aberdeen City had the third highest proportion of non-white ethnic minority people in Scotland at 15.6%. This was more than double the Scotland rate at 7.6% [35]. (Data from the 2022 Census is not expected to be released until Spring 2024.)

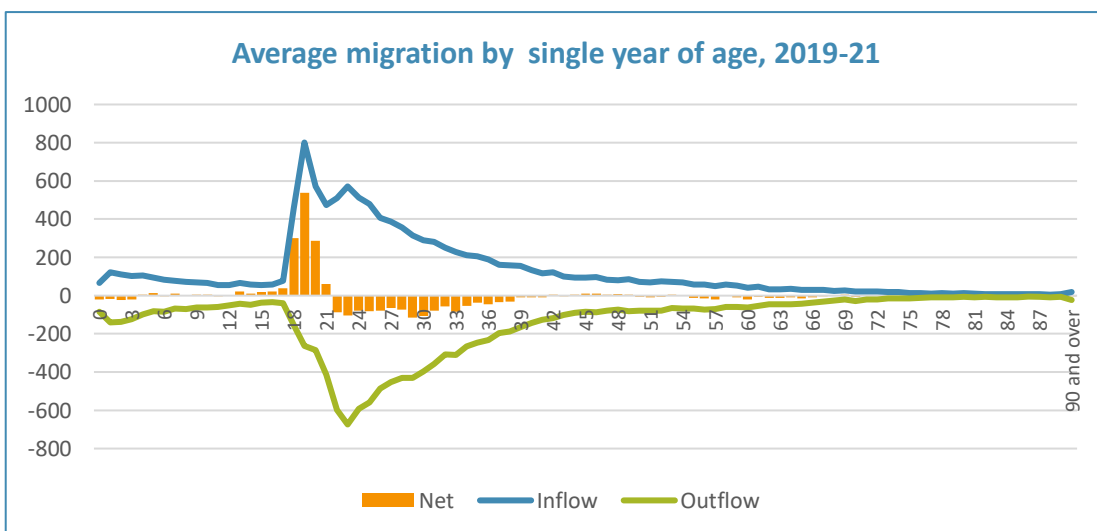
Disability/health: Aberdeen City has a slightly higher rate of people (known to the local authority) with learning disabilities at 5.5 per 1000, compared to 5.2 for Scotland as a whole [36]. At the time of the 2011 Census, 26.5% of the population reported having one or more long-term health conditions (compared to 29.9% in Scotland) and 16% reported having a long-term health condition that limited their activities (compared to 19.7%) in Scotland [35]. In the Scottish Health Survey (2017-21), 26% reported having a limiting long-term illness in Aberdeen City compared to 34% in Scotland. This proportion was higher in females (30%) than males (22%) [37].

3.2. Migration

Migration: Population change is driven by two main components: 1) natural change (births minus deaths) and (2) net migration (the sum of migration to/from Scotland and internal migration). It also includes other changes (e.g. changes in prisoner and armed forces population) although these tend to make up a smaller proportion of changes. The decrease in population between mid-2020 and mid-2021 was mainly driven by high net out-migration from Aberdeen City to other parts of Scotland and the UK (-3,470) as well as negative natural change (-135). While net overseas migration was positive (1,970), this was not high enough to offset net out-migration from Aberdeen to other parts of Scotland and the UK [33].



Migration to the City varies by age with most movement being in younger adults. In 2019-21, average positive net migration was highest in 18-21 year olds and negative net migration highest for people in their early 20s and 30s. The chart below shows in, out and net migration to the City by single year of age [38].



Source: National Records of Scotland, Total Migration to or from Scotland

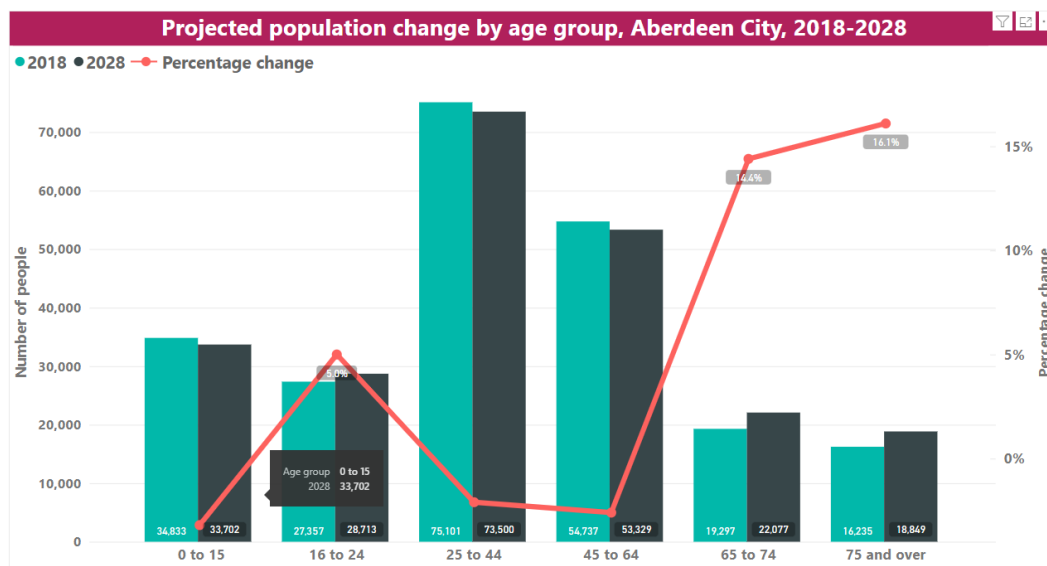
While there is limited data on origin/destination flows for overseas and the rest of UK migration, data on within Scotland migration for 2020-21 show that the highest levels of movement for Aberdeen were between Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire (3,453 out and 2,316 in, giving a net of -1,137), Aberdeen City and Edinburgh (1,091 out and 537 in, giving a net of -554) and Aberdeen City and Glasgow (856 out and 435 in, giving a net of -421). During 2020-21, positive net migration to Aberdeen City from other council areas in Scotland was relatively low with the highest positive net migration being from Moray (238 in and 214 out, giving a net of 24), Inverclyde (31 in and 20 out, giving a net of 11) and Angus (224 in and 215 out, giving a net of 9) [39].

3.3. Population projections

Population projections: Population projections are now quite dated with the most recent being 2018-based – i.e. before Brexit and COVID-19. Newer projections (based on Census data) are not expected to be available until Spring 2024.

Between 2018 and 2028 the population of Aberdeen is projected to increase by 1.1% to 230,170. Over the same time period, the population in Scotland is projected to increase by 1.8%. Most of the increase in Aberdeen City is projected to come from migration (1%) with natural change accounting for 0.1% of the projected increase. Across Scotland, between 2018 and 2028, 14 councils are projected to see a population decrease and 18 councils are projected to see a population increase [40].

Projected change by age group: The projected change is not consistent across all age groups. In Aberdeen City, decreases are projected in the 0-15 year age group (-3.2%), the 25-44 year age group (-2.1%) and in the 45-64 year age group (-2.6%). Increases are projected for the other age groups, with the largest increase being in the 75 years and over age group (16.1%). In terms of size, however, 25 to 44 years is projected to remain the largest age group with the 75+ years group projected to remain the smallest group [40].

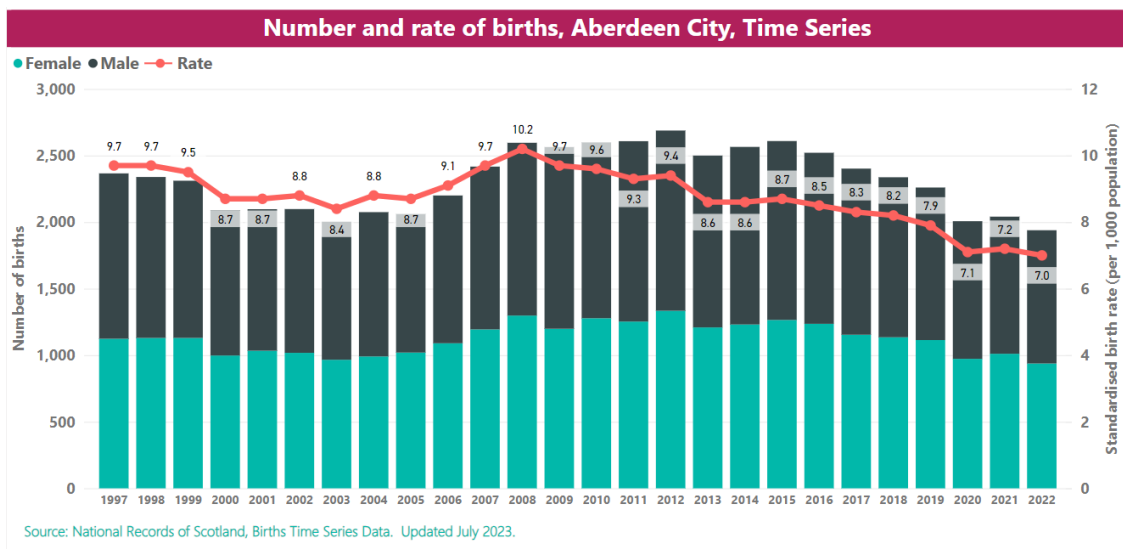


Projected change by gender: The projected change differs by gender. The male population is projected to increase by 2.5% over the period, while the female population is projected to

decrease by 0.2%. This would mean that by 2022, the number of males in Aberdeen City would, in contrast to recent trends, be higher than the number of females [40].

3.4. Births

Births: In 2022 there were 1,939 births in Aberdeen City – a decrease of 5% from 2,041 births in 2021. Of these births, 938 (48.4%) were female and 1,001 (51.6%) were male. The standardised birth rate was 7.0 per 1,000 population (compared to 8.6 for Scotland as a whole) and is the second lowest rate in Scotland, with the lowest being City of Edinburgh at 6 per 1,000 population. The most common age group for mothers is 30-34 years and the least common age group for mothers is 0-19 years. Compared to 20 years ago, more births are now to older mothers, with the number of births to women aged 0-19 years and 20-24 years decreasing (by 86% and 46.1% respectively) and the number of births to women aged 35-39 years and 40 years and increasing by (by 33.1% and 115% respectively) [41]. The number of births varies across the city. The [Intermediate Zone](#) with the highest number of births in 2021 (2022 data not yet available) was Kincorth, Leggart & Nigg South (84 births) and the Intermediate Zone with the lowest number of births was West End North (19 births) [42]. The rate of births (crude rate per 1,000 population) ranged from a low of 5 in Rosemount to a high of 16.5 in Bucksburn South [43].



3.5. Deaths

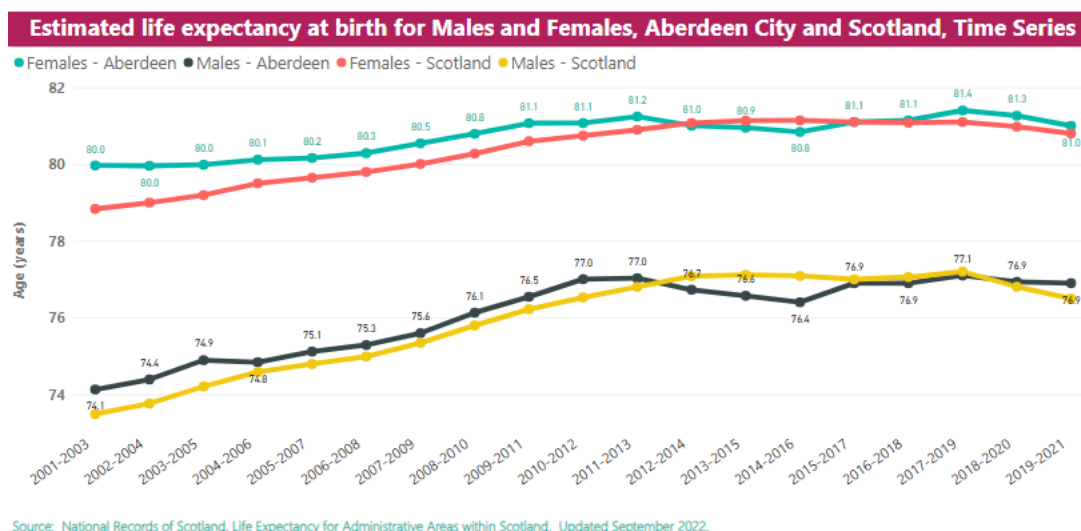
Deaths: In 2022 there were 2,248 deaths in Aberdeen City – a very slight decrease from 2,257 deaths in 2021. Of these deaths, 1,131 (50.3%) were female and 1,117 (49.7%) were male. The age-standardised death rate was 11.4 per 1,000 population compared to 11.5 in Scotland. The highest number of total deaths were in the 85-89 years age group (731 deaths). For females, the most common age group for deaths was 90 years and over and for males the most common age group was 80-84 years [44].

Death rates vary across the city. Based on Intermediate Zones, the most recent data is for 2019-2021 (3-year aggregate). Age-sex standardised rates range from a high of 2,252 per 100,000 population in Woodside to a low of 794 in West End South. The equivalent rate for Aberdeen City is 1,173 [43].

Early deaths (15-44 years, all causes): In 2019-21, the rate (age-sex standardised per 100,000 population) for early deaths in Aberdeen City was 94 which is lower than the rate for Scotland of 117. This rate varied by deprivation, being highest in the most deprived areas. The rate for SIMD quintile 1 (most deprived) was 202 per 100,000 population compared to a rate of 36 for SIMD quintile 5 (least deprived). The rate for early deaths varies across the City (intermediate Zones). In the period 2019-21, the rate of early deaths ranged from 0.0 per 100,000 population in Braeside, Mannofield, Broomhill & Seafield North, Braeside, Mannofield, Broomhill & Seafield South and Kincorth, Leggart & Nigg South to 294 per 100,000 population in Woodside. [43].

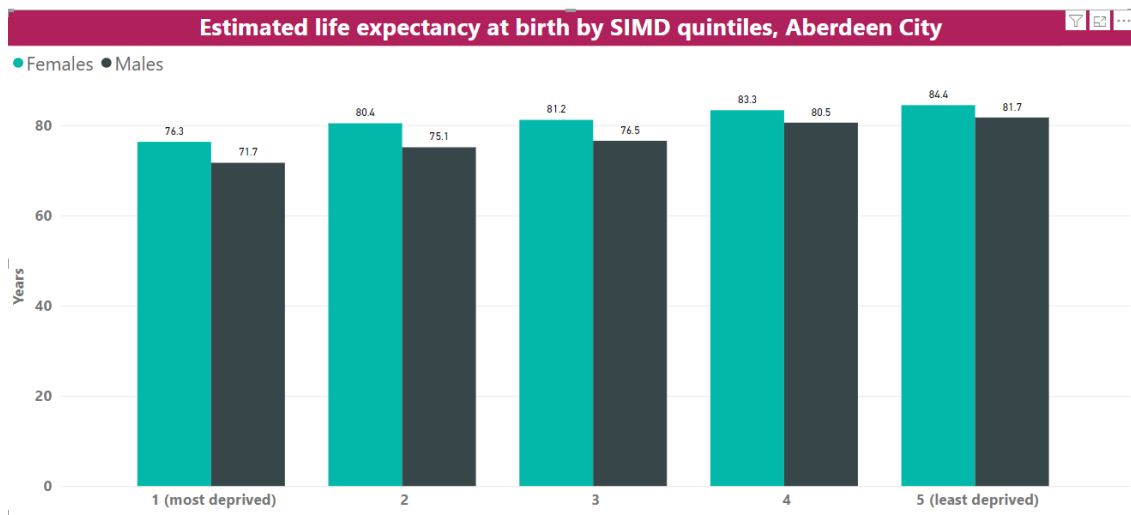
3.6. Estimated life expectancy at birth

Estimated life expectancy: In general, Life Expectancy (LE) at birth is higher for females than for males. In 2019-21 in Aberdeen City LE at birth was estimated to be 81.40 years for women and 76.9 years for men, i.e. on average, a baby girl born in Aberdeen City in 2019-21 could expect to live for 81.0 years while a baby boy born in Aberdeen City in the same period could expect to live for 76.9 years. The estimated LE at birth for both females and males is similar to that for Scotland (80.8 years and 76.5 years respectively) [45]. Across Scotland, life expectancy has increased since the early 1980s but has now remained virtually unchanged since 2012-14, with most of Scotland’s council areas experiencing a slow-down or a stall in life expectancy growth since that time.



Estimated life expectancy by deprivation: Estimated life expectancy is strongly associated with deprivation. In Aberdeen City in 2017-2021, estimated life expectancy for males in SIMD quintile 1 (most deprived) was 71.7 years compared to 81.7 years for males in SIMD quintile 5 (least deprived) – a difference of 10 years. For females, the difference in estimated life expectancy was less marked, at 76.3 years for females in quintile 1 compared to 84.4 years for females in quintile 5 – a difference of 8.1 years [45]. Comparison with data from 2013-2017

shows that the gap in estimated life expectancy between most and least deprived quintiles in Aberdeen City has increased for males (previously 9.7 years) and females (previously 7.4 years).

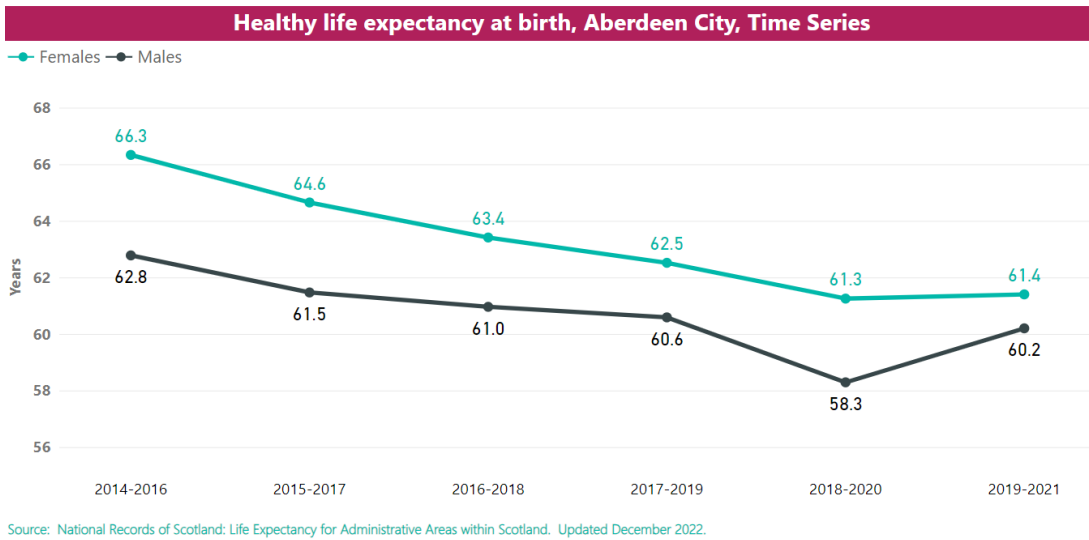


Source: National Records of Scotland, Life Expectancy for Administrative Areas within Scotland. Updated September 2022.

The relationship between estimated life expectancy and deprivation means that for both males and females there are important differences in estimated life expectancy at birth depending on where you live in Aberdeen City. The most recent data available for smaller geographies ([Intermediate Zones](#)) is for the period 2017-2021 (5-year average). For males, estimated LE at birth ranges from a low of 69.4 years in Woodside to a high of 83.1 years in Braeside, Mannofield and Broomhill & Seafield North – a difference of 13.7 years. For females it ranges from a low of 72 years in Woodside to a high of 86.3 years in West End North – a difference of 14.3 years. [43].

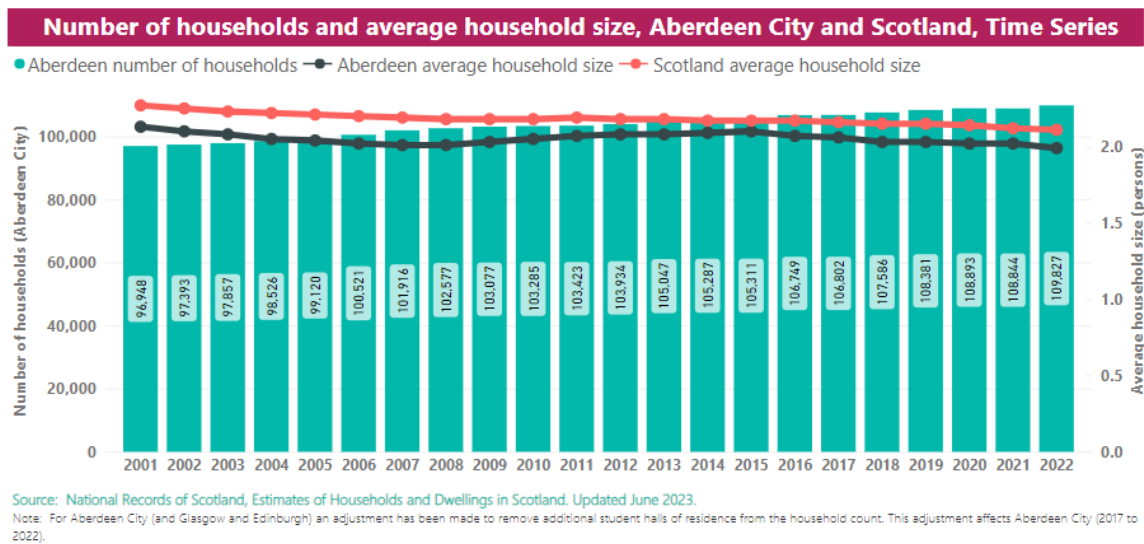
3.7. Healthy life expectancy

Healthy life expectancy: While Life Expectancy (LE) counts total years of expected life regardless of level of health, Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) represents the number of years that an individual can expect to live in good health. In 2019-21, males in Aberdeen City had an estimated life expectancy at birth of 76.9 years and a healthy life expectancy of 60.2 years, giving an expected period of ‘not healthy’ health of 16.7 years. This means that a baby boy born in 2019-2021 could expect to live 78.3% of his life in healthy health. In 2019-2021, females in Aberdeen City had an estimated life expectancy at birth of 81.0 years and a healthy life expectancy of 61.4 years, giving an expected period of ‘not healthy’ health of 19.6 years. This means that a baby girl born in 2019-2021 could expect to live 75.7% of their life in healthy health. So while on average females have a higher life expectancy than males, they also spend a higher proportion of their lives in ‘unhealthy health’. In Scotland, HLE is strongly associated with deprivation. Healthy life expectancy for males in the most deprived areas of Scotland was 26 years lower than in the least deprived areas. For females the difference was almost 25 years. In the most deprived areas, males and females spend more than a third of their life in poor health compared to around 15% in the least deprived areas [46].



3.8. Households

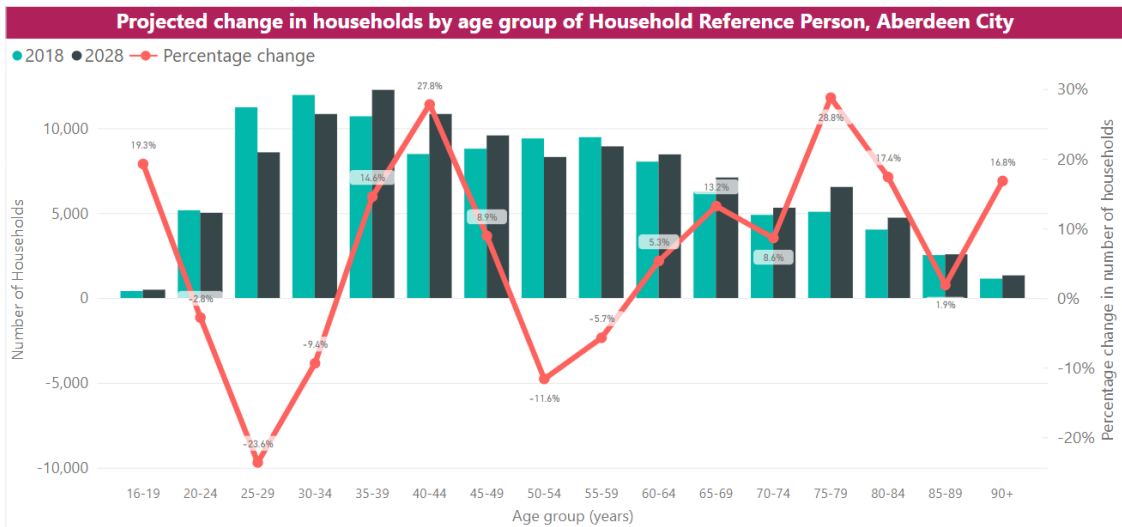
Households: In 2022, there were 109,827 households in Aberdeen City – up from 108,844 households in 2021. Since 2002, the number of households in Aberdeen has increased by 12.8% (12,434 households) which is lower than the average rate for Scotland of 15.3%. The average household size was 1.99 compared to 2.11 for Scotland. In both Aberdeen City and Scotland, average household sizes have decreased over the past 20 years (from 2.10 and 2.25 respectively in 2002) [47].



Household projections: As with the population projections, the most recent household projections are 2018-based as so relatively dated. New projections are not expected until early 2024.

Between 2018 and 2028, the number of households in Aberdeen City is projected to increase from 107,586 to 110,884. This is a 3.0% increase, which compares to a projected increase of 5.0% for Scotland as a whole. In 2028, the household type “One adult” is projected to remain the most common in Aberdeen City (38.4% of all households in 2018 and 38.9% in 2028) and

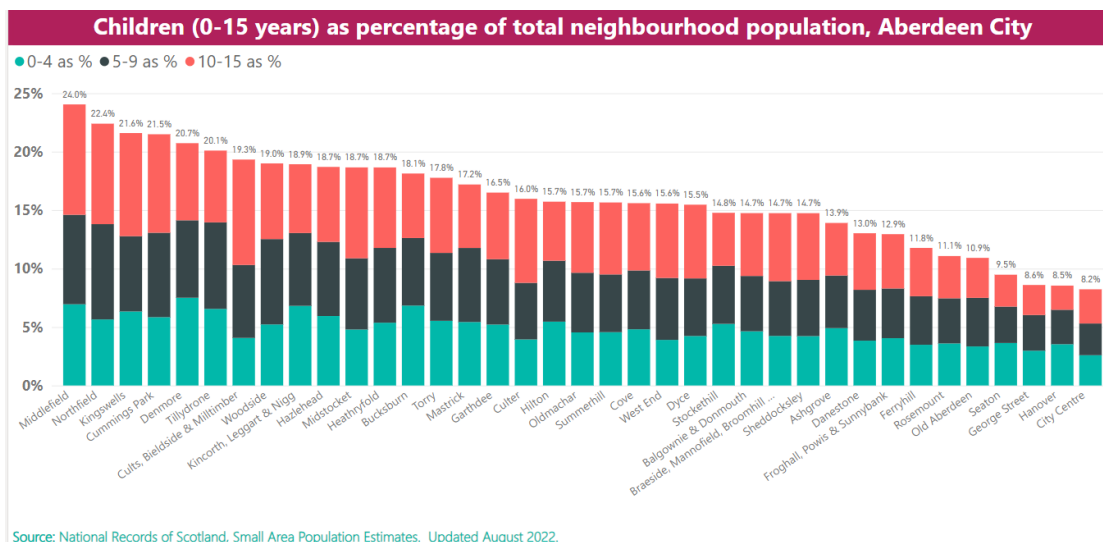
the household type “One adult, one or more children” is projected to remain the least common (3.7% in 2018 and 3.6% in 2028). Between 2018 and 2028, the household type “Three or more adults” is projected to see the largest percentage decrease (-5.0%) and the household type “Two or more adults, one or more children” is projected to see the largest percentage increase (5.0%). Based on 5-year age groupings, between 2018 and 2028, the 25 to 29 age group is projected to see the largest percentage decrease (-23.6%) and the 35 to 39 age group is projected to see the largest percentage increase (28.8%). In terms of size, however, 35 to 39 years is projected to become the largest age group of a Household Reference Person (HRP), compared to 30-34 years in 2018 [48].



4. Children & Young People

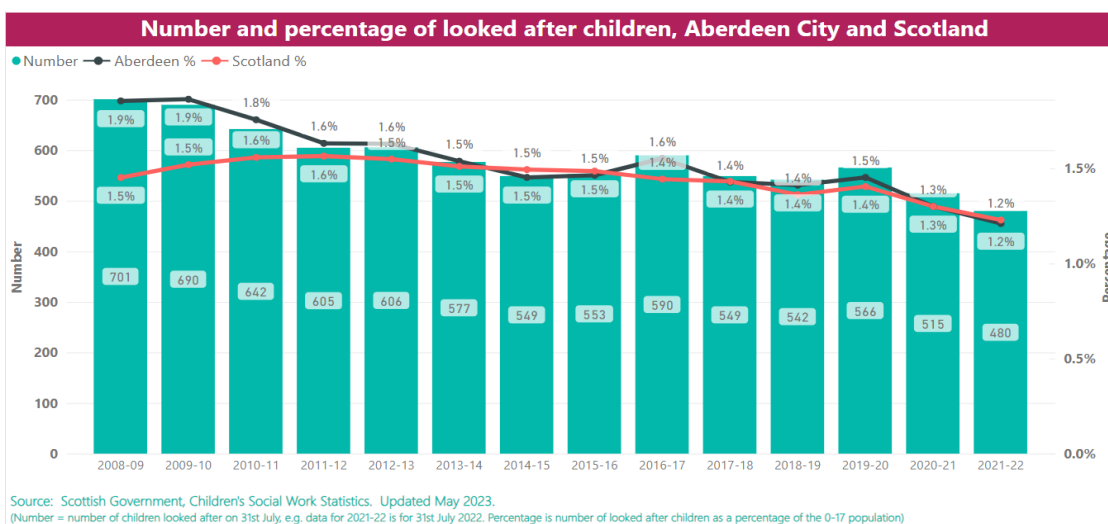
4.1. Child population

Child population: In 2021, there were 35,860 children (0-15 years) in Aberdeen City – 15.8% of the city’s population [23]. The number and proportion of children varies by neighbourhood. In terms of numbers, Old Aberdeen has the smallest child population (281) while Cults, Bieldside and Milltimber has the largest (2,431). The City Centre has the smallest proportion of children (8.2% of the population of the neighbourhood) and Middlefield the largest (24.0%).

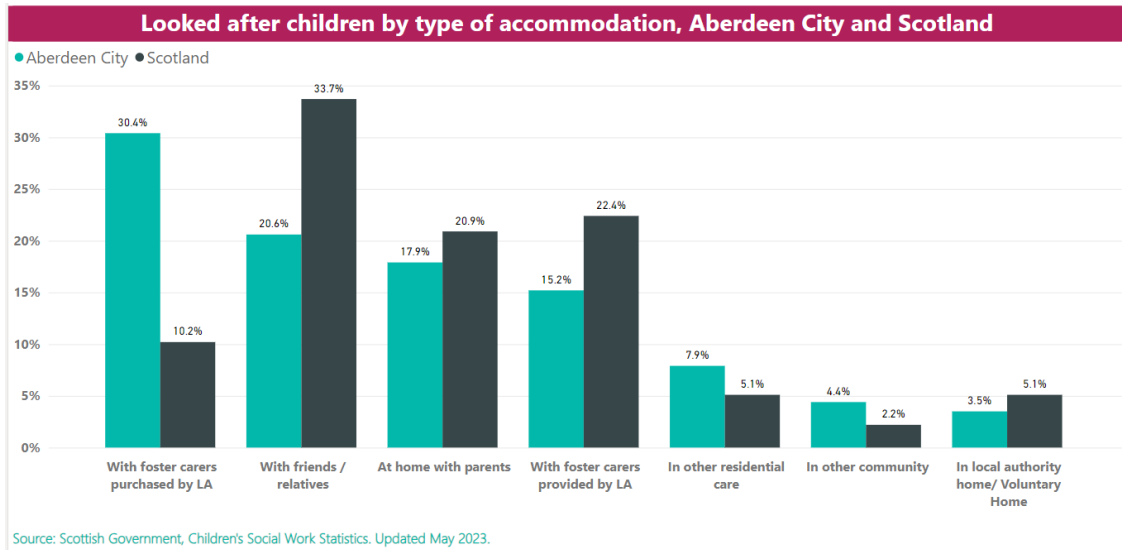


4.2. Looked after children

Looked after children (LAC): Between 1/08/2021 and 31/07/2022, there were 100 children starting to be looked after and 147 ceasing to be looked after. On 31st July 2022 there were 480 looked after children (LAC) in Aberdeen City – equivalent to 1.2% of the 0-17 years population. This is the same as the rate for Scotland. Most (59.1%) looked after children in Aberdeen City are boys, and 17.9% are under 5 years old. Five percent of looked after children are known to be from an ethnic minority group and a quarter (25.4%) are known to have a disability. 16% of LAC are 16 years year or over. [49].

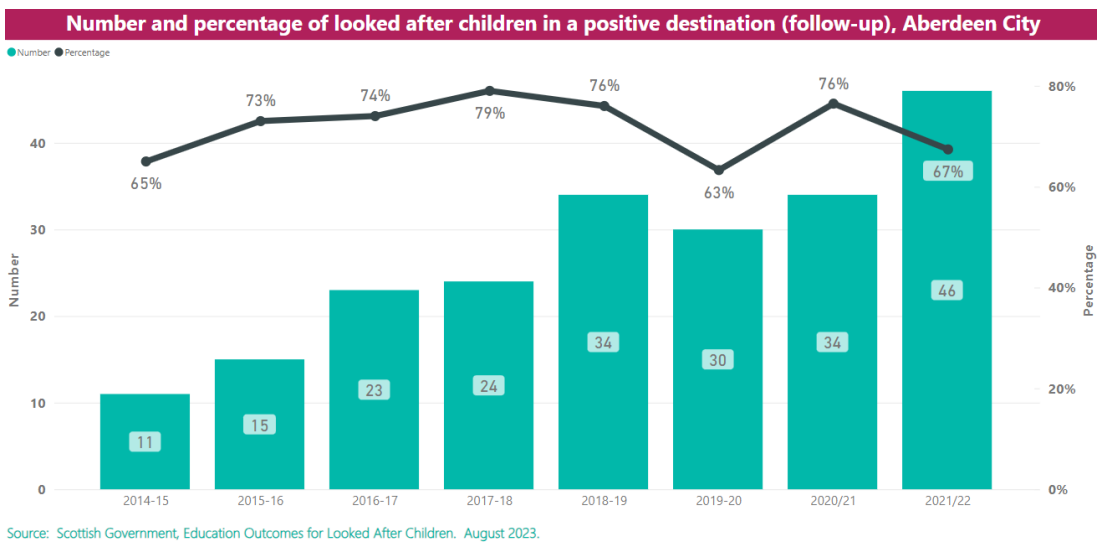


Accommodation: Foster care is the most common setting for looked after children in Aberdeen City. At 38.5%, the proportion of looked after children in kinship care (at home with parents or with friends/relatives) is lower in Aberdeen City than in Scotland (54.6%) [49]. In 2020-21, 21.2% of LAC had more than 1 placement in the past year – higher than the rate for Scotland of 16.8% [7].

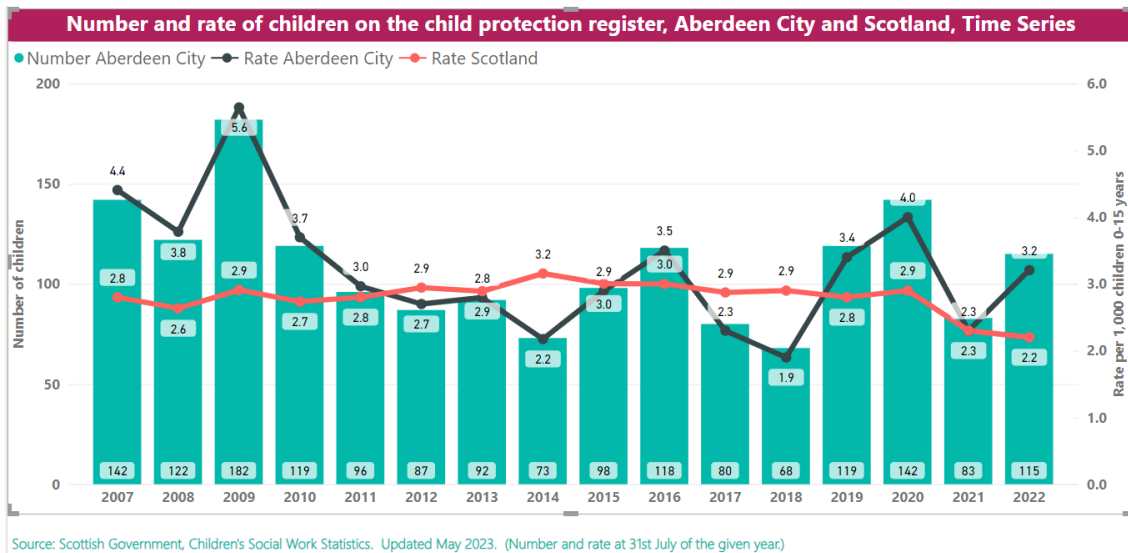


LAC educational outcomes: In 2021/22, 76.1% looked after children in Aberdeen City left school with 1 or more qualification at SCQF level 4 – lower than the rate for Scotland of 78.3% but higher than rate of 65.8% in 2020/21 [50]. Attendance and exclusion data is only available every 2 years. In 2020/21 the attendance rates for looked after children in Aberdeen City was 89.1% compared to 87.9% for Scotland. [The exclusion rate](#) (per 1,000 pupils who were looked after) was lower in Aberdeen (76.5 per 1,000 pupils compared to 77.8 per 1,000 pupils in Scotland) [51].

LAC positive destinations: In 2021/22, 67.4 % of looked after children in Aberdeen City had a positive destination (based on 9-month follow-up survey and children who were looked after for the full year) compared to 70.4% in Scotland. This is lower than the rate for all children of 90.8% (2021/22) . The percentage of children in a positive destination fell in both Aberdeen City and Scotland compared to 2020/21 from 76.5% and 71.5% respectively [50].



Child protection: At 31st July 2022, there were 115 children on the Child Protection Register (CPR) in Aberdeen City. This is an increase from 83 in 2021. The rate of children on the CPR (per 1,000 children aged 0-15 years) was 3.2 compared to 2.2 in Scotland [49]. The most common concerns identified at case conferences of children who were on the child protection register at 31st July 2022 were parental mental health problems (50), neglect (48) and emotional abuse (46). (Note: multiple concerns can be recorded rather than just the main category of concern.) In 2020/21, 2.2% of child protection registrations were re-registered within 18 months – lower than the rate in 2019/20 of 3.1%. In Scotland 7% of child protection registrations were re-registered within 18 months [7].



4.3. Mental health and wellbeing

Information on mental health and wellbeing is informed by the SHINE Mental Health Surveys [52]. Two surveys have been conducted, the first in March 2022 and the second in November/December 2022. During November / December 2022, 9,803 children [52] and young people from P6-S6 completed the Mental Health & Wellbeing Survey developed by the Scottish Schools Health and Wellbeing Improvement Research Network (SHINE), this was a higher return than the previous year (9,428). In real terms this means there were returns from 67% of all pupils from P6 to S6 with a higher proportion of returns from younger year groups. Children and young people from P5-S6 also had the opportunity to undertake a Physical Health & Wellbeing survey developed by the Local Authority. 6,993 pupils completed this survey in November/December 2022.

Given that an individual's mental health and wellbeing is influenced by a wide variety of factors, including environmental, social and the interaction between these, the survey looked at how family affluence (using the Family Affluence Scale – low/medium/high) and gender (boy/girl/did not disclose) impacts wellbeing in the most recent survey. In general, those in the low family affluence group were more likely to report a range of negative outcomes across nearly all the measures within the survey. Similarly, amongst both primary and secondary school pupils, those young people who did not disclose their gender were more likely to report a range of negative outcomes and feelings across nearly all measures.

Primary 6 & 7

In November 2022, 3533 pupils from P6 and P7 completed this survey with 119 pupils not providing details of their gender and 46 pupils not identifying their year group. This is a slightly higher return from last year (3,514) and is thought to be due to the rising school roll.

General health: 82%, 2897 (80%, 2811 in March 2022) of learners in primary 6 and 7 who responded reported that their health was excellent or good. The proportion of pupils self-reporting Excellent or Good Health in November 2022, with the exception of P6 boys, has improved across combined gender and stage in comparison with March 2022. The percentage who reported their health was excellent or good varied by Family Affluence (from 73% with low family affluence to 89% for those with high family affluence) and gender (61% for those who did not disclose their gender, 82% for boys and 84% for girls).

Happiness: Learners were asked to rate how happy they were with various aspects of life (appearance, school, future, health, choice, friends, family, time use, things you have, home and overall). Across P6 and P7, learners were positive about many aspects of their lives. However, across both age groups and gender categories, 'Appearance' was still lower than other aspects of their lives with 24% of P6 learners and 30% of P7 learners noting appearance as a concern (down from 27% and 35% respectively in March 2022). Young people in the lowest family affluence group were more likely to report low levels of happiness across a range of life domains than their more affluent peers. In particular, Those in the lowest group were more than twice as likely to report low levels of happiness with life as a whole, the home they live in, choices available to them, friendships, appearance, their future and school than their peers in the least deprived cohort. Similarly, those who did not disclose their gender were nearly 6 times more likely to be negative about life as a whole than their peers. Only thoughts about free time were in line with peers.

WHO-5 Wellbeing Index: This is a five item scale which provides a measure of emotional functioning, with a score of 50 or less indicating low mood. A score of 28 or less indicates at risk of depression. Based on this scale, 75% of those in P6 & 7 did not show evidence of low mood. Again this differed by family affluence with 34% of pupils from the low affluence group reporting low mood compared with 23% in the medium affluence group and 15% of those in the most affluent group. Additionally, the difference between outcomes for those deemed to be at risk of depression was more prevalent with those identified as being least affluent nearly 4 times more likely to be at risk compared to those deemed the most affluent. Low mood also varied by gender with girls (26%) more likely to report low mood than boys (22%), but with those who did not disclose their gender (51%) more than twice as likely to have low mood than their peers. Those who did not disclose were twice as likely to report being at risk of depression (15% compared to 7% for both boys and girls).

Self Confidence: Learners were asked about how confident they felt in themselves. 57% of P6 & P7 pupils stated that they always or often felt confident (up from 52% in March 2022). Again this varied by family affluence (low 49%, medium 58% and high 66%) and gender (boy 65%, girl 50% and did not disclose 27%).

Secondary 1-6

In November 2022, 59% 6270 (60%, 5914 in March 2022) learners from S1-S6 completed the secondary survey with 292 learners choosing not to provide details of their gender and 98 learners not identifying their year group.

General health: In November 2022, 73% of learners in S1-6 reported that their general health was excellent or good (up from 70% in March 2022). Levels of self-reported health varied by year group. Reporting good or excellent health was also associated with family affluence with 81% of secondary pupils in the high family affluence group rating their health as good or excellent compared with 61% of those in the low family affluence group. There were also differences by gender with only 39% of those who did not disclose reporting excellent or good health (compared to 69% of girls and 79% of boys).

Happiness: Within Secondary Schools, it was clear that the aspects of their lives learners were most happy with are, home, things they had, time use, friends and family, with school and appearance consistently receiving lower scores. Overall, 25% (a reduction of 6% of learners since March 2022) report low happiness linked to 'Appearance' and 20% (a reduction of 3%), linked to 'School'. Although there is a notable reduction in both areas, showing a positive step forward, there continues to be, however from Primary to Secondary, an increase from 10% of primary learners to 20% of secondary learners who report low happiness regarding school. Family affluence heavily influences happiness at the secondary phase. Those in the low affluence group were twice as likely to be unhappy with life in general than those in the highest affluence group. Those in the lower affluence group were 5 times more likely to express unhappiness with the home they live in. In terms of low happiness with life, across nearly all of the measures, pupils who didn't disclose their gender expressed the most unhappiness.

WHO-5 Wellbeing Index: This is a five item scale which provides a measure of emotional functioning, with a score of 50 or less indicating low mood. A score of 28 or less indicates at risk of depression. In November 2022, 40% of S1-6 learners self-rated below the 50-score threshold - down from 47% in March 2022. In general, the proportion of learners indicating low mood is higher in girls than boys and increases by year group (although in November 2022 the percentage of both boys and girls expressing low mood dropped between S5 and S6 – from 35% to 31% for boys and from 65% to 54% for girls). Comparison between March and November data shows a reduction in the number of learners at risk of depression in both gender groups and most year groups although the percentage of girls at risk of depression remains higher for girls than for boys. Family affluence strongly influences both low mood and a risk of depression with the percentage of those in the lower affluence group being higher than for those in the higher affluence groups. Those who did not disclose their gender are also more likely to self-report low mood and be considered at risk of depression.

Self Confidence: In November 2022, the proportion of S1-S6 pupils who report always or often feeling confident was 41% (up from 35% in March 2022). A higher proportion of boys than girls reported always or often feeling confident across all year groups (with an average of 53.7% for boys and 27.3% for girls).

Feeling safe: Learners were asked to consider how safe they felt within various environments and across all schools and year groups, the majority of learners reported that they felt safe always or most of the time in their communities (87%), at home (96%) and in school (81%), however there is a percentage of learners who reported that they rarely or never feel safe in these environments.

Feeling listened to: Being available to listen to children and young people, is essential for supporting individual needs and understanding fully what is required. Learners were asked if they had an adult in their lives that listens to them about how they are feeling. 68% positively shared that they always did, showing an increase of 4%. 5% (345) also stated no, they did not have an adult in their life that listens to them about how they are feeling. This is a similar percentage of learners from March 2022.

Child and adolescent mental health (CAMHS)

The NHS in Scotland provides mental health services for children and young people with a wide range of mental health conditions including Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), anxiety, behaviour problems, depression and early onset psychosis. This treatment is provided through Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMH) services. Data is available by Health Board. In the 12 months to March 2023, there were 4,144 referrals received in Grampian Health Board, of which 3,135 (75.6%) were accepted. At the end of March 2023, there were 335 patients waiting to be seen. Of these 321 (95.8%) had been waiting less than 18 weeks (target period) [53].

4.4. Education

School and pupil numbers: In 2022 there were 14,573 primary school pupils and 10,430 secondary school pupils in Aberdeen City. There were also 140 pupils enrolled in Special Schools. The total number of pupils was 25,143 [54].

Additional support needs/disability: In 2022, 36.5% (5,315) of primary pupils and 43.5% (4,541) of secondary pupils had additional support needs. The most common reason for support for both primary and secondary pupils was English as an additional language. In 2022, 6,294 (25%) of all pupils in Aberdeen City did not have English as their main home language. The five main home languages (other than English) are Polish, Arabic, Russian, Urdu and Ukrainian. In 2022, 518 school pupils were assessed and/or declared as having a disability and 802 pupils had autistic spectrum disorder [54].

Attendance: Percentage attendance is calculated in relation to the total number of possible attendances (half-days). In 2020/21, average attendance in primary schools in the City was 94.3% and for secondary schools the rate was 90.7%. The respective rates for Scotland were 91.4% and 83.2% [55].

Exclusions: In 2020/21 there were 408 cases of exclusion in Aberdeen City (77 in Primary Schools and 331 in Secondary schools) – down from 1,221 in 2018/19. This is equivalent to a rate of 17.2 exclusions per 1,000 pupils. The rate of exclusions was higher in secondary schools (105.8) than in primary schools (19.7). The number of pupils excluded was also higher in secondary schools (237) than primary schools (57) [56].

Free school meals (FSM): In 2022/23, 77% of primary school pupils in Aberdeen were registered for FSM in mainstream local authority schools. (Note: from the beginning of the 2022/23 school year all pupils up to and including P5 were eligible for FSM under the universal provision. 22.3% of P6 and 18.7% of P7 pupils were registered for FSM.) At secondary school level, 16.6% of pupils were registered for FSM – up from 15.7% in 2021 and 13.9% in 2020. Since 2022, all pupils at special schools all eligible for FSM [54].

Eco-Schools: 100 Aberdeen schools are registered with the Eco-Schools programme and 13 have achieved green flags [57].

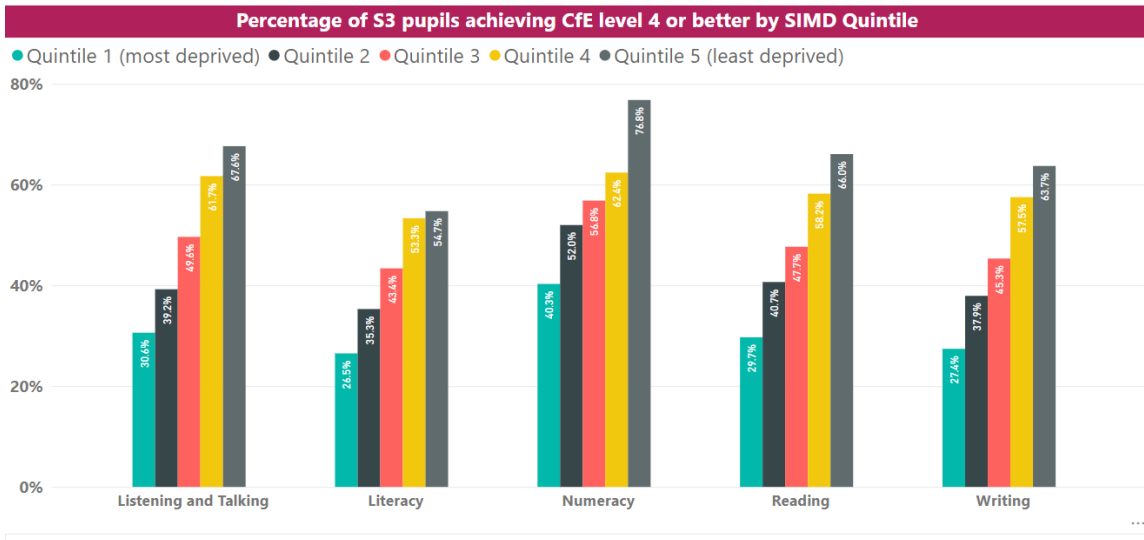
Attainment

Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) Levels: Data on achievement against expected levels (Early Level, First Level, Second Level, Third level or better and Fourth Level) is given at four stages – P1, P4, P7 and S3 – in five areas: reading, writing, listening and talking, literacy and numeracy. In 2021/22, with a few exceptions, the proportion of pupils in Aberdeen City achieving the expected level is similar to or lower than the equivalent proportion for Scotland as a whole [58].

Percentage of pupils achieving expected levels						
		P1	P4	P7	S3	S3
		Early Level	First Level	Second Level	Third Level or better	Fourth Level
Reading	Aberdeen City	76%	76%	80%	84%	51%
	Scotland	79%	76%	79%	88%	54%
Writing	Aberdeen City	74%	69%	74%	83%	49%
	Scotland	77%	70%	73%	87%	52%
Listening and talking	Aberdeen City	84%	86%	85%	85%	52%
	Scotland	86%	85%	86%	89%	55%
Literacy	Aberdeen City	70%	66%	71%	80%	44%
	Scotland	74%	67%	71%	86%	48%
Numeracy	Aberdeen City	82%	74%	76%	89%	61%
	Scotland	84%	75%	76%	89%	59%

Source: Scottish Government, Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels 2021/22 [58]

Achievement of expected levels varies by deprivation. In Aberdeen City in all subject areas, a smaller proportion of those in the most deprived 20% (SIMD 2016) achieved the expected level than those in the least deprived 20%. As an example, the chart below shows the percentage of S3 pupils achieving Fourth Level in each of the five areas [58].

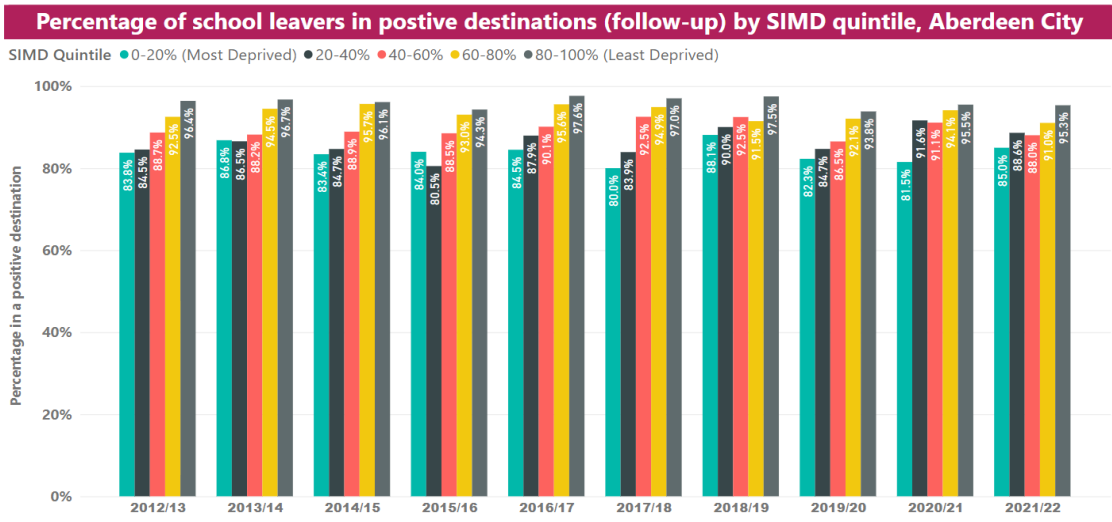


Source: Scottish Government, Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels; 2021/22.

SCQF Literacy and Numeracy: In 2021/22 88% of school leavers achieved literacy and numeracy at SCQF level 4 or better (same as in 2020/21) and 64% achieved literacy and numeracy at SCQF level 5 or better (compared to 65% in 2021/22) [59]. 70% of pupils gained 5+ awards at SCQF level 5 – up from 63% in 2020/21 [7].

Positive destinations: Follow-up destinations for school leavers are for outcomes approximately 9 months after the end of the school year. In 2021/22, 90.8% of school leavers had a positive follow-up destination, a decrease from 92.1% in 2020/21 and lower than the rate for Scotland of 93.5%. The most common destinations were higher education (39.9% of school leavers), further education (24.3%) and employment (24%) [60].

The percentage of school leavers in a positive follow-up destination varied by deprivation (based on SIMD) with 85% of school leavers in the most deprived quintile having a positive destination compared to 95.3% of those in the least deprived quintile [60].



Source: Scottish Government, Follow-up Leaver Destinations. Updated June 2023. (Note: caution is advised in interpretation of 2019/20 figures due to impact of COVID-19).

(Note: caution is advised in interpretation of 2019/20 figures due to the impact of COVID-19)

Participation in Education Employment or Training: The Skills Development Scotland Participation measure provides information on the current position of all children and young people between the age of 16 to 19 years, where they remain in school or have since left. In 2022, 91.2% of 16-19 year olds were participating in education, employment or training – up from 89.4% in 2021 [61].

Participation of Disabled Young People: In 2022, 86.8% of those identified as disabled were participating in education, employment or training – an increase from 83.6% in 2021 but lower than the rate for 2020 of 87.9%. The participation rate for those identified as disabled is lower than participation among non-disabled young people who in 2022 had 91.4% participation rates [61].

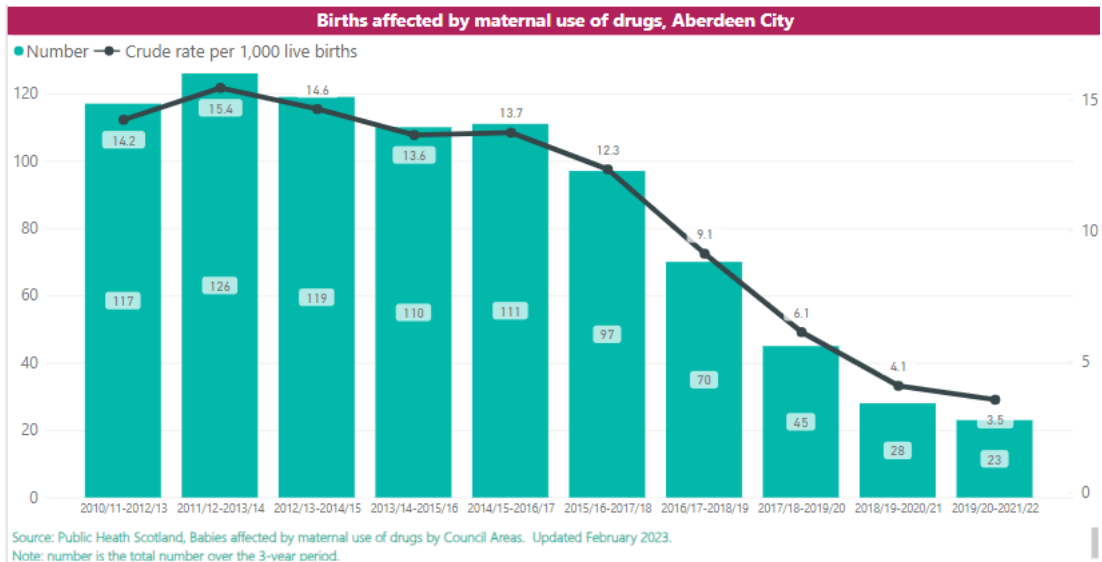
Participation levels in the 20% Most Deprived Communities: In 2022, participation rates were lower for those in the 20% most deprived areas (83.5%) than for those in the 20% least deprived areas (95.9%) [61].

Foundation apprenticeships (FAs): To date, six cohorts of pupils have participated in FAs (SCQF L6). In 2021/22 there were 117 enrolments for Cohort 6 and there are currently 15 FAs in training, down from 112 in the previous period [62].

4.5. Children – early years

Smoking during pregnancy: In 2019/20 to 2021/22 (3-year aggregate), 12.1% of women in the City with a known smoking status were recorded as a ‘current smoker’ at their first antenatal appointment. Rates of smoking during pregnancy are slightly lower in Aberdeen City than in Scotland (12.9%) and have decreased gradually over the past few years. Rates are highest in the most deprived areas (SIMD quintile 1) at 23.7% compared to 2.9% in SIMD quintile 5 (least deprived). Rates of smoking during pregnancy vary across the City (HSC localities) at 11% in Aberdeen South, 12% in Aberdeen North and 13% in Aberdeen Central [43].

Maternities with drug use: In the period 2019/20 to 2021/22 there were 121 maternities with drug misuse recorded. This is equivalent to a rate of 18.8 (crude rate per 1,000 maternities) which is higher than the rate for Scotland of 16.6 [63]. In the same period there were 23 babies affected by maternal use of drugs, equivalent to a rate of 3.5 (crude rate per 1,000 live births). The rate of babies affected by maternal use of drugs has fallen substantially in recent years [64].



Healthy birth weight: In 2019/20 to 2021/22 (3-year aggregate), 85.1% of babies born in Aberdeen City were a healthy birth weight compared to 84.1% in Scotland. The proportion of babies who are a healthy birth weight has remained relatively stable over the past few years. Rates vary across the City ([Intermediate Zones](#)) ranging from a low of 73.3% in Culter to a high of 95.4% in West End South [43].

Premature births: In 2019/20 to 2021/22 (3-year aggregate), 8.3% of births in Aberdeen City were premature, similar to the rate for Scotland of 8.2%. The rate of premature births varied across the City ([Intermediate Zones](#)) from a low of 2% in Cults, Bieldside & Milltimber East to a high of 15% in Summerhill [43].

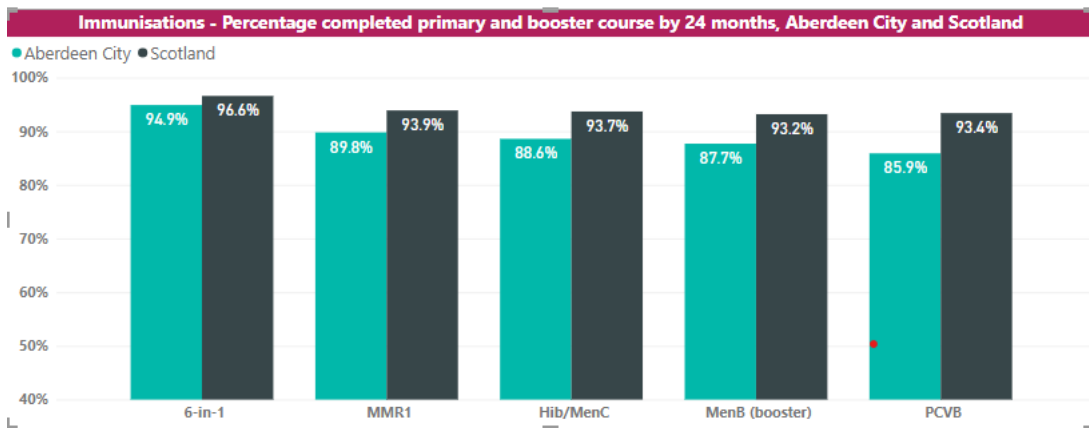
Infant deaths: In 2017-21, the rate (crude rate per 1,000 live births) of infant deaths (age 0-1 years) in Aberdeen City was 3.1 – lower than the rate for Scotland of 3.4 but higher than the rate for 2016-18 of 2.5 [43].

Breast-feeding: In 2019/20 to 2021/22 (3-year aggregate), 41.2% of babies in the City were exclusively breast-fed at the time of their 6-8 week review. This is significantly higher than the Scottish average of 31.9%. While the overall rate of breastfeeding for the City has increased over the past few years, there is variation across the City (based on [Intermediate Zones](#)) with rates ranging from a low of 16.9% in Heathryfold & Middlefield to a high of 76.0% in Cults, Bieldside & Milltimber East [43].

Exposure to second-hand smoke: In 2019/20 to 2021/22 (3-year aggregate), 7.6% of babies were reported as being exposed to second-hand smoke at their 6-8 week review. This is slightly higher than the rate for Scotland of 6.9%. The percentage of babies exposed to second-hand smoke has remained fairly static in Aberdeen in the last few periods [43].

Immunisation: In Scotland there is a national target for 95% of children to complete courses of routine childhood immunisations by 24 months of age. In 2022, rates of babies who have completed the primary and booster courses for these immunisations by 24 months are lower in Aberdeen City than in Scotland and are lower than the 95% target [65]. Uptake of immunisation varies by [Intermediate Zone](#). In 2019-21, percentage uptake of 6-in-1 at 24 months ranged from 89.5% in City Centre West to 100% in Hannover North and Oldmachar

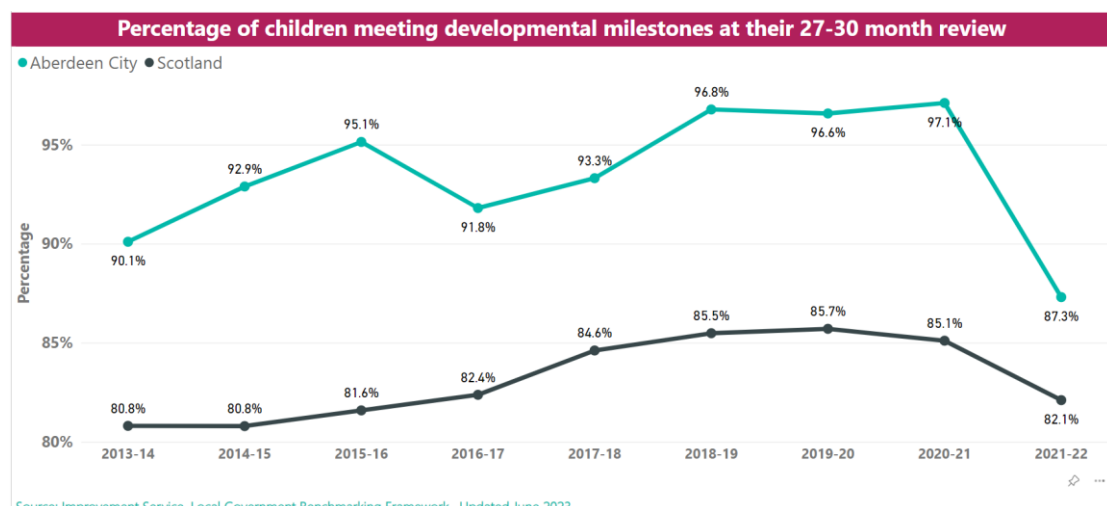
East and uptake of MMR ranged from 79.6% in City Centre East to 99.1% in Oldmachar East [43].



Source: ISD Scotland, Childhood Immunisation Statistics. Updated March 2023.

Developmental concerns at 27-30 months: At 27-30 month reviews, the health professional (normally a health visitor) assesses children’s developmental status and records the outcome (e.g. no concern, concern newly suspected as a result of the review, or concern or disorder already known prior to the review) against each of nine developmental domains (social, emotional, behavioural, attention, speech language & communication, gross motor, fine motor, vision and hearing). It has been recognised that an impact of covid/lockdown has resulted in an increase in speech and language concerns being evident at routine reviews. In 2021-22, 87.3% of children reviewed had no concerns identified at the review – down from 97.1% in 2020-21 [7]. In 2021-22 77.6% of children who were eligible for the 27-30 month review received a review - down from 83.3% in 2020-21.

In 2018/19-2020/21, the percentage of children with one or more developmental concern varied across the City (Intermediate Zones) ranging from a low of 0.0% in West End North to a high of 14% in City Centre East (2018/19-2020/21) [43].



Source: Improvement Service, Local Government Benchmarking Framework. Updated June 2023.

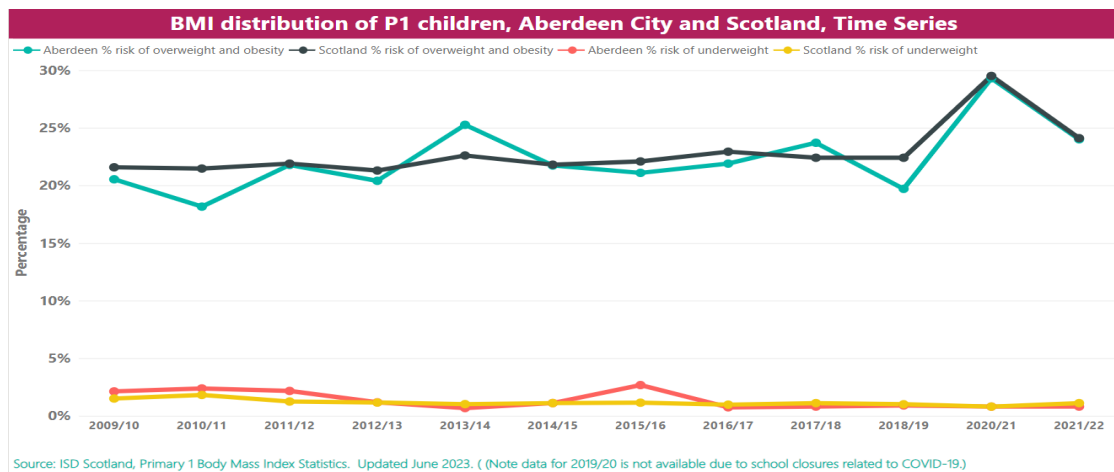
Unintentional injury in children under 5 years: In 2019/20 to 2021/22 there were 137 emergency hospital admissions for unintentional injury in children under 5 years (3-year rolling

average number). This is equivalent to a rate of 1,205 per 100,000 population – higher than the equivalent rate for Scotland of 1,005. After steadily falling for a number of years, the rate of emergency admissions for unintentional injuries has remained fairly static over the past few data periods [43].

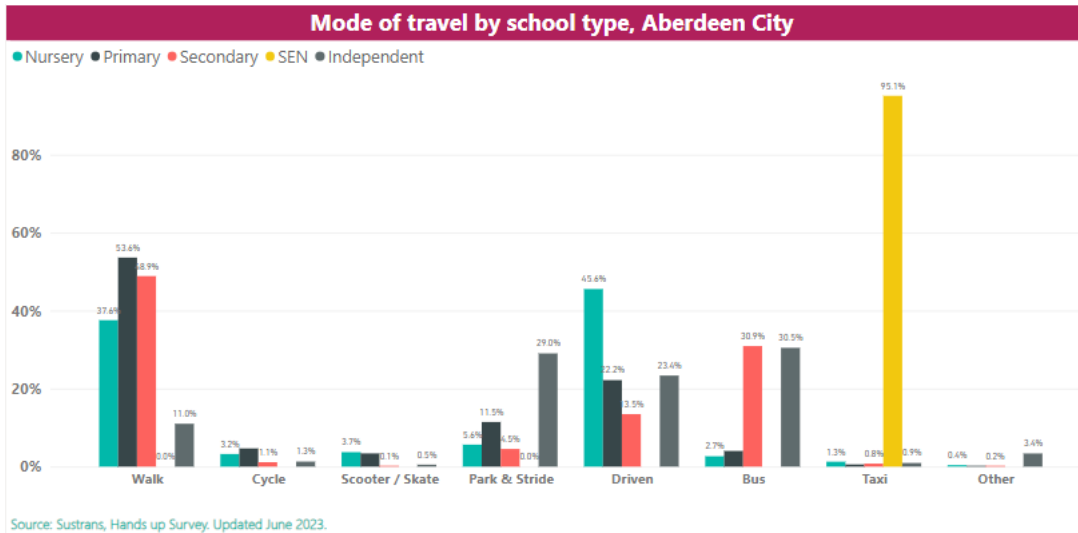
4.6. Child health

Healthy weight/BMI: In 2021/22, valid height and weight measurements were recorded for 1,972 Primary 1 children in Aberdeen City (equivalent to 80.4% of the 5 year-old population). Of these, 75.3% were classified as ‘healthy weight’ (BMI greater than 2nd centile and less than 85th centile) – slightly higher than the figure for Scotland of 74.7%. Based on 2020/21 data, the percentage of P1 children who were a healthy weight varied across the City ([Intermediate Zones](#)) from 50% in Sheddocksley to 95% in West End North [43].

In both Aberdeen City and Scotland the percentage of P1 children classified as being at risk of overweight and obesity (BMI greater than or equal to 85th centile) spiked in the immediate post-COVID-19 period (from 19.7% in 2018/19 to 29.2% in 2020/21 for Aberdeen City). In 2021/22, the figure dropped to 24% in both Aberdeen and Scotland. The percentage of P1 children classified as at risk of underweight remained at less than 1% (Note: no data is available for 2019/20 due to COVID-19) [66].



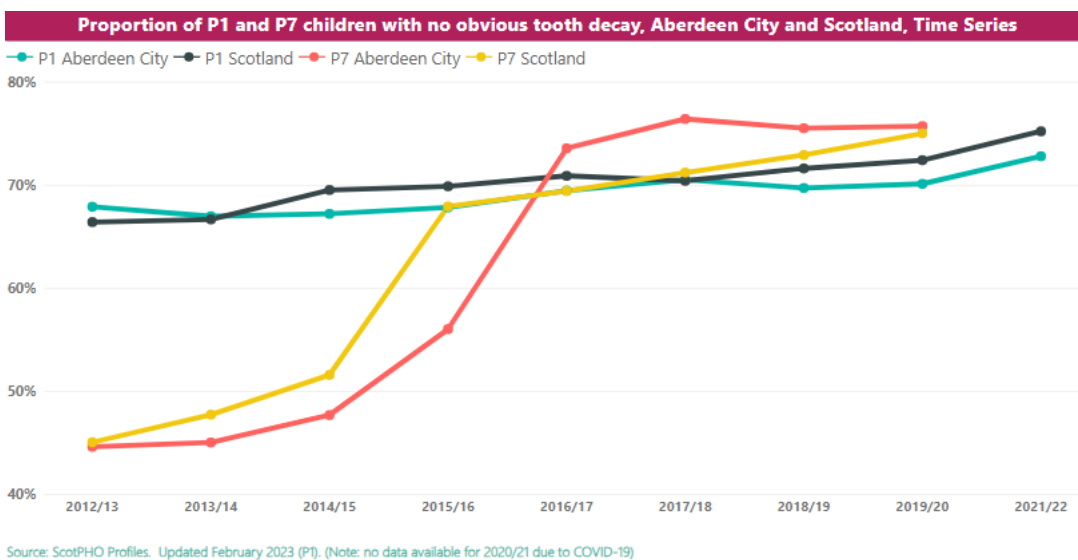
Active travel to school: In 2022, the most common mode of travel to school (excluding nursery) in Aberdeen City was walking (49%), followed by being driven (19.8%) and bus (13.2%). Mode of travel varied by type of school. Walking was the most common mode of travel for both primary (53.6%) and secondary (48.9%) pupils, while nursery children were most commonly driven to school (45.6%) with 37.6% walking. Pupils at SEN schools most commonly travelled by taxi (95.1%). The most common modes of travel for pupils at independent schools were bus (30.5%) and Park & Stride (29.0%) [67].



While still relatively high, the proportion of children who walk to school has fallen since 2010, with a noticeable drop between 2011 (58.3%) and 2012 (49.7%). Since then the proportion of children who walk has remained relatively stable at around 49% to 50% with some minor fluctuations.

Dental health: In 2021/22, 72.8% of P1 pupils in Aberdeen had no obvious tooth decay – slightly lower than the average rate for Scotland of 75.2%. This rate varied by deprivation, being lowest for those in SIMD quintile 1 (most deprived) at 55.1% and highest in SIMD quintile 5 (least deprived) at 81%. Across the City (Intermediate Zones), the proportion of [P1 pupils](#) with no obvious tooth decay ranged from a low of 44% in Torry East to a high of 90% in both Rosemount and Balgownie & Donmouth East. Since 2012/13 the percentage of P1 children with no obvious decay has increased from 67.9% to 72.8%.

In 2019/20 (no data published for 2021/22), the proportion of [P7 children](#) with no obvious tooth decay was 75.7% compared to 75% in Scotland. Again, there was variation by deprivation (67.9% in SIMD quintile 1 and 81.6% in SIMD quintile 5) and variation across the City with proportions ranging from a low of 50% in Hannover South to a high of 94% in Cults, Bieldside and Milltimber West. The proportion of P7 children with no obvious decay increased markedly between 2014/15 (47.7%) and 2017/18 (76.4%) and but has fallen slightly in the last two periods where data was available [43].



Uptake of HPV vaccine in S3 girls: In 2019/20-2021/22, 76.6% (3-year rolling average percentage) of S3 girls had their HPV vaccine – slightly lower than the rate for Scotland (78.8%) and lower than the rate for 2018/19-2020/21 of 78.9%. Rates for uptake of HPV vaccine have decreased in each of the last eight periods in Aberdeen City from 91.4% in 2011/12-2013/14. Rates of HPV vaccine uptake vary by deprivation, being lowest at 63.3% in SIMD quintile 1 (most deprived) and highest in SIMD quintile 5 (least deprived) at 86.6%. Across the city (Intermediate zones) rates range from a low of 38.7% in Tillydrone to a high of 93.5% in Braeside, Mannofield, Broomhill & Seafield East [43].

Teenage pregnancies: As in Scotland as a whole, the rate of teenage pregnancies (15-19 years) in Aberdeen City has reduced significantly over the past 10 years from 47.8 per 1,000 population (crude rate per 1,000 females aged 5-19 years) in 2008-2010 to 29.3 in 2018-2020 – slightly higher than the rate for Scotland of 27.1. The rate of teenage pregnancies varies by deprivation from a high of 58.2 per 1,000 females age 15-19 years in SIMD quintile 1 (most deprived) to a low of 10.4 in SIMD quintile 5 (least deprived) [43]. The percentage of first-time mothers who are aged 19 years and under varies across the City (Intermediate Zones) ranging from 0.0% to 19.2% (most recent data 2016/17-2018/19) [68]. The rate of pregnancies for females under 16 years has also decreased in recent years - from a high of 10 per 1,000 females aged 13-15 years in 2009/11, to 2.2 per 1,000 in 2019/21 [69].

4.7. Smoking, alcohol, and drug use

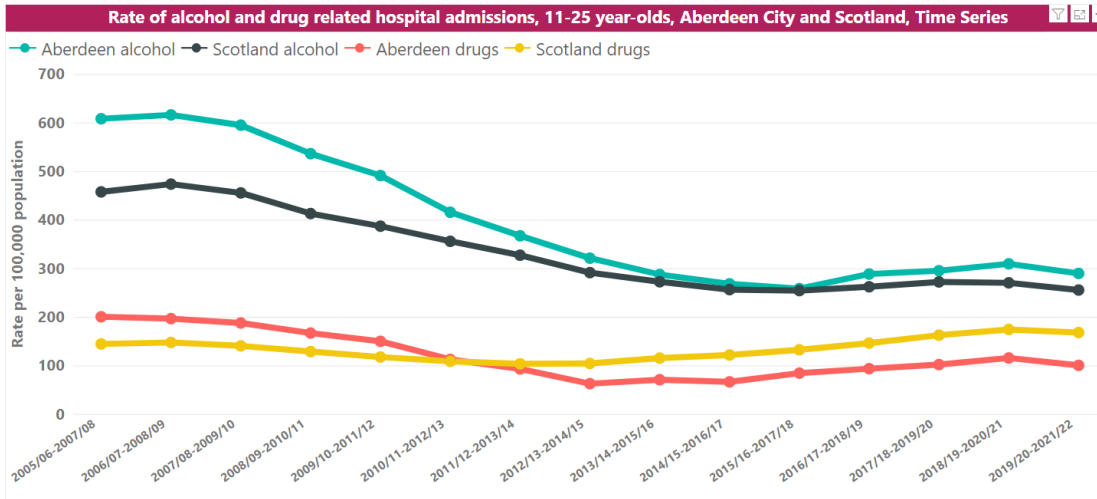
Data on smoking, alcohol and drug use/misuse is available from the Physical Wellbeing Survey [52]. 6,993 learners from P5-S6 completed the Physical wellbeing survey in November and December 2022. This is an increase of 800 (11.4%) pupils from March 2022.

Smoking: In November 2022, 6.7% (473) of learners reported that they have tried smoking (either cigarettes or e-cigarettes) – a reduction of 1.3% from March 2022. 2% (149) of young people reported that they use e-cigarettes or vapes once a week or more.

Alcohol: Learners were asked about alcohol consumption, regularity and type of alcoholic drinks consumed. 88%, 6137 (84.64%, 5242 in March 2022) of learners stated that they had never had a drink of alcohol. From March 2022 there has been a slight reduction from 80 to 62 learners who state that they get drunk weekly, with Cider, Spirits and Alcopops highlighted as those most often selected for regular consumption.

Drugs: Most (6,848) learners stated that they had never used drugs, however 2% (145) of learners reported that they have taken illegal drugs, drugs formerly known as legal highs, solvents or prescription drugs that were not prescribed for the. 21 of our learners also stated that they use drugs daily with the largest number of responses linked to cannabis, followed by Ketamine and Cocaine.

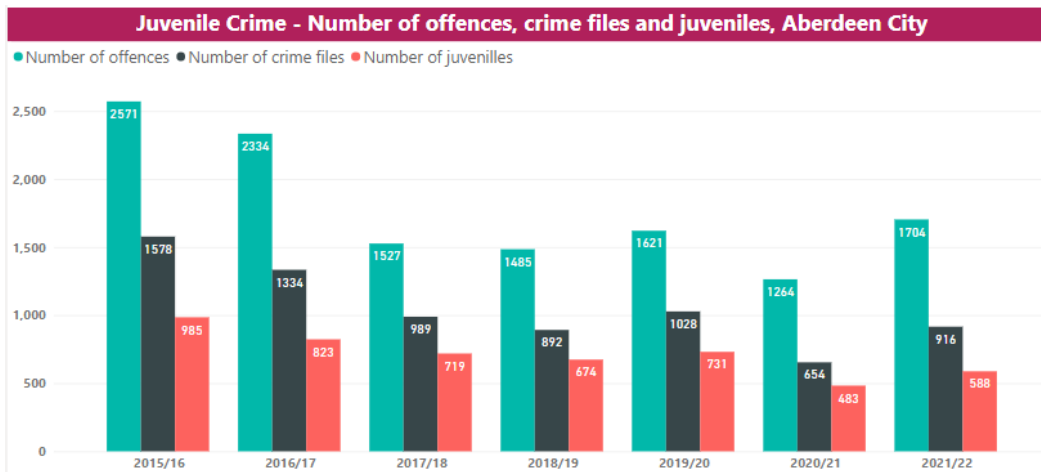
Alcohol- and drug-related hospital admissions, 11-25 years: In the period 2019/20-2021/22 the rate (per 100,000 population) of alcohol-related hospital admissions for young people aged 11-25 years was 289 compared to 255 in Scotland. In the same period, the rate of drug-related hospital admissions for young people aged 11-25 years was 100 in Aberdeen City – lower than the rate of 168 in Scotland. While there was a slight dip in the most recent figures, the rates for alcohol and drug-related hospital admissions appear to be on a gradual upward trend [43].



Source: ScotPHO Profiles. 3-year aggregates. Updated January 2023 (drug related) and March 2023 (alcohol related). (3 year rolling average number and directly age-sex standardised rate per 100,000 population.)

4.8. Juvenile crime

Juvenile crime: In 2021/22, 588 young people (under 18 years) were identified as an accused – up from 483 in 2020/21. In the same period, the total number of Offences increased from 1,264 to 1,704 and the number of CrimeFiles increased from 654 to 916. In 2020/21, 361 (61.4%) of the juveniles were aged 8-15 years and 227 were aged 16-17 years. Just under three quarters (73.1%) were male. The most common type of offence for 8-15 year-olds and 16-17 year-olds was Miscellaneous offences. Over a third (34.5%) of juveniles appeared on more than one CrimeFile [70].



Source: Police Scotland, Comparative Report on Juvenile Offenders, Aberdeen City Local Authority Area. Updated May 2023.

Anti-social behaviour: In 2022, a total of 2,936 Youth Anti-social Behaviour calls were reported to the Police – down slightly from 3,015 in 2021 [71]. Quarterly data from 2023 is being compiled and will be made available in the near future. Following Covid-19, there has been a notable reduction in tolerance for youths by the public. This has resulted in more calls being received regarding youth disorder/annoyance, where the behaviour is in fact normal youth behaviour.

Referred to Children’s Reporter on offence grounds: in 2022/23 there were 273 young people referred to the Children’s Reporter, with 112 being referred on offence grounds – down from

136 in 2021/22. In 2022/23, 69 young people were jointly reported to the Children's Reporter and the Procurator Fiscal, down from 91 in 2021/22 [72] .

Diversion from prosecution: In 2021-22, 60 16-17 year-olds were diverted from prosecution – up from 40 in 2020-21 [73].

Criminal Justice Social Work Reports for 16-17 year olds: In 2021/22 there were 10 CJSW reports submitted for 16-17 year olds in Aberdeen City, down from 16 in 2020/21 and 30 in 2019/20 [73].

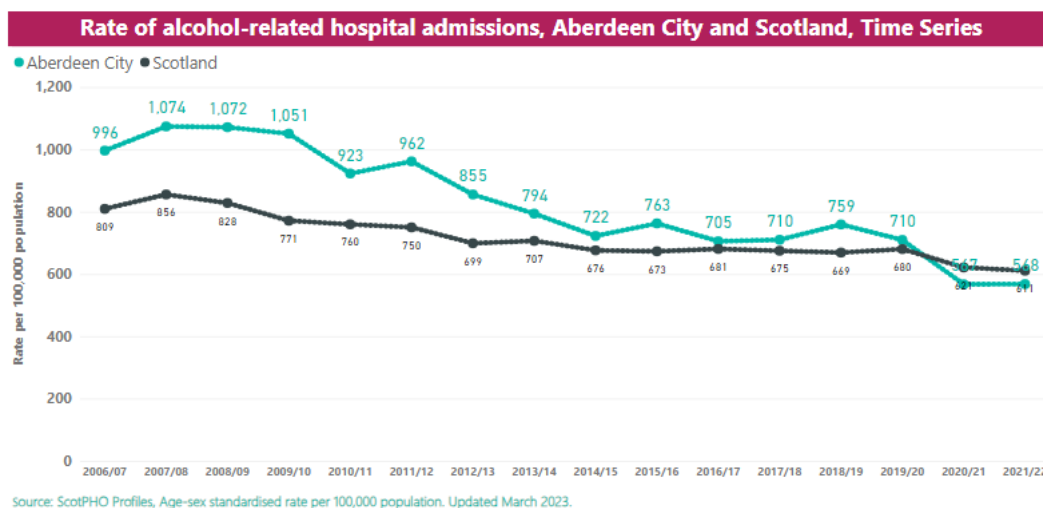
5. Adults

5.1. Health behaviours

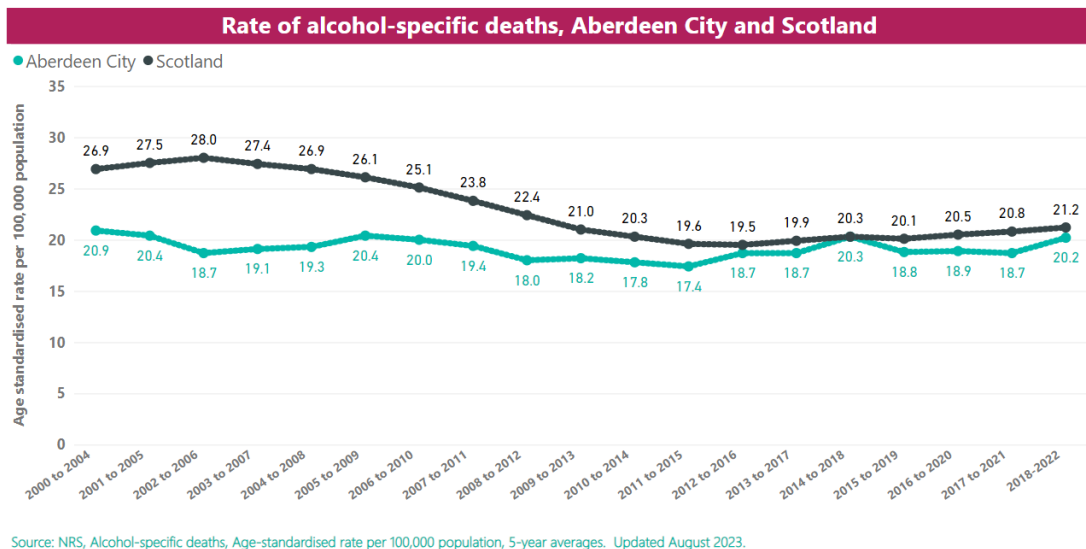
Alcohol: In the period 2017-21, 25% of adults in Aberdeen City were drinking above the guideline recommendations of 14 units per week. This is slightly higher than the rate for Scotland of 24% and unchanged from the rate in 2016-19 [37]. (Note: data for 2017-2021 does not include data for 2020 due to COVID-19.)

Questions relating to alcohol consumption were asked in City Voice 46 (December 2022). When asked if they knew the maximum number of units of alcohol recommended over a week, less than half (46.7%) of respondents correctly choose 14 units. The next most common response was don't know at 25.9% [28].

Alcohol-related hospital admissions: In 2021/22 there were 1,242 alcohol-related hospital admissions in Aberdeen City – equivalent to a rate of 568 per 100,000 population which is lower than the rate for Scotland of 611. Alcohol-related hospital admissions were highest for those in the most deprived areas at 1,092 per 100,000 population for SIMD quintile 1 (most deprived) compared to 207 per 100,000 population for SIMD quintile 5 (least deprived). [Across the City](#) (Intermediate Zones), the rate of alcohol-related hospital admissions ranged from a low of 87.3 in Cults, Bieldside & Milltimber East to a high of 2,104 per 100,000 population in Old Aberdeen [43].



Alcohol-specific deaths: In 2022 there were 49 alcohol-specific deaths in Aberdeen City – up from 43 deaths in 2021. As the number of alcohol-specific deaths can fluctuate substantially on a yearly basis, a 5-year rolling average number is also given. For the period 2018-22 this figure was 41.8 – higher than the figure of 38.6 in 2017-21. The rate (5-year average age-standardised) of alcohol-related deaths in 2018-22 was 20.2 per 100,000 population – slightly lower than the rate for Scotland of 21.2, but higher than the rate for 2017-21 of 18.7 per 100,000 population [74]. Rates of alcohol-specific deaths are higher for those in deprived areas. In Aberdeen City in 2017-21, the rate (age-sex standardised) for those in SIMD quintile 1 (most deprived) was 33.1 per 100,000 population compared with 8.1 per 100,000 population for SIMD quintile 5 (least deprived) [43]. Rates of alcohol-related deaths vary across the city (HSC localities, 2017-21 data) from 13.9 per 100,000 population in Aberdeen South, to 15.5 in Aberdeen North and 28.9 in Aberdeen Central [43].



Alcohol Treatment Services: In Q3 2022/2023, 90 people accessed specialist alcohol treatment services, down from 106 in Q3 2021/22. Up to Q3, a total of 302 people accessed specialist alcohol treatment services in 2022/2023.

Drugs use prevalence: Data on prevalence of problem drug use is limited. In 2015/16 it was estimated that 1.5% of Aberdeen’s population have a problem drug use compared to 1.6% in Scotland [75]. Estimated prevalence of problem drug use is higher in males (2.0%) than females (0.9%).

Drug-related hospital admissions: In 2019/20-2021-22 there were 438 drug-related hospital admissions (3-year rolling average number) which is equivalent to a rate of 182 per 100,000 population, compared to 228.3 per 100,000 population in Scotland. Following a period of increasing drug-related hospital admissions, the rate has decreased slightly in the past two periods – from 191 in 2017/18-2019/21. Rates of drug-related hospital admissions are higher for those in deprived areas at 466.5 per 100,000 population for those in SIMD quintile 1 (most deprived) compared to 26.5 in SIMD quintile 5 (least deprived). The rate of drug related hospital admissions varies (HSC localities) from 136 per 100,000 population in Aberdeen South, to 175 in Aberdeen North and 250 in Aberdeen Central [43].

Drug-related deaths: In 2022 there were 42 drug-related deaths in Aberdeen City – down from 62 deaths in 2021. Of the 42 deaths in 2022, 26 were males and 16 were females. Compared to 2020, females made up a higher proportion of drug-related deaths (38.7% in 2021 and 38.1% in 2022, compared to 23.2% in 2020). As the number of deaths can fluctuate substantially on a yearly basis, annual rates (age-standardised per 100,000 population) for 5-year periods are also given. In the period 2018-2022, the average annual rate for drug-related deaths was 22.9 deaths per 100,000 population. This is slightly lower than the equivalent rate for Scotland (23.4 per 100,000 population) and lower than the rate for 2017-2021 of 24 per 100,000 population. It is the 13th highest average annual rate of drug deaths of all local authorities in Scotland (improvement from 5th highest in 2018). As in Scotland, rates of drug-related deaths have increased year-on-year since 2010-2014. This is the first drop in 5-year age-standardised rate since 2010-14. In Aberdeen City, drug-related deaths were highest in the 35-44 year [age group](#) and the 45-54 year-old age group (with 54.7 and 58.6 per 100,000 population respectively in 2018-2022) [76].

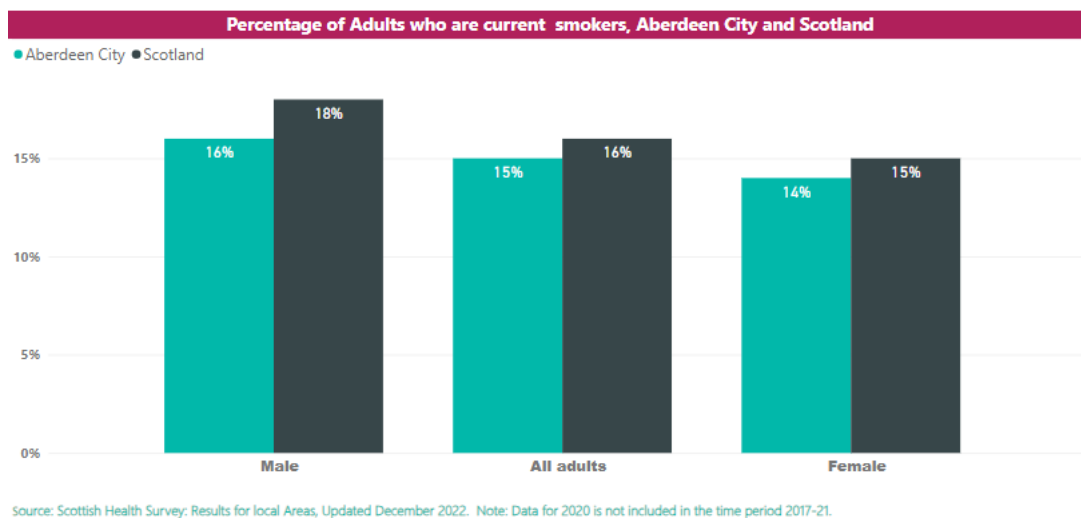
The rate of drug-related deaths is higher for those living in deprived areas. In Aberdeen City in 2017-21, the rate (age-sex standardised) of drug related deaths for those in SIMD quintile 1 (most deprived) was 58.1 per 100,000 population compared to 3.6 per 100,000 population in SIMD quintile 5 (least deprived [43]).



Naloxone Provision: Naloxone is a medication that counters the effects of opioid overdose, specifically it counteracts the impact that opiates exert on the central nervous system and on the respiratory system. In 2022/23 a total of 622 Naloxone Kits were supplied to persons at risk – up from 426 in 2021/22 [77].

Drug Treatment Services: In Q3 2022/2023, 113 people accessed specialist drug treatment services, up from 84 in Q3 2021/22. Up to Q3 2022/2023, a total of 327 people accessed specialist drug treatment services [78].

Smoking: In the period 2017-21, an estimated 15% of adults in Aberdeen City were current smokers compared to 16% in Scotland. A higher proportion of males (18%) than females (14%) were smokers. The percentage of adults who are current smokers has decreased from 18% in 2016-19 and 23% in 2014-17. It is estimated that 5% of adults use e-cigarettes (6% males, 4% females) [37]. (Note: data for 2017-21 does not include 2020 data due to COVID-19).



Obesity: In 2016-19 it was estimated that 23% of the City's adult population is obese (classified as a BMI of 30+). This is lower than the rate for Scotland of 29% and a decrease from 25% in 2014-17 [37]. (Note: no data available for 2017-21 due to COVID-19).

Physical activity: In the period 2017-21, an estimated 71% of adults in Aberdeen City were meeting the recommended guidelines for physical activity (150 minutes of moderate activity or 75 minutes of vigorous activity per week) compared to 66% for Scotland. 21% percent had low or very low levels of physical activity and 8% had some activity [37]. Based on data from the Scottish Household Survey, in 2021 89% of adults in Aberdeen City had taken part in some form of physical activity (including walking) in the previous month. When walking was excluded, the proportion dropped to 61%. The most common activities were walking (at least 30 minutes) at 82%, multi-gym/weight training at 21%, and running/jogging at 18% [79].

5.2. Mental health

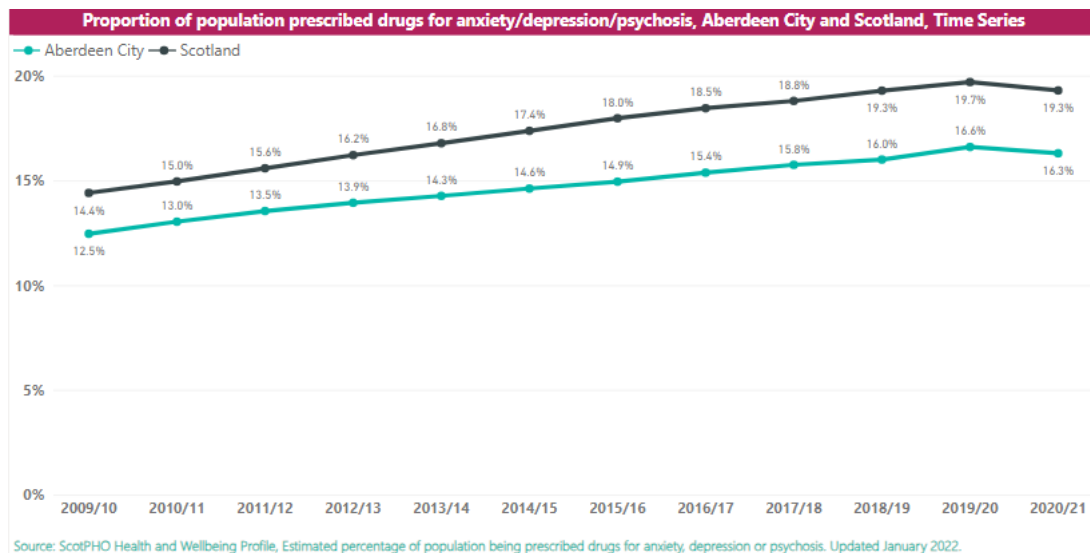
Cost of living crisis – impact on mental health: Financial strain and poverty are key drivers of poor mental health. People struggling to pay their rent or mortgage, feed their families, or cover essential bills are at higher risk of developing mental health problems including anxiety and depression [80]. While there is no specific data for Aberdeen City, research carried out for Mental Health Foundation Scotland reported that 33% of survey respondents experienced stress, 40% experienced anxiety, and 13% said they felt hopeless due to their financial situation in the previous month [80]. Recent statistics published by the Scottish Government showed that in March 2023, almost half (49%) of Scottish adults reported that their mental health is being negatively impacted by the cost of living crisis, with 13% saying that their mental health was impacted negatively to a large extent. When management of household finances were taken into account, only 3% of those who were 'managing well' reported being negatively impacted to a large extent, compared to 9% for those who were 'getting by ok' and 31% who were 'managing less well' [81].

Dementia: Alzheimer Scotland estimate that there are 90,000 people with dementia in Scotland with around 3,000 of these being under the age of 65 years [82]. In 2022, Dementia and Alzheimer's disease were the leading cause of death for females in Aberdeen City (12.2% of all female deaths) and the second most common cause of death for males (7.1% of all male deaths) ⁷ [44].

Prescriptions for anxiety/depression/psychosis: In 2020/21, 32,247 people in Aberdeen City were prescribed drugs for anxiety, depression or psychosis. This is equivalent to 16.3% of the population – lower than the proportion for Scotland of 19.3%. Although the rates for both Aberdeen City and Scotland fell slightly between 2019/20 and 2020/21 (from 16.6% and 19.7% respectively), the proportion of people receiving prescriptions for these conditions has increased in recent years, from (13% in 2010/11 for Aberdeen City). A higher proportion of those from SIMD quintile 1 (most deprived) were prescribed (22%) than those in SIMD quintile 5 (least deprived) at 12.5%. The proportion of people prescribed drugs for anxiety, depression

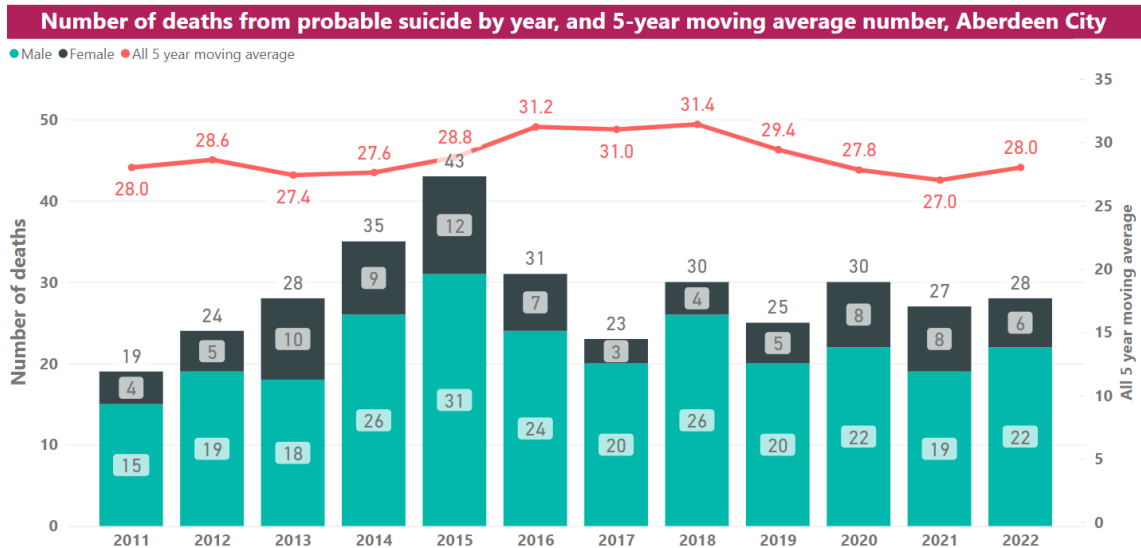
⁷ The leading cause of death analysis is based on a [list of causes](#) developed by the World Health Organisation (WHO). There are around 60 categories in total and cancers are grouped separately according to the type of cancer, for example, lung, breast and prostate cancer are all counted as separate causes. If all cancers were grouped together, cancer would be the leading cause of death.

or psychosis varied by HSC locality, at 15.2% in Aberdeen South, 15.3% in Aberdeen Central and 18.6% in Aberdeen North [43].



Psychiatric patient hospitalisations: In 2019/20-2021/22 there were 510 (3-year rolling average number) patients discharged from psychiatric hospitals in Aberdeen City. This is equivalent to a rate (age-sex standardised) of 228 per 100,000 population – similar to the rate for Scotland of 230 per 100,000 population. Rates of patients with psychiatric hospitalisation have fallen in both Aberdeen City and Scotland in recent years. Rates of psychiatric patient hospitalisation varied by deprivation, being highest in SIMD quintile 1 (most deprived) at 326 per 100,000 population compared to 160 per 100,000 population in SIMD quintile 5 (least deprived). In Aberdeen City, rates were highest in Aberdeen Central (290 per 100,000 population). Rates were similar in Aberdeen North (204) and Aberdeen South (206). [43].

Deaths from suicide: In 2022 there were 28 probable suicides in Aberdeen City (22 male and 6 female). The number of suicides in a single year in the City peaked at 43 deaths in 2015 [83]. For the period 2018-2022 the rate (age-standardised per 100,000 population) of 11.9 per 100,000 population is the lower than the rate for Scotland of 14.4 per 100,000 population [83]. In 2017/19-2021/22 the rate of deaths from probable suicide was highest for those living in the most deprived areas of the city (15 per 100,000 population in SIMD quintile 1 compared to 6 per 100,000 population in SIMD quintile 5). Rates varied by HSC locality at 10.4 per 100,000 population in Aberdeen South, 10.5 in Aberdeen North and 12.6 in Aberdeen Central [43].



Source: National Records of Scotland, Vital events reference tables: Deaths which are the result of Intentional self-harm or events of Undetermined Intent. Updated September 2023. (Note: the 5-year moving average figure is given in the column for the final year e.g. the five year moving average number for 2018-22 is in the column for 2022.)

Mental health and wellbeing: The General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12) is a standardised scale which measures mental distress and mental ill-health. A score of 4 or more is indicative of a potential psychiatric disorder. In 2017-21, an estimated 17% of people in Aberdeen City had a score of 4 or more – lower than the rate for Scotland of 19% and similar to the rate in 2016-19 of 16%. A higher proportion of females (18%) than males (14%) had a score or 4 or more [37]. Mental wellbeing is measured using the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS). Possible total scores range from 14 to 70 with higher scores indicating greater wellbeing. In 2017-21, the average (mean) score for Aberdeen City was 49.9 – similar to the score for Scotland of 49.5. Mean scores were similar for males (50.1) and females (49.8) [37].

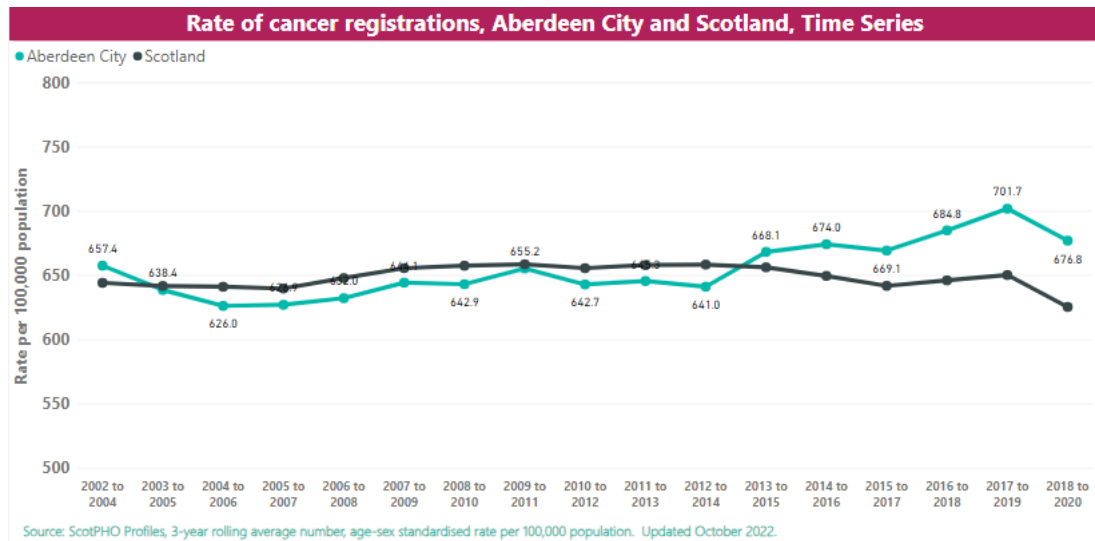
5.3. Key diseases

Key diseases: In 2022, cancer and circulatory diseases (such as coronary heart disease and stroke) together accounted for over half (51%) of all causes of death in Aberdeen City. In 2022, 27% of male deaths and a 25.7% of female deaths were caused by cancer, and 27.8% of male deaths and 21.7% of female deaths were caused by circulatory diseases [44].

Leading causes of death are also given for specific disease classifications (e.g. types of cancer and circulatory diseases are listed separately). In 2022, Ischemic heart diseases were the leading cause of death for males (14.9% of a male deaths), followed by Dementia and Alzheimer disease (7.1%) and Cancer of the trachea, bronchus and lung (6.7%). For females, Dementia and Alzheimer disease was the leading cause of death for (12.2% of all female deaths), followed by Ischaemic heart diseases (7.3%) and cerebrovascular disease (6.5% of all female deaths).

Cancer: In 2018-20 there were 1,287 new cancer registrations in Aberdeen (3-year rolling average number). This is equivalent to a rate (age-sex standardised per 100,000 population) of 676.8 – higher than the rate for Scotland of 625.2. In both Aberdeen City and Scotland the rate of cancer registrations decreased from the rates in 2017-19 (701.7 and 650.1

respectively). The rate of cancer registrations varies by derivation (rate of 781 per 100,000 population in SIMD quintile 1 (most deprived) compared to 609 in SIMD quintile 5 (least deprived)) and by HSC localities, at 644.8 per 100,000 population in Aberdeen South, 692.5 in Aberdeen North and 700.5 in Aberdeen Central [43].



Cancer early deaths: In 2019-21 there were 279 early deaths (<75 years) from cancer (3-year rolling average number). This is equivalent to a rate of 153 per 100,000 population – slightly higher than the rate for Scotland of 150 per 100,000 population. Overall, the rate of early deaths from cancer has decreased over the last 10 years (from 181 per 100,000 population in 2009-11). The rate of early deaths from cancer is higher in deprived areas at 218 per 100,000 population in SIMD quintile 1 (most deprived) compared to 92 in SIMD quintile 5 (least deprived) and varies across the City (Intermediate Zones), from a low of 64 per 100,000 population in Braeside, Mannofield, Broomhill & Seafield South to a high of 303 in Seaton [43].

Coronary heart disease (CHD): In 2019/20-2021/22 there were 669 patient hospitalisations with coronary heart disease (3 year rolling average number). This is equivalent to a rate of 350 per 100,000 population – slightly higher than the rate for Scotland of 342 per 100,000 population. In both Aberdeen City and Scotland, the rate of CHD patient hospitalisations has decreased over the past 10 years. CHD hospitalisations are higher in deprived areas at a rate of 506.4 per 100,000 population for SIMD quintile 1 (most deprived) compared to 254.2 in SIMD quintile 5 (least deprived). The rate of CHD hospitalisations varies by Intermediate Zone, from a low of 188 per 100,000 population in Ferryhill North to a high of 715 in Tillydrone [43].

In 2019/21 the rate of early deaths (<75 years) from CHD was 50.1 per 100,000 population in Aberdeen City, similar to the rate for Scotland of 52.6. The rate of early deaths from CHD was higher in more deprived areas (73 per 100,000 population in SIMD quintiles 1 and 2 compared to 31 per 100,000 population in SIMD quintile 5) and varied across the city ([Intermediate Zones](#)) from a low of 11.3 in Cove North to a high of 186 per 100,000 population in Old Aberdeen [43].

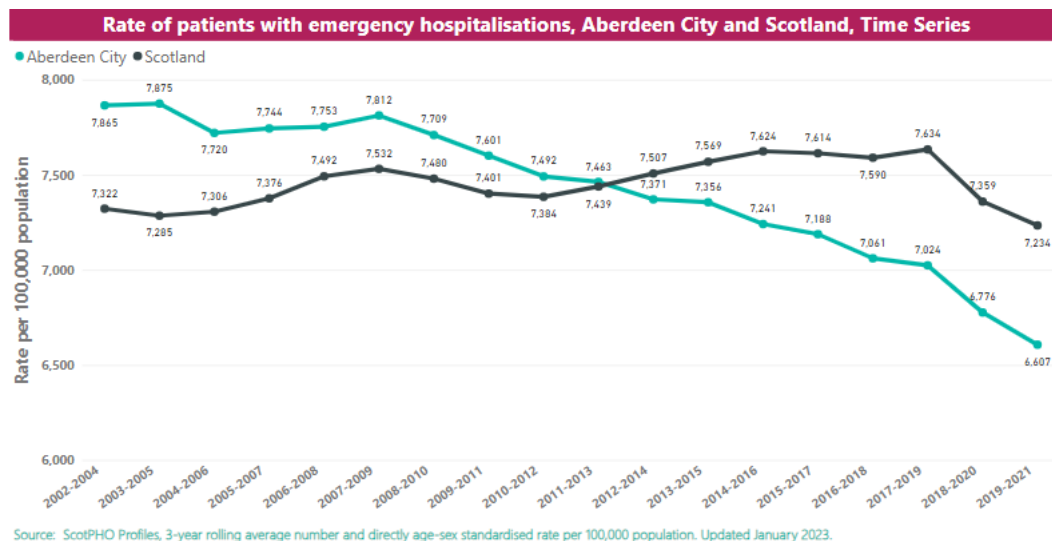
Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD): In 2019/20-2021/22, the incidence⁸ of COPD in Aberdeen City was 175 (3-year average number). This is equivalent to a rate of 112 per

⁸ Total number of patients with a first admission in 10 years who were discharged from hospital or died.

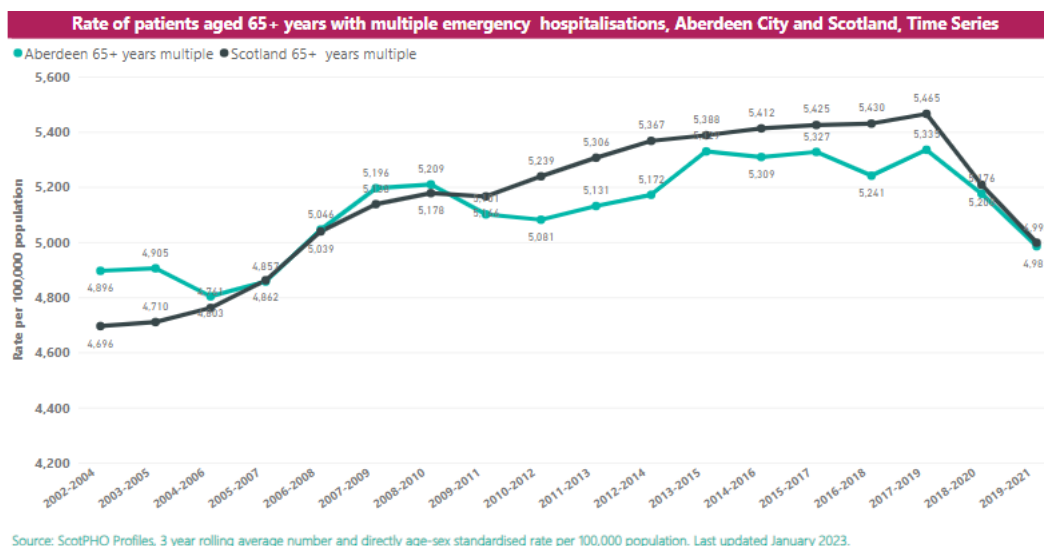
100,000 population which is lower than the rate for Scotland of 126 per 100,000 population. Incidence of COPD has been decreasing in both Aberdeen City and Scotland over the last few data periods. In 2019-21 there were 82 deaths (3-year average), which is a rate of 54 per 100,000 population – lower than the rate for Scotland of 61 per 100,000 population. In 2019/20-2021/22 there were 295 (3-year rolling average number) [patient hospitalisations](#) in Aberdeen City. This is equivalent to a rate of 186 per 100,000 population – lower than the rate for Scotland of 207. The rate of patient hospitalisations for COPD is higher for those in deprived areas at a rate of 425 per 100,000 population for SIMD quintile 1 (most deprived) compared to 59 in SIMD quintile 5 (least deprived) and varied across the City (Intermediate Zones) from a low of 19 per 100,000 population in Kingswells to a high of 857 per 100,000 population in City Centre East [43].

5.4. Hospitalisations

Emergency hospitalisations: In 2019-21 there were 13,834 emergency patient hospitalisations in Aberdeen City (3-year rolling average) – equivalent to a rate of 6,607 per 100,000 population. This is lower than the rate for Scotland of 7,624. In Aberdeen City the rate of emergency patient hospitalisations has been gradually decreasing over the past 10 years, from 7,601 per 100,000 population in 2009-11. The rate of emergency patient hospitalisations varies across the City ([Intermediate Zones](#)) ranging from a low of 4,257 per 100,000 population in Cults, Bieldside & Milltimber West to a high of 10,922 in Mastrick [43].



Patients aged 65+ years with multiple emergency hospitalisations: In 2019-2021 there were 1,778 patients aged 65+ years with 2 or more emergency hospitalisations in Aberdeen City (3-year rolling average number). This is equivalent to a rate of 4,985 per 100,000 population which is slightly lower than the rate for Scotland of 4,997 and a decrease from the rate of 5,176 per 100,000 population in 2018-20. Rates vary across the City ([Intermediate Zones](#)), ranging from a low of 2,602 in Kingswells to a high of 8,690 in City Centre East [43].



5.5. Home care and care homes

Home care: No figures available for Aberdeen HSCP for 2021/22. In 2020/21 (Census Week), 1,870 people in Aberdeen City were receiving home care (equivalent to a rate of 8.2 per 1,000 population – lower than the rate for Scotland of 11 per 1,000 population). Most (81.6%) of those receiving care were 65 years or over, with 38.2% being 85 years or over. In total, 27,435 hours of care were received during Census week [84].

High levels of care: In Aberdeen, in 2020/21 there were 510 people aged 65+ years with high levels of care need who were cared for at home (i.e. who received 10 and more hours of home care purchased or provided by the local authority). This equates to 29% of all people in this age group with high levels of care need – significantly lower than the Scottish average of 38% [43].

Care homes: In 2022 there were 55 care homes in Aberdeen City with a total of 1,634 registered places and 1,431 residents. Most of these (1,364/95.3%) were long stay residents. Older people made up the largest portion of care home residents (80.8%). Since 2012 the number of care homes has decreased by 28.6% (down from 77 in 2012) [85].

Last six months of life: In Aberdeen City, in 2021/22 there were 2,048 deaths in Aberdeen City (including falls but excluding people who died from other external causes). For these individuals, 91% of their last six months of life was spent either at home or in a community setting with the remaining 9% spent in hospital. This is equivalent to an average of 16 days in hospital in the six months prior to death (same as in 2020/21 but 5 days less than in 2019/20) [86].

5.6. Looking After Own Health and Wellbeing

Own health and wellbeing: In Aberdeen in 2022, 92% of respondents to the Scottish Health and Care Experience (HACE) Survey reported being able to look after their own health ‘very well’ or ‘quite well’ – down slightly from 94% in 2020. In 2022, 67% of respondents agreed that they were supported to live as independently as possible, down from 73% in 2020, but

slightly higher than the rate for Scotland of 65%. The percentage of adults supported at home who agreed they felt safe reduced in 2022 to 69% from 76% in 2020 [87].

Unpaid carers: The 2011 Census estimated that there were 222,793 people living in Aberdeen and that 15,571 are Carers with 6,229 stating that they provide more than 20 hours of unpaid care per week [35]. More recently, the Scottish Health Survey (SHeS) presents that 11% of Aberdeen's population identify as a Carer. This is lower than the national average of 15% [37]. This would take us to a figure of 24,507. Of these numbers, there are estimated to be approximately 2000 Young Carers.

There is a significant gap between these estimates and those Carers known to services in Aberdeen [88].

- Adult Carers open to Quarriers Adult Carer Support Service (including enhanced support service) = 1,130
- Adult Carers known to Social Work services (with an adult Carer Support Plan in Place) = 620
- Young Carers open to Barnardos Young Carer Support Service = 135
- Young Carers known to Children's services (education) = 51

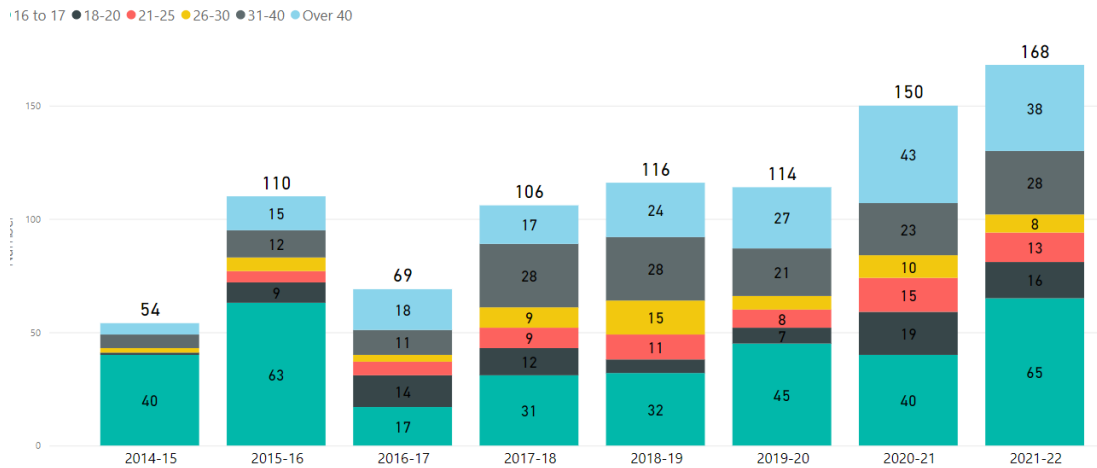
5.7. Criminal Justice & Social Work

First convictions and reconvictions: In 2019/20, 718 people living in Aberdeen City had a first ever court conviction – down from 739 in 2018/19. Of these, 29 were under 18 years and 104 were aged 18-20 years. Of the 1,597 offenders (over 18 years) in the 2018-19 cohort, 31.1% were reconvicted within a year of receiving their sentence (mean 0.6 reconvictions per offender) [89]. (Note: delay in 2019-20 cohort data being available due to the impact of the pandemic and subsequent court closures on this cohort.)

Community payback orders: In 2021-22, 72.6% of Community Payback Orders were successfully completed, up from 67.6% in 2020-21 [73].

Diversion from prosecution (DP): In 2021/22 there were 219 referrals for Diversion from Prosecution. 168 Diversion from Prosecution Cases commenced of which 65 were 16 and 17 year-olds and 103 were 18+ years. The number of DP cases commenced has increased from 114 in 2019-20 and 150 in 2020-21 [73].

Diversion from prosecution - cases commenced by age group, Aberdeen City



Source: Scottish Government, Criminal justice social work statistics: additional tables back to 2004-2005, CJSW local authority tables for diversion from prosecution. Updated February 2023.

Bail supervision orders: In 2021-22, 24 Bail Supervision Cases were commenced by individuals. These Orders are agreed by the Court so that an individual is supervised by Justice Social Work instead of being remanded in prison (which can lead to negative outcomes for individuals in relation to employment, housing, family relations, etc, which can result in an increased likelihood of further offending) [73].

Custodial sentences: In 2020-21, 351 people in Aberdeen City were given a custodial sentence – down from 471 in 2019-20. Of these, a quarter (89) were for a period of up to 3 months [90].

Voluntary assistance and statutory throughcare: In 2021/22, 11 individuals received voluntary assistance, down from 21 in 2020/21. In the same period, 196 received statutory throughcare, similar to 2020/21 when 195 received statutory throughcare [73].

Our Place



6. Our Place

6.1. Our City

Area: Aberdeen City covers an area of 186 square kilometres and has a population density of 1,226 persons per square kilometre (2021). In terms of population size, it is the 8th largest local authority in Scotland.

Neighbourhoods: The City contains 37 neighbourhoods – small area geographies that are used (by Community Planning) to differentiate between different areas of the City. (Note: the neighbourhood boundaries do not match official administrative data boundaries. As a result, official data may not be available at neighbourhood level. Intermediate Zones approximate neighbourhood boundaries.)

Priority localities: The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivations (SIMD) is the Scottish Government's official tool for identifying small area concentrations of multiple deprivation across Scotland. Following SIMD 2020, 13 of Aberdeen's neighbourhoods are recognised as deprived on this basis: Torry, Tillydrone, Seaton, Woodside, Middlefield, Cummings Park, Northfield, Heathryfold, Mastrick, Kincorth, Ashgrove, George Street and Stockethill.

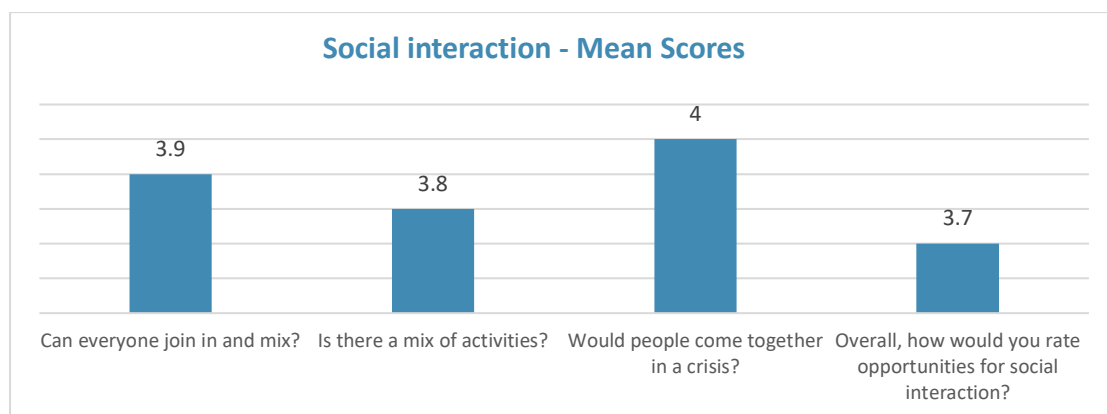
6.2. Communities

Community empowerment: Following the publication of the [Community Empowerment Strategy](#) by Community Planning Aberdeen's [Community Empowerment Group](#), a Community Empowerment edition of the City Voice was undertaken in June 2023. This asked panellists about current involvement and empowerment in their communities. Some of the questions in City Voice 47 were inspired by the [Place Standard](#) which is a recognised framework used for assessing places. The full City Voice report can be found [here](#) [91].

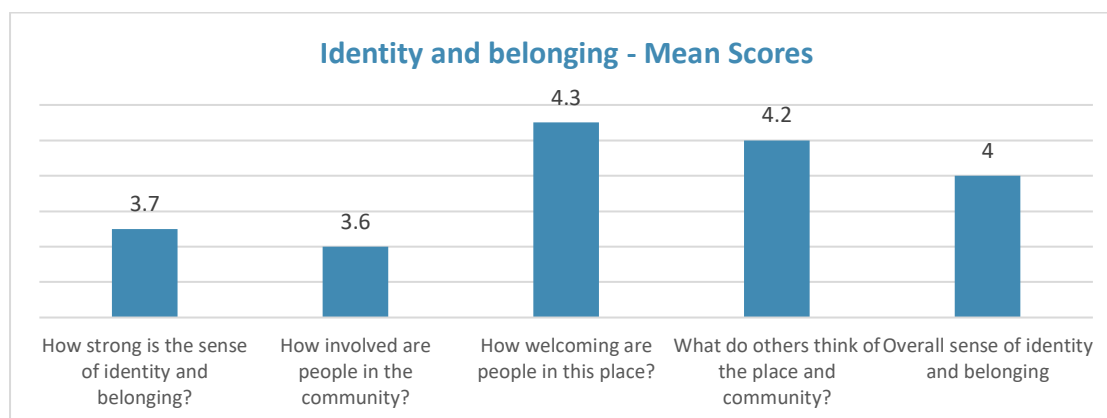
Social interaction: The first set of questions asked about where people get together and find out what is happening in their neighbourhoods. Food and drink outlets, local halls and centres, places of worship and schools are all spaces where communities naturally come together. Outdoor spaces such as streets, outdoor seating, local parks/ playgrounds/ walks,

and dog walking areas are also areas where people meet and gather. Unsurprisingly, 69% of people said that they find out about what is happening in their community by talking to friends, family and neighbours. Social media is also an important source of information with 57.3% of people saying that’s how they find out what is happening.

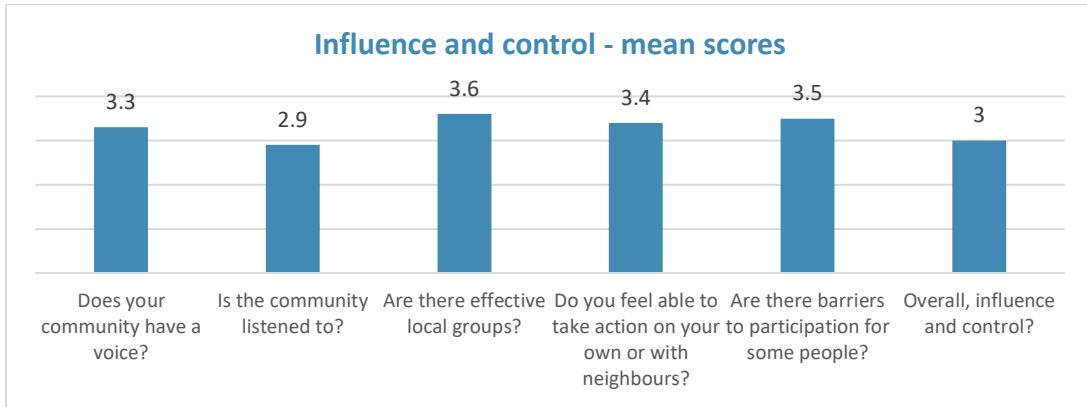
Further questions were then asked about different aspects of social interaction in their neighbourhood, with participants being asked to rate each on a scale of 1-7 (where 1 = little room for improvement and 7 = a lot of room for improvement). Mean scores were calculated for each question. Overall, respondents rated the range of opportunities to meet and spend time with other people in their neighbourhoods as 3.7 (out of a possible 7).



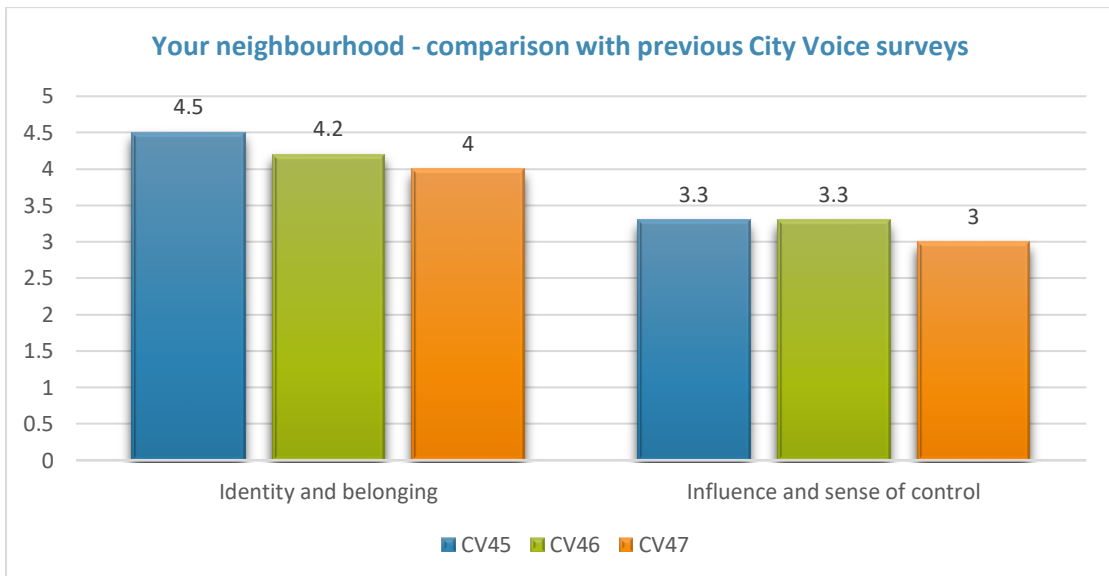
Identity and belonging: The next set of questions asked to what extent their neighbourhood has a positive identity that supports a strong sense of belonging. A series of questions relating to different aspects of identity and belonging were asked (see chart below). The average (mean) rating for ‘overall, to what extent does your neighbourhood have a positive identity that supports a strong sense of belonging?’ was 4 (out of 7).



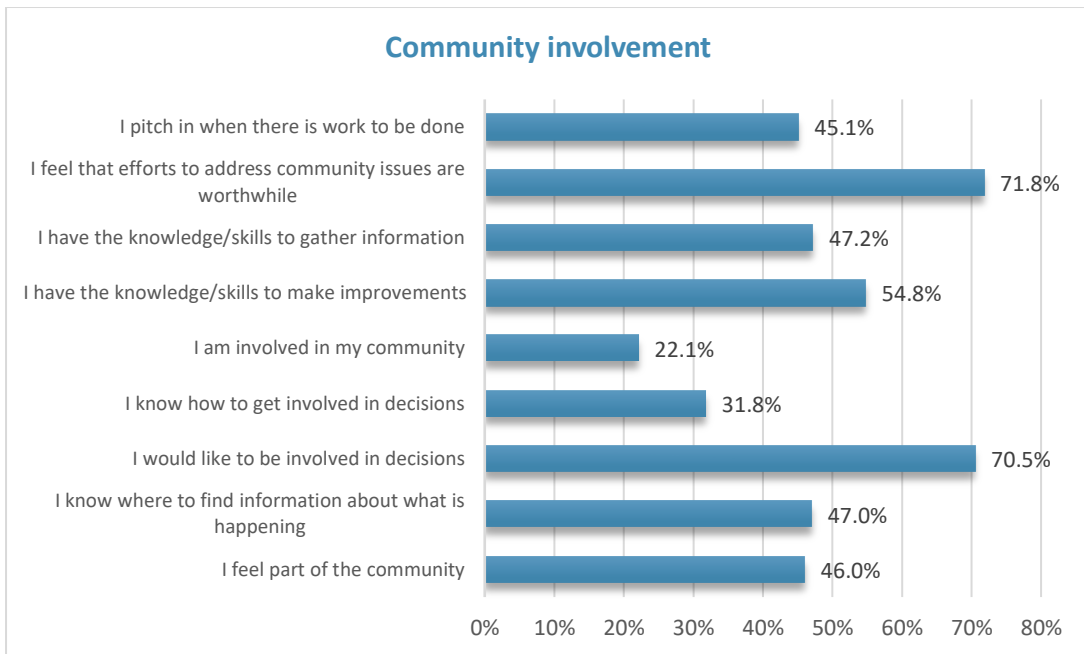
Influence and control: This set of questions was around whether people felt listened to and included in decision-making when things happen in their neighbourhood. Again, a series of questions relating different aspects was included (see chart below). The average (mean) rating for ‘overall, when things happen in your neighbourhood, how well do you feel listened to and included in decision-making?’ was 3 (out of 7), with the lowest individual score being for the question ‘is the community listened to?’ (2.9).



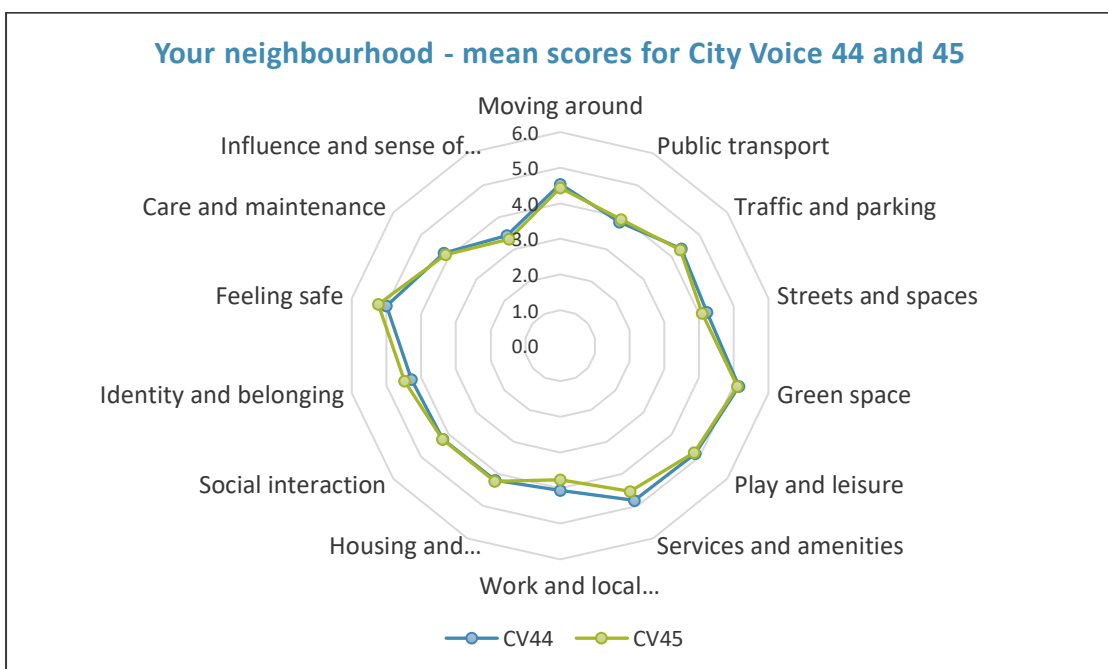
The overall questions relating to sense of Identity and Belonging and Influence and Control have been asked in previous City Voice questionnaires. Comparison with these surveys shows lower score for both areas in the most recent City Voice.



Involvement in community groups: City Voice 47 also included set of questions around involvement in community groups/activities. Most respondents agreed that efforts to address community issues are worthwhile (71.8%) and that they would like to be involved in decisions which affect their community (70.5%). However, only 31.8% said they knew how to get involved in decisions and 22.1% said they were currently involved in their community. Less than half of respondents said they feel part of their community (46%) or that they knew where to find information about what was happening (47%) .



Your neighbourhood: A shortened version of the full Place Standard questionnaire was included in City Voice 44 and 45. Participants were asked to answer a series of questions with their local neighbourhood in mind. For each of the 14 topics participants were asked to give a score on a scale of 1-7, where 1 = lots of room for improvement and 7 = very little room for improvement. On the whole, responses were similar across both questionnaires. In City Voice 45, **‘do you feel safe in your neighbourhood?’** and **‘can you regularly experience good quality natural space?’** were the highest scoring areas with mean scores of 5.2 and 5.1 respectively. The lowest scoring areas were **‘do you feel able to participate in decisions and change things for the better?’** (3.3) and **work and local economy** (3.8) [92].



Volunteering: There are currently over 80,600 volunteers in Aberdeen City, contributing an incredible 6.2 million hours of help every year in Aberdeen [93]. The high levels of volunteering we have in Aberdeen which ACVO support was highlighted in an analysis of volunteering responses to COVID-19 from Volunteer Scotland which showed that the COVID-19 Support Volunteers role registered with ACVO was the third most popular role in the whole of Scotland and the Bon Accord Care Support Volunteers the eighth most popular one people expressed an interest in. This again reflects the tremendous volunteering and caring/community spirit we have in Aberdeen.

Youth volunteering is also a great strength in Aberdeen, with 2,459 young people (age 12-25 years) undertaking Saltire Awards for volunteering (locality breakdown: Central: 541, North: 1155 and South: 763 people). The Saltire Awards are national awards endorsed by the Scottish Government and delivered in each local authority area by Third Sector Interfaces (ACVO in Aberdeen) to recognise the marvellous contribution young people make volunteering and the achievements of young volunteers. Certificates are awarded in recognition for undertaking 10, 25, 50, 100, 200 and 500 hours of volunteering [93].

We know there is substantial economic and social value in the act of volunteering with research showing increased life expectancy and quality of life values. Through our improvement projects we have built on the volunteering community that was crucial during the covid pandemic and sought to sustain the unprecedented level of volunteering seen during that time by further developing a wide range of opportunities. Between December 2021 and March 2023, we saw a 17.4% (437 to 513 – 76 new opportunities in total) in volunteer opportunities on the volunteer hub as a result of consistent promotion of the Hub across media and in contact with groups and volunteers augmenting ACVO's efforts.

Using digital and data to help our communities: The benefits of using data to improve productivity and transform public services have been recognised in the UK Data Strategy 2020 [94] and the subsequent "Roadmap for digital and data, 2022 to 2025" [95]. The Strategy also recognises some of the existing barriers. Presently data is not consistently managed, used or shared in a way that facilitates informed decision-making or joint working across the public sector. Effective use of data and digital technology can help the way we deliver our services and is fundamental to their planning and re-design. It can also empower people in our communities – improving the way they interact, both with each other and with public sector services. Data from the Scottish Social Attitudes Survey 2019 suggests a relatively high degree of trust in public service organisations to use personal data only for acceptable purposes. When asked, 58% of adults said they had either 'a great deal' or quite a lot' of trust in public service organisations, compared to only 15% for private companies [96].

Aberdeen City Accreditations: Aberdeen has been a Fairtrade City since 2004. The accreditation renewal process is overseen by the Fairtrade Foundation. The Aberdeen Fair and Sustainable Trade Group, made up of a range of organisational partners and individuals, works to maintain accreditation for the people of Aberdeen.

Aberdeen is also a Sustainable Food Place and was awarded a silver accreditation in the initiative in 2022. The partnership, Granite City Good Food, works to maintain and extend that accreditation for the people of Aberdeen.

6.3. Housing

Dwellings: In 2022 there were 123,363 dwellings in Aberdeen City – an increase of 1,121 (0.9%) on the number of dwellings in 2021. The number of dwellings varies by neighbourhood from 724 in Cummings Park to 6,691 in Braeside, Mannofield, Broomhill and Seafield. Most (59.1%) are in [Council Tax](#) bands A-C, with 26.1% being in bands D-E and 14.8% being in bands G-H [47]. The proportion of dwellings within each Council Tax band varies by neighbourhood. For example in Cummings Park, 99% of dwellings are in Council Tax bands A-C, while in Cults, Bielside & Milltimber, 67% of dwellings are in Council Tax bands F-H [97].

40% of dwellings have a [single adult discount](#) with the proportion of dwellings with these discounts ranging from a low of 25.4% in Cults, Bielside & Milltimber to a high of 50.1% in Stockethill. 6.7% of dwellings have 'occupied exemptions' (e.g. student households), with the highest levels of exemptions being in Old Aberdeen (33%), George Street (31%), Seaton (26%) and Froghall, Powis & Sunnybank (20%) [47].

Second homes account for less than 1% of all dwellings in the City and in 2022 there were 8,103 vacant dwellings (6.6% of all dwellings) – an increase from 6,733 vacant dwellings in 2020. The percentage of vacant dwellings ranges from a low of 1.8% in Cummings Park to a high of 12.8% in the City Centre.

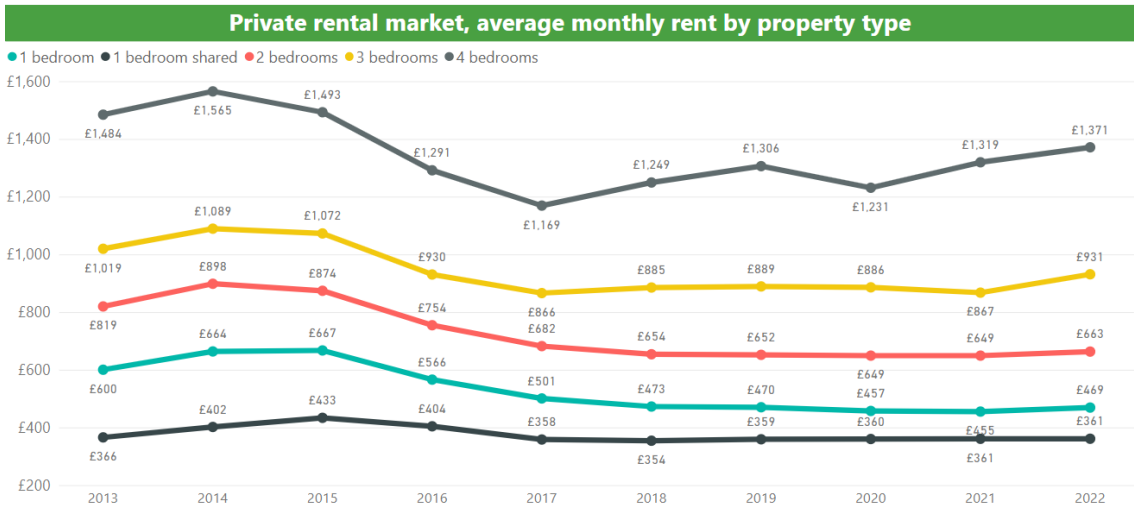
Most (55%) dwellings are flats, 18% are terraced, 16% are semi-detached and 11% are detached (based on 2017 – no update since then). Again this varies by neighbourhood e.g. in Seaton 96.8% of dwellings were flats while in Kingswells only 2.6% were flats and 63.1% were detached. At the time of the 2011 Census, 57.3% of households in the City were owned, 24.2% were socially rented, 17.0% were privately rented and 1.4% were rent-free.

Housing stock: In Aberdeen City in 2021 the Local Authority's housing stock totalled 22,104 – a slight increase from 21,936 in 2020. Of the Council stock, 16,730 (75.7%) were flats and 5,374 (24.3%) were houses. Since 2011, the total housing stock owned by the Council has decreased by 2.6% - from 22,704 [98]. At 31st March 2021 there were 4,138 applicants on the waiting list and 1,668 on the transfer list for housing [99].

Supply of new housing: In 2022-23, 1,059 new houses were supplied in Aberdeen City. Of these, 629 were private new builds, 375 were local authority new builds and 55 were housing association new builds [100].

Supported housing: A range of supported housing is provided by the Local Authority. In 2021, housing for older people included 110 very sheltered, and 1,879 sheltered dwellings (of which 223 are wheelchair adapted) and 1,470 medium dependency. Some 2,681 dwellings have been fitted with a community alarm. Housing for people with physical disabilities included 428 dwellings adapted for wheelchair use, 604 for ambulant disabled and 1,902 with other adaptations [101].

Private rental sector: In 2022, the average monthly rent in Aberdeen City and Shire (Broad Rental Market Area) was £469 for a one-bedroomed property, £663 for a 2-bedroomed property, £931 for a 3-bedroomed property and £1,371 for a 4-bedroomed property. These were broadly similar to the average rents in 2021 with the exception of 4-bedroomed properties which increased from £1,319 in 2021. Rents for all property types are lower than pre-2015 levels [102].



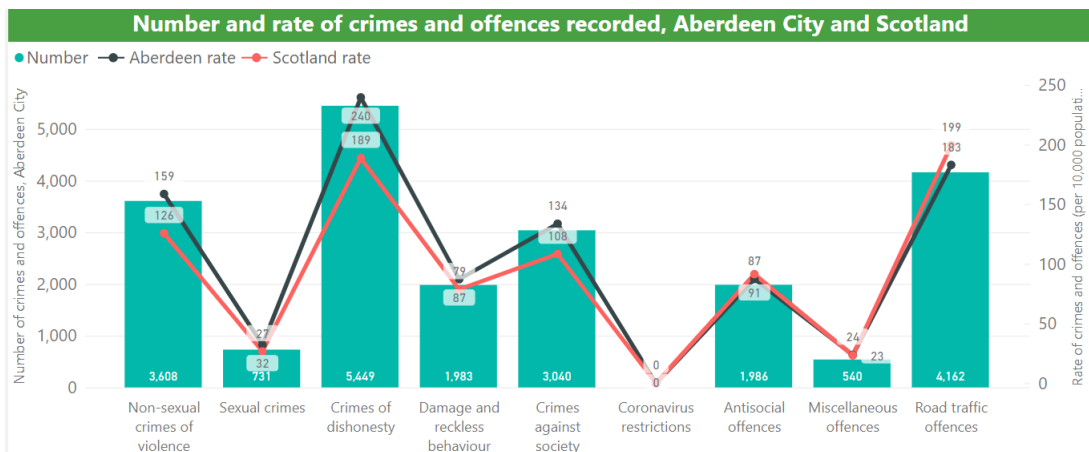
Source: Scottish Government, Housing Statistics for Scotland - Private Sector Rent Statistics. Updated December 2022.

House sales: In 2022, the average purchase price for a residential property in Aberdeen City was £187,169 – down from £193,402 in 2021 and considerably lower than the 2015 peak of £220,665. The number of properties sold in 2022 decreased slightly from 4,799 in 2021 to 4,729 in 2022 [103].

6.4. Crime

Crimes and offences: In Scotland, crimes and offences are classified into groups, with a new group for Coronavirus restriction crimes being added in 2019/20. Data from 2021-22 uses new categories of crime and offence groups. The changes include the introduction of a new set of crime and offence groups and categories. The largest change is the transfer of Common assault and stalking from the miscellaneous offences group to the non-sexual crimes of violence group and by extension the recorded crime total.

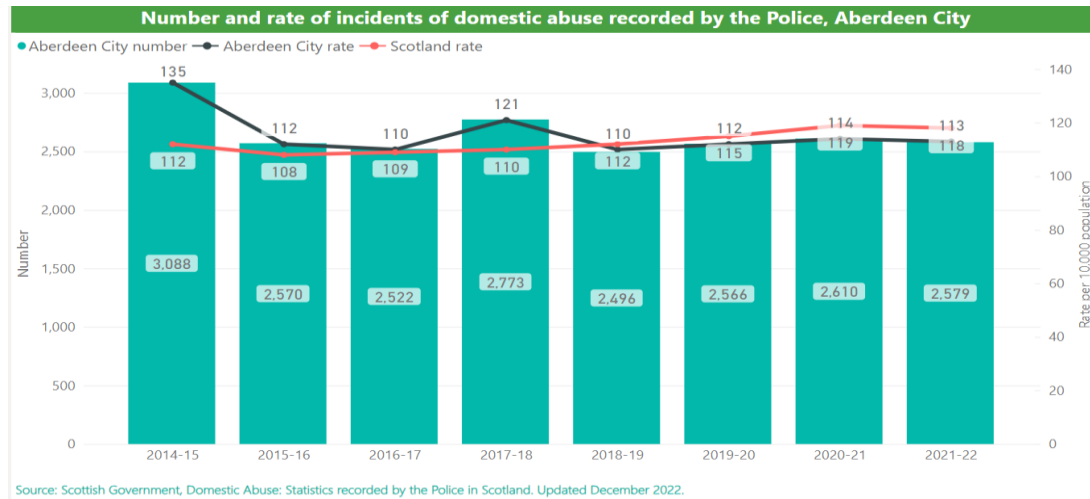
In 2022/23 the most common crimes and offences recorded in Aberdeen City were Crimes of Dishonesty (5,449), Road Traffic Offences (4,162) and Non-sexual Crimes of Violence (3,608). The total rate (per 10,000 population) for crime was 651 (528 for Scotland) and for offences was 294 (314 for Scotland) [104].



Source: Scottish Government, Recorded Crime in Scotland. Updated June 2023.

The rate of crime varies across the City and is relatively low in most areas ([Intermediate Zones](#)). In 2019, the rate of crime⁹ range from a low of 4 (crude rate per 1,000 population) in Braeside, Mannofield, Broomhill & Seafield South to a high of 247 in City Centre East [43].

Domestic abuse: In 2021/22 there were 2,579 recorded incidents of domestic abuse in Aberdeen City – down slightly from 2,610 in 2020/21 [105]. Not all incidents of Domestic Abuse result in a crime being recorded. In 2022-23 there were 116 recorded crimes for Domestic Abuse – down from 170 in 2021-22 [104].



Hate Crime Reports: In 2022/23 there were 344 Police Scotland Hate Crime reports in Aberdeen City, up from 336 in 2021/22 [77].

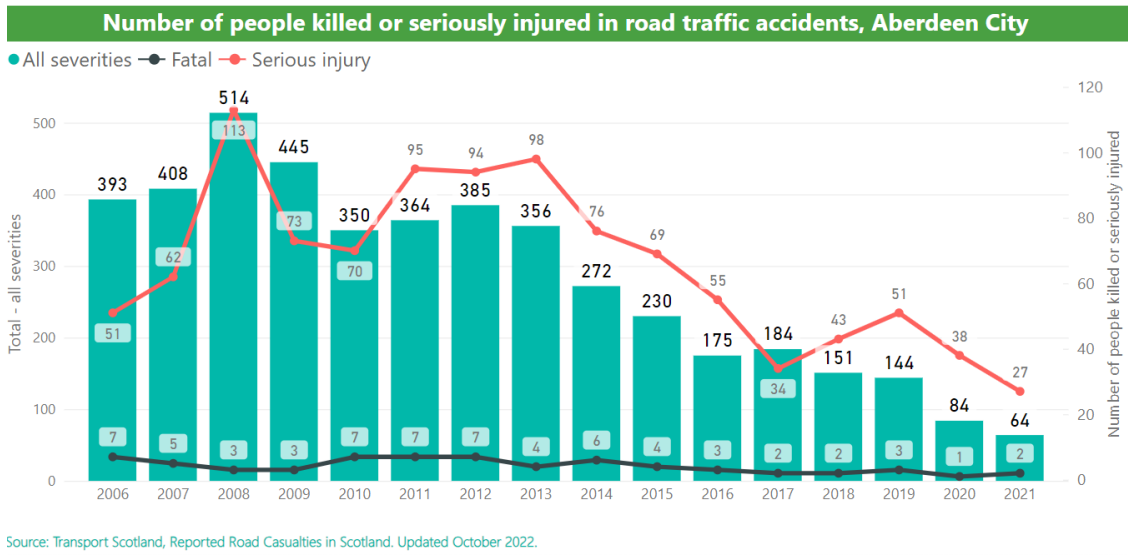
6.5. Safety

Accidental dwelling fires: In 2021-22 there were 199 accidental dwelling fires in Aberdeen City (down from 222 in 2020-21) which is equivalent to a rate of 163 per 100,000 dwellings compared to 157 in Scotland. Impairment due to alcohol/drugs was suspected to be a contributory factor to accidental dwelling fires in Aberdeen in 18.1% of cases – higher than the rate for Scotland of 14.6%. There were 25 non-fatal casualties and no fatal casualties [106].

In 2021-22 there were also 23 deliberate dwelling fires (rate of 18.8 per 100,000 dwellings compared to 16.4 for Scotland). In total there were 768 fires in Aberdeen City in 2021-22, of which 388 were primary fires, 377 were secondary fires and 3 were chimney fires. This is up slightly from the total of 757 fires in 2020-21 [106].

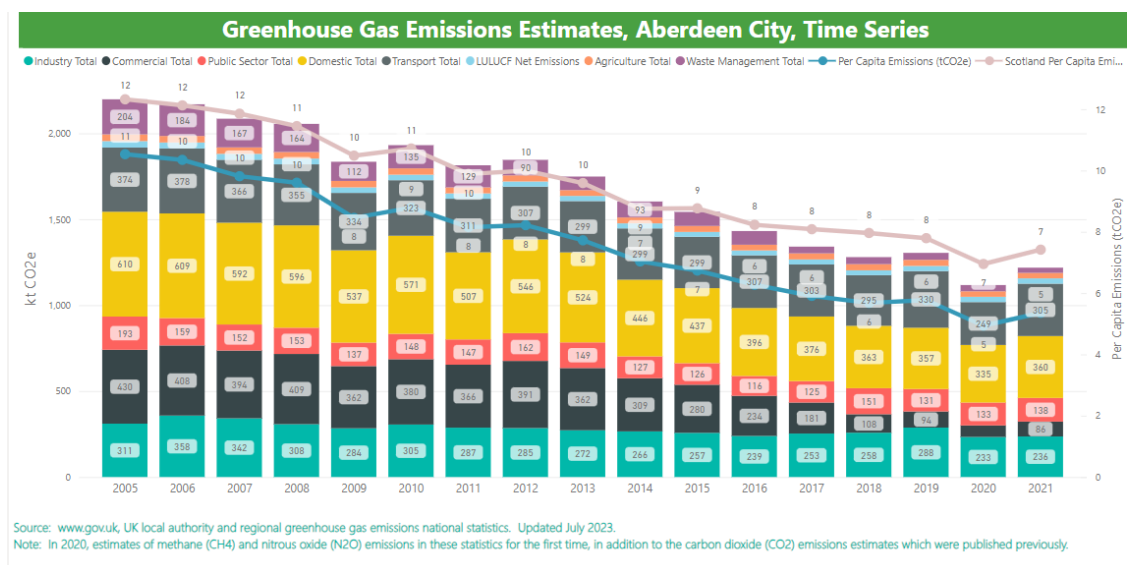
Road safety: In 2021 total, there were 64 reported road casualties in Aberdeen City of which, 2 were fatalities and 27 were serious injuries. The number of people injured in road traffic accidents has decreased in each of the last three years (from 151 in 2018) [107]. In 2019-21, the rate of casualties from road traffic accidents varied across the City ([Intermediate Zones](#)) from a low of 5 per 100,000 population in Denmore to a high of 132 per 100,000 population in Torry East [43].

⁹ (based on SIMD crimes of violence, sexual offences, domestic housebreaking, vandalism, drug offences and common assault)



6.6. Environment – climate change

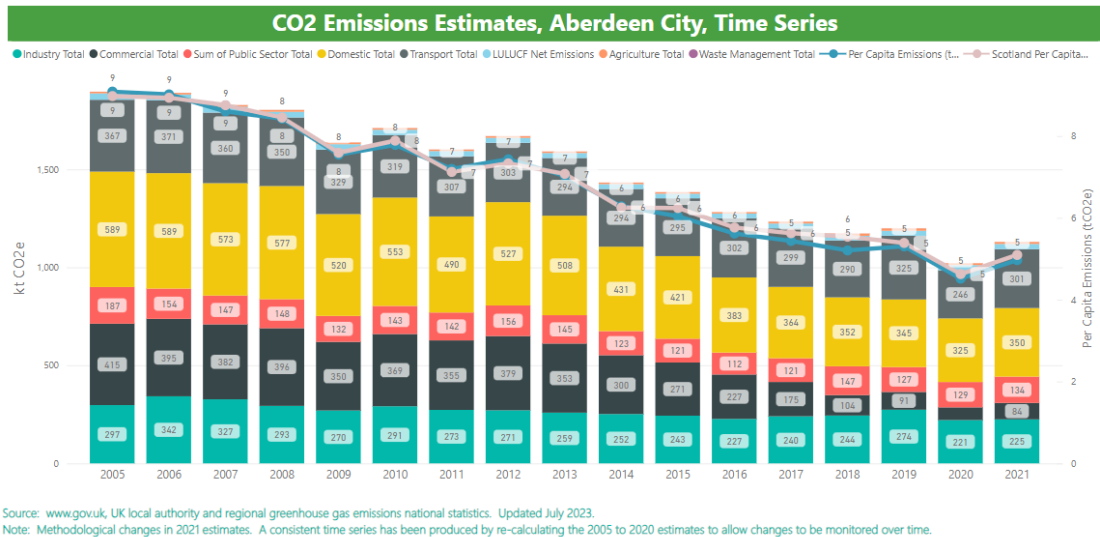
Greenhouse gas emissions: In 2020, estimates of methane (CH4) and nitrous oxide (N2O) emissions were included in the published statistics for the first time, in addition to the carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions estimates which were published previously. In 2021, data for greenhouse gases was backdated to 2005 to provide a continuous run of data. In 2021, Greenhouse Gas emissions estimates totalled 1,218 ktCO2e for Aberdeen City – up from 1,117 ktCO2e in 2020, but lower than the figure of 1,305 ktCO2e in 2019. Domestic use was the single largest contributor (29.6% of all greenhouse gas emissions) followed by travel (25%). In 2021 per capita emissions were lower in Aberdeen City (5.4 tCO2e) than in Scotland (7.4 tCO2e) [108].



Figures for 2021 are higher than those for 2020. The overall increase since 2020 in end-user greenhouse gas emissions allocated to local authorities in the UK was 5.9%, is believed to be

largely as a result of the easing of restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and colder temperatures increasing the use of heating in buildings [108] ¹⁰.

CO₂ emissions: In 2021 CO₂ emissions in Aberdeen totalled 1,130 kt (down 40.4% since 2005) – up from 1,021 in 2020. Since 2005, per capita CO₂ emissions have fallen in both Aberdeen and Scotland, mostly due to the greening of the electricity grid and the Net Zero Vision for Aberdeen has put in place a local commitment to meeting the Scottish Government target of Net Zero Emissions by 2045. In 2021, per capita levels were slightly lower in Aberdeen (4.97 tCO₂e) compared to Scotland (5.1 tCO₂e) [108].



CO₂ emissions within the scope of local authorities: alongside the full dataset, a subset dataset is also published which gives CO₂ emissions within the scope of influence of local authorities (e.g. excludes large industrial sites, railways, motorways, land-use, livestock and soils). In 2021, CO₂ emissions within the scope of local authorities totalled 1,046.9 kt – up from 937.5 kt in 2020, but down 42.7% since 2005 (1,827.4 kt).

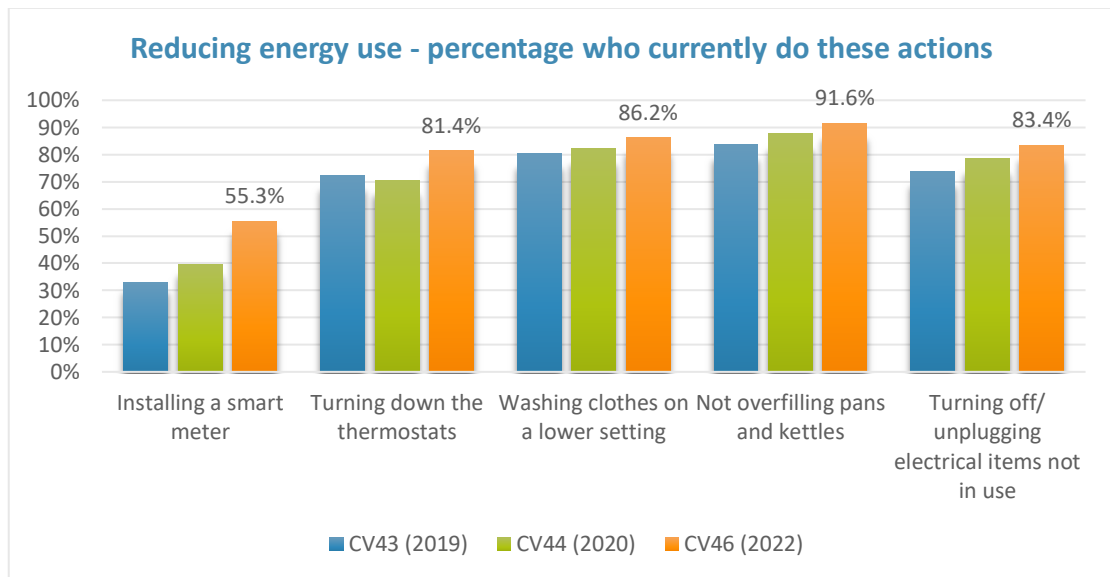
Public Sector CO₂ emissions: In 2021, Public Sector CO₂ emissions totalled 134 ktCO₂e – up slightly from 129 ktCO₂e in 2020. Public Sector Gas made up 81% of emissions.

Renewable energy: In 2021, Aberdeen City had 2,248 renewable energy installations (2,234 of which were photovoltaic) compared to 2,010 in 2020 and 789 in 2014. The installed capacity (MW) was 66.3MW in 2021 compared to 18.1MW in 2020 and 10.3MW in 2014. Renewable energy generation was 10,816MWh in 2021 - lower than 12,295MWh in 2020 and 25,704MWh in 2014 [109].

Reducing energy use and demand: Questions around reducing energy use and demand have been asked in the City Voice, most recently in December 2022. Overall the results suggest that most respondents are already taking steps to reduce the amount of energy they use e.g. turning down heating thermostats or switching off/ unplugging electrical items not in use. Common other ways of reducing energy use include wearing extra layers of clothing and reducing use of appliances such as ovens, dishwashers or tumble driers. Most respondents

¹⁰ Further information about public sector emissions can be found in the Sustainable Scotland Network Analysis Report 2021 to 2022 [Sustainable Scotland Network Analysis Report 2021 to 2022](#)

also reported that they currently are, or would be prepared to, undertake actions which would reduce energy demand, e.g. install more energy efficient appliances or upgrade insulation levels. The exception to this is installing renewable energy technologies such as solar panels, where over half of respondents (55.4%) reported either they were not prepared to do this, or that this option was not applicable (e.g. those living in rented accommodation) [28].



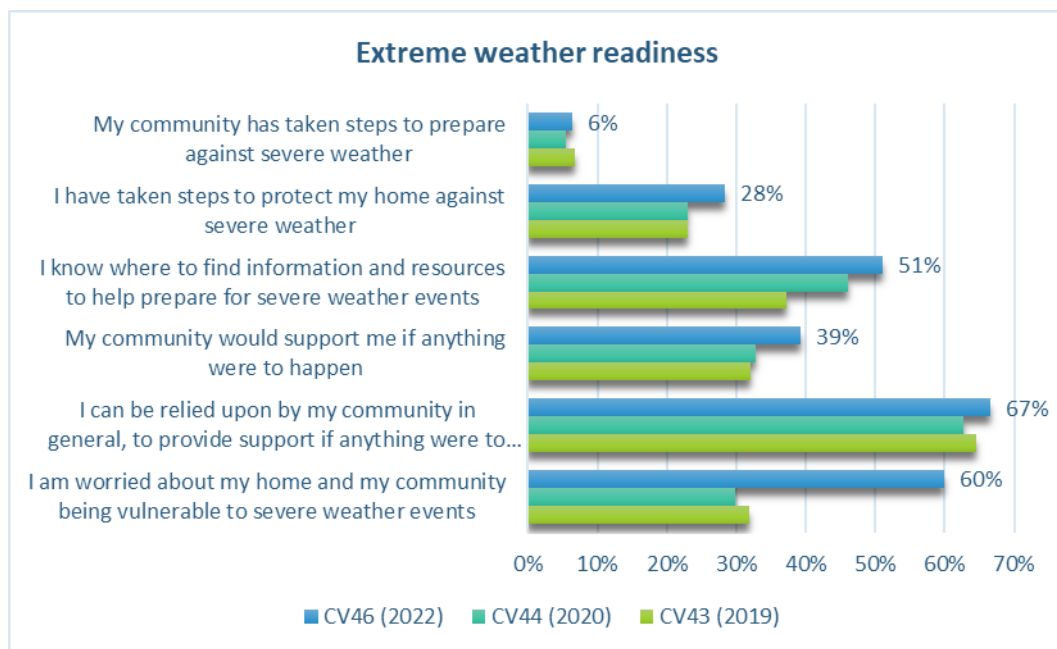
Climate Emergency Declaration: In March 2023, Aberdeen City Council added its voice to the growing number of local authorities around the world to have responded to the global climate change and nature loss crises by declaring a climate and nature emergency. Details of the declaration are available in the [minutes of the full Council meeting of 22 February 2023](#) (see item 18).

A city-wide [Green Champions](#) network exists to identify areas of improvement, drive change towards sustainable and resource efficient behaviour and promote activities which can benefit both climate and nature, as well as reducing long term costs and carbon inefficiencies. The developing city-wide network (currently six partners) meet up quarterly to support, share, and learn from each other.

Adaptation: Climate change is being experienced now across Aberdeen. Changes to local rainfall patterns and weather events are being seen, putting increasing numbers of people and property at risk. A Local Climate Impact Profile (LCLIP) explored severe weather events experienced in Aberdeen over 2014-2019; as well as the impact on Council services. In comparing information with the previous LCLIP 2008-2013, changes in severe weather events, including storms, rainfall and warmer weather, between the two periods were noted. A refresh of Aberdeen Adapts: Climate Adaptation Framework was produced in 2022, alongside an update to the Evidence Base which informs Aberdeen Adapts. The Evidence Base reflected strategic climate risks relevant to the city, taking information from sources including UK Climate Projections (UKCP18).

Results from the 2021 Scottish Household Survey estimate that 83% of people in Aberdeen City see climate change as an immediate and urgent problem – up from 68% in 2019 [79].

Extreme weather readiness: Questions about readiness for extreme weather events have been asked in City Voice. Data from City Voice 46 (December 2022), showed that over half (59.9%) of respondents agreed (either strongly agree or agree) that they were worried about their home and community being vulnerable to severe weather events, double the response in 2020 (30%). While 66.6% of respondents agreed that they could be relied upon to by their neighbours or community to provide support if anything were to happen, only 39.3% agreed that their community would support them if anything were to happen. Just over half (51.1%) of respondents said they would know where to find information and resources to help prepare for severe weather events. Over a quarter (28.4%) of respondents reported they had taken steps to protect their home against severe weather and only 6.3% thought that their community had taken steps to prepare against severe weather with the most common response to this final statement being don't know (41.5% of respondents) [28].



Flood Risk: Scotland has been separated into 14 Local Plan Districts for flood risk management purposes. These districts are based on river catchments and coastal areas which cross administrative and institutional boundaries. SEPA, working with others, has produced a Flood Risk Management Strategy for each Local Plan District. The most recent Flood Risk Management Strategy produced by SEPA for the North East Local Plan District (2022-2028) identifies 4 areas in Aberdeen City that are potentially vulnerable to flooding – Aberdeen City North (Bridge Of Don, Dyce, Kingswells-north), Aberdeen City – South (Central), Peterculter, Cove and Nigg Bay (Cove Bay and Nigg Bay).

Number of people and properties at risk from flooding for each area:

- Aberdeen City - North (Bridge Of Don, Dyce, Kingswells-north): 7,600 people and 4,200 homes and businesses, 670 people and 610 homes and businesses and 100 people and 50 homes and businesses.
- Aberdeen City - South (Central): 23,000 people and 14,000 homes and businesses
- Peterculter: 790 people and 430 homes and businesses

- Cove and Nigg Bay (Cove Bay and Nigg Bay): 260 people and 150 homes and businesses and 90 people and 90 homes and businesses.

The total number of people at risk from flooding for the North-East Local area is 51,000. The total number of people at risk of flooding for Aberdeen City is 32,510. This means that 63.75% of the number of people at risk from flooding in the North-East are within Aberdeen City.

The total number of homes and businesses at risk from flooding for the North-East Local area are 30,000. The total number of homes and businesses at risk of flooding for Aberdeen City is 19,530. This means that 65.1% of the number of homes and businesses at risk from flooding in the North-East are within Aberdeen City.

Nature based solutions are being employed across Aberdeen, at locations such as at Seaton Park, Stronsay Park, and Maidencraig, to reduce flood risk while delivering additional outcomes for people and wildlife. A recent national Nature of Scotland Award was given to Aberdeen for this pioneering work on natural flood management.

6.7. Environment

Greenspace: Greenspace is important for a wide range of reasons, including health and well-being, improving biodiversity, climate mitigation and environmental protection. Greenspace also provides opportunities for play and recreation for all ages as well as providing economic benefits and ecosystem services. Greenspaces directly improve our health and wellbeing, benefitting society and helping to reduce costs on local and wider communities, the NHS, other public sector services and local businesses. Well-managed and maintained spaces can support people to interact with each other and promote a sense of place and community pride. Aberdeen has a diverse mix of greenspaces for people and wildlife. The types, quantities, quality and accessibility of these are not evenly distributed across Aberdeen. Areas of social deprivation tend to have lower diversity and quality spaces which in turn can impact on the health outcomes for those communities. Some areas, e.g. Deeside, have much higher prevalence of tree cover than others. Aberdeen has an overall tree canopy cover of 13%, much lower than comparable cities, Scotland as a whole, and national targets. Further analysis of the context, actions and trends in this area is required.

Aberdeen has 1,450 hectares of parks and other greenspaces. Further extensive areas of land are managed for people and nature and other co-benefits by other public, private and community bodies and partnerships, including, Forestry and Land Scotland, The River Dee Trust, the Woodland Trust and individual private land-owners.

The protection and enhancement of high-quality greenspace networks supports the following UN Sustainable Development Goals: 3 Good Health & Well-Being; 11 Sustainable Cities & Communities; 13 Climate Action; and 15 Life on Land. High-quality greenspace networks will also play a key role in helping to achieve the [Net Zero Aberdeen Routemap](#) by helping to store carbon and reduce carbon emissions.

Aberdeen's greenspaces are assessed through a periodic Open Space Audit, with the latest Audit currently being finalised. This Audit will provide information that is critical to directing greenspace management policies and targeted interventions and improvements for all

partners going forward. In December 2022, 69.9% of City Voice respondents reported that they were satisfied with their local greenspace – up from 65% in March 2020.

The amount of blue green infrastructure, including green walls, green roofs and rain gardens, within the built environment must be increased and enhanced to ensure a sustainable balance of blue, green and grey is achieved and to halt urban sprawl and the density of buildings, roads and hard infrastructure devoid of blue and green space.

The [Net Zero Aberdeen Natural Environment Strategy](#) identifies ways how we can all work together to improve greenspaces in the city e.g. by exploring sites to create naturalised grasslands and wildflower meadows across multiple land ownerships and increasing biodiversity and contributing to carbon stores and carbon savings from a reduction in intensive grass cutting on land across the city.

Aberdeen City Council is extending naturalised greenspace management [by improving and creating blue/green habitats in two high profile parks in the city](#). The Council is using a Nature Restoration in Parks grant from the Scottish Government to survey, plan and design work to further improve the parks for nature e.g. by creating/improving wildflower meadow areas for pollinators and tree planting. Aberdeen Flagship Parks for Pollinators Project also supports longer term '[B-lines](#)' pollinator work between Aberdeen City Council and the charity [Buglife](#).

86.9% of respondents to the Open Space Audit 2022 questionnaire visited Aberdeen's greenspace or open space at least once a week (*Open Space Audit 2022 questionnaire results will be published as part of the upcoming Open Space Audit report refresh*).

Woodland: Aberdeen has 2,410 ha of woodland - 13% of ACC's total land area. By comparison, Scotland's woodland cover is 18%. Native woodlands account for 22% of the total woodland area in Aberdeen. There are an estimated 115,000 individual street, park and garden and civic trees across the City.

Water environment: Aberdeen is a coastal harbour city bounded by two major inland waterways, the River Dee and the Don. These connections to water are important parts of its history, culture, economy, and well-being. Flooding, erosion, pollution, and wildlife impacts are all being experienced at the coast and inland and have significant implications for our people and economy. Further analysis of the context, actions and trends in this area is also required.

SEPA produces a classification system (five quality classes: Bad, Poor, Moderate, Good and High) to assess surface waters. In this system Aberdeen has 18 water bodies. Most of these (83.3%) are categorised as at least 'moderate' condition [110].

The River Don is currently classified as in a 'bad' ecological condition for its 10.7kms from Dyce to the tidal limit. The River Dee is currently classified as in a 'moderate' ecological condition for its 10.4kms from Peterculter to the tidal limit. The Denburn is currently classified as in a 'moderate' ecological condition for its 9.2kms length and the Leuchar Burn 'poor' ecological condition for 9Kms. The coastal water from Don Estuary to Souter Head (50 square kilometers) is classified as in good ecological status. North and south of this strip is in 'high' ecological condition.

The table below provides an overview of the condition of all 18 surface waters for 2020, 2019 and 2018.

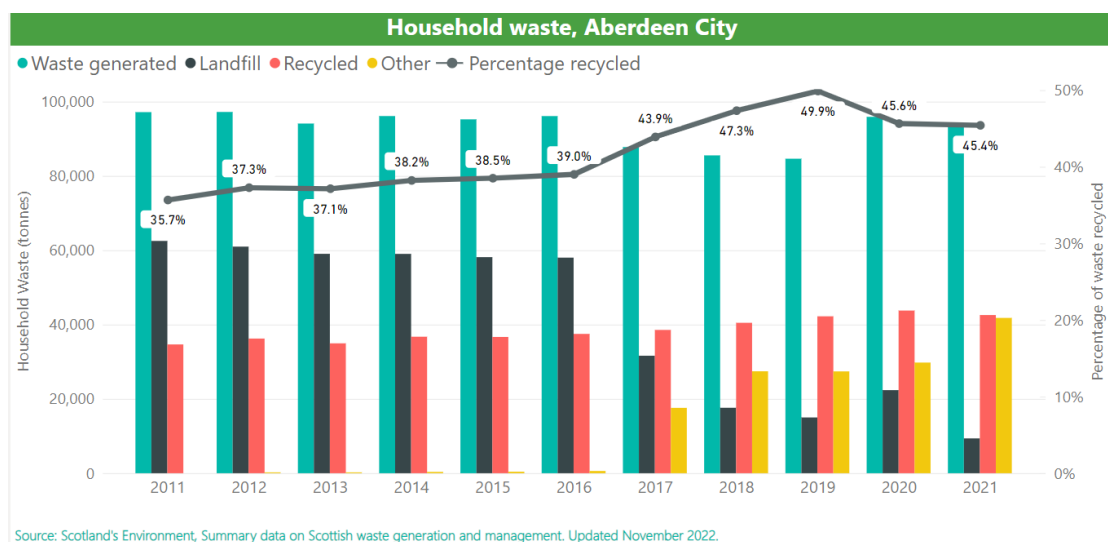
Name	2020	2019	2018
South Mundurno Burn	Good ecological potential	Good ecological potential	Bad
Den Burn	Moderate ecological potential	Moderate ecological potential	Poor ecological potential
River Don - Dyce to tidal limit	Bad	Bad	Poor
Bucks Burn	Moderate ecological potential	Moderate ecological potential	Moderate
Elrick Burn - d/s Newmachar WWTP	Poor ecological potential	Poor ecological potential	Poor
River Don - Inverurie to Dyce	Good ecological potential	Good ecological potential	Good
Black Burn	Moderate ecological potential	Moderate ecological potential	Moderate
River Dee - Peterculter to tidal limit	Moderate ecological potential	Moderate ecological potential	Bad ecological potential
River Dee - Banchory to Peterculter	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Culter Burn	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Gormack Burn	Moderate ecological potential	Moderate ecological potential	Bad
Leuchar Burn	Poor ecological potential	Poor ecological potential	Poor
Brodiach Burn / Ord Burn	Moderate ecological potential	Moderate ecological potential	Bad
Dee (Aberdeen) Estuary	Good ecological potential	Good ecological potential	Good ecological potential
Don Estuary	High	High	High
Don Estuary to Souter Head (Aberdeen)	Good ecological potential	Good ecological potential	Good ecological potential
Cruden Bay to the Don Estuary	High	High	High
Souter Head to Garron Point	High	High	High

Domestic water supply: The [River Dee and its tributaries](#), together with a number of private water supplies, provide a domestic water supply for the whole of Aberdeen City and over half of Aberdeenshire. Over 300,000 people drink water supplied by the River Dee each day [111].

Climate change is likely to bring more uncertainty and may exert pressure in areas that have not yet experienced water scarcity. SEPA are responsible for the forecast, monitoring and report of the situation facing Scotland's water resources and produces a during the summer months [112].

Natural heritage: The dramatic decline and loss of natural heritage is, alongside climate change, a crisis facing most of the globe. Aberdeen is not immune to this and this places risks on our citizens through impacts on food security, economy and health and wellbeing. Aberdeen has a diverse range of species and habitats and their outlook is currently mixed. Aberdeen has 1 Special Area of Conservation (SAC), 3 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), 4 Local Nature Reserves and 45 Local Nature Conservation Sites. Approximately 17% of our land is protected for wildlife. ACC also manage a significant number of sites for nature that are not designated but provide essential refuge, food and wildlife corridors within Aberdeen. Currently, it is unclear what proportion is managed for nature but undesignated and this requires further analysis to compare to the UK wide target of 30% by 2030.

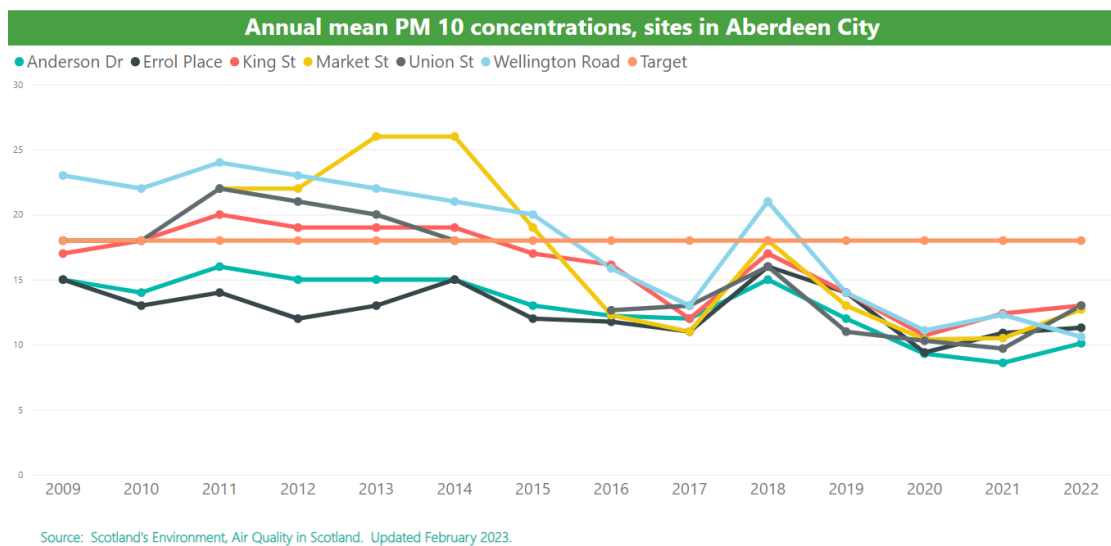
Household waste: In 2021, 93,747 tonnes of household waste were generated in Aberdeen City. 2020 and 2021 saw increases in the amount of household waste generated compared to the preceding years. Overall, the amount of household waste going to landfill has fallen from 58,021 tonnes in 2016 to 9,376 in 2021. In the same period, the level of waste being recycled and 'other' diversions from landfill (disposed by incineration, recovered by incineration, recovered by co-incineration and waste managed by other methods) has increased. In 2021, 45.4% of household waste was recycled (slightly less than the previous year) and 10% was sent to landfill. The carbon impact of household waste has fallen from 253,016 tonnes CO₂e in 2016 to 224,544 tonnes CO₂e in 2019 (although again there were increases in 2020 and 2021 compared to the immediately preceding years) [113].



Active travel: In 2021 an estimated 24% of people in Aberdeen City used active travel (walking or cycling) to get to work or education. This is an increase from 21.4% in 2018/19 [114]. In 2021, 34% of people reported that their main mode of travel was walking (up from 21% in 2019 – no data for 2020) and 4% reported that their main mode of travel was cycling (up from 2% in 2019). Driving a car was the most common main mode of travel at 46% [114]. Most City

Voice respondents (89.1%) reported walking as one mode of travel and 14.8% reported they cycled as one mode of travel (December 2022) [28].

Air Pollution: Information on PM10 concentrations is available for six sites in Aberdeen City (Anderson Drive, Errol Place, King Street, Market Street, Union Street and Wellington Road) [115]. For PM10, the annual mean concentration for the air quality objective of 18ug/m3, and the daily mean concentration with the air quality objective of 50ug/m3 - not to be exceeded more than seven times per year - have not been exceeded at any of the six continuous monitoring sites since 2016. The annual mean PM2.5 objective of 10µg/m3 has also not been exceeded at any of the six continuous monitoring sites since 2016.



Electric Vehicles: In 2022/23, there were 79 public chargepoint sockets installed by the Council in order to encourage the use of electric vehicles - up from 56 in 2020 and 30 in 2017. In addition to these, there are a growing number of publicly available charge points that the Council does not have responsibility for.

7 Further Information




If you have any queries about the content of this document or would like further information, please contact us using the details below.





Contact Anne McAteer, Research Officer, Community Planning Team






Email : communityplanning@aberdeencity.gov.uk






Visit : www.communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/data

Appendix 1: An interpretation of the PNA through the lens of the UN Sustainable Development Goals

 <p>1 NO POVERTY</p>	<p>In 2021/22 an estimated 7,994 children (0-15 years) in Aberdeen City were living in poverty (below 60% median income after housing costs). This is equivalent to 20.5% of children compared to 24.5% for Scotland (End Child Poverty 2023). The proportion of children living in poverty has decreased slightly in Aberdeen from 21.3% in 2019/20.</p> <p>The number of datazones in Aberdeen within the 20% most deprived areas of Scotland increased from 22 (out of 283) in 2016 to 29 in 2020. Additionally the proportion of datazones within the 40% most deprived areas of Scotland has increased by 5.2% in Aberdeen between 2016 and 2020.</p>
 <p>2 ZERO HUNGER</p>	<p>18.6% of City Voice respondents reported they ate only a few kinds of food, 11.6% that they were unable to eat healthy and nutritious food, 10.6% that they ate less than they thought they should and 8.4% that they were worried they would not have enough food to eat.</p> <p>The use of foodbanks has increased. In 2022/23 over 60,000 food parcels were distributed in Aberdeen City (CFINE, Trussel Trust, Instant Neighbour and Inchgarth).</p> <p>22.3% of P6 and 18.7% of P7 pupils were registered for Free School Meals in 2022/23. At secondary school level, 16.6% of pupils were registered for FSM – up from 15.7% in 2021 and 13.9% in 2020.</p> <p>In 2021/22, nearly a quarter of P1 children were classified as being at risk of overweight or obesity. In 2016-19 it was estimated that 23% of the City's adult population is obese (classified as a BMI of 30+). This is lower than the rate for Scotland of 29% and a decrease from 25% in 2014-17.</p> <p>Less than 1% of P1 children were classified as being at risk of underweight.</p> <p>The allotment waiting list continues to grow: 793 households were waiting in 2021, by March 2023 this had risen to 1047 households (ACC Annual Allotments Report).</p>
 <p>3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</p>	<p>In 2019-21 in Aberdeen City Life Expectancy at birth has fallen slightly for women (81 years) and remained static for men (76.9 years) and both are similar to the Scotland average of 80.8 years for women and 76.5 for men.</p> <p>The life expectancy gap between the most deprived and least deprived areas of Aberdeen has increased to 10 years for men and 8.1 years for women.</p> <p>In 2017-21, the rate of infant deaths (age 0-1 years) in Aberdeen City was 3.1 per 1000 live births – lower than the rate for Scotland of 3.4 but higher than the rate for 2016-18 of 2.5.</p> <p>The rate of cancer registrations decreased in Aberdeen from 2017 to 2020 but is higher than the Scottish average.</p> <p>In Aberdeen City, the rate of Coronary Heart Disease patient hospitalisations has decreased over the past 10 years as has the rate of early deaths from cancer (under the age of 75).</p> <p>Alcohol-related deaths are the higher than the previous five year period and slightly lower than the Scottish average.</p>

	<p>There were 42 drug-related deaths in 2022. In the period 2018-2022, the average annual rate for drug-related deaths was 22.9 deaths per 100,000 population slightly lower than the equivalent rate for Scotland.</p> <p>In the period 2017-21, an estimated 15% of adults in Aberdeen were current smokers compared to 16% in Scotland (an 8% reduction from 2014-2017). It is estimated 5% of adults currently use e-cigarettes.</p>
 <p>4 QUALITY EDUCATION</p>	<p>In 2021/22, 90.8% of school leavers had a positive follow-up destination, slightly lower than the previous year and lower than the rate for Scotland. 10.3% more school leavers had a positive destination from the least deprived areas of Aberdeen compared to the most deprived.</p> <p>In 2020/21, average attendance in primary schools in the City was 94.3% and for secondary schools the rate was 90.7%; higher than the rates for Scotland (91.4% and 83.2% respectively)</p> <p>In January to December 2021, compared to Scotland, Aberdeen City had a higher proportion of its workforce who are qualified to NVQ4 and above (54.4% in Aberdeen and 50.0% in Scotland).</p> <p>96 Aberdeen educational settings are registered with the Eco-Schools programme and 13 have achieved green flags Keep Scotland Beautiful Eco-Schools Map.</p>
 <p>5 GENDER EQUALITY</p>	<p>The gender pay gap has improved since 2020. In 2022 the median gross weekly pay for full-time workers living in Aberdeen City was higher for males (£644.90) than for females (£629.70) representing a 2.3% difference. Female full-time workers in Aberdeen earned more however than the Scotland average (£604.70).</p> <p>Recorded incidents of domestic abuse were down slightly in 2021/22 from the previous year and in 2022/23 there were 116 recorded crimes for domestic abuse, 54 fewer than the previous year.</p>
 <p>6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION</p>	<p>The River Dee and its tributaries, together with 150 private water suppliers provide a domestic water supply for the whole of Aberdeen City and over half of Aberdeenshire. Over 300,000 people drink water supplied by the River Dee each day.</p> <p>Climate change is likely to bring more uncertainty and may exert pressure in areas that have not yet experienced water scarcity. SEPA are responsible for the forecast, monitoring and report of the situation facing Scotland's water resources and produces a weekly report during the summer months.</p> <p>Drinking water quality is monitored and maintained Drinking Water Quality Regulator for Scotland.</p>
 <p>7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY</p>	<p>In 2017-19 an estimated 26.1% of households were in fuel poverty – up from 23% in 2016-18 and higher than the rate for Scotland of 24.4%. 12.8% were in extreme fuel poverty. A higher proportion of those in social housing were in fuel poverty than those in owner occupied housing (46.2% compared to 12.9%)</p> <p>In 2021, Aberdeen City had 2,248 renewable energy installations (2,234 of which were photovoltaic) compared to 2,010 in 2020. The installed capacity (MW) was 66.3MW in 2021 compared to 18.1MW in 2020. Renewable energy generation was 10,816MWh in 2021 compared to 12,295MWh in 2020.</p>

<p>8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</p> 	<p>In 2021 Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire had a Gross Value Added per head of £31,823 (current basic prices) showing a slight increase from the previous year (£30,249). This is 23.7% above the Scottish average and 10.6% above the UK average. The gap between the North East, Scotland, and the UK has been narrowing since 2015.</p> <p>In 2022, 75.1% of Aberdeen’s working age population (16-64 years) was classified as economically active compared to 77.1% in Scotland. There were 5.5% fewer enterprises and 5% fewer local units in Aberdeen City compared to the previous year. The unemployment rate in Aberdeen City was 3.9% - slightly higher than the rate for Scotland.</p> <p>In 2022, the median gross weekly pay for full-time workers living in Aberdeen City was £637.90 – slightly lower than the equivalent for Scotland of £640.30.</p>
<p>9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE</p> 	<p>In 2022, 96% of City Voice respondents reported having access to either a laptop or PC, a smart phone or tablet : an increase from 90% in 2018.</p> <p>In 2022, the most common mode of travel to school (excluding nursery) in Aberdeen City was walking (49%), followed by being driven (19.8%) and bus (13.2%).</p> <p>In 2021, 34% of people reported that their main mode of travel was walking (up from 21% in 2019) and 4% reported that their main mode of travel was cycling (up from 2% in 2019).</p>
<p>10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES</p> 	<p>In 2022, participation rates for 16-19 year-olds in education, employment or training were lower for those in the 20% most deprived areas (83.5%) than for those in the 20% least deprived areas (95.9%).</p> <p>86.8% of young people identified as disabled were participating in education, employment or training – an increase from 83.6% in 2021 but lower than the rate for 2020 of 87.9% (participation among non-disabled young people in 2022 was 91.4%).</p>
<p>11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</p> 	<p>Provisional data for 2022/23 shows there were 1,772 homelessness applications in the year – an increase of 26.1% from 2021/22.</p> <p>In 2021-22 there were 1,536,720 entries and exits at Aberdeen train station. This is down from 2,497,108 in 2019-20.</p> <p>For PM10, the annual mean concentration for the air quality objective of 18ug/m3, and the daily mean concentration with the air quality objective of 50ug/m3 - not to be exceeded more than seven times per year - have not been exceeded at any of the six continuous monitoring sites since 2016. The annual mean PM2.5 objective of 10µg/m3 has also not been exceeded at any of the six continuous monitoring sites since 2016.</p> <p>In 2021, there were 64 reported road casualties in Aberdeen City of which, 2 were fatalities and 27 were serious injuries. The number of people injured in road traffic accidents has decreased in each of the last three years (from 151 in 2018).</p>
<p>12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</p> 	<p>In 2021, 93,747 tonnes of household waste were generated in Aberdeen City. 2020 and 2021 saw increases in the amount of household waste generated compared to the preceding years. 45.4% was recycled in 2021 (slightly less than the previous year) and 10% was sent to landfill.</p>

<p>13 CLIMATE ACTION</p> 	<p>In 2021, Greenhouse Gas emissions estimates totalled 1,218 ktCO₂e for Aberdeen City – up from 1,117 ktCO₂e in 2020, but lower than the figure of 1,305 ktCO₂e in 2019. Domestic use was the single largest contributor (29.6% of all greenhouse gas emissions) followed by travel (25%). In 2020, per capita emissions were lower in Aberdeen City (5.4 tCO₂e) than in Scotland (7.4 tCO₂e).</p> <p>Data from the most recent City Voice questionnaire (December 2022), showed that over half (59.9%) of respondents agreed that they were worried about their home and community being vulnerable to severe weather events, double the response in 2020 (30%).</p> <p>Results from the 2021 Scottish Household Survey estimate that 83% of people in Aberdeen City see climate change as an immediate and urgent problem – up from 68% in 2019.</p>
<p>14 LIFE BELOW WATER</p> 	<p>The River Don is currently classified as in a ‘bad’ ecological condition for its 10.7kms from Dyce to the tidal limit. The River Dee is currently classified as in a ‘moderate’ ecological condition for its 10.4kms from Peterculter to the tidal limit. The Denburn is currently classified as in a ‘moderate’ ecological condition for its 9.2kms length and the Leuchar Burn ‘poor’ ecological condition for 9Kms</p> <p>The coastal water from Don Estuary to Souter Head (50 square kilometers) is classified as in good ecological status. North and south of this strip is in ‘high’ ecological condition.</p>
<p>15 LIFE ON LAND</p> 	<p>Aberdeen has 2,410 ha of woodland - 13% of ACC’s total land area. By comparison, Scotland’s woodland cover is 18%. Native woodlands account for 22% of the total woodland area in Aberdeen. There are an estimated 115,000 individual street, park and garden and civic trees across the City.</p> <p>In December 2022, 69.9% of City Voice respondents reported that they were satisfied with their local greenspace – up from 65% in March 2020.</p> <p>In 2021, 17% of Aberdeen’s land was protected for nature.</p> <p>86.9% of respondents to the Open Space Audit 2022 questionnaire visit Aberdeen’s greenspace or open space at least once a week (Open Space Audit 2022 questionnaire results will be published as part of the upcoming Open Space Audit report refresh).</p>
<p>16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</p> 	<p>The rate of crime varies across the City and is relatively low in most areas. In 2022/23 the most common crimes and offences recorded in Aberdeen City were Crimes of Dishonesty (5,449), Road Traffic Offences (4,162) and Non-sexual Crimes of Violence (3,608)</p> <p>718 people living in Aberdeen City had a first ever court conviction in 2019/20 which is 21 fewer than the previous year. Of these, 29 were under 18 years and 104 were aged 18-20 years. Of the 1,597 offenders (over 18 years) in the 2018-19 cohort, 31.1% were reconvicted within a year of receiving their sentence.</p> <p>In 2022-23 there were 116 recorded crimes for Domestic Abuse – 54 fewer than in 2021-22.</p>
<p>17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</p> 	<p>Aberdeen’s relationship with developing countries is expressed through its status as a Fairtrade City and this accreditation is maintained by a partnership of organisations connecting through the Aberdeen Fair and Sustainable Trade Group.</p> <p>Policy coherence across the goals is being assisted locally by the Aberdeen Community Planning Partnership and other important partnerships which include Aberdeen Climate Action, ACVO, Aberdeen Cycle Forum, Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce, Granite City Good Food Sustainable Food Places in Aberdeen City, North East Scotland Biodiversity Partnership, NESTRANS.</p>

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Full Council
DATE	11 October 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Community Planning Aberdeen Annual Outcome Improvement Report 2022/23
REPORT NUMBER	CUS/23/314
DIRECTOR	Gale Beattie, Commissioning (Chair of Community Planning Aberdeen Management Group)
CHIEF OFFICER	Jacqui McKenzie, Early Intervention and Community Empowerment
REPORT AUTHOR	Allison Swanson, Improvement Programme Manager
TERMS OF REFERENCE	24.11

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report presents the Annual Outcome Improvement Report 2022/23. This is the seventh Annual Outcome Improvement Report since the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) was published in August 2016, and the second to be published since the LOIP was refreshed in July 2021.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Council:-

- 2.1 Approves the Annual Outcome Improvement Report 2022/23 as a representation of the Council's contribution to partnership working in delivery of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) 2016-26 was first approved in 2016 and has been refreshed bi-annually since then to ensure it remains relevant and focussed on priority outcomes. The refreshed Aberdeen City LOIP was approved by Community Planning Aberdeen Board on 7 July 2021. Within the refreshed LOIP there were 15 stretch outcomes to be delivered by 2026 and 74 shorter term improvement aims.
- 3.2 The CPA Improvement Programme 2021-23 was approved by the Board on 15 September 2021 and set out the timescales for both initiation of the new aims within the refreshed LOIP, as well as the timescales for the continuing project charters being reviewed, over the following two years until 2023. Over the last two years the Community Planning Partnership has been working towards the improvement aims within the LOIP with a view to improve outcomes for the people of Aberdeen.

- 3.3 On 30 November 2022, the CPA Board approved a New Stretch Outcome 16 within the Community Empowerment Strategy which aimed to achieve “100% increase in the proportion of citizens who feel able to participate in decisions that help change things for the better by 2026”. Within the new stretch outcome there were 7 further improvement aims setting out what we will improve, by how much and by when.
- 3.4 The Community Empowerment Act (CEA) 2015 requires Community Planning Aberdeen to report progress against the LOIP and Locality Plans annually for the period 1 April to 31 March.

ANNUAL OUTCOME IMPROVEMENT REPORT 2012/22

- 3.5 The Annual Outcome Improvement Report 2022/23 contained at Appendix 1 is the second progress report against the Aberdeen City LOIP since it was refreshed in July 2021. It provides an overview of progress made during 2022/23 towards the achievement of the 15 stretch outcomes and 74 improvement project aims within the Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26, as well progress towards Stretch Outcome 16 and the 7 improvement aims from the Community Empowerment Strategy 2023-26. Please note that the reporting covers April 2022 to March 2023 and therefore does not reflect the revised Stretch Outcomes 4-9 approved in April 2023.
- 3.6 A summary Annual Outcome Improvement Report 2022/23 is contained at [Appendix 2](#). This provides a summary of our headline achievements during 2022/23 and an assessment of our overall progress across the themes of economy, people (children and young people and adults), place and community empowerment in a concise and easy to understand format. The summary also highlights the different ways people can get involved and contribute to the Community Planning Partnership.
- 3.7 Drawing on evidence from the latest data available within our outcomes framework, as well as improvement data captured from our improvement projects, the report demonstrates the achievements of the Community Planning Partnership and highlights priority areas for improvement for 2023/24. As of 31 March 2023, 4 of our Stretch Outcomes had been achieved with 35 projects ended, of which 74% (26) had achieved their aims. The remaining original improvements projects were still in progress with a view to all concluding by February 2024.

NEXT STEPS

- 3.8 The Annual Outcome Improvement Report 2022/23 allows the Community Planning Partnership to take stock of what has been achieved over the last year to progress the improvement aims within the Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26. The annual report, alongside the revised population needs assessment and Locality Plan Annual Outcome Improvement reports, provides the foundation for the Community Planning Partnership refreshing the LOIP 2016-26 to ensure that the current priorities continue to respond to local need. The Outcome Improvement Groups will use these documents to evaluate progress to date and, alongside community and

stakeholder engagement, identify their proposed improvement priorities for the period 2024-26.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendation of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Production of the annual report ensures compliance with the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 (“CEA”) which requires Community Planning Aberdeen to report progress against the LOIP annually for the period 1 April to 31 March.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendation of this report.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	No significant risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
Compliance	Must comply with the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 (“CEA”)	Production of the annual report ensures compliance	L	Yes
Operational	No significant risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
Financial	No significant risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
Reputational	There is a risk that the Annual Report does not accurately reflect progress made by the Partnership in delivering outcomes which may have a negative impact on the public’s	Colleagues across the Community Planning Partnership have contributed to the development of the annual report. It has been signed off by the Community Planning	L	Yes

	perception of the Council and Partnership working.	Partnership Board as an accurate reflection of progress made. An easy read version will be produced.		
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	The recommendation in the report has no direct impact on the Policy Statement.
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	The report provides an overview of what has been achieved over the last year to progress the Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The report provides an overview of what has been achieved over the last year to progress the Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	The report provides an overview of what has been achieved over the last year to progress the Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26.
Regional and City Strategies	The recommendation in the report has no direct impact on regional and city strategies.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Stage 1 Assessment has been completed.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	N/A

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 [Refreshed Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016- 26 and CPA Development Plan 2021-2022](#)

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix 1 Annual LOIP Outcome Improvement Report 2022/23
[Appendix 2](#) Summary Annual Outcome Improvement Report 2022/23

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Allison Swanson
Title	Improvement Programme Manager
Email Address	aswanson@aberdeencity.gov.uk

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Annual Outcome Improvement Report

2022/2023



Community Planning
Aberdeen

FOREWORD

By Councillor Allard and Chief Superintendent Graeme Mackie

Welcome to our Annual Outcome Improvement Report for 2022-23, which sets out the work that has been undertaken by Community Planning Aberdeen over the past year, our key achievements and successes, as well as those areas where we seek to improve.

As you would expect, it has been a challenging year as we continue to respond to the rising cost of living which is impacting all households, but felt most acutely by those on the lowest incomes that are struggling to cover the essentials such as energy and food.

The scale of the challenge is understood and over the last year Community Planning Aberdeen has worked together with communities, businesses and stakeholders to support people in immediate need and mitigate the impacts of the cost of living crisis. At the same time we have continued to look ahead to the future, taking action to secure the longer term recovery of the City.

Our key achievements during 2022/23 include:

- Supporting people and families across the City during the cost of living crisis with 696 households helped with fuel bills to achieve £134,464.52 in fuel bill savings.
- Increasing household income by helping 3578 people to access unclaimed benefits, supporting 23 unemployed people to start a business and helping 595 people to upskill and reskill to access employment opportunities.
- Encouraging the uptake of parenting support by 52% to help secure improved outcomes for children and young people such as 97.1% of children meeting their expected developmental milestones and 94% of pupils achieving a minimum of SCQF level 3 qualifications.
- Helping more young people reach their potential with a 13% increase in care experienced young people achieving a positive destination and 40% reduction in number of under 18s offending, including 21% reduction in the number of care experienced young people offending.
- Supporting people to make healthier choices through a range of community based interventions, contributing to a 8% reduction in people smoking and living a healthier life style.
- Enabling more people involved in the justice system to access mental health support, seeing a 59% increase in access for people in Police Custody and 55% in HMP Grampian.
- Reducing the harm caused by alcohol and drugs through targeted interventions such as alcohol awareness, naloxone distribution and the sharp response and crisis response which has supported 226 individuals.
- Improving the environment by working with green champions to run 59 initiatives over the year and achieve a 122% increase in community run green space.

These are just some highlights, the quantifiable improvements that help us know whether we are on track to achieve the aims and ambitions of our city wide Local Outcome Improvement Plan and underpinning Locality Plans.

Whilst there is much to celebrate here, we are not complacent. Tackling poverty and reducing inequality is core to our purpose and achieving our shared vision for Aberdeen as a place where all people can prosper, regardless of their background or circumstances. There are as many areas where we acknowledge we need to do more to improve outcomes for people and communities and throughout the report we identify where further improvement is required.

Areas for improvement during 2023/24 are:

- Raise awareness of support available to communities to reduce energy bills and other ways to increase income to ensure no one experiences extreme fuel poverty.
- Greater focus on supporting young people to get into employment by offering work placements and modern apprenticeships.
- Continue to nurture our care experienced young people to help them thrive and do well in life despite the challenges they have faced through provision of mental health services and a family support model.
- Earlier and preventative interventions for people most vulnerable to harm caused due to poverty, homelessness, mental health and drugs and alcohol.
- Developing approaches to support low income families to have access to and make healthy food choices to support their overall health.
- Continue to tackle hate crime through expansion of Third-Party Reporting Centres and training to teams across the partnership who face and support those victimised by hate crimes.
- Enable and encourage community led action in times of crisis by supporting neighbourhoods and communities to develop their own community resilience plans, particularly in areas at risk of flooding.
- Continue to tackle climate change by making it easier for communities to choose sustainable travel choices such as walking and cycling through initiative such as bikes for all.

We are committed to driving forward these improvements at pace, whilst ensuring we continue to sustain the gains we have already made. We recognise this will take the continued effort, commitment and innovation of all our partners, staff and communities. The progress demonstrated in this report leaves us in no doubt about the ability and drive of our people and we are excited about what the future year will bring.











Councillor Allard, Co-Leader of Aberdeen City Council and Chair of Community Planning Aberdeen











Chief Superintendent Graeme Mackie, Divisional Commander Police Scotland, Vice Chair of Community Planning Aberdeen

Summary of progress 2022/23

This is a summary of our headline achievement during 2022/23 and an assessment of our overall progress towards the 16 Stretch Outcomes (SO) we have set out to achieve in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26 and the Community Empowerment Strategy 2023-26. Our assessment is based on current performance compared to 2016 when we started our plan.

ECONOMY		PEOPLE				PLACE	
<p>SO1</p> <p>No one will suffer due to poverty by 2026.</p> 	<p>CHALLENGES</p>	<p>SO4</p> <p>95% of children will reach their expected developmental milestones.</p> 	<p>EXCEEDED</p>	<p>SO10</p> <p>25% fewer people receiving a first ever Court conviction and 2% fewer people reconvicted within one year by 2026.</p> 	<p>EXCEEDED</p>	<p>SO13</p> <p>Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate.</p> 	<p>PROGRESSING</p>
<p>SO2</p> <p>400 unemployed Aberdeen City residents supported into Fair Work by 2026.</p> 	<p>PROGRESSING</p>	<p>SO5</p> <p>90% of children and young people will report that their experiences of mental health and wellbeing have been listened to by 2026.</p> 	<p>PROGRESSING</p>	<p>SO11</p> <p>Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026.</p> 	<p>PROGRESSING</p>	<p>SO14</p> <p>38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as main mode of travel by 2026.</p> 	<p>PROGRESSING</p>

<p>SO3</p> <p>500 Aberdeen City residents upskilled/reskilled to enable them to move into, within and between economic opportunities as they arise by 2026.</p> 	<p>EXCEEDED</p>	<p>SO6</p> <p>95% of care experienced children and young people will have the same levels of outcome as their peers.</p> 	<p>PROGRESSING</p>	<p>SO12</p> <p>Rate of harmful levels of alcohol consumption reduced by 4% and Drug related deaths lower than Scotland by 2026.</p> 	<p>ACHIEVED</p>	<p>SO15</p> <p>Addressing the nature crisis by protecting/managing 26% of Aberdeen's area for nature by 2026.</p> 	<p>PROGRESSING</p>		
		<p>SO7</p> <p>95% of children living in our priority neighbourhoods will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.</p> 	<p>PROGRESSING</p>			<p>COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT</p>		<p>SO16</p> <p>100% increase in the proportion of citizens who feel able to participate in decisions that help change things for the better by 2026.</p> 	<p>PROGRESSING</p>
		<p>SO8</p> <p>Child Friendly City by 2026.</p> 	<p>EMBEDDED</p>						
		<p>SO9</p> <p>30% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026.</p> 	<p>EXCEEDED</p>						

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What our data is telling us?



How to make sense of the data in this report

Under each theme within this report there is a section called 'What impact have we had?' These sections include run charts which have been prepared using the data available for the improvement aims within the Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26. The purpose of the run charts is to display data over time and help us assess visually whether the changes we are making are resulting in improvement.

-  The coloured line shows CPA performance to date.
-  The black line shows the improvement aim, where applicable set within the CPA Improvement Programme for 2021/23 so we can assess if we are on track to achieve our improvement aims set for the year. Where there is no black line the data does not relate to an improvement aim.

We have also used a traffic light system to help you see at a glance, where we think we are in terms of improvement. The significance of the variation in data over time will depend on the improvement measure **and** population size it relates to. For example, for some improvement measures a 0.5% increase may be very significant, whilst for others it may need to be a 5% increase to be considered significant.




In applying the RAG (Red, Amber, Green) we have taken a rounded view of performance, taking into account subject matter expertise, local context and consideration of progress towards our improvement aims to answer the question:

Are our changes resulting in improvement?

- **Yes (Data shows improving trend and / or achievement of aim)**
- **Getting there (Data shows improving or varied trend and / or on track to achieve aim)**
- **Not yet (Data shows declining trend and not on track to achieve aim)**



Prosperous Economy

What we are working towards	How we are doing	
<p>SO1 No one will suffer due to poverty by 2026.</p> 	<p>CHALLENGES</p>	<p>8.4% of City Voice respondents reported that during the last 12 months there was a time when they were worried they would not have enough food to eat – up from 6.5% in City Voice 45.</p>
<p>SO2 400 unemployed Aberdeen City residents supported into Fair Work by 2026.</p> 	<p>PROGRESSING</p>	<p>44% of Stretch Outcome 2 achieved with 175 people supported into sustained, good quality employment.</p>
<p>SO3 500 Aberdeen City residents upskilled/reskilled to enable them to move into, within and between economic opportunities as they arise by 2026.</p> 	<p>EXCEEDED</p>	<p>Stretch Outcome 3 exceeded with 595 people upskilled/reskilled.</p>

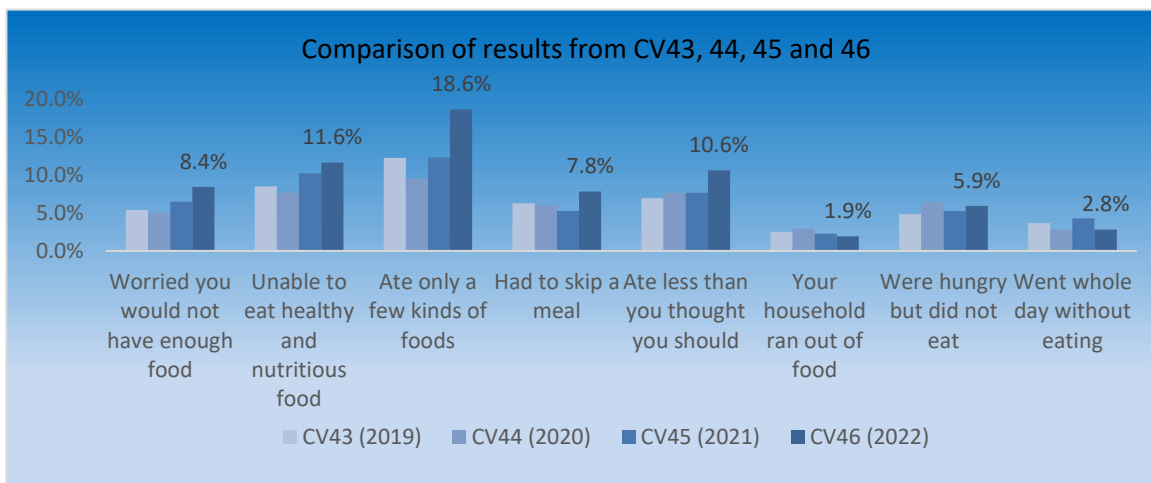


NO ONE in Aberdeen will suffer due to poverty by 2026

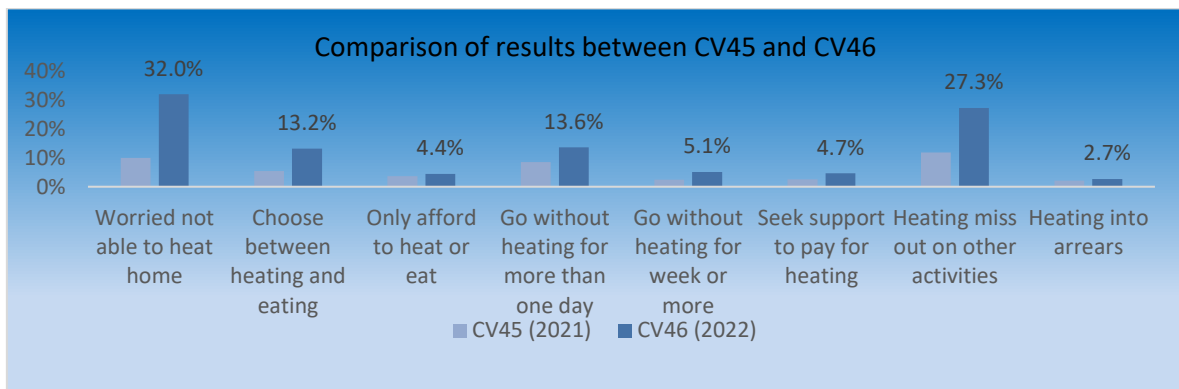
The pandemic had pushed many people into poverty partly due to reduced income and this situation has been compounded in 2022/23 when we have been in the midst of the cost of living crisis. This has had substantial implications for households across the city, with both food and energy prices increasing, resulting in more people being in immediate and acute poverty. The impact has not been evenly spread, with certain groups more likely to experience these negative effects, most often those who were already lowest paid and closest to poverty.

Community Planning Aberdeen recognise the pressure that households are under, in particular the difficult choices many are making on what to allocate their money on. We know that poverty and inequality can lead to negative outcomes and reducing both has always been and continues to be the central ambition throughout the LOIP, with this commitment further demonstrated through Stretch Outcome 1. It provides an additional focus on improvements aiming to mitigate the impact of acute poverty we have seen both through the pandemic and now from the cost of living crisis and supporting all people across the city have access to food, fuel, shelter, and finance.

In the City Voice 2022, panellists were asked about their ability to access healthy or nutritious food. Data shows that since 2021, the proportion of respondents who answered 'yes' has increased in most categories, with the largest increase being in the proportion who reported they ate only a few kinds of food (from 12.3% to 18.6%); 10.6 % reported that they ate less than they thought they should compared to 7.6% in 2021 and 8.4% that they were worried they would not have enough food to eat due to money or lack of other resources up from 6.5% in 2021. However, there was a decrease in the number of panellists responding that they went a whole day without eating from 4.3% to 2.8%.

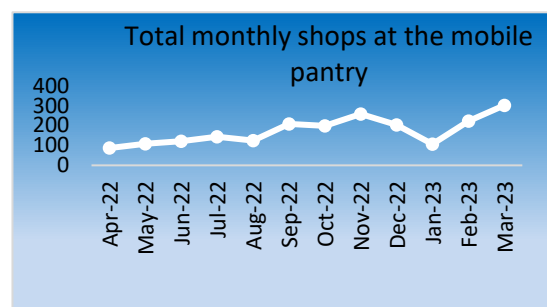


The City Voice also asked about respondents' ability to heat their homes, and there have been increases in the percentage who answer 'yes' across all questions, with the most notable being increases in the proportion of respondents who report being worried about not being able to heat their home (from 10% to 32%) as well the proportion who say that paying for heating has meant they have had to miss out on other activities (increase from 11.8% to 27.3%).



Widening access to affordable food in our priority neighbourhoods

Increasing access to affordable food continues to be a key focus, particularly with food prices rising at the fastest rate in 40 years and we know that such increases whilst affecting most households, they are more likely to disproportionately affect those on low incomes, as they spend a higher proportion of their household budget on food and drink. As such, through [our community food pantry project](#) we have focused on increasing access to affordable food in our priority neighbourhoods. Recognising the challenges people can face attending one of our fixed food pantries, a mobile food pantry was launched in September 2021 to increase accessibility within our priority neighbourhoods and widen the reach. The positive response to the mobile pantry has continued throughout this year and is now available in 10 neighbourhoods on a bi-weekly basis, a 67% increase. The areas are Middlefield, Sheddocksley, Kincorth, Torry, Tillydrone, Seaton, Northfield, Quarryhill, Bucksburn and Hilton.



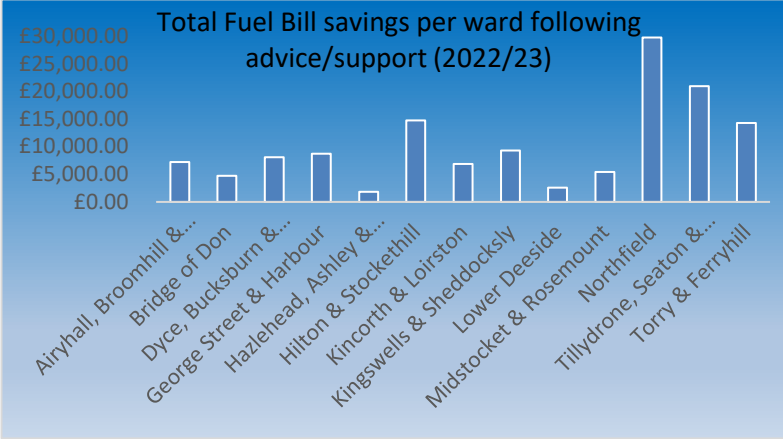
Across all 10 areas there has been a total of 2088 shops at the mobile pantry, a 454% increase since 2021/22 and representing 20% of all pantry shops across the city. This increase has also been seen across the two other food pantries, with overall a 67% increase in the total number of shops across all food pantries from 5726 in 2021/22 to 10234 in 2022/23.

Supporting Fuel Energy

In response to the fuel crisis experienced by households, we have been focused on increasing awareness of the [support available for both fuel bills, insulation and energy efficiency](#). We have been proactively attending a variety of community events, including the various warm spaces established in 2022/23 by Aberdeen City Council and a range of partners. To ensure that the reach and awareness is as wide as possible we've also been training frontline staff across partners so that they can signpost individuals to support available.

During 2022/23 there has been a 20% increase in the number of referrals to SCARF, 2542 referrals to SCARF for fuel poverty support and 1904 direct enquiries. Of those who provided full/partial information, 53% (166) were in fuel poverty and 8 removed as a result of support.

Overall, as a result of the promotion, information sessions, attendance at events, in 2022/23, we have supported 696 households with fuel bills and made approx. 237 home visits to deliver insulation and energy efficiency measures. As a result, a total of £134,464.52 in fuel bill savings was made across the city in 2022/23.



Enabling People to Claim the Benefits They’re Entitled To

104% Improvement Exceeded

104% increase in the uptake of benefits.

94% over the project’s original aim.

Ensuring that household income is maximised through the uptake of unclaimed benefits is a key aspect to supporting households to come out of poverty and improve their financial security. There continues to be barriers such as stigma of claiming, unaware of what they are entitled to, and onerous application processes which can mean people do not claim the benefits they are entitled to. In response, through our [benefit uptake project](#), we have implemented improvements to mitigate these barriers.

During 2022/23, the project has further promoted the online benefit calculator, which enables people to self-serve and check the benefits they’re entitled to with privacy, through an ongoing promotional campaign, targeting organisations/community groups supporting people experiencing financial instability and/or poverty. In this reporting period, 4259 people have used the calculator with £627,088.68 benefits identified. Of those who completed the calculator 84% had unclaimed benefits identified, with on average £52,257.40 of unclaimed benefits identified per month, compared to £19,371.35 per month from August 2021 to March 2022. This is a 170% increase since Aug 21/March 22 and a 104% increase since the baseline period in uptake of unclaimed benefits on average per month through the online benefit calculator.



We’ve also focused on taking a targeted approach using data to identify household who should be entitled to Pension Credits and contacting them directly by letter. Using this approach 410 households were identified who qualified for Pension Credits and would be entitled to £172,218.42 weekly/ £895,357.84 annually. People contacted have feedback that **without the contact they wouldn’t have been aware of entitlement and wouldn’t have made the claim**. This system is now built in with eligible households now contacted as business as usual and the next step is to test a system to auto award benefits where data available confirms eligibility.

Recognising that some people will need support the Financial Inclusion Team have established new referral pathways targeted at specific groups and supported 2995 people. Also as part of our improvement work we are also focused on providing [financial assessments to people presenting as homeless to ensure that they have access to all appropriate benefits](#). In 2021/22 there was 1,405 homelessness applications in Aberdeen City, a 4% reduction since last year and 18% reduction since

2018. Through our financial assessment, between May 2022 February 2023, 75% of people who have presented as homeless have completed a financial assessment and accessed all appropriate benefits. Of those who have completed an assessment during this period, 81 people (10%) have had additional benefits identified to a value of £434,296.

Finally, the landscape around child age benefits is complex, to ease this a families’ booklet was developed to increase awareness and uptake of these benefits such as, Education Maintenance Allowance and School Clothing Grants. The booklet targeted families and provided guidance on how to claim. The evaluation data shows the positive impact of the booklet with 90% of people who responded reporting that they found the families’ booklet useful and 25% went on to submit a claim. Feedback also reported that families wanted the information provided on a regular basis and not as a one off and that it needed to be easy to access on an ongoing basis.

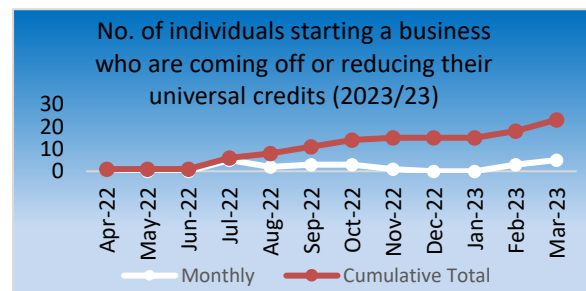


Supporting people into fair work employment opportunities

175 PEOPLE
supported into
sustained, good
quality
employment

The proportion of our working age population who are economically active has fallen from 76.9% (Jan-Dec 2021) to 71.2% in (Jan-Dec 2022), with 5,090 claimants in Aberdeen in March 2023, down from 9675 in March 2021, but up from 3270 in March 2016. 47% of claimants are from our priority neighbourhoods, down from 53% in March 2020. Community Planning Aberdeen are focused on developing new fair work employment opportunities and supporting people into those opportunities through a variety of improvements ranging from business creation; increasing the number of Real Living Wage employers and providing targeted pathways to support those groups who experience the most disadvantage and inequality.

Through our varied improvement activity 175 people have been supported into sustained, good quality employment. One such project has focused on supporting people to start a business, with 37 individuals in total, 23 in 2022/23 and 14 in 2021/22 starting a business which has either taken them off universal credits or significantly reduced their universal credits. Of the 37 people who started a business, 3 were from priority neighbourhoods (PNs) in the North, 5 from PNs in South and 8 from PNs in Central. This has been achieved through new bespoke funding streams targeting support to young people and parents to support them start a business.



We've also focused on providing support within the heart of our communities with a dedicated Business Gateway Adviser based in a priority neighbourhood in each locality to help increase the number of direct referrals. As a result, 104 referrals of individuals in receipt of universal credits who are investigating starting a business since the start of the programme.

Impact of our support

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Carly Stewart, qualified beauty therapist, became unemployed. While relying on Universal Credit, she reached out for 'Expert Support' from Business Gateway in starting up a business of her own. Through Business Gateway services, Carly was connected with Aberdeen City Council & successfully applied for start-up funding through the Parental Support Fund. This enabled her to purchase the commercial equipment needed to start & develop her skin specialist business, Karma Beauty.

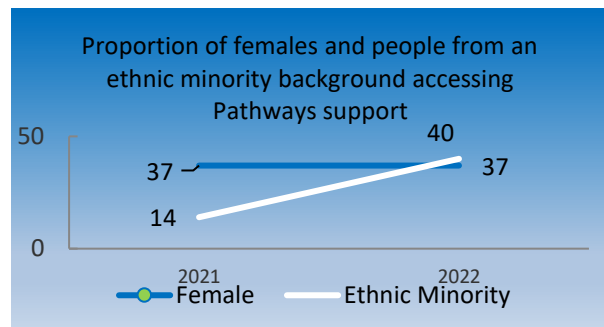
Carly said, describing her 1-1 adviser support, "My adviser Gillian, was brilliant, and helped me throughout the whole process, advising me on how to plan and prepare my business, to supporting me with funding opportunities."

Over the past 6 months, Carly has continued to develop her business. Now working in the medical aesthetics field with a focus on non-surgical injectable procedures. With Gillian's encouragement Carly "has worked incredibly hard to get to where she is, from being unemployed to launching a business in the height of the pandemic. It is fantastic to see how well Karma Beauty is doing and to have been able to support her.

Targeted employability support to reduce inequalities

Inequalities in society have increased with national reports evidencing that the impacts of the pandemic and the cost of living crisis have not been evenly spread. In light of this, through different projects, we are targeting employability support to those experiencing inequalities, focusing on care experienced young people, females and ethnic minority people initially.

Targeted support has included development and promotion of specific pathways for employability support and as a result of this approach through our [support for people most disadvantaged by the pandemic project](#), in 2022 we have seen a 107% increase in the number of ethnic minority people being referred to Pathways for employability support, along with a 186% increase in the number then accessing support.



Through our [priority neighbourhood and over 50 employment project](#), bespoke employability support events focused on individuals over 50, with a disability and from our priority neighbourhoods have been held. Specifically, three 'Your Routes to Work' employability support events were held in priority neighbourhoods. These were aimed at young people disengaged from school, school leavers, work returners and their wider families to find out information on how to get into employment, training, education or volunteering as well as provide money and benefit advice. 30 people attended the event in Northfield; 42 the Torry event and 16 attended Tillydrone. Exit surveys were completed with a small number of event attendees. Everyone who attended and provided feedback felt the event was useful or very useful and all would be likely to visit a future event. Some people would like the events to include businesses with opportunities so more like a jobs fair.

In addition to the above, in relation to supporting people over 50, particularly from our priority neighbourhoods, a range of employability pilots have been developed and tested since September 2022, these have included dedicated 50+ work coaches, the launch of an employer recruitment incentive scheme, and a pilot Older but Wiser employability pilot support group. The pilot support group ran over an 8 week period and was well received with 7 participants consistently attending the 8 weeks. Travel vouchers were provided to support the participants attend a number of career fairs which occurred over the 8 week period and one participant was able to secure a job at one of these events. As a result of the supports above as at March 2023, 10 people, all from our priority neighbourhoods, have gained employment. We are also seeing positive outcomes with latest Local Government Benchmarking Framework data showing that 2,611 people in 2021/22 were progressing positively through the employability pipeline – considerably higher than the figure for 2022/21 of 149.

Supporting our care experienced young people

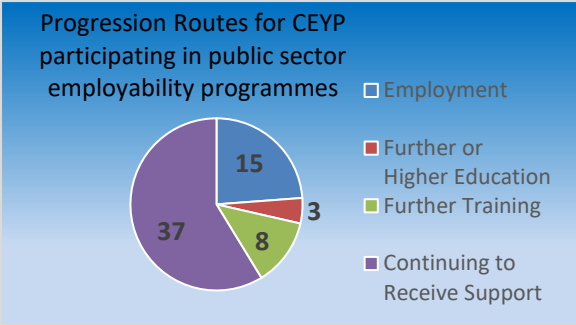
100%
Improvement Project Aim Exceeded
 15 care experienced young people gaining employment.

Inequalities are also experienced by care experienced young people (CEYP) who often face significant barriers to employment and will need additional support and mentoring to help them achieve and sustain employment. We are committed to supporting CEYP achieving the same outcomes as their peers and one aspect of this is achieving positive destinations (education, training, formal volunteering), with the ultimate goal of moving into employment.

The journey and support required for each care experienced young person will vary and through our [employability support for care experienced young people](#) project, we have attested a variety of initiatives ensuring that each were designed with needs of the young person being at the heart of that process. Initiatives included:

- a guaranteed interview scheme for CEYP (who fit the person spec)
- a tailored employability support programme, RiteWorks, with work experience,
- pathway planning meeting for CEYP in school
- a tailored induction into work

As a result of the above we are delighted to report that as at January 2023, 63 CEYP had accessed employability support via ABZWorks, with 15 moving into employment; three into further or higher education, eight to further training and the remainder continuing receiving support.



Impact of our support

Rebekah (Bekah) joined the Council as a Kickstart intern, blazing her way into the organisation, making a great impact and really positive first impressions to everyone she met in the course of her six month post with the Talent team. She took a lead role in the development of our ABZWorks Instagram page and impressed everyone with her knowledge, determination to learn and succeed, honesty, and hard-work.

Bekah tells her own story here [in her LinkedIn post](#). She left Aberdeen City Council at the end of her placement to move elsewhere in the country. She quickly secured work and is doing well.

Another young person, who has faced a number of challenges and lost an apprenticeship, has been supported to set up his own business through seed funding we made available through Young Person Guarantee monies. We worked in partnership with Business Gateway to get a business plan and funding plan developed, provided funding in a staged way to gradually equip him for the challenges of business, provided a laptop and phone, driving lessons, other training, and he is now fully established in a self-employed role. This would not have been possible without steady and structured support.

37% increase in employers paying the Real Living Wage



Improvement Project Aim Achieved

37% increase in Aberdeen employers paying the Real Living Wage since 21/22

On track to achieve 5% increase year on year by 2026.

Our commitment to alleviating in-work poverty remains a key priority and in November 2022, we took a further step forward in our desire to [Make Aberdeen a Living Wage City](#), with the publication of our Aberdeen Living Wage Action Plan, developed by a collaboration of employers and stakeholders from across the public, private and third sectors and led by Scottish Enterprise on behalf of Community Planning Aberdeen.



Based on data from Living Wage Scotland, there are currently 84 employers (April 2023) headquartered in the city now Real Living Wage accredited – a 37% increase since 2021/22 and a 91% increase since January 2020. With 20 new employers signing up in 22/23, this is the highest number of new accreditations since the project begun. 1,695 workers have received an uplift in wages since the establishment of the real Living Wage movement in the city which now covers over 42,800 employees. Latest data available showed that 93.3% of employees in the city were in living wage employment, a 6.3% increase since 2021 and a 11.3% increase since 2016. The impact for both employers and employees is reflected in the feedback below:

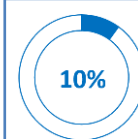
“We just feel that paying the real Living Wage is the right thing to do. A team that has to worry less about money is a happier team. We’ve been paying the real Living Wage for a number of years but we’ve decided to become accredited to demonstrate our commitment to the team. We also hope it’ll encourage other companies to do the same.”
Gary Henderson, Managing Director of Grampian Fasteners

“Aberdeen’s ambition to become a Living Wage City is an essential initiative for the overall economic wellbeing of our region. When people are paid well, with fair contracts, and schedules that they know in advance, people are more productive and able to live better quality lives. They’re able to plan and provide for their families, which is what everyone wants to do. Yet the statistics are stark and we need to encourage all business owners to take this step, to make a real difference to boost the social and economic life of Aberdeen and beyond.” **Andrew Alleway, Managing Director of Tidy Green Clean and Chair of the Aberdeen City Living Wage Action Group**

Increasing digital access and skills to improve employability opportunities

595 PEOPLE
upskilled/
reskill to access
new jobs as
they arise

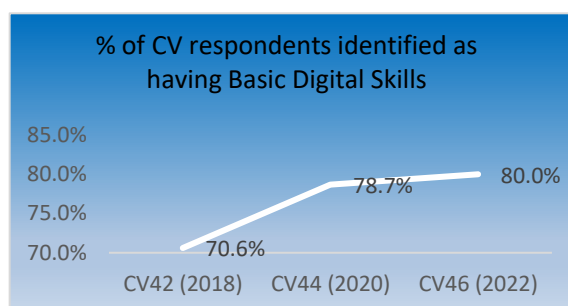
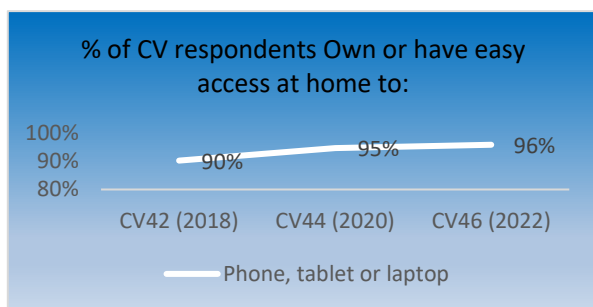
Digitisation will continue to change the world of work and without access to digital devices and basic digital skills our citizens will see their job possibilities restricted. Community Planning Aberdeen are committed to ensuring that all can be resilient in this digital economy and have access to employment opportunities by having the ability to learn new digital skills and to apply them at work. Through our improvement activity we



**Improvement
Project Aim
Achieved**

10% increase in basic digital skills and 6% increase in access to devices.

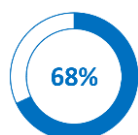
have seen positive outcomes for both digital access and skills with a 9.4% increase in the percentage of respondents to our City Voice identified as having basic digital skills, with 80% of respondents in 2022, compared to 70.6% in 2018. Similarly, there has been a 6% increase in the proportion of respondents who have access to at least one of the devices has increased from 90% to 96%.



In conjunction with the Connecting Scotland programme and similar local schemes, [digital access across the city](#) has improved substantially with 1439 digital devices were issued between March 2020 and March 2021. 320 of the devices were issued to individuals who were unemployed and on low incomes to support employability. In addition, 1798 people/households received MiFi - this has ensured 1798 households now have digital access.

Devices were only part of the support provided, we also rolled out support to develop and improve basic digital skills, again with positive outcomes with 387 people overall directly trained/upskilled to support employability opportunities.

68% increase in Graduate Apprenticeships



**Improvement
Project Aim
Exceeded**


68% increase in Graduate Apprenticeships

53% over project's original aim.

We are committed to developing and promoting a range of pathways into employment and learning, with a particular focus on routes that remove some of the barriers to learning such as financial pressured. [Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships](#) are two routes enabling people to combine academic and vocational qualifications with on the job experience and therefore enabling people to earn as they learn.

Despite a challenging economic environment, we have achieved positive outcomes resulting from the promotional events for employers and potential apprentices, as well as the introduction of incentives for employers through the Apprentice Employer Grant where employers were offered £5k on recruitment of a new Modern Apprentice (MA). Data shows a 68% increase in Graduate Apprenticeships in 2022/23 compared to 2019/20. As a region, whilst there has been a 15% decrease in MA starts between the baseline year and 2022/23, however in our test area NESCol (where the improvement projects have been trialled), NESCol data demonstrates that the interventions in this period have resulted in a 36% increase from 157 in 2019/20 to 214 in 2022/23.

Responsible Businesses supporting our communities

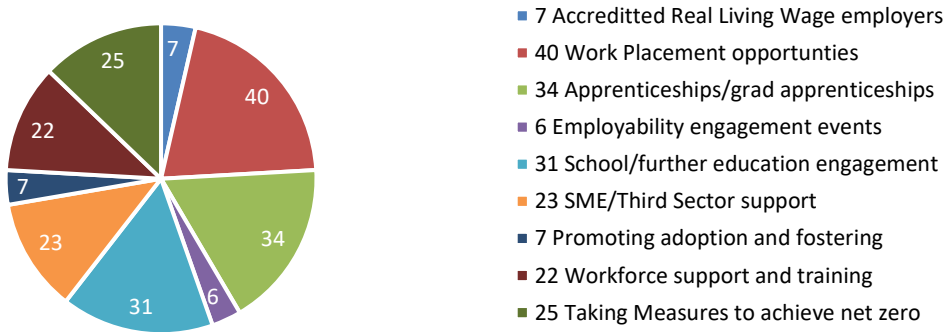


Improvement Project Aim Achieved

200% increase in responsible business partners.

Our collaboration with businesses continues to grow with positive outcomes for our communities, with a 200% increase in the number of [responsible business partners](#) as at March 2023. Through our Annual Responsible Business Event, as well as partnership working with Business in the Community to create and promote events for members of the business networks and creation of a Community Planning Aberdeen linked in account, Community Planning Aberdeen are now working with 27 Responsible Business Partners all of whom are contributing to the achievement of our LOIP outcomes. The chart below summarises just some of the outcomes achieved by our Responsible Business Partners in 2022-2023:

Our Network's Impact

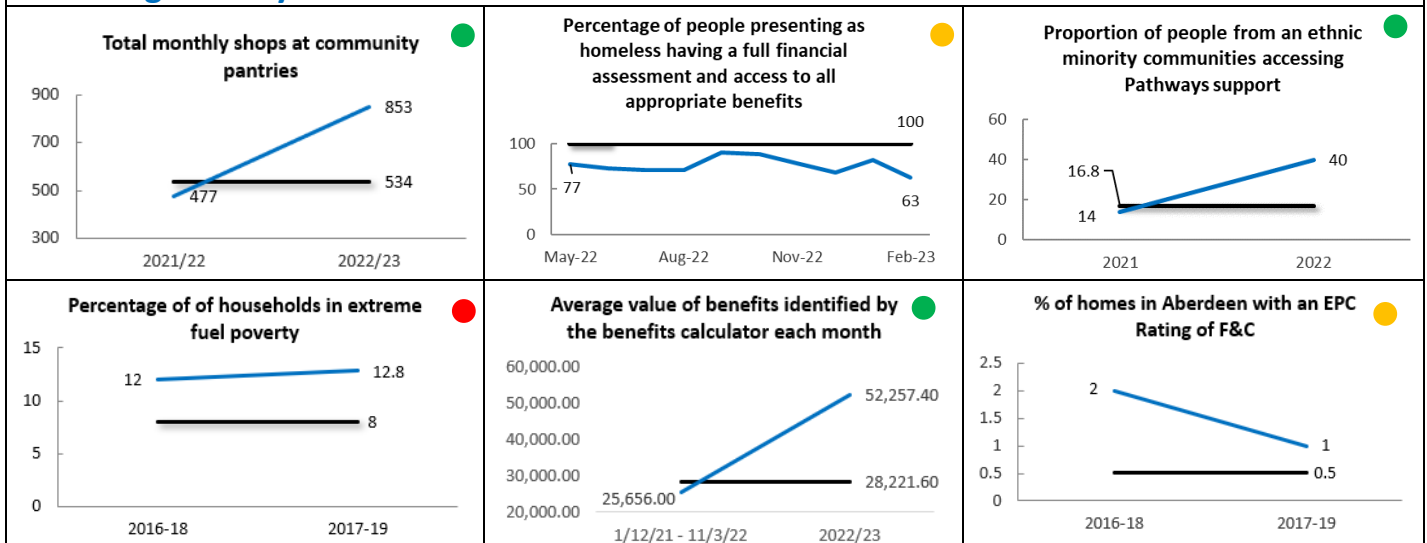


What impact have we had?

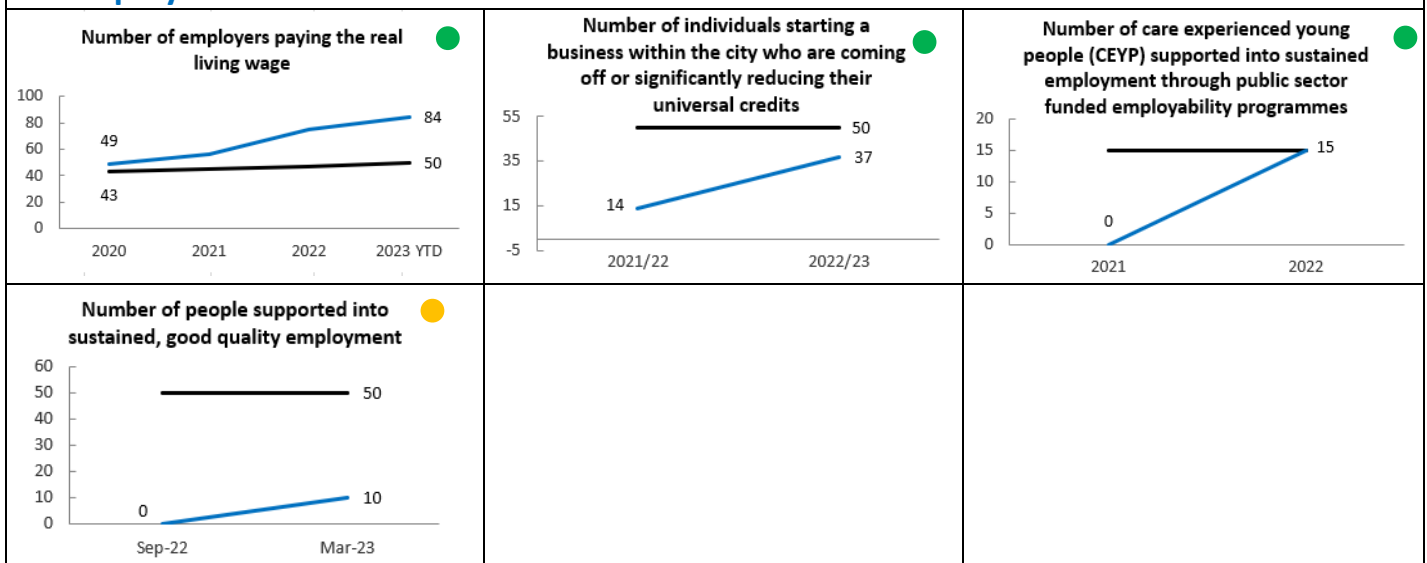
- Yes
- Getting there
- Not yet

— 22/23 improvement aim — Performance

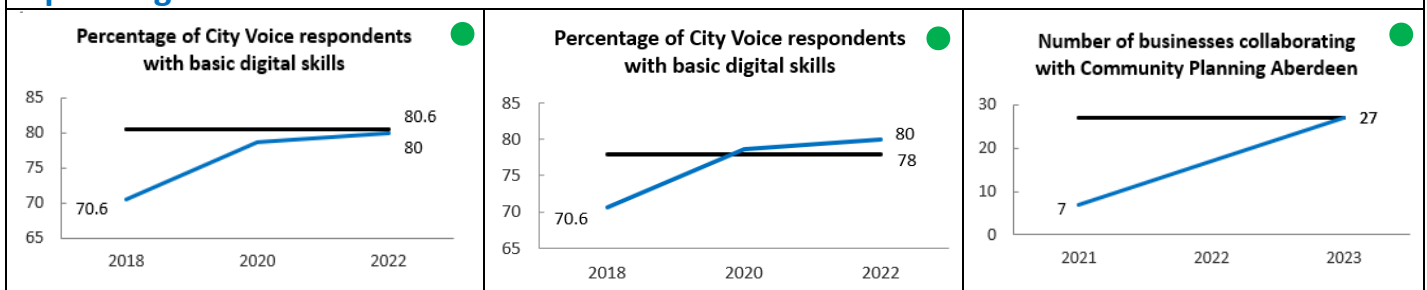
Reducing Poverty

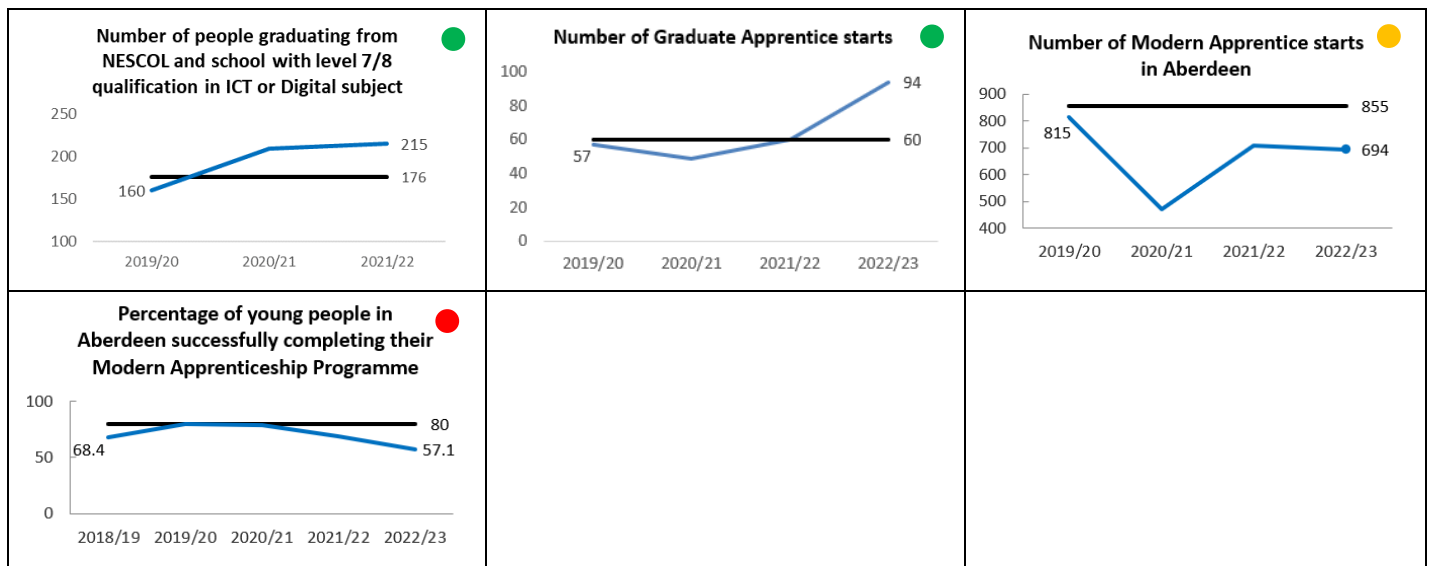


Unemployed Residents in Fair Work



Upskilling Residents





Improvement priorities 2023/24






- Expanding use of data to be able to identify and make direct contact, and where possible, auto award, for other benefits to ensure all are receiving their benefit entitlement.
- Raising awareness of support available to reduce energy bills and the number of households in fuel poverty
- Supporting all households presenting as homeless to complete financial assessments as part of the homelessness assessment to ensure all are receiving their benefit entitlement.
- Outreach by financial inclusion services into community spaces to increase uptake by people within protected groups.
- Supporting individuals to come off, or reduce universal credit by starting up a business.
- Supporting people into sustained, good quality employment, with a particular focus on; those from priority neighbourhoods and people over 50.
- Supporting young people into and to complete Modern Apprenticeships.



Prosperous People

Children & Young People

Our Stretch Outcomes

What we are working towards		How we are doing
<p>SO4 95% of children will reach their expected developmental milestones</p> 	EXCEEDED	<p>97.1% of children having a 27-30 month review met their expected developmental milestones in 2020/21, 2.1% over Stretch Outcome 4.</p>
<p>SO5 90% of children and young people will report that their experiences of mental health and wellbeing have been listened to by 2026.</p> 	PROGRESSING	<p>68% of children and young people report they feel listened to all of the time, up 4% since March 2022.</p>
<p>SO6 95% of care experienced children and young people will have the same levels of outcome as their peers.</p>	PROGRESSING	<p>3.1% reduction in the gap between the % of care experienced young people and all young people achieving a positive and sustained destination in 20/21.</p>
<p>SO7 95% of children living in our priority neighbourhoods will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.</p> 	PROGRESSING	<p>3% decrease in the % of young people from Quintile 1 achieving a positive and sustained destination (81.5% in 20/21 compared to 84.5% in 16/17) and a 3.7% increase in the % of young people from Quintile 2 achieving a positive and sustained destination (91.6% in 20/21 compared to 87.9% in 16/17).</p>
<p>SO8 Child Friendly City by 2026</p> 	EMBEDDED	
<p>SO9 30% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026.</p> 	EXCEEDED	<p>40% decrease in number of young people being charged with an offence (985 in 21/22 compared to 588 in 15/16)</p>

Progress made during 2022/23



Supporting children have the best start in life

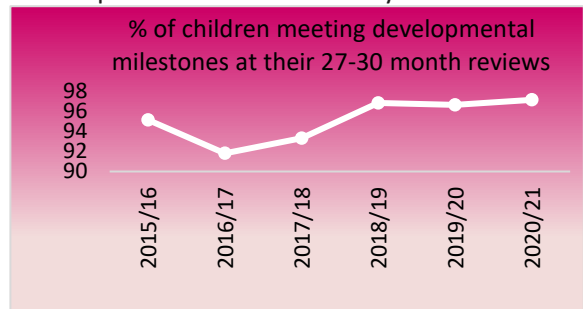
STRETCH OUTCOME 4 EXCEEDED WITH 97.1% OF CHILDREN reached their expected developmental milestone on time



Latest data available at the end of 2020/21 shows that we have sustained and further exceeded our stretch outcome that 95% of children meet their developmental milestones at the time of their 27-30 month review, with 97.1% achieved compared to 96.6% in the previous reporting period and 85.1% for Scotland.

Although in the previous period, the stretch outcome had been achieved, CPA recognised that the COVID pandemic had a substantial impact on our children, young people, and their families, with feedback from education and other early years

settings stating that there is an emerging gap in children’s development and the skills they have before they begin nursery or school compared to pre Covid 19. We needed to do more to support all children get the best start in life and throughout 2022/23 we focused on implementing new approaches that enable families to receive the parenting and family support they need, both pre birth and post and that developed the confidence of staff and families to identify any issues and enable access to the appropriate intervention at the earliest opportunity.



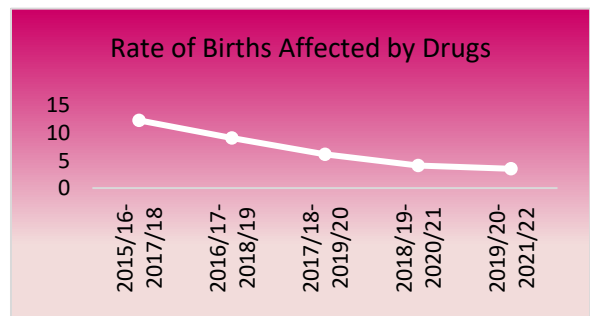
Reducing preventable harms to children pre and post birth

There are many preventable harms, both pre and post birth, that impact on the health and development of a child. Through our improvement activity we are making changes that are focused on early intervention and prevention, with the aim of reducing harm occurring in the first place and creating a safe and supportive environment for children to thrive in.

Improvement Project Aim Exceeded

67% decrease in the number of births affected by drugs.

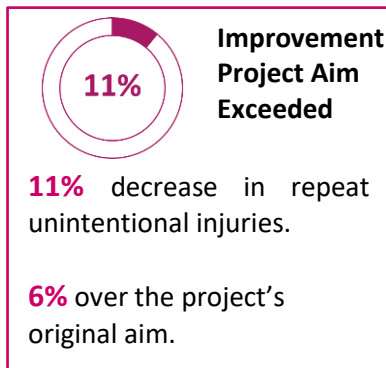
Pre birth, we are supporting maternal health and wellbeing and providing information and resources to enable families to make informed decisions on areas that are likely to impact on their unborn child such as substance use and



healthy eating. Through our [births affected by drugs project](#), we have developed and promoted a variety of campaigns to raise awareness of sexual health support available and the impact of substances on an unborn child. Recognising that different approaches are required depending on individual circumstances, we have set up an outreach approach to increase availability of contraception and promotion of choice and control to vulnerable people. Between July and December 2022, our Sharp Response 'Crisis Intervention' service had scheduled 259 home visits enabling us to engage with people

who would be unlikely to engage directly with sexual health services. These improvements have secured a continuous downward trend, with a 67% reduction in the total number of births affected over the 3 year period reducing from 70 (2016/17-18/19) to 23 in 2019/20-21/22. Preventative approaches, such as support and information has also enabled us to achieve a continued reduction in the percentage of women in the city who smoke during pregnancy with latest data showing this to be 12.1% which is again lower than the rates in Scotland of 12.9%.

Preventing unintentional injuries

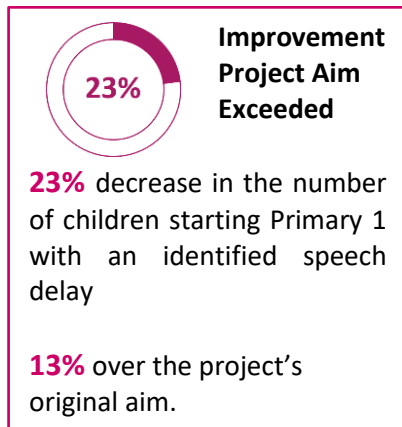


A high proportion of unintentional injuries (UIs) are preventable. Through our [repeat unintentional injuries project](#), we are building the capacity of multi-agency staff who work directly with families to identify potential harms and to support parents to also identify and steps to prevent these. Staff have also been provided with Keeping Kids Safe Packs to discuss and provide to families where potential for risk has been identified, with 75 kits issued by Feb 2023. As a result of the changes, the project has



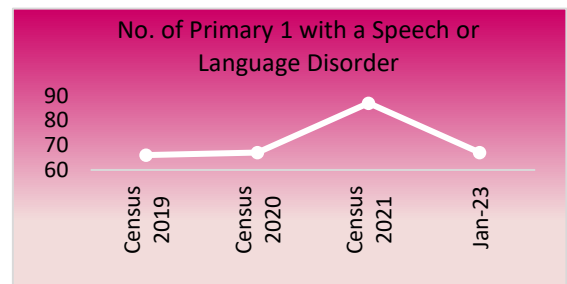
surpassed its aim of a 5% reduction, with an 11% reduction in the number UI repeat admissions between 2017/18 to 2020/21. The data also shows an improvement in the number of overall emergency admissions for UIs in under 5's with a 5.5% reduction between 2016/17 to 2018/19 and 2019/20 to 2021/22.

Addressing the impact of the pandemic

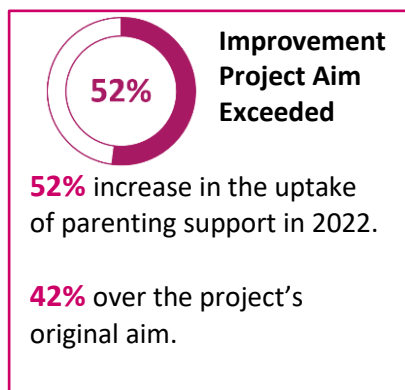


Covid-19 restricted social and family interactions, having a significant impact on young children's development, particularly in speech and language delays. Our [reducing the number of children starting Primary 1 with an identified speech delay project](#) has worked collaboratively across all our early years settings to ensure speech and language is fully integrated in the planning for our children. The Nursery Nurse role is now responsible for identifying developmental issues and a referral pathway has been introduced to ensure children receive the support they need. We have also developed a multi-agency single speech and language parent resource to support parents with early detection and awareness of the pathway for support. To ensure that children facing adversity also have equal

access, we have built on the partnership between health and (early) education through the Links Nursery and Hub and strengthened our collaboration with weekly integrated planning meetings held that cover all areas of developmental need and with a focus on children facing adversity. The interventions have resulted in a 23% decrease since 2021 in the number of primary 1 pupils with a speech or language disorder, exceeding our aim by 13%. However, it is recognised that this is early evidence, and we continue to monitor the impact of the initiative to ensure the improvement is sustained.

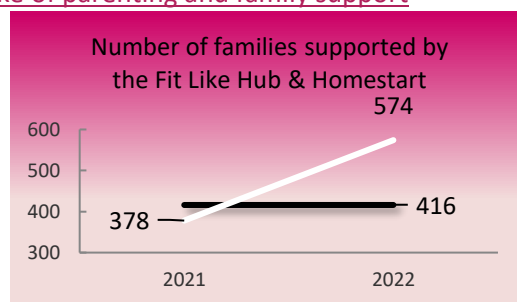


Removing the barriers to families accessing parenting support

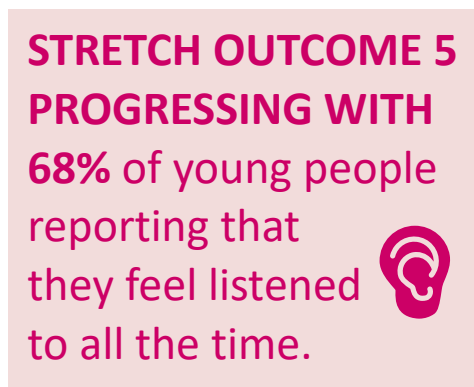


We understand that online resources and signposting is only part of the support needed by families. Health and education staff have provided feedback that during Covid parents had not engaged with the online support available to the same level as face to face interactions. In response to this, we have collaborated with families and early years services to identify barriers and make improvements. This has included streamlining the referral process for both self referrals and for professionals; prioritising families based on their level of need; and providing opportunities to meet in person. Through these approaches, we have surpassed our aim by 42% with a 52% increase in the uptake of parenting and family support between 2021 and 2022,

with 574 families supported through our FitLike Hubs and Homestart in 2022, compared to 378 families in 2021. Similarly, we have seen an upward trend in the number of referrals, with a 77% increase in multi-agency support referrals. In 2022, there was a 49% increase in the number of referrals for parenting and family support, with 1515 referrals made across all services.

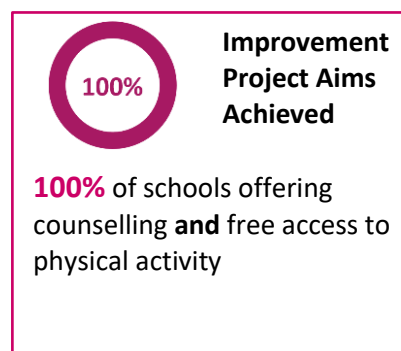


Developing interventions to support children's mental health



The number of children accessing mental health support and the seriousness of their concerns have increased since the pandemic. We have implemented a range of supports and interventions through our projects, such as counselling being available in all schools. Through October 2022 – December 2022, 330 young people were being supported with counselling and 100% of the 103 children who had completed an end of session questionnaire, reported an improved wellbeing outcome following this support.

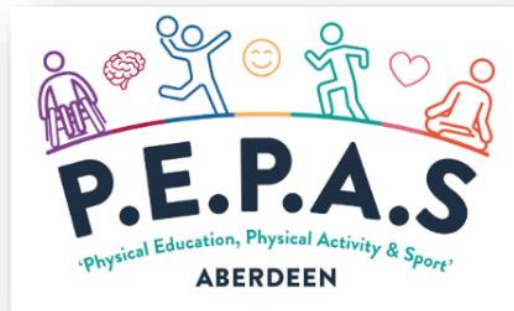
As well as counselling, all school nurses are currently trained to deliver LIAM (Let's Introduce Anxiety Management), as are a team of Fitlike staff, as well as staff in 25 schools. pilot of DBI (Distress Brief Intervention) has extended to 6 Secondary Schools in partnership with CAMHS and Penumbra focusing on learners aged 14-16. The latter pilot offering more targeted support for young people who have been identified or self-identify the need for support and helps some of our most vulnerable learners to access trained staff and a pathway to support through Penumbra and CAMHS if required. We are beginning to see early signs of improvement with data in relation to the Who-5 wellbeing index, reporting a 4% reduction in the % of P6 and 7 learners reporting low mood, which may suggest that earlier responsive intervention is supporting young people previously indicating low mood.



Throughout our lives, the number and strength of relationships can affect our mental and physical wellbeing. The benefits of social interactions and good mental health are significant. Being available to listen to children and young people, is essential for supporting individual needs and understanding fully what is required. We are delighted to see positive outcomes across our improvement activity resulting in 68% of young people reporting that they always had an adult in their lives that listens to them about how they are feeling, a 4% increase since March 2022.

We also recognise the huge potential physical activity has to enhance mental wellbeing and that this needs to be available freely for all children regardless of their circumstances. We are delighted that through our improvement activity 100% of schools are providing free physical activity. Our physical activity improvements have focused on ensuring that the voice and involvement of all children and young people is at the core of the development of activities and promote inclusivity. This has resulted in:

- **3%** increase in young people in S1-S6 reporting that their general health is good or excellent since the last survey in March 2022.
- **13** members on the Active Girls Committee, from 7 (77%) of secondary schools
- **61** care experienced young people through the SPACE (Supporting Physical Activity for Care Experienced) and bespoke programmes and 350 Sport Aberdeen memberships issued
- A Primary PE progression toolkit, providing primary staff with a clear progression of learning in PE and signposts to relevant resource/lessons developed. This is improving the confidence of staff in delivering high quality PE
- **367** volunteers as at Oct 2022 in Active Schools Aberdeen
- Boccia, a sport designed for all, being rolled out in all primary schools and a Boccia Festival where all pupils with disabilities and ASN of all ages taking part is planned for next session.



It helps me concentrate, makes me stay in school and is good for me (Young Person)

My fitness levels have improved and I try new things, I don't play the computer as much. (Young Person)

It is exactly what he needs as it gets him focussing on things away from the classroom (carer)

I have noticed a lot of progress in the young person's confidence, maturity and ability to regulate their emotions since working with you. (Teacher)

Developing staff confidence to support young people

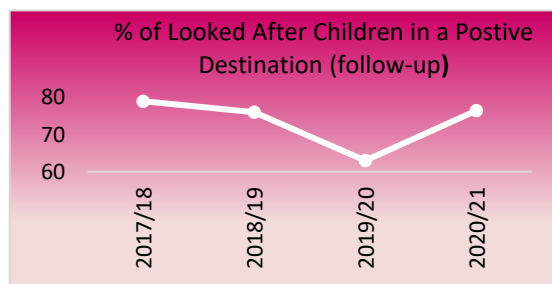


We recognise that our school based staff are crucial for providing direct support, referrals and signposting children and young people to appropriate mental health and wellbeing supports or services. Through our '[Staff Confidence in Supporting Children's Mental](#)' project we have developed a variety of supports for staff including new support sessions, both 1-1 and group to allow professionals to share, normalise and develop positive working relationships. This is in addition to the development of whole school e-learning; resources and a signposting framework for practitioners to support children, young people and their families. As a result, we have seen a 31% increase in the number of staff who agree or strongly agree that they can now support children and young people's mental health and wellbeing, with 86% reporting this.

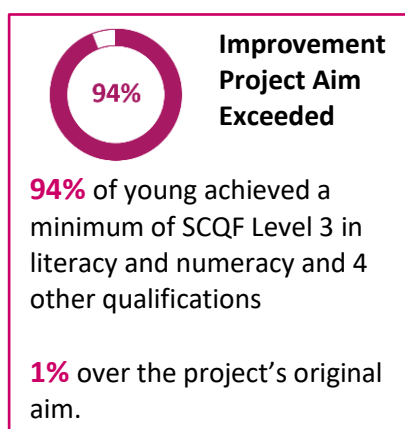
Increasing opportunities to enable all young people to achieve their goals

STRETCH OUTCOME 6
PROGRESSING WITH
76.5% of Looked After Children in a positive destination.

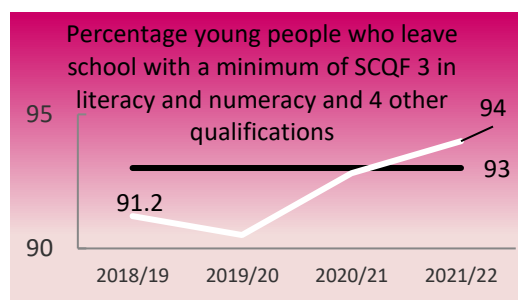
92.1% of children across the city achieved a positive destination in 20/21 the highest ever recorded in the city. We also saw a 13% increase in the percentage of Looked after Children achieving a positive destination in 20/21, with 76.5%, however there remains a considerable gap between their peers and our aim is to remove that gap by



ensuring that there are a range of opportunities and supports available to provide all young people, but particularly our care experienced young people (CEYP) and those living in our priority neighbourhood with the access to the skills and opportunities to achieve their goals and full potential. See above on how we have supported CEYP into employment.



We have been focused on ensuring that young people have the skills, qualifications and experiences that are necessary to enable them to go on to further training, education or into employment. Literacy and numeracy skills are key to this, better literacy and numeracy for individuals contributes to a more just and equitable society. They also provide the foundation our children need to learn, to navigate everyday life and to fully participate in school and their communities and widen access to job opportunities. Through our [literacy and](#)



[numeracy](#) project in 2021/22, 94.29% young people across the city achieved a minimum of SCQF Level 3 in literacy and numeracy and 4 other qualifications, a 4% increase since 2019/20.

This project introduced a variety of supports focused on family learning which has proven to be a powerful method of engagement and learning, fostering positive attitudes towards life-long learning, promoting socio-economic resilience and challenging educational disadvantage. One of the supports introduced was a menu of activities, to support achieve better outcomes for families through programmes which enable them to improve literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing using an asset-based approach. From which, 120 group sessions have been run, with 5 parents accessing counselling services and 6 residentials held where families got to go away together to develop new skills. We have also rolled out PEEP (Parents as Early Education Partners) groups to support parents as early educators of their children; working with Early Learning and Childcare settings to ensure a strong focus on the development of literacy and numeracy skills. See the impact of our range of parenting supports in the [case study](#) below.



Preparing for the world of work – young people shaping their future

Building on the successful Lift Off, Learner Pathway event reported in the last period, young people have been at the heart of co-designing Lift Off and Grow which was held again in June 2022 with 3805 young people attending, a 154% increase in participants from 2021.




The Lift off events were well received with young people feeding back:

'It was good to gain a sense of the skills that are generally required to work in these industries.'

'Knowing the things that people did and what skills and qualities they needed to develop in order to get where they wanted to be was really helpful.'

'The talks helped to motivate me and told me what to strive for in the future.'



Improvement Project Aim Exceeded

11.5% increase in number of courses aligned to growth sector.

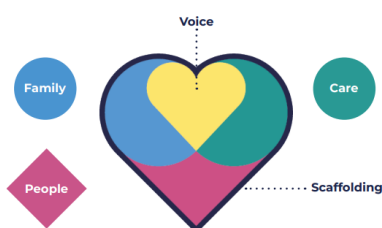
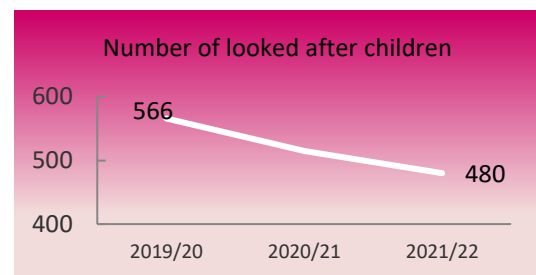
4.5% over the project's original aim.

Similarly, the ABZ Works site, which was co-designed with care experienced young people to clarify all of the [opportunities available to young people](#) and the pathways into the many different growth sectors, has continued to be developed and is now an established tool used both by schools and employability teams to support increasing understanding of the opportunities that exist for young people moving into the world of work, with a total 3996 hits in 2022, a 24% increase since 2021. Thanks to the co-design approach taken with young people, the website is easy to navigate with a great user experience and a responsive chatbot. The collaboration and partnerships developed from both the Lift Off events and website has

resulted in the number of courses aligned to the growth sector increase by 11.5% since 2019/20 and 3.6% since 2021/22%.

Supporting more children and young people to live within their family

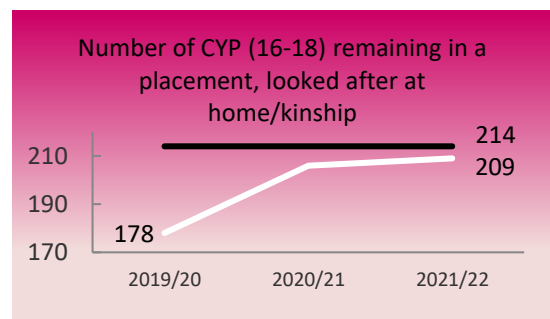
In line with the Promise, CPA is supporting more children and young people, with significant risk factors in their family circumstances, to continue to live within their family with an appropriate multi-agency support plan in place, with the number of looked after children in Aberdeen City fallen by 19%. In 2021/22, there were 480 children looked after by the local authority compared to 590 in 2016/17. This decrease is across all care types mirroring the national trend. However, Aberdeen has a higher % of children and young people placed within a fostering setting compared to the national position and that further improvement is required.



During 2022/23, we have tested improvements to strengthen the support offer to kinship placements, with the view to bolster the longevity and stability of kin placements. Specifically, we provided enhanced packages of support to children when placements were identified as vulnerable, and young people who were facing points of transition. The packages varied depending on the needs of the child and young person and the circumstances of the kinship placement.

Feedback from kinship carers is below and reflected positively on this support and helped them to develop a clear understanding of the needs of the child in their care and the impact of early life events/trauma on their needs and behaviours. This learning will directly feed into how we evolve the role and capacity of the kinship team to support kinship carers going forward.

Through [our supporting 16-18 year olds remain in a placement](#) project, we're also seeing positive outcomes, in the stability of placements where they're required, with a 17% increase in the total no. of 16-18 remaining in placement since 2019/20, from 178 (2019/20) to 209 (2021/22), with transitions being elongated enabling more supported transitions. The impact of this practice is seen in the improvement in the level of tenancy sustainment for our care experienced young people. We continue to see a positive trend in care experienced young people accessing and sustaining tenancies with 93 young people accessing tenancies during 2021/22. There was an 82.8% tenancy sustainment rate for those households, which rises to 94.6% when taking into account people who went on to a positive destination after their first tenancy.



"We became carers for our granddaughter in 2021. Dealing with a teenager with various behaviour issues was to say the least a difficult task for two grandparents in their 60's. Without the help of the family network team this may have been beyond us. We found the group & individual meetings a great help not only for the child but for us as carers. The importance of these meetings cannot be understated. On more than one occasion they were the only thing that kept the relationship between us and our granddaughter in place."

Child F wrote a thank you note to her worker simply noting "Thank you for helping me with my problems".

Embedding children's rights

Children's rights have been prioritised and intrinsically woven throughout our Local Outcome Improvement Plan and improvement activity. The Partnership recognises the progress that has been made in raising awareness of children's rights and to progress this further, has agreed a new improvement aim under Stretch Outcome 16 "100% of decisions which impact on children and young people are informed by them by 2026" which is overseen by the Community Empowerment Group. This is to ensure that children's rights are incorporated into all our improvement activity and not seen as solely the responsibility of our Children's Services Board. Examples of our children and young people co-designing our projects are shown below.

Training our multi-agency workforce on children's rights has been a key improvement activity over the last year 260 members of staff to ensure that our staff have the understanding and confidence to engage with children and young people and to ensure that they're aware of the impending incorporation of UNCRC.

**260 staff
trained on
children's rights
in 2022/23**



New and refreshed partnership policies and strategies now explicitly reference children's rights, and these extend beyond those traditionally impacting on children to include those on Net Zero and Master planning for example. Staff report that both direct engagement with young people and consideration of their rights is helping them to be bolder in their recommendations. Approaches to participation are becoming more varied and dynamic and nearly 70% of our children and young people tell us that they more actively participate in decision making now. However, this is a 10% reduction from when the survey was last completed 3 years ago, and this reduction is thought to reflect the increased expectation of participation by our children and young people.

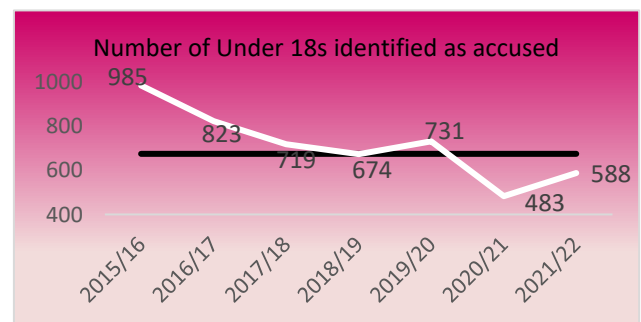
A more detailed evaluation of partnership work to incorporate the UNCRC is available in our [Children's Rights Report](#).

Keeping children and young people safe and preventing crime

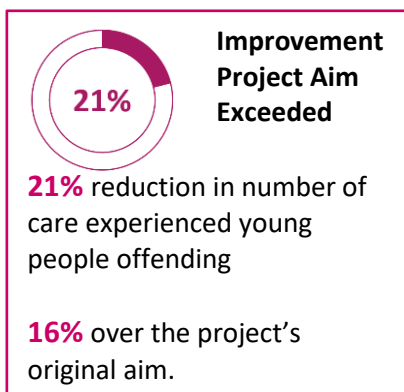
**STRETCH OUTCOME 9
EXCEEDED WITH 40%
reduction in number
of under 18s
offending**

We are delighted to report that latest data shows we have sustained a reduction in the number of under 18s identified as being responsible for an offence of 40% since the LOIP was first published in 2016. Whilst there has been a 22% increase compared with 2020/21 that period was significantly impacted by Covid-19 restrictions. This sustained improvement from the baseline period is reassuring given the removal of all covid-19 measures in this reporting period.

We recognise that young people in conflict with the law are often the most vulnerable young people in our communities and we are taking forward an early intervention and prevention approach by ensuring that we are providing opportunities for all and being flexible and adaptive in provision of support and responding to need.



Targeted support and access to trauma and bereavement support



Children in conflict with the law experience high rates of bereavement, loss, and trauma and although recognised as one of the vulnerabilities for families being referred to our Fit Like Hubs Family Wellbeing Team, it is likely that bereavement is under reported. Recognising that their needs are complex our [trauma and bereavement](#) project has focused on staff development across all settings to ensure that they're seeing and supporting our children and young people through a needs focused and trauma informed lens and referring into appropriate supports.

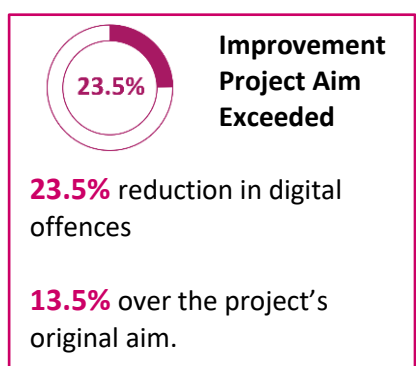
It is important that we are taking an early intervention approach and that young people are not only being offered support at the point in which they came into conflict with the law. To further embed our early intervention approach one of the new pathways for trauma support introduced this year was Seasons for Growth (SfG). SfG is an educational group work programme supporting children and young people who have experienced significant loss and change in their lives. The programme sees a trained group of companions work in pairs to deliver an eight-session programme with two follow up reconstructor sessions for the pupils. Resulting from the development of staff and new pathways, we have seen a 21% reduction in the number of 16/17 year olds with higher support needs offending (96 to 73).

Also, 138 children and young people have received trauma and bereavement support via two pathways, the FitLike Hubs and the Seasons for Growth programme. To increase access to trauma support, we now have 51 Seasons for Growth teachers and support staff Companions across 23 schools trained.

"Each of the children who participated in the group became more relaxed and were able to discuss their feelings more freely by the end of the programme. The children became a support for each other and bonded during the course of the sessions." S4G Companion during evaluation



Young people at the heart of co-designing our improvements



Children and young people have supported our digital offences project understand current digital culture and co-designed the content of new digital offending training provided to all schools, young people, and their families. From this, we've seen a 23.5% reduction from 81 (digital offences including both sexual and non-sexual) in 2018/19 to 62 in 2021/22 reduction in both the number of offences of child sexual exploitation and the number of 'digital' offences by Young People (Under 18). The young people on the group reported that they felt *"valued having professionals listen to their opinion and try and act on same."*



**Improvement
Project Aim
Exceeded**

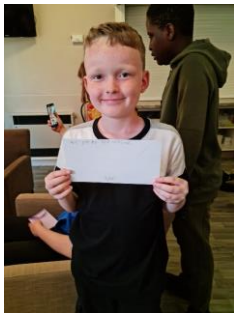
70% increase in 10-16 year olds attending community activities.

20% over the project's original aim.

Through our youth community activity and reducing anti social behaviour projects we are committed to developing a range of opportunities for children and young people to get involved in their local community and to support a reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour. However, we also know that this needs a multi agency approach, with our communities at the heart of it, for this to be sustainable and to meet the needs of our children and young people. Taking this approach, in 2022 we established a new youth group co-designed with children and young people and developed a volunteer led youth group model, resulting in a 70% increase in the number of 10-16 year olds who attended community activities from

40 in 2019 to 68; and 3 new youth groups established in priority neighbourhoods.

We also saw a 212% increase in overall participation in 2022, with 938 attendances citywide compared to 300 in 2019. Similarly, there has been a 2.6% reduction in the number of youth disorder calls to the police in 2022. Young people were asked what they enjoyed about their group. They said:



Opportunities to meet friends and make new ones.

We get to make friends; it's very fun; you get to do art, sports, games and make food.

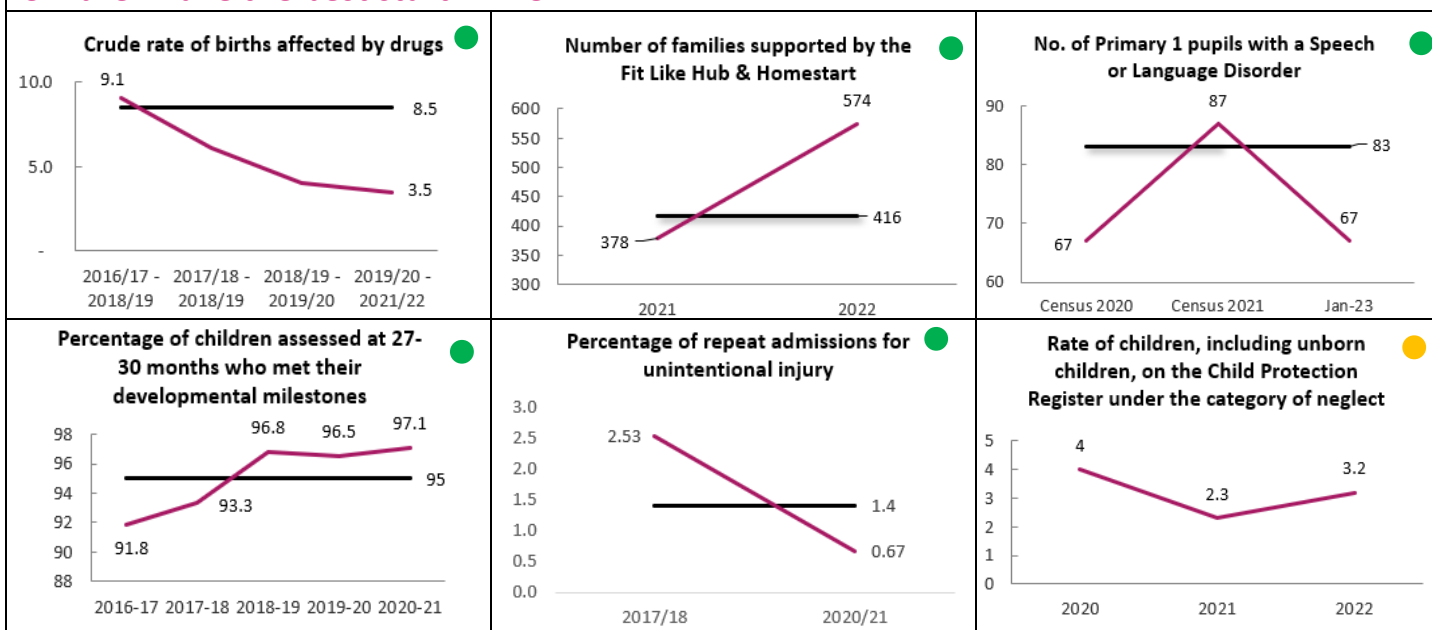


What impact have we had?

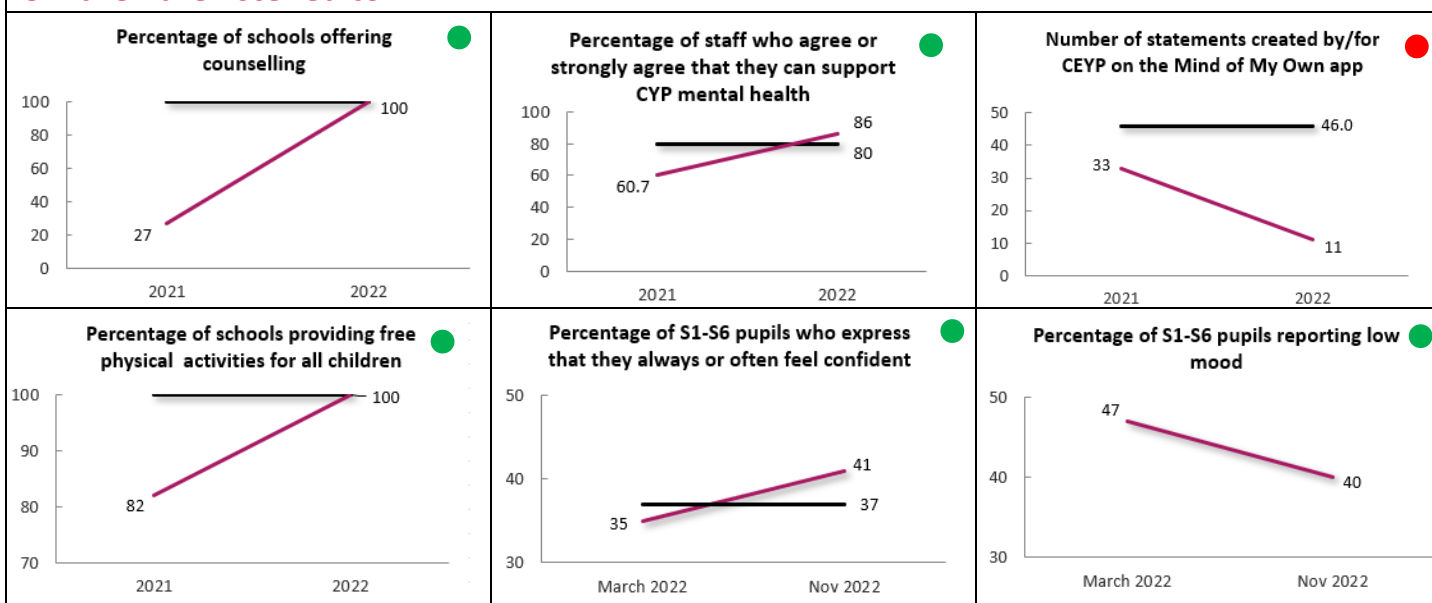
22/23 improvement aim Performance

- Yes
- Getting there
- Not yet

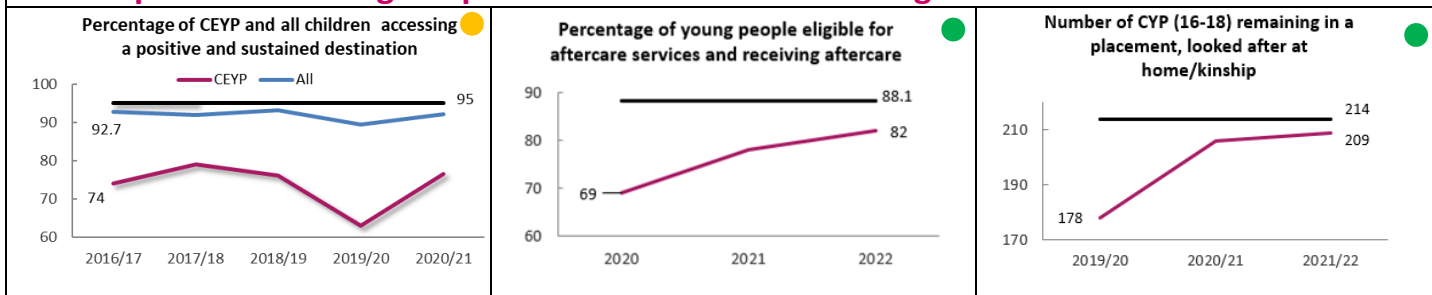
Children have the best start in life

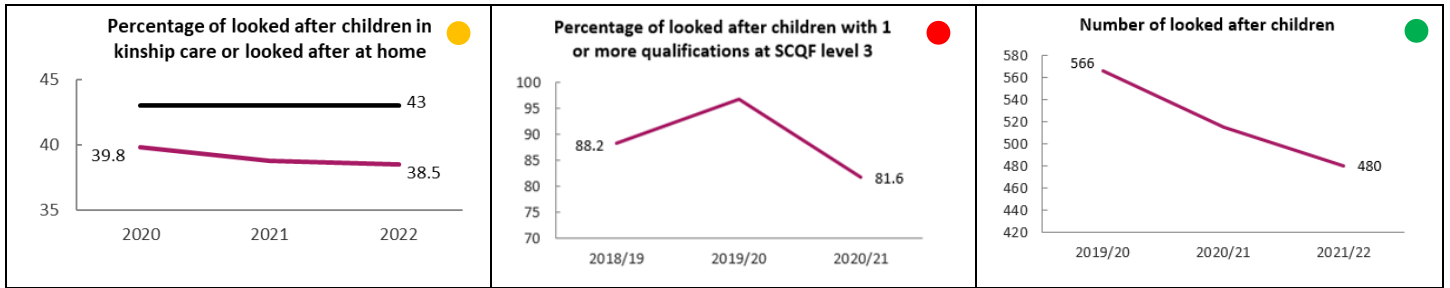


Children are listened to

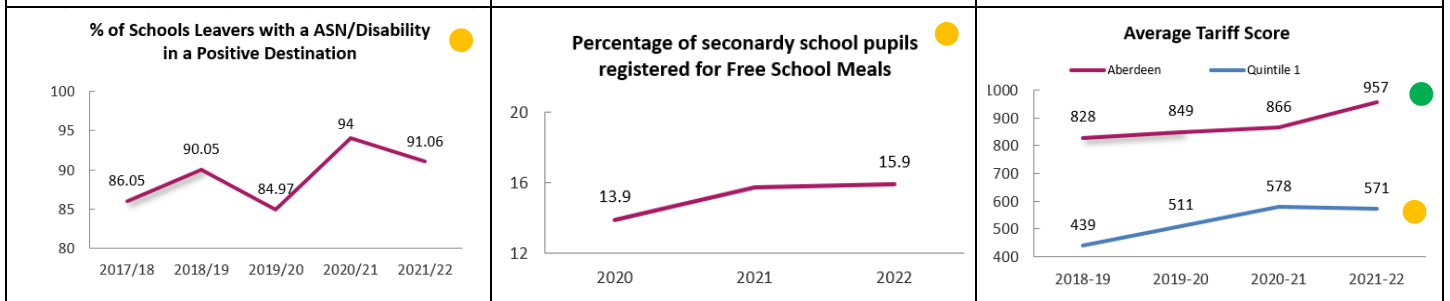
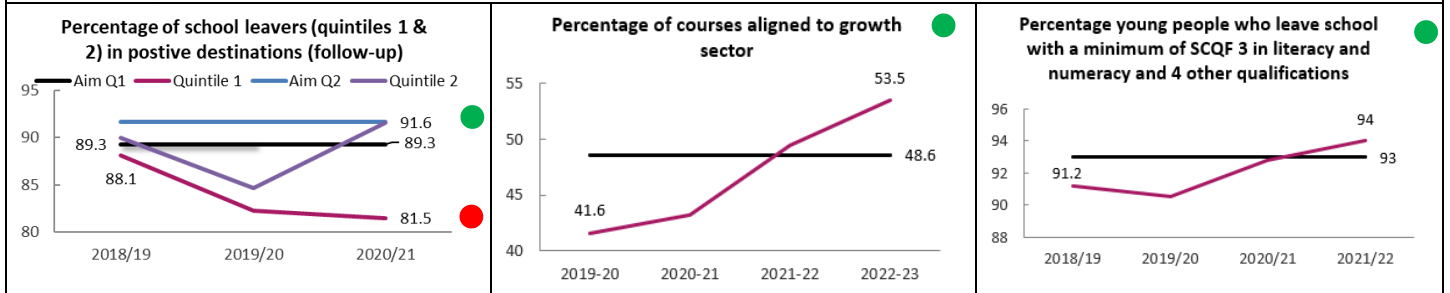


Care Experienced Young People are included and achieving

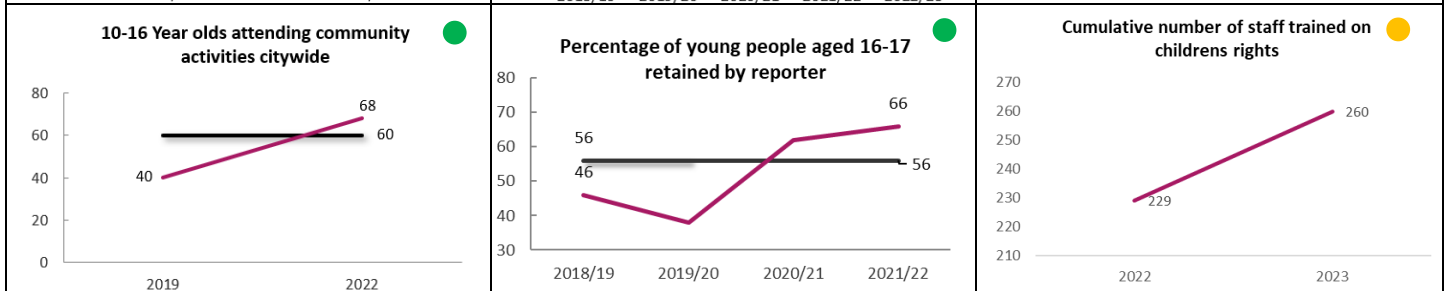
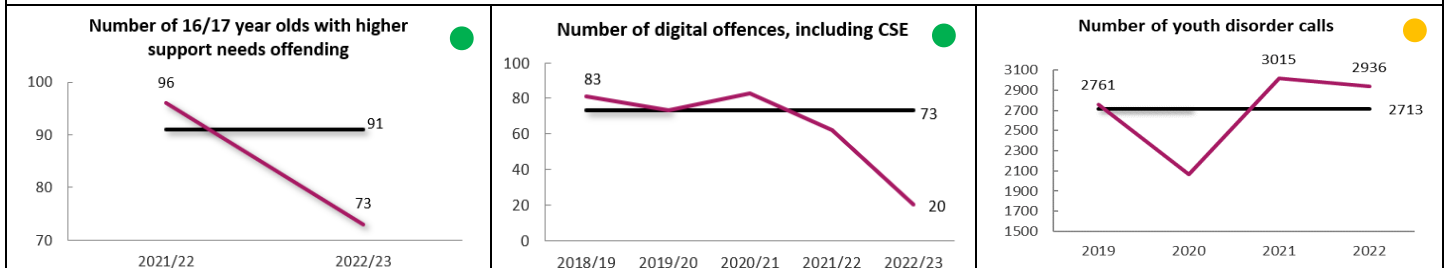




All Young People are achieving their potential



Children are Safe and Involved



Improvement priorities 2023/24

In April 2023, following an extensive development process the Children's Services Strategic Plan 2023-26 was approved, refreshing our children and young people's section (Stretch Outcomes 4-9) within the LOIP and the improvement priorities, see the full priorities within our LOIP 2016-26, summarised below:

- Further streamline support pathways and awareness of supports available
- Continue to address food insecurity including maternal and infant food insecurity to help families access the benefits they're entitled to and have pathways to provide emergency access to emergency first stage infant formula milk and nutritional support to ensure that poor child nutrition does not impact on child wellbeing in the longer term.
- Develop approaches to improving levels of dental health in primary 1 with a particular focus on areas of deprivation.
- Establish a mental health collaborative informed by a young person Taskforce, introducing mental health assessments for care experienced young people and looking at supporting young people from our priority neighbourhoods to feel safe.
- Better prepare care experienced young people for life beyond care, including preparing them for parenthood.
- Develop a Family Support Model to offer earlier and preventative support and intervention with a particular focus on kinship carers and preventing children and young people from entering care and also to reduce offending rates.
- Consider our enhanced support offer to families at a universal and targeted level that mitigates the risk of neglect and harm and reducing the number of children placed on the child protection register.
- Continue to develop a broader range of qualifications and pathways for young people which are aligned to growth sectors to enable them to secure employment in the longer term.
- Introduce new ways, such as Pathway Advocates, to close the gap between the attainment levels of our care experienced young people and children and young people living in poverty from those who do not.
- Increase the number of co-delivered services, such as, an integrated neurodevelopmental pathway improving diagnosis timescales and ensuing timely access to support.
- Supporting children with additional support needs and declared disabled achieve positive destinations by better understanding the lived experiences of this large group and developing our multi-agency continuum of provision more holistically across child and adult services.
- Further tackle child poverty and consider how the needs of the 6 groups identified as most at risk differ in need so that we can respond proactively. Proactive engagement will be important to shape how we respond next.

Whole Family Approach: Supporting all parents and children to thrive.



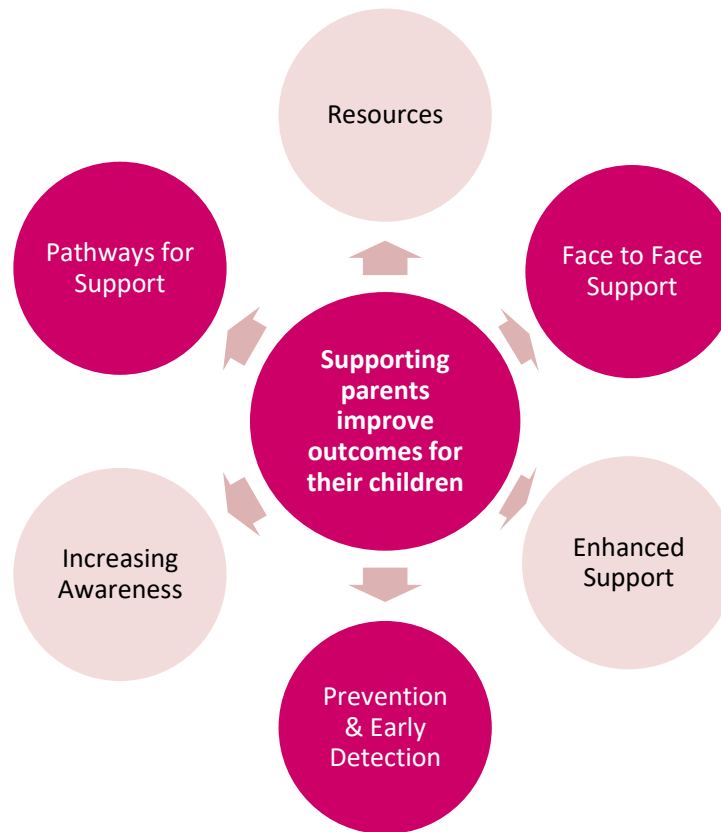
Supporting Parents and Children Thrive

Parents and families play a critical role in a child's development, and providing a range of supports for parents is vital to creating an environment where both children and their parents can flourish.

Our Approach

Through our cross cutting improvement projects we are putting in place changes that focus on the whole family approach with a focus on early detection and intervention. Specifically, we've tested:

- Streamlined referral processes for parenting support and implemented a prioritisation system based on level of need
- Developed a speech and language parenting resource to help parents with early detection and awareness of the pathway for support
- Created a menu of activities for parents to attend which enable them to support their child improve literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing using an asset-based approach.
- Rolled out PEEP (Parents as Early Education Partners) groups to support parents as early educators of their children
- Developed enhanced packages of support to kinship carers/families when placements were identified as vulnerable, and young people were facing points of transition
- Provided Keeping Kids Safe packs to reduce preventable harms



What we've achieved?

- **52%** increase in the uptake of parenting and family support between 2021 and 2022, with 574 families supported in 2022, compared to 378 families in 2021
- **120** group sessions from the menu of activities have been run, with 5 parents accessing counselling support and 6 residential held.
- **11%** reduction in the number UI repeat admissions between 2017/18 to 2020/21



What have our parents said?

"Gained confidence in dealing with my son's meltdowns. Provided courses to help extend my knowledge on emotion training & sleep"

"Family Learning for me has been having someone non-judgmental and supportive during a time of struggle with family life, to listen and give advice and also reassure you're doing the best you can"

"The support you've given has been invaluable"

"This is like a bespoke service for me & my family, it's the first time support has felt right for me and fits for what we actually need"







Prosperous People

Vulnerable Adults

Our Stretch Outcomes

What we are working towards		How we are doing
<p>SO10 25% fewer people receiving a first ever Court conviction and 2% fewer people reconvicted within one year by 2026.</p>	 <p>EXCEEDED</p>	<p>67.4% fewer people receiving a first ever court conviction and 2.2% fewer reconvicted within one year since 2015/16.</p>
<p>SO11 Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026.</p>	<p>70-73</p> <p>PROGRESSING</p>	<p>1.9 years increase in Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) at birth for Males (60.2) from 2018-20, 2.6 lower than 2014-16.</p> <p>0.1 years increase in estimated HLE at birth for Females (61.4) from 2018-20, 4.9 lower than 2014-16.</p>
<p>SO12 Rate of harmful levels of alcohol consumption reduced by 4% and Drug related deaths lower than Scotland by 2026.</p>	 <p>ACHIEVED</p>	<p>4% reduction in harmful levels of drinking and a 32% reduction in drug related deaths since 2021 and 22% since 2017 baseline. The 5 year average drug related death rates for Aberdeen are now lower than Scotland.</p>

Progress made during 2022/23



Reducing court conviction - Stretch Outcome 10 exceeded

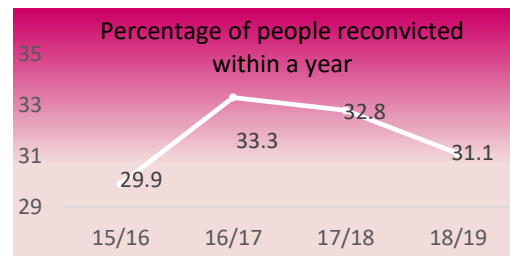
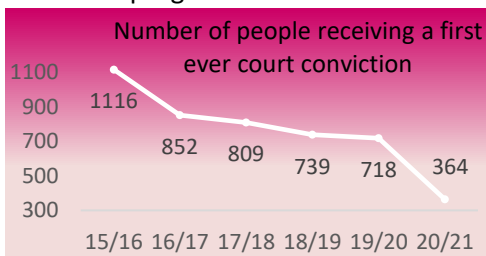


67.4% FEWER people receiving a first ever court conviction and **2.2% FEWER** reconvicted within one year.

Data available at the end of 2021/22 shows that Stretch Outcome 10 has been achieved and exceeded with a 67.4% reduction in first court convictions, from our baseline year (2015/16) 42.4% over our 25% reduction Stretch Outcome. The reduction reported in 20/21 will have been impacted by the backlogs in the court system caused by the Covid pandemic. However, taking into consideration the impact, data shows an annual reduction in the number of first ever convictions compared to the baseline period (2015/16).

Latest data available also shows a 2.2% reduction in people reconvicted in one year since the LOIP was published in 2016. As a result of a delay in reporting

resulting from the Covid pandemic, further data on this measure has not been published. Our Community Justice Group, in the next reporting period, as part of the refresh of our Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26, will review the Stretch Outcome and ensure that data is available to measure our progress.



Supporting People to Make Progress on the Employability Pipeline



Improvement Project Aim Exceeded

63 individuals in the Justice System supported to make progress on the Employability Pipeline

110% over the project's original aim.


We have been working together to increase the number of individuals who are engaged with different areas of the Justice System being supported to make progress on the employability pipeline. Through our [My Way to Employment](#) project we have exceeded the original aim of 30 people being supported with 63 individuals progressing at least one stage along the Employability skills pipeline. Of the 63 people supported onto the employability pipeline 36 (57%) are in a positive destination.

To achieve these outcomes, the project created two new referral pathways: - a community and prison employability pathway for supporting people onto the employability pipeline. The pathways were supported by a new employability sub-group comprising of

HMP Grampian, DWP, Aberdeen City Council Employability Team, Aberdeenshire Council Employability Team and SDS. Specifically, they tested whether pre release employability support and having a job offer prior to release would better support those being released from custody. This was tested with two employers in the first instance (CFine and Greene King). Through this route a total of 51 were referred for the pre-release employability support. 88% (36) completed the CFine course and another 10 were interviewed by Greene King and offered employment.

Supporting teams and victims of domestic abuse

Ensuring that people who experience domestic abuse have access to appropriate specialist domestic abuse support is a key priority and is part of our commitment to Equally Safe: Scotland's Strategy to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls. There continues to be barriers which lead to people experience domestic abuse not seeking support. These include the stigma and shame, not recognising that what they are experiencing is abuse, not knowing where to access support and/or being prevented from accessing support by their perpetrator. Through our [support for victims of domestic abuse project](#) we have put in place a range of staff development and preventative education sessions for targeted audiences and the public at large to mitigate the barriers; increasing awareness of domestic abuse among the public and those seeking support. As a result, we have seen a 47% increase in the number of people receiving specialist support services because of domestic abuse, with 2945 supported in 2022, up from 2004 in 2021.



Improvement Project Aim Exceeded


47% increase in the number of people accessing domestic abuse support.

27% over the project's original aim.



Throughout 2022 training was delivered to teams across Aberdeen City Council to develop awareness of domestic abuse and develop Domestic Abuse Champions to perpetuate the learning across the Partnership. Information sessions to increase young people's awareness of local support services have also been held with North East Scotland College students. Across all sessions, an average of 68% students reported an increased awareness of local support services at the end of the sessions.

Accessing mental health services through the Justice System



Improvement Project Aim Exceeded

59% increase in the number of people accessing mental health support in Police Custody and **55%** in HMP Grampian.

49% over the project's original aim.

It is well documented that many individuals in the Justice System have mental health issues. Community Planning Aberdeen are committed to ensuring that [people in the Justice System diagnosed with mental illness or experiencing mental ill health are able to access the right support](#), at the right time, from the right service. Our improvement activity has targeted developing new support pathways in HMP Grampian and Police Custody and initiating an early intervention model starting with supportive, non-judgemental conversations about mental wellbeing. We are delighted that as a result of the improvements we have exceeded our aim with a 59% increase in the number of people accessing mental health support in Police Custody and 55% in HMP Grampian.

Specifically, in the Kittybrewster Custody Suite, intentioned conversations with a Custody Nurse were held and, where consent was given, individuals were referred on to appropriate services. However, it was recognised that referrals were only part of pathway and having access to support at the point of need was also needed. To support this the project tested a pilot called "WELL Service". This pilot which started in November 2022 saw Penumbra, mental wellbeing provider, having a member of staff based within Kittybrewster during "out of hours" and accepting referrals to support individuals with a disclosed mental health issue at that point. During November and December 2022, overall, 458 individuals disclosed a mental health issue, of which 359 were prompted to access support and 32 individuals were seen by the WELL practitioner.

In HMP Grampian, a range of low intensity psychological interventions have been developed. The shorter length of these interventions and consequent lower waiting times has meant that patients have increased access to psychological treatment, both on a one-to-one and group basis. These can be a standalone treatment for mild to moderate mental health difficulties or can be a helpful first step in preparation for higher intensity interventions subsequently offered by qualified psychology staff. The delivery of short-term or single-session interventions has also allowed for a greater inclusion of remand prisoners accessing support. Previously, few psychological interventions could be offered to remand prisoners, due to the uncertain length of their time in custody.

In addition to the low intensity interventions, 1:1 including Cognitive Behavioural Therapy appointments and mental health education groups were delivered. Following the introduction of the range of interventions, 450 individuals in HMP Grampian accessed support/treatment in 2022/23, up from 290 in 2020/21 (55% increase). These supports are all now available ensuring that support relevant to the individual’s needs are available.

Patients were asked to rate the overall helpfulness of group sessions from (0) very unhelpful to (5) very helpful; the mean rating for all group sessions was between 4 and 5. Qualitative feedback from the Group sessions have been positive with comments including:

“Overall these groups have great potential to help those open to the ideas and tools. Thank you!”

“Opened eyes that we’re all in similar position.”

“[Gained] More understanding of mental health and wellbeing, and the importance of this.”

Reducing Deliberate Fire Raising through Collaboration

12% Improvement Project Aim Exceeded

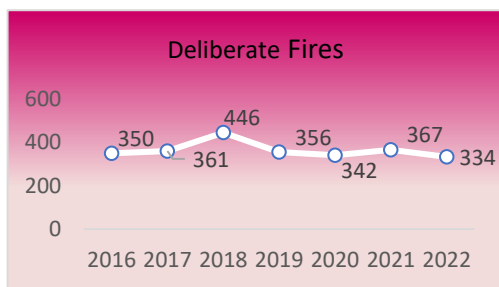
12% decrease in the number of deliberate fires.

2% over the project’s original aim.

Wilful, or deliberate, fires are an indicator of wider anti-social behaviour, consequently, actions taken to address deliberate fire-raising can have a positive impact on wider societal issues. Deliberate fires account for 10% of all incidents attended by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) in Aberdeen and is a considerable pull on SFRS resources as well as that of other emergency response colleagues. Through our wilful fire project we aimed to take early intervention approaches to reduce wilful fires in the city by 10%. The interventions introduced ranged from engagement with and education of children and young people through

Fire Skills courses with referral pathways with Police Scotland, schools and Sport Aberdeen, mixed media messaging in collaboration with local media, Walk and Talks with video presentations and a Virtual Community Fire Safety Programme for schools and youth groups. We’ve also developed a leaflet for parents and carers with guidance on how to talk to young people about the dangers of playing with fire.





The changes were tested initially in the Torry and Ferryhill area as this was the area where most incidents had occurred over the baseline period of 2015-19. As a result, data for Torry and Ferryhill shows a reduction in deliberate fires of 48 to 50% year on year compared to the 5 year average. Whilst, over the whole city there has been a 12% reduction from the 5-year average of 334 (2016-20), with 328 deliberate fires recorded in 2022.

Healthy life expectancy for all

Latest data available at the end of 2022, shows slight improvement in estimated healthy life expectancy (HLE) at birth (2019-2021) with 60.2 years for Males up from 58.3 years in 2018-2020 and slightly lower than the figure for Scotland of 60.4 years. Whilst estimated HLE at birth for Females was 61.4 years, similar to the figure for 2018-2020 of 61.3 years and the figure for Scotland of 61.1 years. Despite the improvement from the previous reporting period, it is recognised that further improvement is required with HLE remaining below the baseline period.

Through our improvement projects we are committed to tackling health inequalities through both preventative and targeted approaches. We have focused on highlighting the impact of our individual behavioural decisions and providing specialist outreach and targeted services for particularly high risk individuals, but also addressing wider environmental factors such as reducing youth homelessness, supporting opportunities to volunteer and be part of our communities and ensuring accessibility of services for all.

Increasing our communities' capacity to promote good health and wellbeing



Improvement Project Aim Exceeded

106 people supported to feel confident to promote wellbeing and good health choices

6% over the project's original aim.

The communities where we live, work and play have a significant influence on our health and wellbeing. Through our [good health and wellbeing choices project](#) we have trained 96 people working in our communities with Making Every Opportunity Count (MeOC). MeOC is a brief intervention being rolled out across partners to support staff to make the best of every appropriate opportunity to raise the issues of a healthy lifestyle.



Evaluation has shown increases in:

- Awareness of health and social issues that may affect people's health and wellbeing.
- Confidence in speaking about issues which may affect their health and wellbeing.
- Confidence to undertake a very brief intervention to support people to make positive health and wellbeing choices.
- Confidence in the knowledge of health and wellbeing support and signposting to services.

We've also developed a Health Issues in the Community (HiIC) course to develop community capacity and increase community participation to tackle inequalities in health. 10 staff from a range of partners undertook the tutor training in March 2023, with the first introduction to HiIC course has been delivered to Locality Empowerment Group members. Overall, 114 people have HiIC Workshops. The feedback has been positive and provided areas for further development.

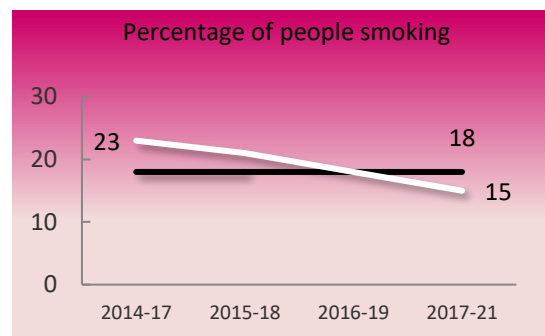
"As a result, when looking at someone's situation I will consider it from a point of view of equity rather than equality." LEG member

Improvement Project Aim Exceeded

8% reduction in % of people smoking

3% over the project's original aim.

Given the reach of MeOC, and from collaboration with our [reducing tobacco smoking project](#), Smoke Free homes training has now been included in. Through training, raising awareness and promotion of the Charter for a smoke free generation, latest data shows an estimated 15% of people in Aberdeen are 'current smokers' in the period 2017-21, 3%



lower than the last reporting period; 8% lower than the baseline period and lower than the percentage for Scotland of 16%. As at November 2022, 38 organisations in the city had signed the smoke free charter.

Maximising opportunities to volunteer and to contribute to our communities

Improvement Project Aim Exceeded

17.4% increase in volunteer opportunities

7.4% over the project's original aim.

We know there is substantial economic and social value in the act of volunteering with research showing increased life expectancy and quality of life values. Through our improvement projects we have built on the [volunteering community](#) that was crucial during the covid pandemic and sought to sustain the unprecedented level of volunteering seen during that time by further developing a wide range of opportunities. Between December 2021 and March 2023, we saw a 17.4% (437 to 513 – 76 new opportunities in total) in volunteer opportunities on the volunteer hub because of consistent promotion of the Hub across media and in contact with groups and volunteers augmenting ACVO's efforts.

New opportunities developed were varied and many were to support our LOIP projects to connect in our communities and to build community capacity and resilience. We've seen the following impact: -

- Community Resilience: Community Resilience Volunteer Groups established in Culter, Bridge of Don, and Cults and two new groups in the initial stages of starting CRVGs in Ruthrieston and Midstocket and Rosemount,
- Response to Emerging situations: Significant levels of new volunteering around emerging positions such as Ukrainian refugee support and responses to the cost of living crisis, with more than 100 volunteers from across the city have contributed more than 2000 hours of volunteer time, up from c200 volunteer hours in April 2022.

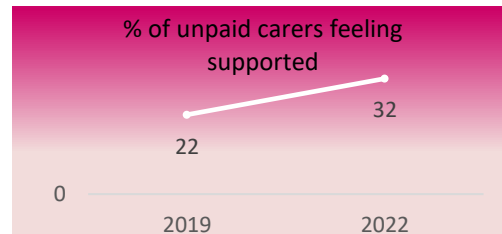


Supporting our unpaid carers



Community Planning Aberdeen recognises the vital role unpaid carers play in meeting social care needs across the city. It also recognises the challenges faced by unpaid carers and we are committed to ensuring that they receive consistent support to carry out their caring role and to take a break from caring with a range of options for respite and short break available.

Through our [unpaid carer project](#) we are testing a variety of initiatives to increase the range of support available. Data from the Health and Care Experience survey (HACE) in 2022 reported that 32% felt supported, a 10% increase compared to 2019. Similarly, there has been a 71.3% increase in the number of adult carers accessing support (594 in 2021/22 compared to 1018 in 2022/23). One initiative we've tested is the Respite Bureau which sought to increase the uptake of short breaks for Carers. Since the Bureau started in June 2022, 320 people have been referred for a short break as of March 2023. 3 further tests promoting different types of Carer Breaks were also tested this year, Doorstep Breaks, Scot Spirit and Time to Live.



We are also piloting a Wee Blether Group in the Middlefield Community Hub which aims to reduce social isolation by bringing Carers together for company and a chat, and to build better links to the local community. The Wee Blether groups are targeted at our unpaid Carers aged 55+ and they are welcome to bring their Cared-for person along. Part of our support is signposting them to ongoing activities and groups within the local community providing additional support. A second group is set to begin in July at the Bon Accord Centre. We are looking to establish a further 3 groups and all locations are based on postcode of carers to concentrate support and community building to areas where Carers are based.



Reducing harmful levels of alcohol consumption and drug related deaths

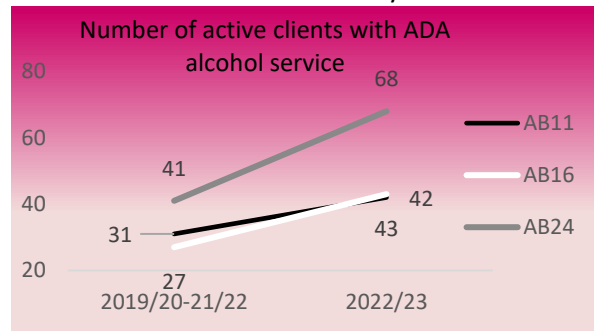
STRETCH OUTCOME 12 ACHIEVED WITH 4% reduction in harmful levels of alcohol consumption and 22% reduction in drug related deaths.

Alcohol is one of five lifestyle behavioural risk factors which contribute to the majority of chronic and non-communicable disease in our population. Latest data available at the end of 2022 shows that we have sustained our stretch outcome with a 4% reduction in the adult population drinking to hazardous/harmful levels in 2017-21 at 25%, down from 29% in 2014-17. The rate of alcohol related hospital admissions was 568 per 100,000 population compared to 611 in Scotland. Although in the previous period, the Stretch Outcome had been achieved, we know that the effects of harmful drinking on individuals, their families and communities are wide-ranging, and we strive to sustain the reduction achieved and have taken forward a

range of interventions in 2022/23 to achieve this.

Latest data has also shown that the 5 year average drug related death rate for Aberdeen is now lower than Scotland. Data shows that in 2022 there were 42 drug related deaths, a 32% reduction since 2021 and 22% since 2017 baseline. Whilst the Stretch Outcome has been achieved, we are not complacent and know that there is more to do and the development of innovative approaches to further reduce drug related deaths remains a priority for the Partnership.

Throughout 2022/23 we have focused on increasing awareness of alcohol risks and [widening access to alcohol interventions and support](#), including the development of a new alcohol audit screening tool to increase referrals for support both from professionals and individuals directly with a corresponding promotional campaign. As a result of the interventions and targeted campaigns we have seen the number of active clients with Alcohol and Drugs Action (ADA) Duty Drop-in service in 2022/23 increase in each of the three priority neighbourhoods against the 3-year baseline. Specifically, data shows a 35% increase in AB11, 59% increase in AB16, 66% increase in AB24 and a 112% increase in other areas.



As part of reviewing lifestyle choices, it is important that we take a moment to consider alcohol consumption: particularly as we move away from the COVID restrictions of the last few years, and now as we enter another period of difficulty with the rise in the cost of living.

We are asking anyone who consumes alcohol to check in by taking the short and anonymous quiz, and get some valuable feedback.

Foos yer booze?

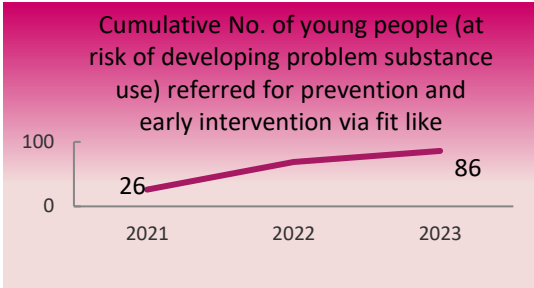
TAKE THE QUIZ...
www.alcoholaberdeen.org.uk

Similarly, as a result of the increased awareness of staff and the community through information sessions and resources we have seen substantial increase in the number of referrals for alcohol support, with a 322% increase from health, 22% from criminal justice and 77% from self. A new referral pathway from police has also been piloted with positive feedback to date. We have also continued to widen the number of [settings for Alcohol Brief Interventions \(ABIs\)](#), with ABIs now delivered in custody, HMP Grampian and due to commence in the housing service. This is ensuring that the access to support is accessible as possible and available directly in our priority neighbourhoods and not reliant on primary care settings.

Positive outcomes have also been seen through the targeted social media campaign and the subsequent levels of engagement with the 'Alcohol Aberdeen' online 'quiz' (AUDIT screening tool). Between June 2022 and March 2023, 455 people have completed the 'quiz', a 99% increase compared to the previous tool available in 2020/21. Of those completing the tool, 23% were identified as hazardous, harmful, or dependent and therefore support required. 92% of the 455, completed the tool in Nov/Dec 2022 directly correlating with the campaign.

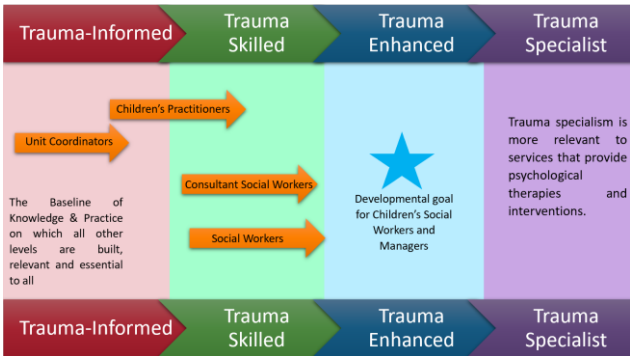
Support for vulnerable young people at risk of substance use

There is a strong correlation between where children grow up around substance use and those young people developing patterns of substance use characterised by increased frequency and experience of problems as well as a multitude of other adverse health outcomes. Through our [support for vulnerable young people at risk of substance use](#) project we have developed a process to identify young people who would benefit from receiving selective or indicated prevention/early intervention supports, which go beyond the scope and reach of universal prevention. We are seeing positive outcomes from this targeted approach with 100% of vulnerable young people, identified by Education as being at risk of substance use referred for support from the FitLike Hubs.



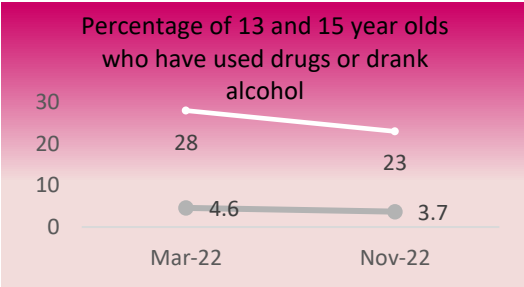
We've also introduced a post to deliver a service to care experienced young people in the transitional phase of moving through continuing care support and to Assertive Outreach has seen 18 young people received direct support and approximately 50 young people over all supported.

One pathway for support will not suit all young people, therefore, a key improvement has been developing all our frontline Children's Social Work staff to be trauma informed and deliver trauma responsive services to ensure that all young people have access to the required support at point of first contact. A Skills and Knowledge Framework for Prevention and Early intervention (co-produced with parents) has been introduced and trauma Skilled training is now mandatory for all Children's Social work staff.




Reduction in the number of 13-15 year olds reporting having used alcohol or drugs

100% of our schools have access to new substance use guidance and resources which have streamlined guidance and reporting process. In addition, materials for parents are available and parental workshops on various topics held as required. Through the Aberdeen City Health and Wellbeing Survey undertaken across all schools in November 2022, data shows that compared to March 2022 there has been a 5% decrease from 28% to 23% of 13-15 year olds having had a drink and a decrease from 4.6% to 3.7% of 13-15 year olds who have tried drugs.



Reaching out to people at risk and removing barriers to accessing drug supports



Improvement Project Aim Exceeded

Increase in engagement with Alcohol and Drug Action drug services across our priority neighbourhoods. 26% in AB11, 23% in AB16, 42% in AB24 and 27% in other areas.

More than **10% increase** in each area over the project's original aim.

There are many barriers to people engaging with drug services and we know that a range of interventions and approaches based in the heart of our communities are required to increase engagement rates, particularly in our priority neighbourhoods. In July 2022, building on our assertive outreach approach, our [uptake of drug treatment and reducing drug related deaths projects](#) have introduced both a Sharp Response and a Crisis Response Services.

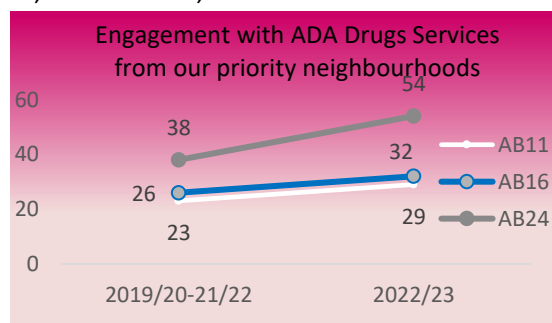


The services aimed to:

- **Identify and increase access to treatment for those at risk:** assertive outreach approach with daily crisis intervention/home visits to individuals identified at risk to provide support in their homes and encourage engagement with services.
- **Focus on harm reduction:** raising awareness of safer drug use practices, sterile injecting equipment to reduce the risk of blood borne infections and sexual health advice, read our [harm reduction case study](#) below.
- **Engage with communities:** raising awareness in the community of risks of drug use; how to respond to an overdose and where support is available; and
- **Widen referral pathways:** a direct referral pathway between ADA and the custody suite, Police Scotland was introduced.

Between July 2022 and March 2023, 226 individuals overall have been supported, with 65 individuals receiving a service through the sharp response service and 282 visits being undertaken by the Crisis Response service. In addition, there were 72 referrals from Kittybrewster Custody Suite. From the targeted approach, data has shown a 1.5% increase in uptake of drug treatment at Integrated Drug Service (IDS) from 1276 (2021/22) as an average across the year for the number of active clients at IDS to 1295 in 2022/23.

Similarly, there has been increased engagement with ADA Drugs Services from our priority neighbourhoods in 2022/23, with a 26% increase in AB11, 23% in AB16, 42% in AB24 and 27% in other areas compared to 2019/20-21/23 3 year average. There has also been a 34% increase in referrals to Assertive Outreach (AO) in 2022/23 compared to 2021/22, which has led, to referrals to the Sharp Response and Crisis Response services. In 2019/20 - 2021/22 the rate of drug-related hospital admissions in Aberdeen City was 182.4 per 100,000 population – down from 189.5 in the previous period and lower than the rate for Scotland of 228.3.

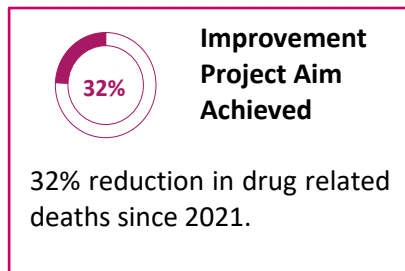


Through the Crisis Response service, a team is available daily to check in with partners in Housing (ACC), ARI (NHS), Assertive Outreach (AO) team and others to identify those at risk and who are requiring support/access to treatment. Daily crisis intervention/home visits are then undertaken, enabling rapid assessment and referral to the appropriate service. Crisis Response clients have said:

'I can't thank them enough for your help. This is above and beyond anything I ever expected.'

'Thank you for coming out and helping me again. This has been so important to me. Thank you'

Increasing access to Naloxone – saving lives



As above, latest drug related death data shows a 32% reduction (62 to 42) in drug related deaths since 2021 and 22% since 2017. The Partnership through our [fatal drug overdose projects](#) are focused on reducing drug related deaths (DRDs) through innovative developments and by increasing the distribution of naloxone. Naloxone is an emergency medication that can reverse the effects of an overdose of opioids like heroin or methadone and can save someone's life.

Reviews from past DRD have shown than many of those people who died were not in any drug treatment service but had come to the attention of many other services. By increasing the number of services who can distribute and administer Naloxone to those in need, we can get the life saving drug out to those people at risk of overdose, as well as to family members/friends of those in need. During this year, we have widened access to naloxone by increasing the number of non drug and alcohol services able to supply and/or admisnister naloxone. Most notably, Aberdeen City Council commenced distribtuion of naloxone supplier and as of w/c 1 December 2022, the following ACC service points were stocking Naloxone: Marischal College Housing Team, Cummings Park Centre, Kaimhill Centre, West North Street, Len Ironside Centre, Spring Gardens, Unpaid Work, Court Team, and Central Library.

As a result of this, along with a wide ranging campaign run acrfpositiveoss International Overdose Awareness Day and throughout December 2022, there has been a 40% in the total number of naloxone kits issued, not including the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) data, with 1151 kits supplied in 2022/23, compared to 821 in 2021/22. Similarly, for 2022/23 there have been 622 kits supplied to persons at risk (excluding spares and SAS), compared to 426 in 2021/22, a 46% increase. Of the kits issued, 56 kits were reported as used, a 27% increase from 2021/22; 5% of overall kits supplied and 9% of kits supplied to people at risk. We have also seen increased supply in each locality, with a 40% increase in Central (226 kits), 35% increase in South (135 kits), 38% increase in North (120 kits) and 94% increase in other (64 kits) compared to 2021/22.



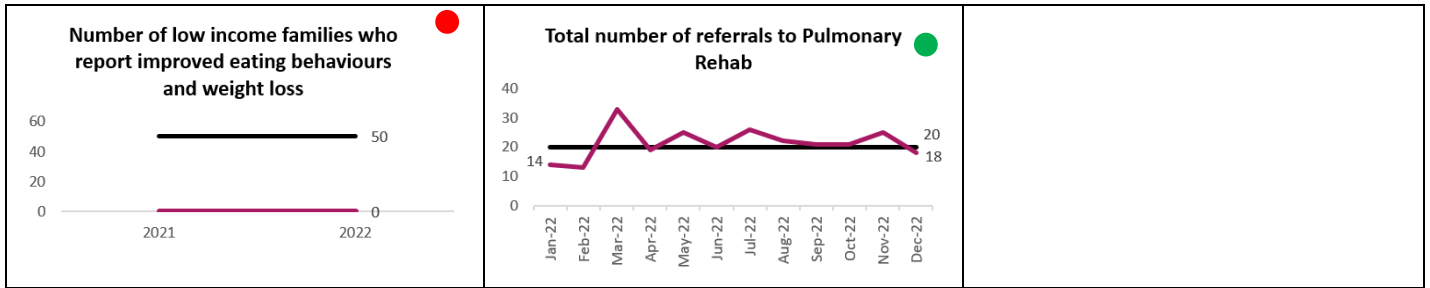
Our projects are also focusing on targeting interventions and providing support at the various settings where people are attending and needing support. We are seeing the impact of this approach. For example, through our improvements focused on **people liberated from prison** we have seen a 56% reduction in drug related deaths of people liberated within 6 months from 2020 to 2021. Various improvements have been developed, including a joint working protocol between Alcohol and Drugs Action, Justice Social Work, Integrated Drug Service and HMP Grampian to provide a clear pathway for people at risk from drug related harm on release to ensure that the various potential touchpoints are connected, and all are clear on responsibilities. Naloxone/Nyxoid kits are also now available at point of liberation (custody or prison) and between October 2022 and April 2023, 127 kits have been collected.

What impact have we had?

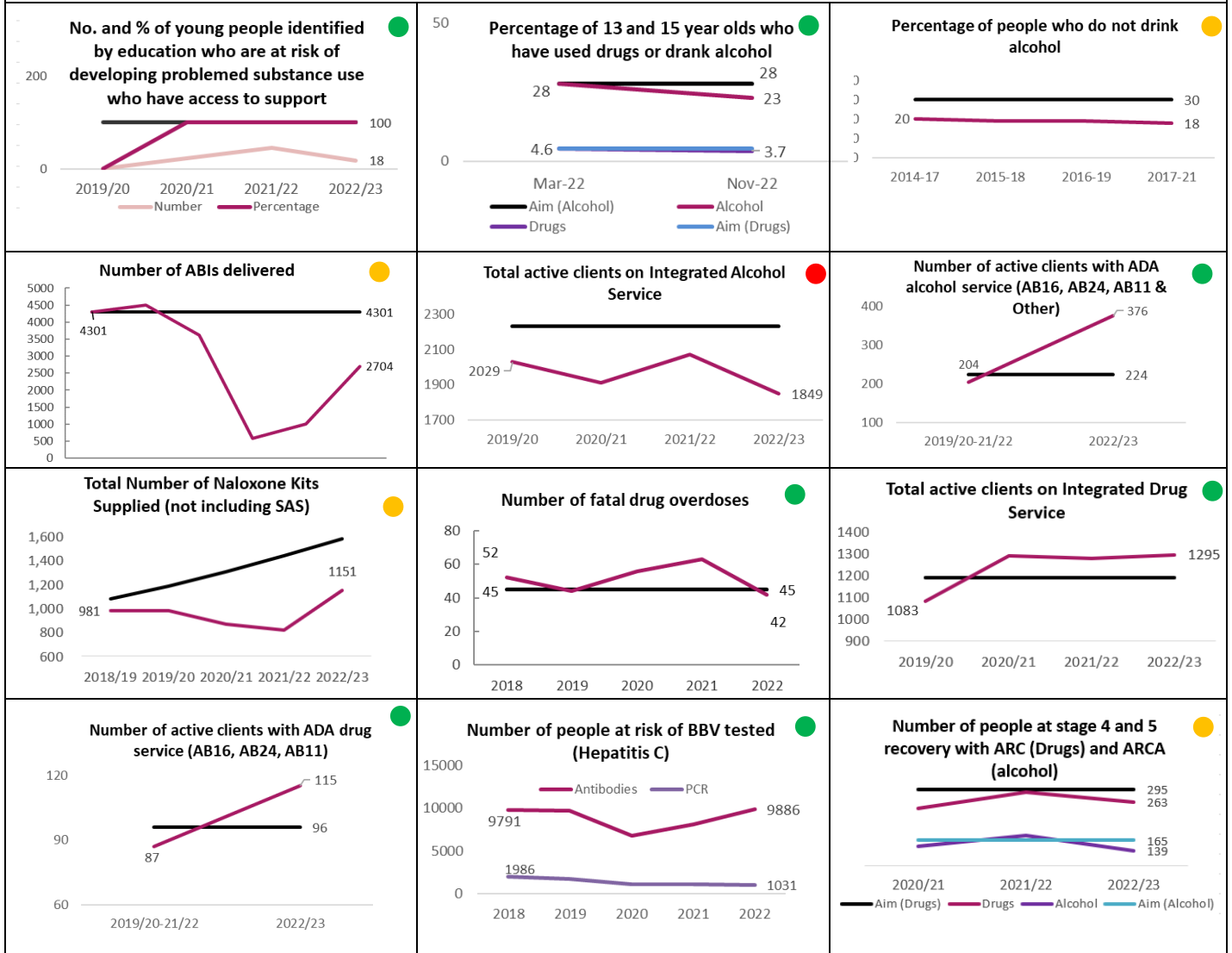
- Yes
- Getting there
- Not yet

— 22/23 improvement aim — Performance





Lower Substance Use



Improvement priorities 2023/24

- Expand collaboration with local businesses to provide support and respite opportunities for unpaid carers, in particular incorporating shorter day breaks for carers throughout the year, as per carers request.
- Test a new respite facility for a year at Chapelton retirement village to provide carers with more options for respite near the city.
- Test innovative approaches to preventing homelessness through participation in the Royal Foundation of the Prince and Princess of Wales Homewards Programme.
- Using data to identify areas for targeted supports to take preventative measures to reduce suicides and improve mental health.
- Developing approaches to support low income families to have access to and make healthy food choices to support their overall health.
- Continue to tackle hate crime through expansion of Third-Party Reporting Centres and training to teams across the partnership who face and support those victimised by hate crimes.
- Further develop the whole family approach to support a reduction in drug related deaths and increase availability of naloxone through in our priority neighbourhoods.
- Spread the use of alcohol brief interventions to wider frontline settings to increase support available directly in our priority neighbourhoods.
- Utilise new recording systems in Criminal Justice Social Work to expand the access to mental health support project beyond custody and prison.

Substance Use Harm Reduction: Improving Access to support in our Communities.

RAPID TESTING FOR HEP C INFECTION

What are we trying to achieve?

We are aiming to reduce the harms for people using substances such as blood borne viruses, by increasing awareness and improving ways to access testing, support and treatment.

What are we testing?

Through our multi agency project we tested several improvements, including:

- Sharp response **mobile needle exchange delivery**



A **Cepheid Machine** which allows testing for Hepatitis C to be offered in the heart of our communities (alongside testing for Hepatitis B and HIV) providing individuals with direct access to treatment.

- A public awareness campaigns highlighting the opportunity to cure people of Hepatitis C and tackling the stigma associated with HIV. This also includes a new HIV quiz to check your knowledge of HIV and find out where you can get tested, treated and supported if necessary.



The Cepheid Machine

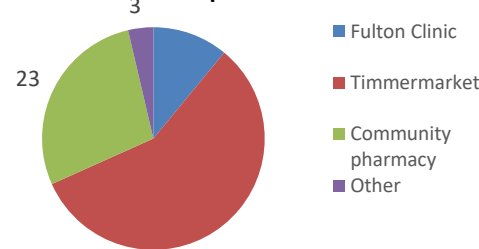
What are the benefits?

- Completes a quick finger prick test, producing a Hepatitis C result within an hour. If someone is reactive for Hepatitis C, treatment can be arranged to start within the same appointment.
- Is mobile which means testing can be offered testing in venues at the heart of the community, giving people flexibility in choosing where to come for a test. Some people would never be tested without the use of Cepheid in some settings.
- Testing for Hepatitis B and HIV is also offered via Dry Blood Spot (DBS) Testing, a similar finger prick method but slightly longer result turnaround times (generally within a week).

What outcomes have been achieved?

- **82** samples obtained using the machine, **96%** in a community setting.

Location of Cepheid Test



- Of the **82**, Hepatitis C reactive was detected in **12%** of cases, **60%** of which have commenced treatment.
- Read the impact on the next page

Mobile needle exchange delivery

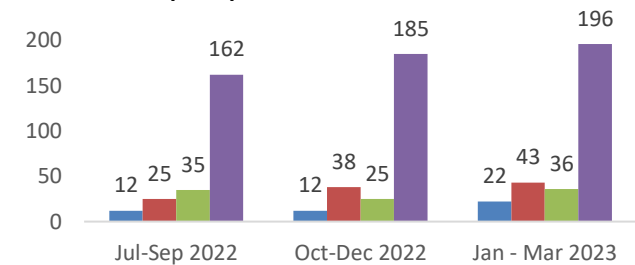
What are the benefits?

- Provides sterile equipment reducing the risk of people using contaminated needles and the infection of blood borne viruses.
- Increasing engagement and referrals to treatment services
- Provides advice and support for other services, such as sexual health.

What outcomes have been achieved?

- **543** injecting equipment deliveries between July 2022 and March 2023
- **46%** of deliveries were to our 3 priority neighbourhoods

Sharp Response Services IEP Deliveries



What impact have we had?

'The people delivering to my house were perfect, extremely nice and always checking in on me and showing genuine concern and care'. A Sharp Response client

What impact has this had?

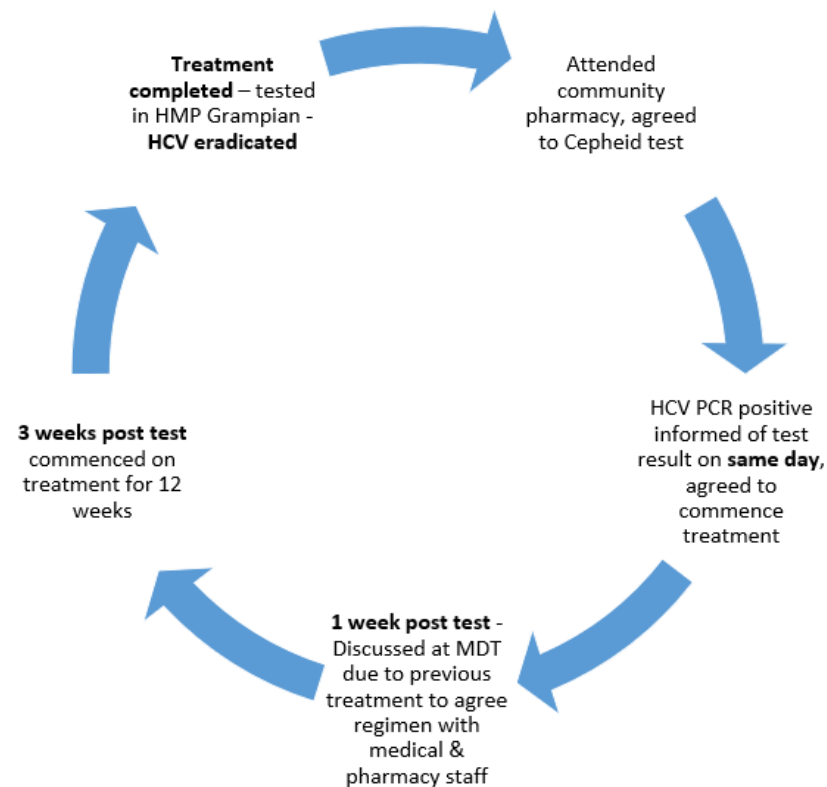
Example of trying to engage an individual in BBV testing prior to Cepheid machine:

machine: Person A was known to have risk of BBV due to prior injecting use of substances. Person A not on any opiate replacement therapy (ORT) so did not attend a community pharmacy (where DBS testing can be completed). Person A was known to have Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) antibodies, but no test had been completed to confirm ongoing infection (HCV PCR). However, had through other routine medical appointments suggested they would like treatment if required.

Person A attends hospital and cannot have a traditional sample (blood) taken. A DBS sample is obtained and their liver is checked for fibrosis via a scan. The test result is returned around 16 days later but the person has been discharged. The person is contacted several times but there is no response. A month later the person is reviewed by a Community Psychiatric Nurse, who lets them know their test result and refers them for treatment. It is around **two months** from the test being completed to the person starting treatment.

If using Cepheid: The patient would have had the result on the same day and treatment agreed whilst still an inpatient and the process would have been smoother and quicker and potentially would have been cured of their infection in the same timeframe (treatment usually taking anything between 8-12 weeks to complete).

Engagement with Cepheid machine available: Person B is known to be injecting substances and has been in and out of prison previously. They self-report sharing injecting equipment, which presents a risk of infecting others with BBVs. Person B has some recall of being treated previously whilst in prison but cannot remember if they cleared (cured) the virus. When tested again; result shows ongoing infection. They are offered an appointment to attend for treatment but do not attend. They latterly attend a community pharmacy where Cepheid is being offered:



Cepheid re-engaged this person in treatment and cured them of their virus quicker and reduced the risk of onward transmission to others.



Prosperous Place

Our Stretch Outcomes

What we are working towards	How we are doing	
<p>SO13 Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate</p>	<p>PROGRESSING</p>	<p>46.3% reduction in carbon emissions from baseline.</p>
<p>SO14 38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as main mode of travel by 2026.</p>	<p>PROGRESSING</p>	<p>34% of people walking, a 6% increase from 2017. 4% of people cycling, a 1.6% increase from 2017.</p>
<p>SO15 Addressing the nature crisis by protecting/ managing 26% of Aberdeen's area for nature by 2026</p>	<p>PROGRESSING</p>	<p>17% of land is protected for nature and this has remained static.</p>

Are our changes resulting in improvement?

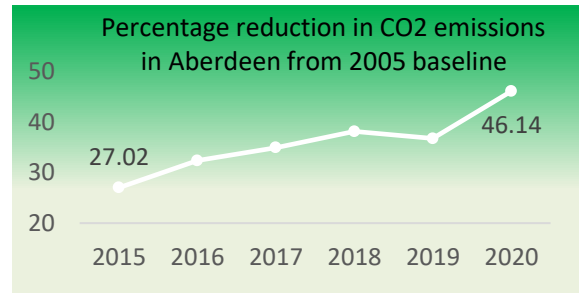


Stretch Outcome 13 progressing with 46.3% reduction in carbon emissions and initiatives to reduce carbon emissions

**STRETCH OUTCOME 13
PROGRESSING WITH
46.3% reduction in
carbon emissions.**



Latest data available at the end of 2022 shows that we have continued to reduce our carbon emissions with a further 7.7% reduction since the last reporting period with 1,010.6 ktCO₂e down from 1,166.9 ktCO₂e in 2019 and a 46.3% reduction since our baseline of 2005.



It is heartening to see the positive outcomes through national and system based efforts, as well as through our collective improvement aims. Our improvement activity through Community Planning has multiple positive benefits on health and environment including active travel, nature for health, and food growing. It is all part of the movement we are trying to cultivate and there are successes from improvements in infrastructure, technology and changes to our lifestyles and behaviour all of which contribute to the Aberdeen Climate and Nature Pledge that has been developed and launched this year. The Pledge was launched, in conjunction with the Net Zero Aberdeen Route map and Aberdeen Adapts Framework, to accelerate action towards net zero, climate resilient and nature-positive city.

net zero Aberdeen | **Aberdeen Adapts**

Towards securing a just future of net zero emissions and climate resilience for Aberdeen.

Find out more, join the movement, make a pledge to act.

Through our Green Champions, staff volunteers that help identify areas of improvement and drive change within our partner organisations to encourage sustainability, we have seen 8 green initiatives tested over 2022/23 with 204.944kgCO₂e carbon emissions saved since the project started in June 2021. Initiatives have included:

GREEN CHAMPIONS

Summary of activities 2022-23

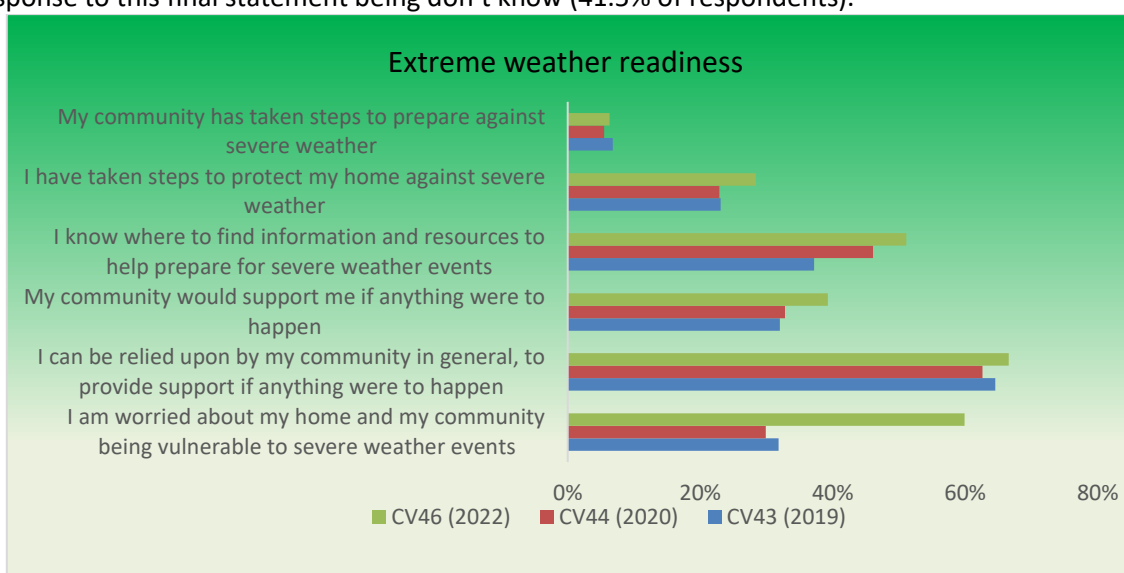
8 INITIATIVES

- Food Waste Collection
- Clothes collections for Ukraine- 145.5kg collected
- Step Challenge
- Love to Ride/Cycling Challenging- 620 miles cycled
- Workplace Growing- Spring-harvest visit to nurseries
- Repair What you wear series.
- Pass it on Museums & Galleries crates upcycled for community projects
- E-Learn Competition

Building community resilience

We know that when emergencies happen that there are many people keen to help their community but are not sure how. During winter 2021/22 when we experienced storms Arwen, Malik, and Corrie we saw the importance and impact that the Peterculter, and Cults and Milltimber, Community Resilience Groups formed by the areas' Community Councils had on supporting the community to respond to these storms. Resilience groups keep people informed, have a role for all, they bring residents in a community together, helps communities feel safe and prepared for emergencies, and people become more community spirited.

Data from our City Voice in 2022, showed that over half (59.9%) of respondents agreed (either strongly agree or agree) that they were worried about their home and community being vulnerable to severe weather events, double the response in 2020 (30%). While 66.6% of respondents agreed that they could be relied upon to by their neighbours or community to provide support if anything were to happen, only 39.3% agreed that their community would support them if anything were to happen. Just over half (51.1%) of respondents said they would know where to find information and resources to help prepare for severe weather events. Over a quarter (28.4%) of respondents reported they had taken steps to protect their home against severe weather and only 6.3% thought that their community had taken steps to prepare against severe weather with the most common response to this final statement being don't know (41.5% of respondents).



Through our [community led resilience project](#) we are focused on building on this and supporting the establishment of Community Resilience Volunteer Groups in each of our communities, particularly those at risk of flooding, to ensure that our communities, where possible, are trained in what to do and how to best help the emergency services in these situations.

The project led by Aberdeen City Council and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service has helped organisations set up their own resilience group by providing help with training, grants, developing a resilience plan and insurance, which will help communities feel safe and prepared for emergencies. Resilience groups keep people informed, have a role for all, bring residents in a community together, helps communities feel safe and prepared for emergencies, and people become more community spirited. As a result, we currently have 3 Community Resilience Groups, namely: Culter; Cults Milltimber and Bieldside and Bridge of Don & Danestone all of which have resilience plans in place.

“We are delighted with the privilege to partner with the council and other agencies located in north of the city to provide community support as part of the community resilience volunteer group and be there for people when they need us”.

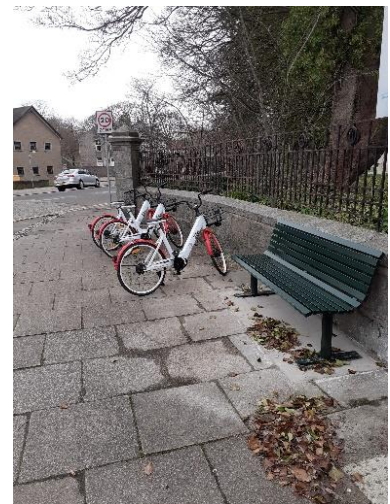
Spokesperson for The King's Church Aberdeen

As well as development of resilience plans, we have supported resilience with 47 community emergency resilience boxes issued in December/January 2023 to a variety of community locations. Battery generator packs are also being provided to the 3 existing Community Resilience Groups to assist the overall response to a power outage emergency.

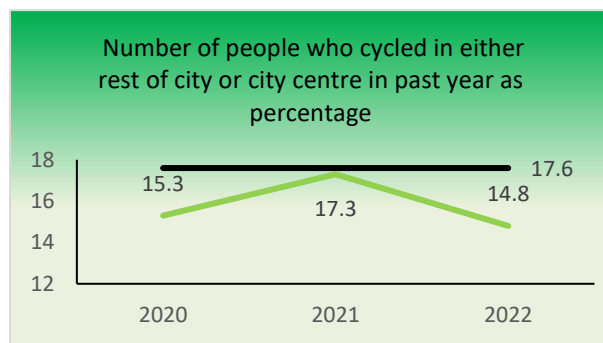
Promoting Walking and Cycling

Small changes to the way we travel can play a big role in helping to reduce the impact of climate change, as well as health benefits individually and for our communities. We are working with our communities to promote and enable everyone to walk, wheel or cycle for recreation and transport and to therefore support our environmental and health outcomes.

Data from City Voice in 2022 shows that walking has increased as the mode of travel most commonly reported as easy or very easy and is the most common choice for travel within the City Centre, with 76.8% compared to 63.2% in 2021. Similarly, there has been an 11.3% increase in respondents who walked as one mode of travel in the past year, 89.1% up from 77.8% in 2021. Throughout 2022/23 our [walking project](#) has been working on a project that came about as an improvement idea from the Central community to make walking more accessible and encourage more people to walk to appointments at the Foresterhill Campus, having highlighted that it was not accessible for all to walk the full distance in one go. This has involved a variety of partners to get a series of park benches installed on Hutcheon Road and Westburn Road to the Foresterhill Campus to test if having places to stop and rest on their journey encouraged more people to walk. Nine locations were identified along the route and working with the landowners by March 2023, eight of the nine benches were installed. Pedestrian counts pre and post bench have been scheduled and we will report the impact in the next reporting period.




Whilst, walking is increasing, City Voice shows that the percentage of people using a standard pedal bike was lower in 2022 than in 2021, with 14.8% of respondents cycling as one mode of travel in the past year – down from 17.3% in 2021. This may be a levelling out linked to the pandemic and the large increase in people walking and cycling that was seen during the Covid-19 restrictions.



We continue to recognise the importance of road safety and of children and adults having access to training to build their confidence to cycle. Through our [cycling project](#) we are encouraging people to undertake adult cycling courses, but also to increase capacity of courses encouraging people to be cycling trainers. This year seven people have become certified to conduct risk assessments, plan, develop and deliver cycling sessions based on the National

Standard for cycling to anyone that wants to cycle. We also recognise that not everyone has access to a bike comes at a cost and not all can make this financial commitment, particularly with the cost-of-living crisis. In response to this and to support our reduction of waste project, a new bike recycling initiative will commence from June 2023 which will see bikes recycled, repaired, and reused and will provide discounted and affordable bikes, as well as a referral scheme for those who otherwise may not be able to own their own bike. As well as making bike ownership accessible, it helps the circular economy, reducing the needless waste of unwanted bikes going to landfill.

Communities developing green spaces and food growing



Improvement Project Aims Exceeded

122% increase (23 to 51) in the number of community run green spaces and **1733%** (3 to 55) increase in food growing projects.

Our community run green space and food growing projects have continued to thrive and achieve positive outcomes with 55 food growing projects in schools, communities, and workplaces as at March 2023, an increase of 52 since February 2022. This was made up of 19 in North, 14 in South & 22 in Central Localities. Similarly, there were 28 new community run green spaces established in 2022/23, a 122% increase (23 to 51) since March 2022 and a 920% since the project started in February 2021. Volunteers from communities across the city have enabled these outcomes to be achieved and we are delighted to report that 4792 volunteers are helping manage green space across the city, a 16% increase since 2021/22 (4125 people). 68% of respondents to the City Vice reported being satisfied with the overall quality of green / open spaces in the City – up from 64.5% in 2021.

Collaboration is at the heart our approach to climate change Nature preservation

Scotland’s nature is in decline. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are embedded throughout the LOIP and help create a common understanding and goal across all our stretch outcomes of the impact and role we all play in creating a sustainable environment. Climate change alongside habitat loss and pollution is threatening our diverse wildlife and environment and we are committed to working together to manage at least 10% of our land for nature. In November 2022, we launched the Aberdeen Climate and Nature Pledge. The Aberdeen Climate and Nature Pledge is open to businesses, organisations and members of the public to pledge their support and actions towards our city-wide goals of reducing emissions and adapting to the effects of climate change and recovering nature across our city. Between November 2022 and March 2023, 70 organisations and individual/household pledges were made, of which 20 organisations have given their pledge to manage at least 10% of their land for nature.

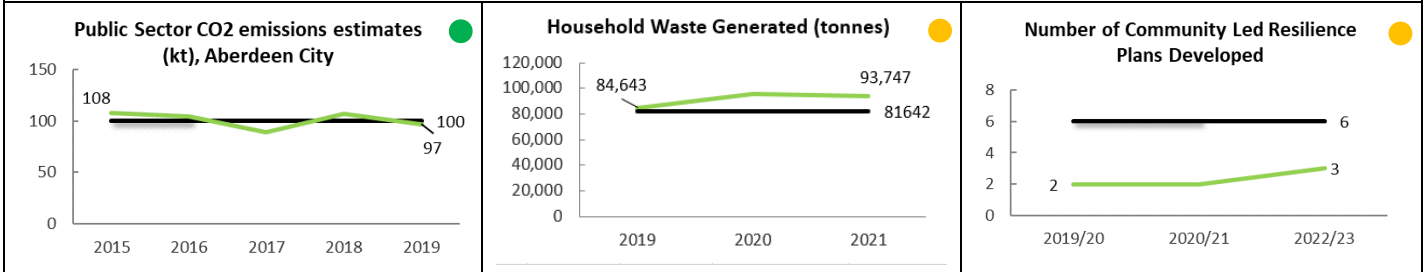


What impact have we had?

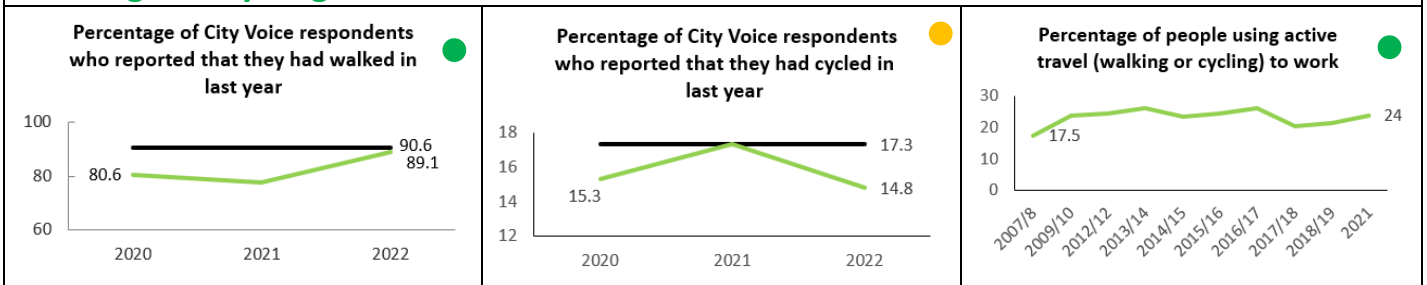
— 22/23 improvement aim — Performance

- Yes
- Getting there
- Not yet

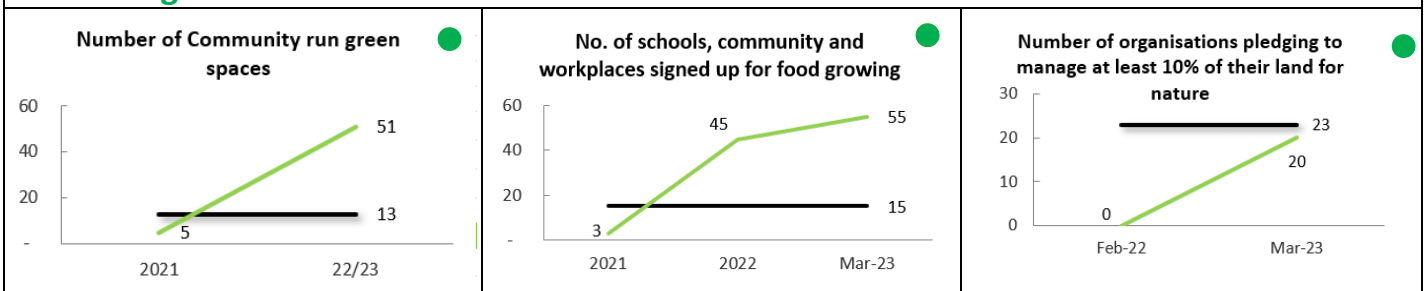
Climate Change



Walking and Cycling



Protecting Nature



Improvement priorities 2023/24

- Support communities to develop community resilience plans, with plans in place for all communities at risk of flooding.
- Develop and implement innovative improvements to reduce waste.
- Explore the development of community reuse hubs.
- Launch the bike recycling project increasing access to bikes for all to support both an increase in people cycling and reducing waste.
- Pilot social prescribing for nature.
- Continue to promote and increase number of organisations pledging to manage at least 10% of their land for nature.



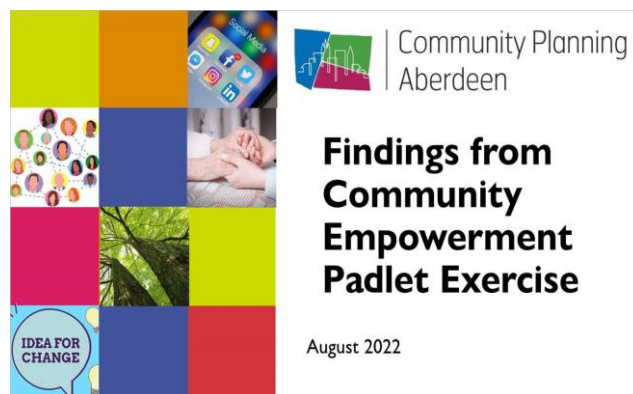
Community Empowerment

Our Stretch Outcome

What we are working towards	How we are doing
<p>SO16 100% increase in the proportion of citizens who feel able to participate in decisions that help change things for the better by 2026</p>	<p>PROGRESSING 24% of City Voice respondents scored 5 and above (out of 1-7) feel able to participate in decisions that help change things for the better.</p>

New Community Empowerment Strategy published

In 2022 we sought the views of the public, our partners and stakeholders on what success in community empowerment looks like for them through a padlet exercise, an online whiteboard to support the development the development of the new Community Empowerment Strategy. The [Padlet Findings](#) were explored through workshops at the Community Empowerment Network meeting held on 28 July 2022 which was open to all. The feedback from the engagement helped define the overall aim of the strategy and the themes for improvement.



Then, in November 2022, Community Planning Aberdeen approved a new Community Empowerment Strategy to complement and support the Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP), recognising that we need an active and inclusive citizenship where all people have a voice and ability to influence what happens to them and their community. The ambition of the Community Empowerment Strategy is for all communities across Aberdeen to be equal community planning partners in realising the LOIP's vision.



At the beginning of the year, following publication of the Strategy, the Community Empowerment Group started making visits to community groups as part of the Community Empowerment Network Road Show. This will continue throughout the year as part of ongoing efforts to work more closely with communities.

New Stretch Outcome 16

The strategy defines what improvement in community empowerment will look like by 2026 by introducing a new 16th Stretch Outcome which aims to achieve a:

“100% increase in the proportion of citizens who feel able to participate in decisions that help change things for the better by 2026.”

Underpinning Stretch Outcome 16 are [seven improvement project aims](#). These are the projects that the Community Empowerment Group has prioritised to achieve the overall stretch outcome each of these commenced in April 2023. They include:

 <p>City Voice Representativeness and response rate of the City Voice</p>	 <p>Child Rights Decisions which impact on children and young people are informed by them</p>	 <p>Testing Community Ideas Working with communities to design and test their ideas</p>
 <p>Community Involvement Number and diversity of community members participating in community planning</p>	 <p>Community Funding Community led organisations feeling supported to access funding</p>	 <p>Celebrating Communities Community led projects celebrated and promoted</p>
 <p>Capacity Building Staff and community capacity building to work together</p>		

Communities coming together

As part of the launch of the new Community Empowerment Strategy, the Community Empowerment Group held the first Community Gathering event on 13 May. The event provided an opportunity for people and community groups from across the City to come together to connect and find out about what is going on in their local community.

121 people attended (87 general admission, 28 exhibitors and 69 workshop participants), not including people who dropped in on the day. The main event was an exhibition of community information with 25 community exhibitors. People gathered to wander around the stalls and learn about the different opportunities to get involved in their local community.



Community Planning Aberdeen

COMMUNITY Gathering

Free Admission Saturday 13 May 10-1.30pm | Cowdray Hall (via Aberdeen Art Gallery)

Drop in and join the fun

COME AND JOIN US
Find out what's going on in your community, connect with community groups, find out how to volunteer.

Sign up → to participate in workshops on the day.

Tea, coffee, food, stalls, raffles, activities for children.

NIHR Health Departments Research Collaborations Aberdeen | acvo | grec

Attendees were also invited to book onto the three workshops on the following areas throughout the morning:

1. What does good community engagement look like and what support and resources do we need to be more active in our communities?
2. How can we improve the health of our communities? Come and find out more about the role of a citizen researcher?
3. Child friendly participation activities for children and young people aged under five and aged 5-12



Read a summary of the workshop findings in the full [Community Gathering Event Playback Report](#)

Communities taking action

Our three Locality Empowerment Groups (LEGs) are made up of local people interested in improving the quality of life for people living in their community. Members use their own knowledge and experiences to influence priorities, help determine solutions and drive the development and delivery of the North, South and Central Locality Plans. As well as the LEGs we have three Priority Neighbourhood Partnerships (PNPs) which focus on some areas of the City which experience the greatest disadvantage. These partnerships were set up in 2017 before we had LEGs and continue to meet to discuss local community issues. The LEGs and PNPs work together to take shared priority issues forward. See table 1 below for our localities, neighbourhoods, and priority neighbourhoods.

To support our LEGs/PNPs, a new integrated Locality Planning Team was created in February 2023. Since February 2023, the team have undertaken a rationalisation exercise of the community ideas captured within the North, South and Central Locality Plans; prepared easy read versions of the three Locality Plans; and developed annual reports. They will be used to re-new community interest in Locality Planning and getting involved through their local community group or by joining a Locality Empowerment Group or Priority Neighbourhood Partnerships. The Locality Empowerment Groups relaunched in April/ May 23, whilst the Priority Neighbourhood Partnerships have continued to meet since 2017.

Table 1. Localities, neighbourhoods and priority neighbourhoods

Localities	North	South	Central
Neighbourhoods	1. Dyce	1. Culter	1. Tillydrone
	2. Danestone	2. Cults, Bieldside, Milltimber & Countesswells	2. Old Aberdeen
	3. Oldmachar	3. Hazlehead	3. Seaton
	4. Denmore	4. Braeside, Mannofield, Broomhill & Seafield	4. Woodside
	5. Balgownie & Donmouth	5. Garthdee	5. Hilton
	6. Bucksburn	6. Ferryhill	6. Stockethill
	7. Heathryfold	7. Kincorth, Leggart & Nigg	7. Ashgrove
	8. Middlefield	8. Torry	8. George Street
	9. Kingswells	9. Cove	9. Froghall, Powis & Sunnybank
	10. Northfield		10. Midstocket
	11. Cummings Park		11. Rosemount
	12. Sheddocksley		12. City Centre
	13. Mastrick		13. Hanover
	14. Summerhill		14. West End

Priority neighbourhoods (Based SIMD analysis)	7.Heathryfold 8.Middlefield 10.Northfield 11.Cummings Park 13.Mastrick	7.Kincorth 8.Torry	1.Tillydrone 3.Seaton 4.Woodside 6.Stockethill 7.Ashgrove 8.George Street
Locality Empowerment Group	North LEG	South LEG	Central LEG
Priority Neighbourhood Partnership	<u>Wider Northfield</u>	<u>Torry</u>	<u>Seaton, Woodside & Tillydrone</u>
Locality Plans	<u>North Locality Plan</u>	<u>South Locality Plan</u>	<u>Central Locality Plan</u>

Through our LEGs/PNPs members are supporting our LOIP projects develop, and test improvements identified by their community. They provide a community voice on the project team and help ensure the Community Planning Partnership is listening to community ideas. One example of this, is from our active walking project. In this project, the Central community had an improvement idea that installing benches on a key walking route between Hutcheon Road and Foresterhill Campus would make walking more accessible and encourage more people to walk to appointments at the Foresterhill Campus, having highlighted that it was not accessible for all to walk the full distance in one go. Working with the community connector the project identified locations for the with nine locations identified along the route and working with the landowners by March 2023, eight of the nine benches were installed. Pedestrian counts pre and post bench have been scheduled and we will report the impact in the next reporting period. Through the community promotion of the benches is now being developed.

Building the capacity of our communities to get involved

There are many ways people can get involved in the work of Community Planning Aberdeen to make things better for their local community and influence how public services are delivered in their area to meet their needs. We are committed to enabling all citizens to participate should they wish to. To support this, in partnership with SCDC, we have been offering free training sessions for community members and partnership staff on what good community engagement looks like using the national standards for community engagement. Partner staff and LOIP improvement project teams are being encouraged to attend this training to strengthen their engagement with community members. This is in addition to the development of the online tools and resources webpage for communities. 51 community members attended the engagement training.


Training on the improvement methodology to upskill all who want to be involved and build their confidence in being involved in multi-agency improvement projects has also been developed and initial testing completed with the community. By actively encouraging communities to be involved in our improvement projects we hope to avoid the need for communities to make a formal participation request. Over the last year we have had 0 participation requests.




Are you enthusiastic about improving your community?


We need you!

Involvement could include...

 Providing a voice on behalf of the people and communities across your neighbourhood

 Sharing your knowledge, skills and experience

 Getting involved in work to improve your community

 Supporting the development and delivery of Locality Plans



This is a QR code, scan using your phones camera and it will take you to the Community Planning Website where you can find out more!

 Community Planning
Aberdeen

Community Learning & Development

Community Learning and Development (CLD) empowers people of all ages to work individually or collectively to make positive changes in their lives, and in their communities. Whether someone wants to better their personal situation or make things better for their family or the wider community, it is about giving people the skills and confidence to be able to go after what they want and to succeed regardless of their background or current circumstances. Key improvements and outcomes across Youth Work, Community Development and Adult Learning are detailed below:

Youth Work

- Youth work activities engaged 2074 young people (aged 10-18 years) and 689 children (aged 5-9 years) in positive experiences developing new skills and abilities, with 1648 of those young people reporting improved mental health and wellbeing as a result of their engagement with youth work.
- The Saltire Awards in Aberdeen continue to recognise and enhance volunteering by young people in the city for 2,459 young people. These awards, which are for volunteers aged 12-25 and co-ordinated by ACVO, continue to contribute positively to employability skills.
- Children and young people in the majority of primary and secondary schools in the City continue to benefit from youth work support through Scottish Attainment Challenge Funding and over 100 young people identified as unlikely to secure a positive destination benefited from youth work programmes.
- Youth Participation and Empowerment is central to our work with young people. Alongside schools and community-based engagement programmes, the youth work team continue to provide support to 3 key groups who represent the views of young people across the city locally, regionally, and nationally, these being Aberdeen Youth Movement (AYM) (formerly Aberdeen City Youth Council), Northern Alliance – Youth Advisory Group and Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP).
- The new youth-voice group Aberdeen Youth Movement (AYM) was established in 2023. A new approach to youth participation, the AYM aims to provide a place for young people to express their views and use their voice in a less formal environment than was the case with Aberdeen City Youth Council. A key goal is to represent all groups of young people, capturing the hidden voices, and communicate their needs and wants both locally and nationally.
- During 2022/23, 1888 children and young people registered to take part in youth work activities and 644 activities. Children and young people are reporting that participation in youth work activities is having a positive impact on their emotional and mental wellbeing.
- During 2022/23, 31 children and young people gained a Dynamic Youth Award and 73 gained a Hi-5 award. The CLD youth work is supporting partners to deliver Dynamic Youth Awards.
- The youth diversionary hub in the Mastrick area of the city continues to provide young people with opportunities to meet up out-with school time and take part in sports and arts activities. Antisocial behaviour in the area continues to decline. It is now in its second year and its positive impact on reducing vandalism and promoting young people's wellbeing continues. As an offshoot of the Hub a group for primary 6 and 7's was set up in the local community centre.

Community Learning and Development Community Projects

Community groups have been funded to provide Community Learning and Development (CLD) in priority neighbourhoods, focusing on working with vulnerable and disadvantaged people and families affected by poverty, including those most impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis. The funded projects continue to contribute to the LOIP Stretch Outcome 1: No one will suffer due to poverty by 2026, by mitigating the causes of poverty and supporting vulnerable people, families, and groups in priority communities, and to the Community Learning and Development Plan 2021-24. The projects provide a range of activities and support, including access to free food and food pantries and support on fuel poverty, welfare reform, benefits, financial inclusion, employment, health and wellbeing, isolation, and social exclusion. As a result:

- Over the year 3,937 people participated and over 261 volunteers contributed 32,625 volunteer hours. 2,569 adults, 808 young people and 560 children were supported.
- 806 children and young people took part in CLD activities, 357 young people participated in diversionary activities, 236 took part in programmes that were explicitly about promoting good mental and physical health, and 423 reported that their confidence had increased.
- 849 adults took part in CLD activities, and 70 moved on to positive destinations (education, employment, training, volunteering). 309 people took part in programmes that were explicitly about promoting good mental and physical health, and 90 participated in employability activities.
- Support was given to 3,833 people affected by poverty, 193 ethnic minority households, 327 disabled people, 21 people with no recourse to public funds, 959 lone parents, 1585 families with children, 91 larger families (3+ children), 27 kinship carers, and 23 care experienced young people were supported.
- 14,811 people were provided with free food and 321 with fuel vouchers through the projects.

Adult Learning continues to support our communities

2314 adults have been engaged in adult learning activity and the city-wide family learning offer provided 250 activities to 481 adults (and their 389 children/young people), resulting in an improvement in knowledge, skills, confidence, access to additional support services and the removal of barriers to future learning and engagement.

Adult Learners are equipped to meet key challenges and transitions in their lives including digital inclusion, literacy, numeracy, ESOL and financial resilience. Many learners are supported to move on to further learning, volunteering, and employment opportunities. Key achievements include:

- 818 adults reported improved mental health and wellbeing outcomes because of their engagement.
- 54 adults completed nationally recognised awards through CLD activity (SCQF levelled and awards such as Adult Achievement Award)
- The Adult Learning Network (started in September 2021) continues to develop as means for partners to network, reduce duplication of adult learning opportunities and co-ordinate new provision. A range of partners including WEA, NESCOL, Aberdeen University, Skills Development Scotland, Aberdeen Science Centre, LEAD Scotland, GREC, SHMU, Police Scotland, ACC Adult Learning/Family Learning/Healthy Minds/Refugee/Libraries/Creative Learning teams have been involved over the last year.
- The English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) subgroup has been working well for the last year and has developed a streamlined ESOL service across all providers in Aberdeen. CLD Adult Learning team assessed the learning needs of over 600 Ukrainian learners since May '22 and delivering more than 40 ESOL classes at Beginner/Intermediate level, to Afghans, Ukrainians, and wider communities.

Supporting those in need through Community Development:

- 171 Community Groups supported, 1064 adults and young people reached and engaged with through one off promotional events/drop-ins/community events/engagements.
- Increased levels of community volunteering
- Ukrainian integration - Over 100 volunteers helped bring properties to standard to welcome refugees totalling upwards of 2000 volunteer hours.
- The Healthy Minds teamwork with adults in recovery of an enduring mental illnesses to access learning opportunities across the city by building confidence and skills – 74 participants in the last year with 96% reporting increased confidence and 92% improved knowledge and skills; 7 learners supported in the Blair Unit (Forensic unit at Cornhill Hospital) with literacy, numeracy, and digital skills.

Fairer Aberdeen Fund 2022-23

The Fairer Aberdeen Fund is allocated by Aberdeen City Council to tackle poverty and deprivation, contributing to the LOIP Stretch Outcome 1: No one will suffer due to poverty by 2026. The Fund is allocated by a deliberative participatory budgeting approach, with a Board made up of Elected Members, Community Planning Partners, and community representatives with lived experience. The Fund supports initiatives and services in priority areas, as well as vulnerable groups across the city. In 2022-23 £1.6m was made available to support this work. Over 45,000 people were involved or benefitted from the 36 funded initiatives within the programme and 739 volunteers contributed 114,280 hours of volunteering with a value of over £2m.

706 people took part in employability programmes and 251 people moved into work. 4,651 people received money and income maximisation advice, with 1230 of them receiving a total financial gain of £2,323,811 the equivalent of £1,890 per person. 444 parents and families with complex needs were supported, and 373 people accessed mental health counselling provision provided locally. A Community Support Fund was also available for community engagement and an Employment Support Fund addressed financial barriers for people getting back into work.

Fairer Aberdeen Fund Participatory Budgeting (PB)

The Fairer Aberdeen Board allocated £25,000 to undertake a PB event in the Garthdee area during October 2022. A steering group made up of partners and community representatives prioritised the funding for initiatives to improve the community, support social inclusion, and tackle isolation and loneliness.



10 applications were received from organisations working in the area, and funding was awarded to the 9 projects that were most popular in the public vote on the day. Activities focused on bringing people back together after the isolation of the pandemic, with youth groups, football and athletics for young people, outdoor initiatives including allotments, road safety, a forest garden, and community benches, and a Big Christmas Party to bring the whole community together.

What impact have we had?

22/23 improvement aim Performance

- Yes
- Getting there
- Not yet

Community Empowerment



Improvement priorities 2023/24

- Increase the rate and representativeness of the response to Aberdeen City Voice
- Developing Community Engagement Training for managers, project leads, frontline staff and communities
- Co-designing a digital community engagement toolkit to support staff and communities to work together to make improvements in the community
- Refresh of the Locality Plans and identification of community ideas for improvement that can be co-designed with communities and tested through our LOIP projects and CPA partners
- Award ceremony for community groups sponsored by Aberdeen Responsible Business
- Testing with children and young people different methods of engagement on decisions which impact them.
- Support for community led organisations to access funding for community led initiatives.

Ways to get involved

There are many ways people can get involved in the work of the Community Planning Aberdeen to make things better for our citizens and the wider community. Our ambition is for all communities across Aberdeen to be equal community planning partners and we are reaching out to all individuals, community groups and organisations to get involved in our work to make the City a place where all people can prosper, regardless of their background or circumstances.

Find out more about the different ways you can get involved by clicking on the links below.

[Find out more about Community Planning Aberdeen](#)

[Sign up for community updates](#)

[Join a Locality Empowerment Group](#)

[Join a Priority Neighbourhood Partnership](#)

[Become a member of our Citizen Panel](#)





[Find out about other ways of working with communities](#)

[Learn about our Community Empowerment Network](#)

Or simply get in touch by emailing communityplanning@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Who's Who

CPA Board and Management Group Provides strategic leadership and direction.




<p>Chair CPA Board</p>  <p>Councillor Allard, ACC</p>	<p>Vice-Chair of CPA Board</p>  <p>Graeme Mackie, Police Scotland</p>	<p>Partners involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Council • NHS Grampian • Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership • Police Scotland • Robert Gordon University • SFRS • University of Aberdeen • Skills Development Scotland • North East Scotland College • Nestrans • Active Aberdeen Partnership • Scottish Enterprise • Civic Forum • ACVO
<p>Chair Management Group</p>  <p>Gale Beattie, ACC</p>	<p>Vice-Chair of Management Group</p>  <p>David Howieson, Police Scotland</p>	

Outcome Improvement Groups

Anti-Poverty Group Preventing suffering due to poverty.

<p>Chair</p>  <p>Martin Murchie, ACC</p>	<p>Vice Chair</p>  <p>Lawrence Johnston, SCARF</p>	<p>Lead Contact</p>  <p>Susan Thoms, ACC</p>	<p>Partners involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Council • Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership • ACVO • CFine • Civic Forum • DWP • GREC • NHS Grampian • North East College Scotland • SCARF • University of Aberdeen
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Aberdeen Prospers Responsible for improving our economy.

Chair	Vice Chair	Lead Contact	Partners involved
 <p>Allison Carrington, SDS</p>	 <p>Duncan Abernethy, NESCOL</p>	 <p>Charlotte Saunders, ACC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Council • Skills Development Scotland • North East Scotland College • Nestrans • Robert Gordon University • Scottish Enterprise • Civic Forum • ACVO • DWP




Children's Services Board Ensuring children are the future.

Chair	Vice Chair	Lead Contact	Partners involved
 <p>Eleanor Sheppard ACC</p>	 <p>Tracy Davis, NHS Grampian</p>	 <p>James Simpson, ACC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Council • ACVO • Children's Hearings Scotland • NHS Grampian • Police Scotland • Scottish Children's Reporters Association • Scottish Fire and Rescue • ACHSCP • Active Aberdeen Partnership • Skills Development Scotland




Resilient, Included & Supported Group Helping people live independently.

Chair	Vice Chair	Lead Contact	Partners involved
 <p>Alison MacLeod, ACH&SCP</p>	 <p>Andy Hislop, SFRS</p>	 <p>Grace Milne ACHSCP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership • Aberdeen City Council • ACVO • NHS Grampian • Scottish Fire and Rescue Service • Police Scotland • Alcohol and Drugs Partnership • Active Aberdeen Partnership




Community Justice Group Improving outcomes for people involved in the justice system.

Chair	Vice Chair	Lead Contact	Partners involved
 <p>Claire Wilson, ACHSCP</p>	 <p>Darren Bruce, Police Scotland</p>	 <p>Chris Parker ACC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Council • Health and Social Care Partnership • Crown Office & Procurator Fiscal • NHS Grampian • Police Scotland • Scottish Courts and Tribunals • Scottish Fire and Rescue • Scottish Prison Service • Skills Development Scotland • ACVO • Alcohol and Drugs Partnership • Civic Forum • Active Aberdeen Partnership • Community Justice Scotland

Alcohol and Drugs Partnership Tackling issues arising from substance misuse.

Chair	Vice Chair	Lead Contact	Partners involved
 <p>Gale Beattie, ACC</p>	 <p>Dermot Craig</p>	 <p>Simon Rayner, ADP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police Scotland • Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership • Aberdeen City Council • NHS Grampian • ACVO • Scottish Fire and Rescue Service • Scottish Prison Service • Active Aberdeen Partnership • Alcohol and Drugs Partnership • Aberdeen in Recovery • Civic Forum • Aberdeen in Recovery






Sustainable City Group Creating a safe, attractive, welcoming environment.

Chair	Vice Chair	Lead Contact	Partners involved
 <p>Jillian Evans, Public Health, NHS Grampian</p>	 <p>David Dunne, ACC</p>	 <p>Jacqui Bell, NHS Grampian</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Council • Active Aberdeen Partnership • ACVO • Civic Forum • NHS Grampian • Police Scotland • Scottish Fire and Rescue Service • Sport Aberdeen • Nestrans • SEPA • Scottish Natural Heritage








Community Empowerment Group Ensuring community perspective.

<p>Chair</p>  <p>Michelle Cochlan, ACC</p>	<p>Vice Chair</p>  <p>Maggie Hepburn, ACVO</p>	<p>Vice Chair</p>  <p>Jonathan Smith, Civic Forum</p>	<p>Partners involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Council • ACVO • Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership • Civic Forum • Grampian Regional Equality Council (GREC) • Police Scotland • Scottish Fire & Rescue Service • NHS Grampian • University of Aberdeen
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Community Planning Team Provides strategic support to Partnership colleagues.

 <p>Michelle Cochlan, Community Planning Manager, ACC</p>	 <p>Allison Swanson, Improvement Programme Manager, ACC</p>	 <p>Charlotte Saunders, Improvement Programme Officer, ACC</p>
 <p>Anne McAteer, Research Officer, ACC</p>	 <p>Martin Wyllie, Transformation and Improvement Advisor, ACC</p>	

Integrated Locality Planning Team Responsible for delivering our three Locality Plans.

<p>City Wide</p>  <p>Iain Robertson, Transformation Programme Manager, ACHSCP</p>	<p>South</p> <p>Vacant, Public Health Coordinator, ACHSCP</p>	<p>Central</p>  <p>Chris Smillie, Public Health Coordinator, ACHSCP</p>	<p>North</p>  <p>Katie Cunningham, Public Health Coordinator, ACHSCP</p>
<p>City Wide</p>  <p>Jade Leyden, Community Development Manager, ACC</p>	<p>Torry</p>  <p>Teresa Dufficy, Community Development Officer, ACC</p>	<p>Tillydrone, Seaton, Woodside</p>  <p>Graham Donald, Community Development Officer, ACC</p>	<p>Northfield, Mastrick, Middlefield Heathryfold, Cummings Park</p>  <p>Kev Donald, Community Development Officer, ACC</p>

Further Information:

If you have any questions about this report or Community Planning Aberdeen please contact:
CommunityPlanning@aberdeencity.gov.uk

To find out more about community planning please visit:
www.communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Full Council
DATE	11 October 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Community Planning Aberdeen Locality Annual Outcome Improvement Reports 2022/23 for North, South and Central Localities.
REPORT NUMBER	CUS/23/313
DIRECTOR	Gale Beattie, Commissioning (Chair of Community Planning Aberdeen Management Group)
CHIEF OFFICER	Jacqui McKenzie, Early Intervention and Community Empowerment
REPORT AUTHOR	Jade Leyden, Community Development Manager, ACC Iain Robertson, Transformation Programme Manager, ACHSCP
TERMS OF REFERENCE	24.11

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report presents the Annual Reports 2022/23 against the North, South and Central Locality Plans published in July 2021. The plans underpin the Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan, as well as individual partner plans, to cement a joint and coordinated approach between public services and local communities to improve outcomes city wide and at a locality level.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Council :-

- 2.1 Approve the Locality Plan Annual Outcome Improvement Reports for North, South and Central as a representation of the Council's contribution to partnership working in delivery of the Locality Plans published in July 2021.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 Since 2021, Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership has been working together to facilitate and deliver an integrated locality planning model on behalf of Community Planning Aberdeen. The approach ensures that Community Planning partners are meeting their locality planning duties in respect of both the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 and the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. At the same time, this joint working enables more efficient and effective working between partner staff and communities to secure better outcomes for the economy, people and place of Aberdeen. Integrated locality planning is an innovative approach in Scotland.

- 3.2 In July 2021, Community Planning Aberdeen published Locality Plans for the North, South and Central [Localities of the City](#). This approach sees every neighbourhood in Aberdeen covered by a Locality Plan. The plans incorporate improvement activity for the whole locality and/or targeted at specific neighbourhoods – in most cases priority neighbourhoods. Priority neighbourhoods are those areas within the North, South and Central localities which experience poorer outcomes as a result of their socio-economic status, as identified by Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data. These include: for the North, Heathryfold, Middlefield, Northfield, Cummings Park and Mastrick; for the South, Torry and Kincorth; and for Central, Tillydrone, Seaton, Woodside, Ashgrove, Stockethill and George Street.
- 3.3 The three Locality Plan Annual Reports 2022-23 contained at Appendices 1, 2 and 3 provide an overview of progress made in the last 12 months to address priority issues, some highlights from each plan are set out against the Economy, People, and Place themes below:

3.4 CENTRAL LOCALITY

3.4.1 Economy:

- We launched the online benefit calculator to help more people find out what benefits they are entitled to. This has been accessed 7274 times across the city during 2022-23, with 887 of those being from Central priority neighbourhoods.
- We supported 696 households with their fuel bills and made approximately 237 home visits to deliver insulation and energy efficiency measures. As a result, a total of £49,829.28 fuel bill savings were made in the Central Locality.

3.4.2 People:

- Of the 68 Health Improvement Fund (HIF) projects in 2022-23, 33 HIF projects were either from bidders based in the Central Locality or aimed to support health improvement activities within Central Locality.
- 431 unpaid carers accessed the Quarriers Adult Carer Support Service in the Central Locality which was an increase of 38.1% on the 312 unpaid carers who accessed the service during 2021-22.
- The rate of drug related hospital stays for the Central Locality was 249.6 people per 100,000 of the population, this was a slight increase on the data for 2021, where the rate stood at 244.3 admissions. The Central Locality was the only locality in Aberdeen City where drug related hospital stays increased between 2021-22. The Central Locality continues to have the highest rate of drug related hospital stays across Aberdeen City.

3.4.3 Place:

- 16 new community green spaces were established in Central Locality by June 2022. 67.4% of Central Locality respondents to the City Voice survey reported being satisfied or fairly satisfied with the overall quality of green/open spaces, compared to 68% for the city as a whole.
- 91.6% of Central Locality residents walk regularly compared to 89.1% of citywide respondents. People in the Central Locality are most likely to walk regularly in Aberdeen City.

3.5 NORTH LOCALITY

3.5.1 Economy:

- Across the City, 2749 families were supported to access additional child age benefits, with 792 families in North Locality seeing an increase to their benefits.
- Within the North Locality there were 928 shopping visits at the mobile food pantry, with 106 people accessing the pantry at CFine at Poynebrook Road.
- 92.6% of school leavers from the North Locality achieved a positive destination in 2021-22, this is lower than the 96.2% of school leavers in 2020-21 and lower than the Aberdeen City average of 93.8%.

3.5.2 People:

- All schools in the North Locality offer counselling and 100% of schools have signed up to the Safer Schools App. The app launched in 2022 and is promoted widely in school newsletters and is accessible to all parents and carers. Initial feedback from parents and carers has been positive.
- Of the 2459 Aberdeen Saltire Award recipients between December 2021-March 2023, 1155 young people were from the North Locality. This is the highest number by locality area in Aberdeen City.

3.5.3 Place:

- Bridge of Don and Danestone were identified as areas most at risk of flooding in Aberdeen City. A pilot community resilience group in Bridge of Don was established which is made up of several local organisations, including Kings Church, Local Men's Shed, and the rotary club. The group are currently being supported to develop a community resilience plan.

3.6 SOUTH LOCALITY

3.6.1 Economy:

- According to the City Voice Survey carried out in 2022, 28.3% of people in the South Locality worried they would not be able to heat their home compared to 55.6% of people living in Torry and Kincorth.
- Insulation and energy efficiency measures has led to South Locality households making £32,725.77 in fuel bill savings last year.

3.6.2 People:

- 21 of the 36 Fairer Aberdeen Fund projects benefited the South Locality.
- Alcohol related mortality rates in South Locality have been improving since 2019, with a rate of 13.91 per 100,000 recorded in 2021, compared to 17.31 in 2018. South Locality now has the lowest alcohol related mortality rate across Aberdeen City.

3.6.3 Place:

- CLD's Family Learning Team has supported approximately 46 families in the South Locality to access outdoor learning opportunities as well as others who attended residential throughout the year.

3.7 WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES

3.7.1 Working with communities to deliver the Locality Plans is facilitated by our Locality Empowerment Groups (LEGs) and Priority Neighbourhood Partnerships (PNPs). LEGs restarted on 27 April 2023, having not met since February 2022. PNPs have continued to meet regularly since they were established in 2017. The groups are facilitated by the Locality Planning Team and agenda items are driven by community members. Meetings provide an opportunity for community members to influence and shape what happens in their neighbourhoods and wider locality. Work also goes on in between formal meetings to support collaboration between partner staff and community members on specific areas for improvement.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendation of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Production of the annual reports ensures compliance with the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 (“CEA”) which requires Community Planning Aberdeen to report progress against the Locality Plans annually for the period 1 April to 31 March.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendation of this report.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	No significant risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
Compliance	Must comply with the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 (“CEA”)	Production of the annual report ensures compliance	L	Yes
Operational	No significant risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
Financial	No significant risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A

Reputational	There is a risk that the Annual Reports do not accurately reflect progress made by the Partnership and communities in delivering outcomes which may have a negative impact on the public's perception of the Council and Partnership working.	Colleagues and communities across the Community Planning Partnership have contributed to the development of the annual report. It has been signed off by the Community Planning Partnership Board as an accurate reflection of progress made. An easy read version will be produced.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
Impact of Report	
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	The recommendation in the report has no direct impact on the Policy Statement.
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	The report provides an overview of what has been achieved over the last year to progress the Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26 and the ideas for improvement within the Locality Plans.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The report provides an overview of what has been achieved over the last year to progress the Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26 and the ideas for improvement within the Locality Plans.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	The report provides an overview of what has been achieved over the last year to progress the Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26 and the ideas for improvement within the Locality Plans.
Regional and City Strategies	The recommendation in the report has no direct impact on regional and city strategies.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Stage 1 Assessment has been completed.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	N/A

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 [Refreshed Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016- 26 and CPA Development Plan 2021-2022](#)
- 10.2 [Final Draft Integrated Locality Plans 2021-26 – North, South and Central](#)

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix 1, 2 and 3 - Locality Plan Annual Outcome Improvement Reports 2022-23 for North, South and Central

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Contact details:

Name	Jade Leyden	Iain Robertson
Title	Community Development Manager	Transformation Programme Manager (Communities), ACHSCP
Email Address	JLeyden@aberdeencity.gov.uk	iairobertson@aberdeencity.gov.uk

North Locality

Name	Kev Donald	Katie Cunningham
Title	Community Development Officer, ACC	Public Health Coordinator, ACHSCP
Email Address	KeDonald@aberdeencity.gov.uk	KCunningham@aberdeencity.gov.uk

South Locality

Name	Teresa Dufficy	Graham Donald
Title	Community Development Officer, ACC	Community Development Officer, ACC
Email Address	TeDufficy@aberdeencity.gov.uk	GrDonald@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Central Locality

Aberdeen City - North Locality

Annual Outcome Improvement Report 2022-23



North Locality Neighbourhoods:

Dyce, Danestone, Oldmachar, Denmore, Balgownie & Donmouth, Bucksburn, Heathryfold, Middlesfield, Kingswells, Northfield, Cummings Park, Sheddocksley, Mastrick, Summerhill



Community Planning
Aberdeen

WELCOME

Welcome to our second annual report against the North Locality Plan first published in 2021. The North Locality Plan sets out how Community Planning Aberdeen and its member organisations will work together and with communities to deliver improved outcomes for the 14 neighbourhoods in the locality and the locality as a whole. The Locality Plan was prepared by Community Planning Aberdeen staff and community members involved in the North Locality Empowerment Group and North Priority Neighbourhood Partnership. Click on the links to view a copy of the full North Locality Plan and Summary Locality Plan. Also see the end of this report to find out more about the organisations and community groups involved in preparing the plan.



This report provides an update on progress made against the priorities identified in the Plan, including information about key activities and the impact these have had in the Locality. The information within the report demonstrates success in many areas. However, we also recognise where we need to do better and have identified priorities for improvement next year.

Our focus is always on impact on outcomes for communities. Central to our approach is involving and empowering communities which we have made clear in our new Community Empowerment Strategy published in 2022. Behind the scenes, Community Planning Aberdeen has also made some changes to ensure member organisations are working better together to empower communities. Our new locality planning team has been in place since February 2023 and epitomises our renewed vigour for working together with local communities. This report provides an important baseline for how we are currently performing in the North Locality and a commitment to improving going forward.

This report is split into the following sections:

- [Our Economy](#) [page 3](#)
- [Our People](#) [page 7](#)
- [Our Place](#) [page 15](#)
- [Community Empowerment](#) [page 17](#)



OUR PRIORITIES

The North Locality Plan 2021-26 sets out two priorities to improve our local economy:

Priority 1. Reduce the number of people living in poverty

Priority 2. Increase digital access and skills across the locality

PROGRESS MADE DURING 2022/23



Supporting our most vulnerable families

Supporting communities with benefit uptake

Ensuring that household income is maximised through the uptake of unclaimed benefits is a key aspect to supporting households to come out of poverty and improve their financial security. There continues to be barriers which can mean people do not claim benefits they are entitled to such as; stigma of claiming, unaware of what they are entitled to, and onerous applications processes.

We have made progress with a number of initiatives to help remove these barriers. For example, we launched the online benefit calculator last year to help support more people to find out what benefits they are entitled to. This has been accessed 7274 times across the city during 2022/23, with 724 of those being from the North priority neighbourhoods. We have also taken action to identify households who should be entitled to Pension Credits and have contacted them directly by letter. Using this approach 410 households were identified from across the City which qualified for Pension Credits. Finally, a booklet for families was developed to increase awareness and uptake of child benefits such as Education Maintenance Allowance and School Clothing Grants. The booklet targeted families and provided guidance on how to claim. Across the City 2749 families benefited financially by accessing additional benefits with 792 families in the North Locality benefiting financially by accessing additional benefits.

Affordable heating

As the cost of living increases it is important that we work together to do everything we can to support every household in Aberdeen. We have been working with partner organisations to provide a range of public warm spaces that will provide an opportunity for people to come together, share and use resources. Every warm space is unique however all warm spaces offer a friendly welcome and comfortable environment to meet friends or socialise. There are 15 warm spaces across the North Locality but of course people are free to visit any warm space across the City. You can find your nearest warm space by visiting [here](#).

As well as providing warm spaces we have been increasing awareness of the support available to households at a variety of community events and have also trained frontline staff. As a result of the promotion of support available and increase in home visits to deliver insulation and energy efficiency measure, a total of £51,909.47 of fuel bill savings was made last year across the North Locality.

Staying Warm & Well Winter Roadshow

Thursday 8 December, 10am - 2pm
Central Library, Rosemount Viaduct, Aberdeen

Pop in for a free cuppa and chat to friendly staff who will share information and advice.

WARM SPACE
We are open and the heating's on

Community food provision and community pantries

Affordable Food Providers in the North

[CFine](#) operates a mobile food pantry on Tuesdays at:

- Middlefield Community Centre from 10-10.30am
- Sheddocksley Sports Centre from 12-12.30pm

[Mastrick Community Centre](#) runs one of several [Food Banks](#) available to people experiencing food insecurity across the North.

With food prices rising at the fastest rate in 40 years we have been working with CFine to increase access to affordable food across the locality, particularly for our most vulnerable communities and low-income families. Through our community food pantry project we have focused on increasing access to affordable food in our priority neighbourhoods which include Middlefield, Mastrick, Cummings Park and Heathryfold and Northfield in the North Locality. Recognising the challenges people can face attending one of our fixed food pantries, a mobile food pantry was launched in September 2021. CFine has 928 members of the North Locality shopping at the pantry at Poynerook Rd on a regular basis. The mobile food pantry also had 106 visits from residents of the North locality during 2022-23.



Create opportunities for fair work







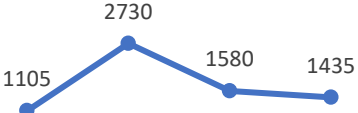
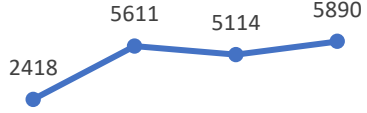

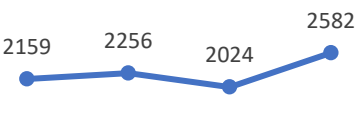


Social Enterprises and small businesses

Local community start-ups benefit everyone. Not only do they help get people back into employment, they can also create new jobs and bring new money into the community. We are delighted to have secured local community support for people wishing to start their own business. Through Business Gateway we now have a Community Business Advisor attending the Cummings Park Community Centre to provide a monthly drop-in service. Over the last 12 months the service has attracted an average of 2 attendees per drop-in which has resulted in 3 people starting their own business.



Local employability support and job opportunities

Partners Aberdeen City Council, Skills Development Scotland, the DWP and Business Gateway have delivered 'Your Route to Work' sessions aimed at young people living in priority neighbourhoods that are disengaged from school, school leavers, work returners and their wider families to find out information on how to get into employment, training, education or volunteering as well as provide money and benefit advice. This has been done through our ABZ works initiative. There were 30 attendees at the Northfield event. Exit surveys were completed with a small number of event attendees. Everyone who attended and provided feedback felt the event was useful or very useful and all would be likely to visit a future event.

Tackling Poverty		
<p>Food Insecurity</p>  <p>8.3% of people in the North Locality worried they would not have enough to eat compared to 29.4% of people living in Middlefield, Mastrick, Cummings Park, Heathryfold and Northfield (City Voice 46, 2022)</p>	<p>Food Poverty</p>  <p>6.3% of households in the North Locality ran out of food compared to 18.8% of households in Middlefield, Mastrick, Cummings Park, Heathryfold and Northfield (City Voice 46, 2022)</p>	<p>Affordable Food</p>  <p>1,034 families in the North Locality accessing affordable food at their local community pantry (mobile and located in Middlefield and Sheddocksley)</p>
<p>Fuel Insecurity</p>  <p>33.6% of people in the North Locality worried they would not be able to heat their home compared to 62.5% of people living in Middlefield, Mastrick, Cummings Park, Heathryfold and Northfield (City Voice 46, 2022)</p>	<p>Fuel Poverty</p>  <p>2.8 of households in the North Locality have had to seek support for paying for heating, compared to 12.5% of households in Middlefield, Mastrick, Cummings Park, Heathryfold and Northfield (City Voice 46, 2022)</p>	<p>Fuel Bill Savings</p>  <p>£51,909.47 fuel bill savings made across the North Locality through energy efficiency measures and support such as provision of 19 warm spaces</p>
<p>Claimant Count</p>  <p>Has decreased after a spike in 2021. 39% of claimants live in North Locality Priority Neighbourhoods</p>	<p>People on Universal Credit</p>  <p>Has increased in the North Locality since 2020. 43% of UC claimants live in Priority Neighbourhoods</p>	<p>Benefit Maximisation</p>  <p>The online benefit calculator has been accessed 724 times by people from North priority neighbourhoods</p>
<p>Children in low income families</p>  <p>Child poverty has increased in the North Locality since 2019. 51% of children in low income families live in Priority Neighbourhoods</p>	<p>Business Start Ups</p>  <p>3 people in the North Locality supported to start their own business.</p>	<p>Digital Access and Skills</p>  <p>82.6% of City Voice respondents in the North Locality reported they had at least basic digital skills.</p>

- Support families with English as a second language to access services
- Increase the number of vulnerable learners entering positive and sustained work or training.
- Increase uptake of warm spaces
- Support and develop employment opportunities for young people.
- Strengthen relationships with local businesses.
- Develop locally available employability support
- Make childcare affordable and accessible to increase parental employment.
- Buy debt

OUR PRIORITIES

North Locality Plan 2021-26 sets out three priorities to improve outcomes for our people

Priority 3. Improve the physical health and wellbeing of people

Priority 4. Support local volunteering opportunities

Priority 5. Early intervention approach targeted at those who are involved in, or at risk in offending behaviour

WHAT PROGRESS HAVE WE MADE DURING 2022/23?



Providing support to existing services

Volunteering in the Community



We have continued to build our volunteering community across the City that was so crucial during the covid pandemic. Between December 2021 and March 2023, we saw a 17.4% increase in volunteer opportunities being advertised across the City on the volunteer hub run by ACVO. Volunteering across the Locality is invaluable in supporting stretched public services. For example, through the Fairer Aberdeen Fund 739 volunteers contributed 114,280 hours of volunteering with a value of over £2m. Over 45,000 people were involved or benefitted from the 36 funded initiatives within the programme and 27 of the Fairer Aberdeen Fund projects benefitted the North Locality. Another project to support volunteering is Station House Media Unit's (SHMU) community project

to support prisoners in HMP Grampian, offering them post-release support and engaging them in opportunities at SHMU upon release - including employability, volunteering, and meaningful activity.

Supporting Unpaid Carers

In January 2023, Aberdeen City Health and Social Partnership published the new Carers Strategy which acknowledged the huge contribution that Carers make and seeks to support all unpaid Carers in Aberdeen City.

During the development of the new strategy there were several key inputs including: the National Carers Inquiry, publication of the National Carers Strategy from Scottish Government, the dedicated work and support of the Carers Strategy Implementation Group and most importantly the wider consultation and engagement of Carers across the City.

The new Carers Strategy identifies four key priorities to support Carers:

- Identifying as a Carer and the first steps to support
- Accessing advice and support
- Supporting future planning, decision making, and wider Carer involvement
- Community support and advice for Carers

In 2022-23, 359 carers accessed the Quarriers Adult Carer Support Service in the North Locality, an increase of 79.5% on the 200 carers who accessed the service in 2021-22.

Since the Respite Bureau started in June 2022, 320 people have been referred for a short break as of March 2023. Three further tests promoting different types of carer breaks were also tested this year, Doorstep Breaks, Scot Spirit and Time to Live. Data from these tests will be evaluated and shared for future learning. More information on the Carers Strategy and how carers can access services and support can be found [here](#)



Creating opportunities to upskill knowledge and understanding

The Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership Wellbeing Team deliver a number of initiatives under the **Stay Well Stay Connected** programme, which targets older people and those with disabilities who are at risk of becoming socially isolated or having poor health and wellbeing outcomes. A few of the sessions they deliver in the North Locality are set out below:

The Granite City Gathering 2023 was a public health event held on 24 June 2023 at Kings Church, Bridge of Don. The gathering helped people explore how to support themselves and retire positively. The aim and purpose of the gathering was to help people to understand and explore what a good retirement could look like in their own communities and have a real sense of purpose and opportunity to contribute.



167 attendees
Targeted at those aged 45+
Aberdeen City Residents
1 Choir
6 crafting and art groups
1 Yoga group
1 gigong and taichi
Ballroom dancing
22 community groups and charities
4 speakers
20 volunteers

Highlights

- The gathering focused on people who are planning to retire soon, or have already retired and live in Aberdeen
- The event had a number of taster sessions where people could try new activities such as movement with gigong, Tai chi, Chair based yoga, sing in a choir, have a boogie at the gathering, try out crafting or an art session
- There was an opportunity for delegates to meet representatives of community groups and charities who told them about who they were, and what services they provide
- The speakers ranged from Horseback, UK; to Japanese wellbeing tips 'Ikigai'; to exploring what an Age Friendly Aberdeen could look like.



Supporting people to make healthy choices

Health and Wellbeing

Boogie in the Bar provides an opportunity for people at risk of social isolation to meet up at a local venue to have a blether and a dance. A monthly Boogie in the Bar is held at Sunnybank Football Club with an average of 40 people attending throughout the year. Work is underway to create a resource for future Boogies so that they share the same ethos. It is important that we learn from the successes of the Boogies so that future sessions are sustainable and meaningful for those who attend.



Roving Day Care Wee Blether is a partnership between Care Management, Quarriers and the Wellbeing Team and it aims to deliver an alternative to traditional day care. The group meet on Mondays at Middlefield Community Hub in the North Locality where people can come and enjoy a light lunch alongside some great company and conversations. The *conversation café* element of this can be moved to any location that can cater to a café based activity, for example the group have met at the Aberdeen Art Gallery. Currently, there are around six participants attending and plans are in place to create a further two Wee Blethers in the city.



Men's Hub at Middlefield Hub was launched in January 2023 to enable men to socialise over a hot cooked breakfast, which they cook themselves. After breakfast, the men can play different games or just chat. There is a monthly programme where attendees go on visits to venues such as Fettercairn Distillery or Pittodrie Stadium utilising Middlefield Hub's bus. So far, these sessions are regularly attended by 12 men.

The Health Improvement Fund supports initiatives that improve the health and wellbeing of people across Aberdeen. During 2022-23, 68 projects received funding, with initiatives ranging from community gardening and lunch clubs to birthing classes and Virtual Reality (VR) training. In a bid to streamline funding opportunities across the City, the Health Improvement Fund linked up with ACVO Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund and Aberdeen City COVID Recovery Fund to ensure an additional 14 applications could receive funding. Funded projects are evaluated to measure impact and achievement of the Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership (ACHSCP) priorities. Of the 68 HIF funded projects, 29 were either from bidders based in the North Locality or aimed to support health improvement activities within the North. The Health Improvement Fund received 122 applications, of which 51 were from, or would benefit the North Locality. Evaluation data has found the North Locality submitted the fewest applications for HIF funding across the three locality areas. A good example of how HIF funding was used in the North Locality was the funding allocated to **Friends of Westfield Park** to build a Sensory Garden in Westfield Park. This project has involved the whole community and the Bridge of Don & Districts Men Shed volunteers built wooden plant beds

"It has been fabulous how many people have helped and become involved. We have even had a local resident filling up our water carriers from his tap."

Friends of Westfield Park volunteer

which have been adopted by Braehead Primary, Scotstown Primary, Bridge of Don Academy, Aberdeen Family Learning and the Bridge of Don Community Council. Aberdeen Action for Disability are growing seeds to share with the project and some of members are also making signs for the beds. The Sensory Garden has been created so all members of the community can have the opportunity to learn about gardening and food growing.



Provide activities for children and young people

Community activities for young people

Through our youth community activity and reducing anti-social behaviour projects we are committed to developing a range of opportunities for children and young people to get involved in their local community and to support a reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour. Last year a youth work community-based activity project, co-designed with children and young people was launched in the Mastrick area. It was set up to cater for children who are too young to take part in the diversionary programme known as the Mastrick Hub. Attendance numbers so far show that the club is popular with the target audience. Nine children participated in the Mastrick Group at the start of 2023 with 42 attendances overall. At the request of the community centre, the group operates a ratio of four children to one member of staff. With a staff complement of three, the group will not exceed 12.

When asked what they liked about the group, attendees said they particularly enjoyed *“doing things with friends and getting to do cooking.”*

The **Northfield Community Centre Youth Group** was started by Community Centre volunteers this year and, owing to its popularity with young people, required additional staff and volunteers. The Project has been supported by the project team through the draft community led youth group model, which includes guidance on health and safety, safeguarding for children and young people, and how to run a youth group. The Northfield group is more informal than the other two youth groups in the city which have a programme of activities decided by the participants themselves. During 2019 there were three registered participants from Northfield taking part in ACC youth work community-based activities, however, by 2022, there were 43. Participants said it was a chance to hang out with friends, make new friends and take part in fun activities.

The Middlefield Youth Flat and Under 11s is an initiative to support young people especially those with low confidence, low literacy skills, and additional support needs which are not always picked up in the education system. The project provides positive adult support that meets their needs, challenging their view of the world, understanding the barriers they face and supporting them to overcome these challenges.

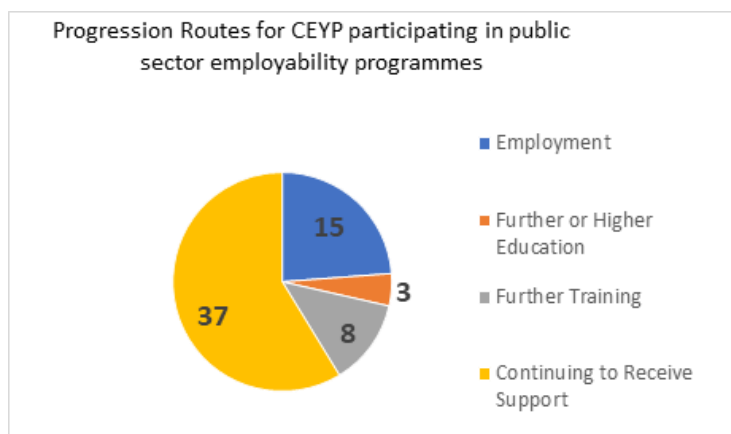
Young People's Mental Wellbeing

All schools in the North Locality offer counselling, and each school provides free physical activity to enhance the mental wellbeing of children, regardless of circumstances. The Safer Schools app was launched in 2022 with 100% of schools signed up in the North Locality. The app includes features to help parents and carers navigate challenges such as absence reporting and safeguarding concerns, as well as develop easier channels of communication. All local parents and carers can access the app, which has been promoted widely in school newsletters. Initial feedback from parents has been positive, and formal evaluation data will be available for future reporting periods. We recognise the role physical activity plays in supporting good mental health and through the Active Schools Programme, all North Locality schools provide free physical activity opportunities for pupils.



Positive Destinations for Care Experienced young people

Positive destinations mean that young people go on to attend further or higher education, a voluntary placement, begin an apprenticeship, or go into paid employment. In 2021-22, 92.6% of North Locality school leavers achieved an initial positive destination which was below the 2020-21 figure of 96.2% and the Aberdeen City average of 93.8%. Care experienced young people (CEYP) often face significant barriers to employment and need additional support and mentoring to help them achieve and sustain employment. We're committed to supporting CEYP to achieve the same outcomes as their peers and one aspect of this is achieving positive destinations, with the ultimate goal of moving CEYP into paid employment. The journey and support required for each care experienced young person varies and through our employability support for care experienced young people project, we're testing a variety of ways to support them, including a guaranteed interview scheme, tailored employability support programme, pathway planning and induction into work. A good example of youth volunteering are the Saltire Awards, which is the Scottish Government's way of celebrating, recognising and rewarding the commitment, contribution and achievements of volunteers aged between 12-25 in Scotland. Of the 2459 Saltire Award recipients between December 2021-March 2023 in Aberdeen City, 1155 young people were from the North Locality. This is the highest number by locality area across the City.



Supporting priority families via fit like hubs

[Fit like? Family Wellbeing Hubs](#) are a group of services working together to support children and young people's mental wellbeing. The Hubs help with:

- Finance and benefits
- Family relationships and communication
- Coping with daily pressures
- Promoting positive emotional and mental wellbeing
- Talking about traumatic things that have happened

The Fit Like Hub operates out of Manor Park School in the North Locality.

Training community groups on issues impacting children

The ACHSCP Public Health Team train practitioners to deliver the **PEEP programme**. PEEP recognises that parents and carers are children's first and most important educators.



The Peep Learning Together programme supports parents and carers to:

- Value and build on the home learning environment by making the most of everyday learning opportunities.
- build and strengthen attachment relationships with their child through listening, talking, playing, singing and sharing books together.
- help babies and children to make the most of their opportunities by becoming confident communicators and active learners, ready for school

There were 14 referrals to PEEP from the North Locality during 2022. Six people from the North Locality were also referred by Health Visitors to the Family Learning Service.



Supporting those affected by substance use

Raise awareness of substance service and provision

Latest Aberdeen City drug related death data shows an increase from 56 to 62 deaths in 2021. The Aberdeen City Alcohol and Drugs Partnership through its fatal drug overdose projects are focused on reducing drug related deaths through innovative developments and by increasing the distribution of naloxone. Naloxone is an emergency medication that can reverse the effects of an overdose of opioids like heroin or methadone and can save someone's life. Reviews from past drug related deaths have shown that many of those people who died were not in any drug treatment service but had come to the attention of many other services. By increasing the number of services who can distribute and administer Naloxone to those in need, we can get the lifesaving drug out to those people at risk of overdose, as well as to family members/friends of those in need. Over the past year, we have widened access to naloxone by increasing the number of non-drug and alcohol services able to supply and/or administer naloxone. We have seen increased supply of Naloxone in each locality, with 120 kits supplied in the North Locality. As well as Naloxone, increasing education and access to a variety of treatments, the Partnership are taking a targeted approach, focusing on interventions and supports required at the various touchpoints. We are seeing the impact of this approach. For example, through our improvements focused on people liberated from prison we have seen a 56% reduction in drug related deaths of people liberated within 6 months.

Reducing harms from alcohol use

Alcohol is one of five lifestyle behavioural risk factors which contribute to the majority of chronic and non communicable disease in our population. Throughout 2022/23 we've focused on increasing awareness of alcohol risks and widening access to alcohol interventions and support, including the development of a new alcohol audit screening tool. As a result of the interventions and targeted campaigns we've seen the number of active clients with Alcohol and Drugs Action (ADA) Duty Drop-in service in 2022/23 increase in each of the three priority neighbourhoods against the 3-year baseline. In the North Locality, data shows a 59% increase in clients from AB16 postcodes. Other interventions ADA have taken during 2022-23 include:




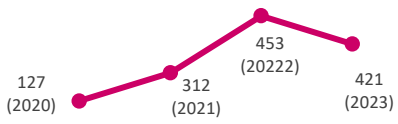





- The piloting of a new referral pathway from Police to ADA
- Widening the number of settings for Alcohol Brief Interventions, including HMP Grampian
- Targeted social media campaign and subsequent levels of engagement with the 'Alcohol Aberdeen' online 'quiz'






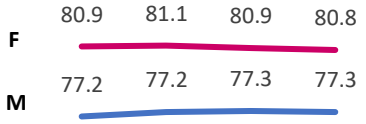
Suicide Prevention

Suicide is more prevalent in middle-aged white males from deprived areas. However, being male, white, middle-aged, and living in a deprived area are not precursors to suicide. Trauma or events that lead up to suicide are more likely to occur in that demographic and this group are less likely to seek help in those circumstances.

In an effort to fully understand what are the leading contributing factors in deaths by suicide in the North East, Police Scotland analysed all Death Reports since the start of 2021 and tracked all contributing factors that were highlighted in the reports including medical and family history, and events leading up to the person's death. These were not geography or locality specific. The circumstances behind suicides are constantly changing, research is ongoing to keep abreast of these changes and to adapt training, information and resources accordingly in Aberdeen City and across the wider North East. The rate of death from suicide in the North Locality of 12.6 per 100,00 is above the citywide average of 11.1 per 100,000 of the population. This is the highest amongst the city's three locality areas.

WHAT IMPACT HAVE WE HAD DURING 2022/23?

<p>Activities for Young People</p>  <p>43 young people from Northfield were involved in community based youth work activities in 2022, a 93% increase from 2019.</p>	<p>Positive destinations</p>  <p>92.6% of North Locality school leavers achieved an initial positive destination. The citywide average was 93.8%.</p>	<p>Young People Confidence</p>  <p>41% of S1-S6 pupils reporting feeling confident compared to 35% last year.</p>
<p>Young People Mental Health</p>  <p>No. of referrals each month to NHSG's children and adolescent mental health services increasing</p>	<p>Counselling for Young People</p>  <p>100% of schools in North Locality offer counselling and Active School activities</p>	<p>Working Together with Parents</p>  <p>14 referrals were made to the Parents as Early Education Partners (PEEP) programme from the North Locality in 2022</p>
<p>Young People Volunteering</p>  <p>1155 young people from the North Locality received a Saltire Award during 2022. The highest per locality in Aberdeen City.</p>	<p>Healthy Eating</p>  <p>11.9% of people in the North Locality said they were unable to eat healthy and nutritious food due to poverty, compared to 12.5% living in priority neighbourhoods. 19.8% of people living in the locality said they ate only a few types of food. (City Voice 46, 2022)</p>	<p>Unpaid Carers</p>  <p>359 unpaid carers were supported in the North Locality by Quarriers Adult Carer Support Service during 2022-23, this is an increase of 79.5% on 200 unpaid carers supported last year.</p>

<p>Alcohol Awareness</p>  <p>20.3% of people in the North Locality said they didn't know how many units are in the alcoholic drinks they consume. 48.4% of people living in the North said they didn't think about units at all. (City Voice 46, 2022)</p>	<p>Drug Related Deaths</p>  <p>120 naloxone kits were supplied in the North Locality in 2022.</p>	<p>Drug Related Hospital Stays</p>  <p>The rate of drug related hospital stays for the North Locality in 2022 was 175.2 per 100,000. This has improved from 193 per 100,000 of the population in 2021.</p>
<p>Alcohol Related Mortality Rates</p>  <p>Alcohol related mortality rates in North Locality in 2022 are 15.54 per 100,000. This has improved since 2018 when the rate was 16.86 per 100,000 of the population.</p>	<p>Deaths from Suicide</p>  <p>The rates of death from suicide in the North Locality is 12.6 per 100,000, this is above the citywide average of 11.1 per 100,000 of the population.</p>	<p>Life Expectancy</p>  <p>Has stayed stable in the North Locality since 2018 for males and females. But it is lower in priority neighbourhoods at 78.3 (F) and 75.4 (M)</p>

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT 2023/24

- Increase the number of people volunteering in the North Locality
- Increase the number of successful Health Improvement Fund applications from the North Locality to tackle health inequalities
- Increase the number of priority families and community groups we work with through programmes such as PEEP and Health Issues in the Community
- Renewed focus on increasing community capacity and capability building
- Scale up Stay Well Stay Connected programme

Our Place

OUR PRIORITIES

The North Locality Plan 2021-26 sets out one priority to improve our local place:

Priority 6. Maximise use of disused outdoor space to increase food growing Opportunities

WHAT PROGRESS HAVE WE MADE DURING 2022/23?

Supporting greenspace development

Friends of Westfield Park received funding from the Health Improvement Fund to build a Sensory Garden in Westfield Park. This project has involved the whole community. The Bridge of Don & Districts Men Shed built wooden plant beds which have been adopted by Braehead Primary, Scotstown Primary, Bridge of Don Academy, Aberdeen Family Learning and the Bridge of Don Community Council. Aberdeen Action for Disability are growing seeds to share with the project and some of members are also making signs for the beds. The Sensory Garden has been created so all members of the community can have the opportunity to learn about gardening and food growing.

"It has been fabulous how many people have helped and become involved. We have even had a local resident filling up our water carriers from his tap."



Encourage healthy outdoor activities




Promote and improve accessible, active travel

In 2023, Aberdeen City Council, in partnership with Big Issue eBikes launched an electric bike hire scheme. [Big Issue E-Bikes](#) are available in 40 locations across Aberdeen and aim to make shorter journeys easier and affordable. The scheme also hopes to have a positive impact on our environment.

The City Voice survey found that 11.8% of people in the North Locality regularly cycled compared to the citywide average of 14.8%. People in the North Locality are least likely to cycle regularly (vs people living in the South and Central Localities).



WHAT IMPACT HAVE WE HAD DURING 2022/23?

Satisfaction with Green Space	Community Growing Spaces	Cycling
 <p>66.5% of North Locality respondents to the City Voice survey reported being satisfied or fairly satisfied with the overall quality of green/open spaces, compared to 64.7% of people living in Middlefield, Mastrick, Cummings Park, Heathryfold and Northfield (City Voice 46, 2022)</p>	 <p>19 food growing projects happening across the North Locality</p>	 <p>11.8% of people in the North cycled in the last year compared to the citywide average of 14.8% (City Voice 46, 2022)</p>

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT 2023/24

- Increase community food growing in schools, communities and workplaces.
- Renewed focus on promoting active and accessible travel



Working Together

Community Empowerment Strategy

Community Planning Aberdeen is committed to working with communities to improve outcomes across each locality and indeed the City as a whole. In 2022 we launched a new Community Empowerment Strategy setting out our vision for all communities to be equal community planning partners. A number of improvement projects and now underway to strengthen community participation in community planning and ensure they have a voice and ability to influence what happens to them and their community.



This year, we have been pleased to see the return of in-person community-based events, including two citywide events, the Community Gathering and the Granite City Gathering.



These events provided a great chance to bring our community and partners together, make connections, and share learning and opportunities. Both events were open to people across the City and were an exhibition of community information and provided a chance for attendees to wander around the stalls and learn about the different opportunities to get involved in their local community. There were 25 stall holders on the day showcasing the work they do in local communities and approximately 121 people attended the gathering. Of the registered attendees, 24.3% were from the North Locality. You can read the Community Gathering report for more information [here](#).


In addition to our citywide events, the North Locality Empowerment Group (LEG) restarted on 31 May 2023, having not met since early 2022. Meetings are now held on a two monthly cycle and alternate between virtual meetings and in person meetings at a community venue. Meetings provide an opportunity for LEG members to influence and shape delivery of the North Locality Plan and hold Community Planning Partners to account. LEGs also provide the Locality Planning Team and Outcome Improvement project managers an opportunity to involve community members in their projects and gain valuable feedback. The Middlefield, Mastrick, Cummings Park, Heathryfold and Northfield Priority Neighbourhood Partnership has continued to meet throughout 2022-23.




Find out more & Get Involved!

The [North Locality Empowerment Group](#) and the [Cummings Park, Heathryfold, Northfield, Mastrick and Middlefield Priority Neighbourhood Partnership](#) are two of the main ways we connect with our local communities in the North Locality. As a member of a LEG and Torry Partnership you will be able to provide a voice on behalf of the people and communities across your neighbourhood.


What's in it for you?




Influence what happens in your community



Help make a brighter future for all



Connect with others



Participation can lead to credits for the Saltire Award (young people, age 12-25)

Following a recent training session provided by SCDC in partnership with ACC/AHSCP, the community had this to say about community engagement:

"Talk to us and talk to us early. Don't make decisions and then get it approved by us. Communities have knowledge and skills to know what's best for us. We're the local experts about our places"

"Community Engagement is where people grow"

If you are interested in getting involved in helping achieve these aims in your local community, follow this link to find out more: [Our Communities - Community Planning Aberdeen](#) or email localityplanning@aberdeencity.gov.uk.

Meet your Locality Planning Team

We understand the importance of working with communities to build a thriving environment for everyone. By engaging with local communities through our dedicated locality planning team, we aim to become more receptive, supportive and action-oriented. Community input is extremely valuable to this work.

The Locality Planning Team includes staff from Aberdeen City Council and the Aberdeen City Health and Social Care partnership working together to support improved outcome across all our localities and neighbourhoods. In the North Locality your locality planning contacts are Iain, Jade, Katie, and Kev.



Iain Robertson,
Transformation Programme
Manager, Aberdeen City Health and
Social Care Partnership



Jade Leyden,
Community Development Manager,
Aberdeen City Council



Kev Donald, Community
Development Officer, Aberdeen City
Council



Katie Cunningham,
Public Health Coordinator, ACHSCP

Please take a moment to complete this [survey](#) and let us know how we can enhance our service delivery and collaboration with you. Together we can make a positive impact and create a place where all people can prosper.

Aberdeen City - South Locality

Annual Outcome Improvement Report 2022-23



South Locality Neighbourhoods:

Culter; Cults, Bieldside, Milltimber & Countesswells; Hazlehead; Braeside, Mannofield, Broomhill, Seafield; Garthdee; Ferryhill; Torry; Cove; Kincorth, Leggart & Nigg



Community Planning
Aberdeen

WELCOME

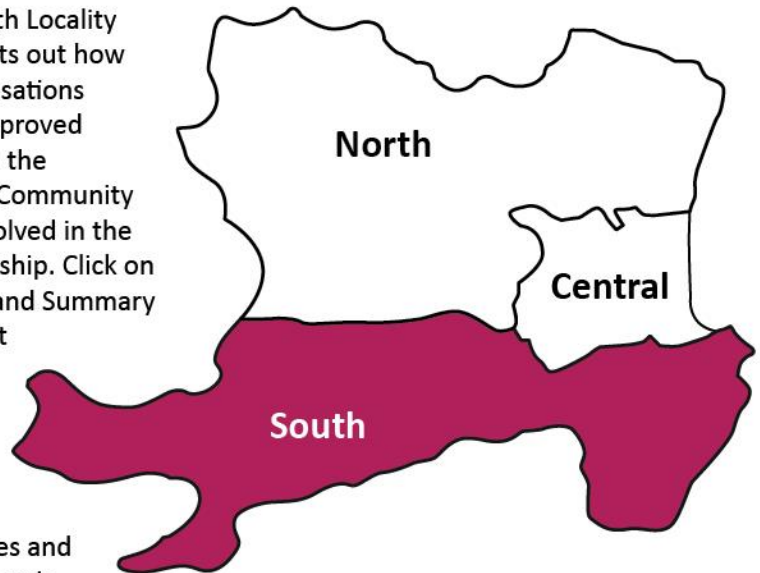
Welcome to our second annual report against the South Locality Plan first published in 2021. The South Locality Plan sets out how Community Planning Aberdeen and its member organisations will work together and with communities to deliver improved outcomes for the 9 neighbourhoods in the locality and the locality as a whole. The Locality Plan was prepared by Community Planning Aberdeen staff and community members involved in the South Locality Empowerment Group and Torry Partnership. Click on the links to view a copy of the full South Locality Plan and Summary Locality Plan. Also see the end of this report to find out more about the organisations and community groups involved in preparing the plan.

This report provides an update on progress made against the priorities that were identified in the South Locality Plan. It includes information about key activities and initiatives and also the impact that these have in the South Locality and in target neighbourhoods. The information and data within the report demonstrates success in many areas. However, we also recognise where we need to do better and have identified priorities for improvement next year.

Our focus is always on impact on outcomes for communities. Central to our approach is involving and empowering communities which we have made clear in our new Community Empowerment Strategy published in 2022. Behind the scenes, Community Planning Aberdeen has also made some changes to ensure member organisations are working better together to empower communities. Our new locality planning team has been in place since February 2023 and epitomises our renewed vigour for working together with local communities. This report provides an important baseline for how we are currently performing in the South Locality and a commitment to improving going forward.

This report is split into the following sections:

Our Economy	page 3
Our People	page 7
Our Place	page 15
Community Empowerment	page 18



OUR PRIORITIES

The South Locality Plan 2021-26 sets out three priorities to improve our local economy:

Priority 1. Reduce number of people living in poverty

Priority 2. Improve and create employment opportunities.

Priority 3. Identify and embed opportunities to mitigate digital exclusion

PROGRESS MADE DURING 2022/23



Supporting our most vulnerable families

Community food provision and community pantries

With food prices rising at the fastest rate in 40 years we have been working with CFine to increase access to affordable food across the locality, particularly for our most vulnerable communities and low-income families. Through our community food pantry project, we have focused on increasing access to affordable food in our priority neighbourhoods which includes Torry and Kincorth in the South Locality. Recognising the challenges people can face attending one of our fixed food pantries, a mobile food pantry was launched in September 2021. CFine has 284 members of the South Locality shopping at the pantry at Poynerook Rd on a regular basis. The mobile food pantry also had 350 visits from residents of the South locality during 2022-23.

Affordable Food Providers in the South

[CFine](#) operates a mobile food pantry on Wednesdays at:
-Kincorth Sports Centre from 10-10.30am
-Abbey Road, Torry from 11.30 to 12pm

[Touch of Love](#) is one of several [Food Banks](#) available to people experiencing food insecurity across the South.

Benefit uptake

Ensuring that household income is maximised through the uptake of unclaimed benefits is a key aspect to supporting households to come out of poverty and improve their financial security. There continues to be barriers which can mean people do not claim benefits they are entitled to, such as stigma of claiming, unaware of what they are entitled to, and onerous applications processes.

We have made progress with several initiatives to help remove these barriers. For example, we launched the online benefit calculator last year to help support more people to find out what benefits they are entitled to. This has been accessed 7274 times across the city during 2022/23, with 737 of those being from the Torry and Kincorth priority neighbourhoods. We have also taken action to identify households who should be entitled to Pension Credits and have contacted them directly by letter. Using this approach 410 households were identified from across the City who qualified for Pension Credits, this includes 28 people in the South Locality that have benefited from an uplift in their Pension Credits. Finally, a booklet for families was developed to increase awareness and uptake of child benefits such as, Education Maintenance Allowance and School Clothing Grants. The booklet targeted families and provided guidance on how to claim. Across the City 2749 families benefited financially by accessing additional benefits with 890 families in South Locality benefitting financially by accessing additional benefits.

Fuel poverty/ affordable heating

As the cost of living increases it is important that we work together to do everything we can to support every household in Aberdeen. We have been working together with partner organisations across Aberdeen to provide a range of public warm spaces that will provide an opportunity for people to come together, share and use resources. Every warm space is unique however all warm spaces offer a friendly welcome and comfortable environment to meet friends or socialise. There are 14 warm spaces across the South Locality but of course people are free to visit any warm space across the City. You can find your nearest warm space by visiting [here](#).

As well as providing warm spaces we have been increasing awareness of the support available to households during the at a variety of community events and training frontline staff. As a result of the promotion of support available and increase in home visits to deliver insulation and energy efficiency measure, a total of £32,725.77 fuel bill savings was made last year across the South Locality.



The poster is for a 'Staying Warm & Well Winter Roadshow' held on Thursday 8 December from 10am to 2pm at the Central Library, Rosemount Viaduct, Aberdeen. It encourages people to 'Pop in for a free cuppa and chat to friendly staff who will share information and advice.' The poster features several logos: Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeen City Libraries, Care & Repair, Communities, healthpoint, Home Energy Scotland, scarf (Scottish Action Resource Centre for Families), and Social Security Scotland. At the bottom, there is a 'WARM SPACE' logo with icons for Wi-Fi, a hand, a cup, and a book, and the text 'We are open and the heating's on'.



Supporting businesses and young people into employment

Social Enterprises and small businesses

Local community start-ups benefit everyone. Not only do they help get people back into employment, but they also create new jobs and bring new money into the community. We are delighted to have secured local community support for people wishing to start their own business. Through Business Gateway we now have a Community Business Advisor attending the Old Torry Community Centre to provide a monthly drop-in service. Over the last 12 months the service has attracted an average of 2 attendees per drop in which has resulted in 5 people starting their own business.

Local employability support and job opportunities

Supporting people into employment is a top priority for the locality. Over the year we have delivered a range of employability support events targeted at people who face barriers and challenges. For example, we have delivered sessions for people over 50, people with a disability and people living in our priority neighbourhood Torry.

Through our ABZ works initiative, partners Aberdeen City Council, Skills Development Scotland, DWP and Business Gateway have also delivered 'Your Route to Work' sessions aimed at young people living in priority neighbourhoods that are disengaged from school, school leavers, work returners and their wider families to find out information on how to get into employment, training, education or volunteering as well as provide money and benefit advice. There were 42 attendees at the Torry event. Exit surveys were completed with a small number of event attendees. Everyone who attended and provided feedback felt the event was useful or very useful and all would be likely to visit a future event.



Further support for people over 50, through dedicated 50+ work coaches; 50+ pilot in Torry; the launch of an employer recruitment incentive scheme, the outcomes of which to be reported in the next report and a pilot Older but Wiser employability support group. The pilot support group ran over an 8-week period and was well received with 7 participants consistently attending the 8 weeks. Travel vouchers were provided to support the participants attend several careers fairs which occurred over the 8-week period and one participant was able to secure a job at one of these events. As a result of the supports above, 10 people have gained employment.



The Torry Skills centre, ideally situated in the heart of the community on Victoria Road, has now been open a full year. Community partner Pathways has delivered 43 group sessions at the centre and over 350 one-to-one sessions to provide people with assistance to find the job they want. There have been 34 referrals since April 2022 to March 2023 from the Torry area alone and of these 31 clients have been assisted into sustainable employment. The Foyer has also delivered 85 one-to one sessions at the Torry Skills Centre over the same period and 12 group sessions.






Supporting digital access and skills




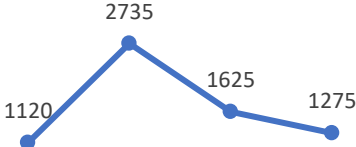
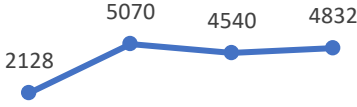




Digital Access

Through our digital improvement project, we have seen positive outcomes for both digital access and skills. This work included the promotion of existing access and new access to digital devices, such as library computers, council digital resources, and universities. In addition to this, Silver City Surfers continue to offer face to face tuition for over 55's in the City helping them to become more comfortable using digital tools, offering support to community members at the Central Library.

78.3% of City Voice respondents in the South Locality reported they had at least basic digital skills.

WHAT IMPACT HAVE WE HAD DURING 2022/23?

Tackling Poverty		
Food Insecurity	Food Poverty	Affordable Food
 <p>7.2% of people in the South Locality worried they would not have enough to eat compared to 22.2% of people living in Torry and Kincorth. (City Voice 46, 2022)</p>	 <p>1.7% of households in the South Locality ran out of food compared to 11.1% of households in Torry and Kincorth (City Voice 46, 2022)</p>	 <p>634 families in the South Locality accessing affordable food at their local community pantry (mobile and located in Torry)</p>

<p>Fuel Insecurity</p>  <p>28.3% of people in the South Locality worried they would not be able to heat their home compared to 55.6% of people living in Torry and Kincorth. (City Voice 46, 2022)</p>	<p>Fuel Poverty</p>  <p>5.6% of households in the South Locality have had to seek support for paying for heating, compared to 11.1% of households in Torry and Kincorth (City Voice 46, 2022)</p>	<p>Fuel Bill Savings</p>  <p>£32,725.77 fuel bill savings made across the South Locality through energy efficiency measures and support such as provision of warm spaces</p>
<p>Claimant Count</p>  <p>Has decreased after a spike in 2021. 52% of claimants live in south locality priority neighbourhoods</p>	<p>People on Universal Credit</p>  <p>Has increased in the south locality since 2020. 50% of claimants live in priority neighbourhoods</p>	<p>Benefit Maximisation</p>  <p>The online benefit calculator has been accessed 737 times by people from Central priority neighbourhoods</p>
<p>Children in low income families</p>  <p>Child poverty has increased in the south locality since 2019. 55% of children in low income families live in priority neighbourhoods</p>	<p>Business Start Ups</p>  <p>5 people in Torry supported to start their own business.</p>	<p>Digital Access and Skills</p>  <p>78.3% of City Voice respondents in the South Locality reported they had at least basic digital skills.</p>

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT IN 2023/24

- Strengthen relationships with local businesses as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility
- Encourage more people to start their own business and promoting local business gateway services across the wider locality
- Ensure support extends to Priority Neighbourhood Kincorth as well as Torry

OUR PRIORITIES

South Locality Plan 2021-26 sets out two priorities to improve outcomes for our people

Priority 4. Support children and young people to achieve their potential

Priority 5. Focus on early intervention, prevention and re-enablement actions

PROGRESS MADE DURING 2022/23



Providing activities for Children and Young People

Opportunities and activities

Through our youth community activity and reducing anti-social behaviour projects we are committed to developing a range of opportunities for children and young people to get involved in their local community and to support a reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour. There was a need identified in Kincorth to tackle anti-social behaviour with 282 calls in 2021. In response to this, young people, and local people in Kincorth co-designed a community-based activities group based in Kincorth Community Centre. This was chosen as it has a games hall, classrooms, kitchen, and a coffee bar, all of which widen the scope of what can be offered and the facility had to be attractive to the target audience. The Group meets weekly from 6.15pm to 8pm. The new group was highly successful, attracting 34 young people from Kincorth attending between March - December 2022. The group has also helped reduce the number of calls relating to antisocial behaviour in Kincorth area, which decreased from 282 calls in 2021 to 238 calls in 2022. The change idea of establishing co-designed youth groups in target areas has been successful.



*“we get to make friends; it’s very fun; you get to do art, sports, games and make food.” **Kincorth Young person***

We have also been working with children and young people in Torry and Ferryhill to address deliberate fire-raising which accounts for 10% of all incidents attended by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) in Aberdeen. Activities have included engagement with local young people, delivery of Fire Skills courses, media campaigns and a Virtual Community Fire Safety Programme for schools and youth groups. A leaflet for parents and carers with guidance on how to talk to young people about the dangers of playing with fire has also been produced. Changes were tested initially in Torry and Ferryhill as this was the area where most incidents had occurred between 2015-19. As a result, data for the area shows there has been approximately a 50% reduction in deliberate fires when compared to the 2015-19 average.



Supporting vulnerable children and young people

Young People’s Mental Wellbeing

All schools in the South Locality offer counselling, and each provides free physical activity to enhance the mental wellbeing of children, regardless of circumstances. The Safer Schools app was launched during 2022 with 100% sign up by South Locality schools. The app includes features to help parents and carers navigate challenges such as absence reporting and safeguarding concerns, as well as develop easier channels of communication. All local parents and carers can access the app, which has been promoted widely in school newsletters. Initial feedback from parents has been positive, and formal evaluation data will be available for future reporting periods. We recognise the role physical activity plays in supporting good mental health and through the Active Schools Programme, all South Locality schools now provides free physical activity opportunities for pupils.

Training community groups on issues impacting children

The ACHSCP Public Health Team train practitioners to deliver the PEEP (Parents as Early Education Partners) programme. PEEP recognises that parents and carers are children’s first and most important educators.

The Peep Learning Together programme supports parents and carers to:

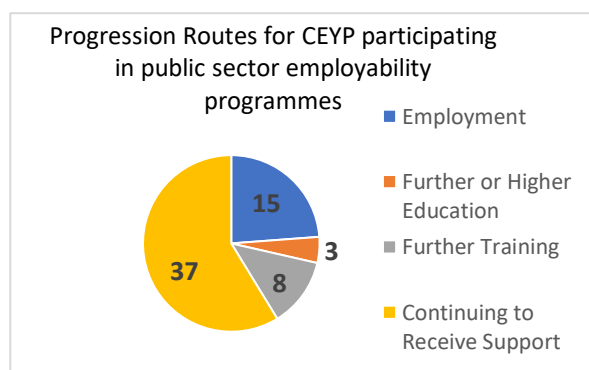
- Value and build on the home learning environment by making the most of everyday learning opportunities.
- build and strengthen attachment relationships with their child through listening, talking, playing, singing and sharing books together.
- help babies and children to make the most of their opportunities by becoming confident communicators and active learners, ready for school



There were 30 referrals to PEEP from the South Locality during 2022, in addition five people from the South Locality were referred by Health Visitors to the Family Learning Service.

Positive Destinations for Care Experienced young people

Positive destinations means that young people go on to attend further or higher education, volunteer, begin an apprenticeship or go into paid employment. In 2021-22, 90.5% of South Locality school leavers achieved an initial positive destination which was below the 2020-21 figure (92.9%) and the Aberdeen City average (93.8%). Care experienced young people (CEYP) often face significant barriers to employment and need additional support and mentoring to help them achieve and sustain employment. We are committed to supporting CEYP achieving the same outcomes as their peers and one aspect of this is achieving positive destinations, with the ultimate goal of moving CEYP into employment. The journey and support required for each care experienced young person varies and through our



employability support for care experienced young people project, we are testing a variety of ways to support them such as a guaranteed interview scheme, tailored employability support programme, pathway planning and induction into work. A good example of volunteering is the Saltire Awards, which is the Scottish Government's way of celebrating, recognising and rewarding the commitment, contribution and achievements of volunteers aged between 12-25 in Scotland. Of the 2459 Saltire Award recipients between December 2021 to March 2023 in Aberdeen City, 763 young people were from the South Locality.

Supporting priority families via Fit Like hubs

[Fit like? Family Wellbeing Hubs](#) are a group of services working together to support children and young people's mental wellbeing. The Hubs help with:

- Finance and benefits
- Family relationships and communication
- Coping with daily pressures
- Promoting positive emotional and mental wellbeing
- Talking about traumatic things that have happened

There is a Fit Like Hub based in Tullos Community Centre in the South Locality.

Providing additional support to existing services

Volunteering in the Community



We have continued to build our volunteering community across the City that was so crucial during the covid pandemic. Between December 2021 and March 2023, we saw a 17.4% in volunteer opportunities being advertised across the City on the volunteer hub run by ACVO. Volunteering across the South Locality is invaluable in supporting stretched public services. For example, through the Fairer Aberdeen Fund 739 volunteers contributed 114,280 hours of volunteering with a value of over £2m. Over 45,000 people were involved or benefitted from the 36 funded initiatives within the programme and 21 of the Fairer Aberdeen Fund projects benefited the South Locality. Another project to

support volunteering is Station House Media Unit (SHMU's) community project to support prisoners in HMP Grampian, offering them post-release support and engaging them in opportunities at SHMU upon release. including employability, volunteering, and meaningful activity.

Support for unpaid carers

In 2023, Aberdeen City Health and Social Partnership published the new Carers Strategy which acknowledges the huge contribution that Carers make and seeks to support all unpaid Carers in Aberdeen City. During the development of the new strategy there were several key inputs including; the National Carers Inquiry, publication of the National Carers Strategy from Scottish Government, the dedicated work and support of the Carers Strategy Implementation Group and most importantly the wider consultation and engagement of Carers across the City.

The new Carers Strategy identifies four key priorities to support Carers:

- Identifying as a Carer and the first steps to support
- Accessing advice and support
- Supporting future planning, decision making, and wider Carer involvement
- Community support and advice for Carers

In 2022-23, 239 carers accessed the Quarriers Adult Carer Support Service in the South Locality which is an increase of 42.3% on the 168 carers who accessed the service in 2021-22.

Since the Respite Bureau started in June 2022, 320 people have been referred for a short break as of March 2023. Three further tests promoting several types of carer breaks were also tested this year, Doorstep Breaks, Scot Spirit and Time to Live. Data from these tests will be evaluated and shared for future learning. More information on the Carers Strategy and how carers can access services and support can be found [here](#)

Raise awareness of substance service and provision

Latest drug related death data shows an increase from 56 to 62 in 2021. The Partnership through our fatal drug overdose projects is focused on reducing drug related deaths through innovative developments and by increasing the distribution of naloxone. Naloxone is an emergency medication that can reverse the effects of an overdose of opioids like heroin or methadone and can save someone's life. Reviews from past drug related deaths have shown that many of those people who died were not in any drug treatment service but had come to the attention of many other services. By increasing the number of services who can distribute and administer Naloxone to those in need, we can get the lifesaving drug out to those people at risk of overdose, as well as to family members/friends of those in need. During this year, we have widened access to naloxone by increasing the number of non-drug and alcohol service able to supply and/or administer naloxone. We have seen increased supply of naloxone in each locality, with 135 kits supplied in the South Locality. As well as naloxone, increasing education and access to a variety of treatments, the Partnership are taking a targeted approach, focusing on interventions and supports required at the various touchpoints. We are seeing the impact of this approach. For example, through our improvements focused on people liberated from prison we have seen a 56% reduction in drug related deaths of people liberated within 6 months.

Reducing harms from alcohol use

Alcohol is one of five lifestyle behavioural risk factors which contribute to the majority of chronic and non-communicable disease in our population. Throughout 2022/23 we have focused on increasing awareness of alcohol risks and widening access to alcohol interventions and support, including the development of a new alcohol audit screening tool to increase referrals for support both from professionals and individuals directly with a corresponding promotional campaign. As a result of the interventions and targeted campaigns we have seen the number of active clients with Alcohol and Drugs Action (ADA) Duty Drop-in service in 2022/23 increase in each of the three priority neighbourhoods against the 3-year baseline. In the South Locality, data shows a 35% increase in clients from AB11 postcodes. Other interventions ADA have taken during 2022-23 include:

- The piloting of a new referral pathway from Police to ADA
- Widening the number of settings for Alcohol Brief Interventions, including HMP Grampian
- Targeted social media campaign and subsequent levels of engagement with the 'Alcohol Aberdeen' online 'quiz'



Supporting people to make healthy choices

Health and Wellbeing

ACHSCP's Wellbeing Team deliver several initiatives targeting key target groups such as older people and those with disabilities who are at risk of becoming socially isolated or suffer from poor health outcomes. All the activities and initiatives outlined below support people in the South Locality to make better health and weight management choices.



Boogie in the Bar provides an opportunity for people at risk of social isolation to meet up at a local venue to have a blether and a dance. Monthly Boogie in the Bars are held in the Foundry Bar and Abbott Bar with an average of 65 people attending throughout the year.

Work is underway to create a resource for future Boogies so that they share the same ethos. It is important that we learn from the successes of the Boogies so that future sessions are sustainable and meaningful for those who attend.

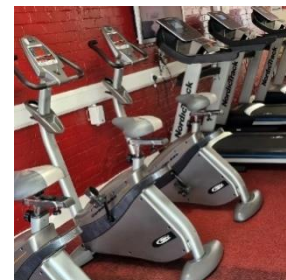


Soup and Sarnie Sessions are now up and running across the city. These sessions are run in partnership with CFINE, The Wellbeing Team, AFCCT and the centre in which the sessions are hosted. Torry Soup and Sarnies begun in May 2023 out of the Old Torry Community Centre and after two sessions, interest and uptake has been very positive.

The Health Improvement Fund supports initiatives that improve the health and wellbeing of people across Aberdeen. During 2022-23, 68 projects received funding, with initiatives ranging from community gardening and lunch clubs to birthing classes and Virtual Reality (VR) training. In a bid to streamline funding opportunities across the City, the Health Improvement Fund linked up with ACVO Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund and Aberdeen City COVID Recovery Fund to ensure an additional 14 applications could receive funding. Funded projects are evaluated to measure impact and achievement of the Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership (ACHSCP) priorities.

Of the 68 HIF funded projects, 34 were either from bidders based in the South Locality or aimed to support health improvement activities within the South. The Health Improvement Fund received 122 applications, of which 52 were from, or would benefit the South Locality.

An example of HIF funding being used successfully in the South Locality was at Inchgarth Community Centre who recognised the importance of people being able to access physical activity opportunities without a cost barrier. Health Improvement Funding covering the cost of 100 annual gym memberships was awarded to Inchgarth providing free access to the Inchgarth fitness gym for people who are unemployed, in receipt of benefits, the elderly, on low incomes, and young people who wish to access the fitness gym under supervision. Those joining the gym are given an induction to ensure they know how to use the equipment and are encouraged to attend other activities/groups that are on offer at the Community Centre.



Upskilling communities' knowledge of health and wellbeing services

The Stay Well Stay Connected – Granite City Gathering 2023 was a public health event held on 24 June at Kings Church Bridge of Don. The gathering helped people explore how to support themselves and retire positively. The aim and purpose of the gathering was to help people to understand and explore what a good retirement could look like in their own communities and have a real sense of purpose and opportunity to contribute.



167 attendees
Targeted at 45+
Aberdeen City Residents
1 Choir
6 crafting and art groups
1 Yoga group
1 gigong and taichi
Ballroom dancing
22 community groups and charities
4 speakers
20 volunteers




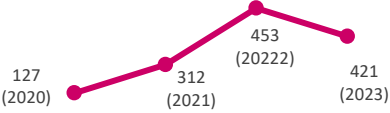










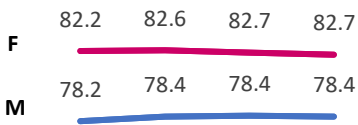
- The gathering focused on people who are planning to retire soon, or have already retired and live in Aberdeen
- The event had a number of taster sessions where people could try new activities such as movement with gigone, Tai chi, chair based yoga, sing in a choir, have a boogie at the gathering, try out crafting or an art session
- There was an opportunity for delegates to meet representatives of community groups and charities who told them about who they were and what services they provide
- The speakers ranged from - Jock at Horseback, UK; to Japanese wellbeing tips 'Ikigai'; to exploring what an Age Friendly Aberdeen could look like.

Suicide Prevention

Suicide is more prevalent in middle-aged white males from deprived areas. However, being male, white, middle-aged, and living in a deprived area are not precursors to suicide. Trauma or events that lead up to suicide are more likely to occur in that demographic and this group is less likely to seek help in such circumstances.

To fully understand what the leading contributing factors in deaths by suicide were in the North East, Police Scotland analysed all Death Reports since the start of 2021 and tracked all contributing factors that were highlighted in the reports including medical and family history and the events leading up to the person's death. These were not geography or locality specific. The circumstances behind suicides are constantly changing and research is ongoing to keep abreast of these changes and to adapt training, information and resources accordingly in Aberdeen City and across the wider North East. The rate of death from suicide in the South Locality of 10.4 per 100,00 is below the citywide average of 11.1 per 100,000 of the population. This is the lowest amongst the city's three locality areas.

WHAT IMPACT HAVE WE HAD IN 2022/23?

<p>Youth Anti-Social Behaviour</p>  <p>238 anti-social behaviour calls were received in Kincorth during 2022, this is down 15.6% from 2021</p>	<p>Positive destinations</p>  <p>90.5% of South Locality school leavers achieved an initial positive destination. The citywide average was 93.8%.</p>	<p>Young People Confidence</p>  <p>41% of S1-S6 pupils report feeling confident compared to 35% last year.</p>
<p>Young People Mental Health</p>  <p>No. of referrals each month to NHS's children and adolescent mental health services increasing</p>	<p>Counselling for Young People</p>  <p>100% of schools in South Locality offer counselling and Active School activities</p>	<p>Working Together with Parents</p>  <p>30 referrals were made to the Parents as Early Education Partners (PEEP) programme from the South Locality in 2022</p>
<p>Young People Volunteering</p>  <p>763 young people from the South Locality received a Saltire Award during 2022.</p>	<p>Healthy Eating</p>  <p>10.1% of people in the South Locality said they were unable to eat healthy and nutritious food due to poverty compared to 16.7% people in Torry and Kincorth. 17.5% of people living in the locality said they ate only a few types of food. (City Voice 46, 2022)</p>	<p>Community Empowerment</p>  <p>167 people attended the Stay Well Stay Connected – Granite City Gathering to explore ways older people can support themselves in the community and retire positively.</p>
<p>Alcohol Awareness</p>  <p>22.9% of people in the South Locality said they didn't know how many units are in the alcoholic drinks they consume 32.4% of people living in the South said they didn't think about units at all. Compared to 30% and 43.3% in Torry and Kincorth. (City Voice 46, 2022)</p>	<p>Drug Related Deaths</p>  <p>135 naloxone kits supplied in South Locality in 2022</p>	<p>Drug Related Hospital Stays</p>  <p>The rate of drug related hospital stays for the South Locality was 135.7 per 100,000 of the population. This was an improvement from 147.2 per 100,000 in 2021.</p>
<p>Alcohol Related Mortality Rates</p>  <p>Alcohol related mortality rates in South Locality are now 13.91 per 100,000. This has improved since 2018 when the rate was 17.31 per 100,000.</p>	<p>Deaths from Suicide</p>  <p>The rate of death from suicide in the South Locality is 10.4 per 100,000, this is below the citywide average of 11.1 per 100,000 of the population.</p>	<p>Life Expectancy</p>  <p>Has stayed stable in the South Locality since 2018 for males and females. But it is lower in priority neighbourhoods at 79.6 (F) and 73.9 (M)</p>

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT IN 2023/24

- Explore piloting a programme with vulnerable young people at Camphill
- Increase positive destinations for vulnerable learners
- Renew our focus on community capacity and capability building
- Explore proposal for pump track in Torry with communities
- Enhance our child friendly practice
- Increase the number of priority families accessing PEEP programme
- Increase the number of people attending Health Issues in the Community sessions and increase the number of trained practitioners

OUR PRIORITIES

The South Locality Plan 2021-26 sets out three priorities to improve our local place:

Priority 6. Identify and maximise use of green space

WHAT PROGRESS HAVE WE MADE DURING 2022/23?

Supporting greenspace development

Encourage community growing spaces

Our community-run green space and food growing projects have continued to thrive and achieve positive outcomes with 14 food growing projects in schools, communities, and workplaces across the South Locality as of March 2023. For example, the **Tullos Community Garden** has been a work in progress since early 2018, when the paths around the garden were put in place and they had 8 planters (4 of which are accessible to those in wheelchairs) installed to grow vegetables and herbs for the local community. The volunteers continue to work on the best way for their produce to be used by the local community but encourage people to help themselves to anything they would like when it is ready. Previously a box of lettuce and other fresh produce was delivered to George's shop for people to take free of charge. They have also donated to CFINE and the Zero waste cafe when that was running and hope to supply to more community free meal initiatives in the future.

The volunteer group is hosting a garden party on Saturday the 19th of August 2023. This will be the first big family event that the volunteers have put on since before lockdown so it is hoped that many people from across Torry will come along to celebrate the garden and enjoy free food, face-painting, craft activities, planting with One Seed Forward and children's fun and stories.



St Fitticks Edible Garden also began in 2018 in response to the Torry Older People's Network wanting to turn the disused council depot site into an orchard and edible garden. It also faced the challenges of lockdowns and, in this case, water supply but it is still growing and thriving with entries into the Keep Scotland Beautiful competition with awards as well. The garden now has a part-time coordinator/grower who organises community growing sessions, community events and business plus charity involvement. the project has just made a start on a more substantial toolshed. In addition, a wellbeing course with CFINE and Mindstore is due to start. This will be held in the garden and recently and the project has had a fairy garden activity with children from Barnardo's.



Encouraging the use of greenspaces for healthy benefits

Community Learning and Development's (CLD) Family Learning Team have been committed to using the abundant outdoor resources the city has to offer; from the incredible beaches and scenic Torry battery to the plethora of woodland and greenspaces. Working in partnership with various agencies the Family Learning Team identifies children and families most in need of support throughout the City of Aberdeen.

With this need recognised, an array of thought provoking, imaginative, and creative outdoor learning experiences are offered. These connect children and families, assess risk, build resilience, confidence and skills through creative activities and play- all throughout the academic year.

The offer is city-wide with sessions happening in each locality. Within the South Locality there has been Geronimo, Coastal Project, Wellbeing Walks, Holidays of Play as well as families accessing a residential in Cullen looking at environmental issues and the impact humans have on the climate.

CLD's Family Learning team has supported approximately 46 families in the South Locality to access outdoor learning opportunities as well as a number attending the residential throughout the year.







Deevale Community Garden



Work is underway to create a community garden in for residents of Deevale Gardens care home in Kincorth. Residents have shared their ideas for the garden with support from the Community Development team, which will be delivered in partnership with local organisations including CFINE.

WHAT IMPACT HAVE WE HAD IN 2022/23?

Satisfaction with Green Space	Community Growing Spaces	Community Managed Green Spaces
 <p>71.6% of South Locality respondents to the City Voice survey reported being satisfied or fairly satisfied with the overall quality of green/open spaces, compared to 50.1% in Torry and Kincorth.</p>	 <p>14 food growing projects happening across the South Locality</p>	 <p>3 community groups being supported to look after community green space in Torry and Kincorth</p>
Cycling		
 <p>15.6% of people in the North cycled in the last year compared to the citywide average of 14.8% (City Voice 46, 2022)</p>		

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT IN 2023/24

- Ensure support extends to Priority Neighbourhood Kincorth as well as Torry
- We will support communities to collaborate food growing efforts with schools and workplaces



Working Together

Community Empowerment Strategy

Community Planning Aberdeen is committed to working with communities to improve outcomes across each locality and indeed the City as a whole. In 2022 we launched a new Community Empowerment Strategy setting out our vision for all communities to be equal community planning partners. Several improvement projects are now underway to strengthen community participation in community planning. This will ensure that communities have a voice and an ability to influence what happens to them and their community.



This year we have been pleased to see the return of in-person community-based events, including two citywide events: the Community Gathering and the Granite City Gathering.



These events provided a great chance to bring our community and partners together, make connections, and share learning and opportunities. Both events were open to people across the City and were an exhibition of community information and provided a chance for attendees to wander around the stalls and learn about the different opportunities to get involved in their local community. There were 25 stall holders on the day, showcasing the work they do in local communities. Approximately 121 people attended the gathering. Of the registered attendees, 27% were from the South Locality. You can read the Community Gathering report for more information [here](#).

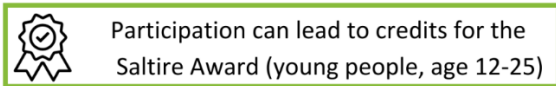
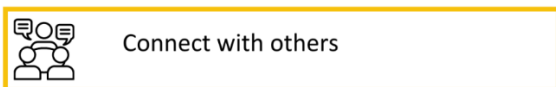
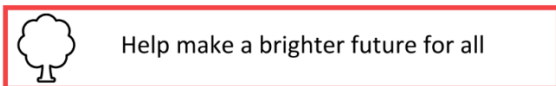
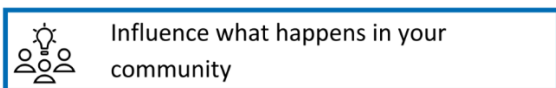
In addition to our citywide events, the South Locality Empowerment Group (LEG) restarted on 27 April 2023. This was its first meeting since early 2022. Meetings are now held on a two-monthly cycle and alternate between virtual meetings and in person meetings at a community venue. This provides an opportunity for LEG members to influence and shape delivery of the South Locality Plan and hold Community Planning Partners to account. LEGs also provide the Locality Planning Team and Outcome Improvement project managers an opportunity to involve community members in their projects and gain valuable feedback. The Torry Partnership has continued to meet throughout 2022-23.



Find out more & Get Involved!

The [South Locality Empowerment Group](#) and the [Torry Partnership](#) are two of the main ways we connect with our local communities in the South Locality. As a member of a LEG and Torry Partnership you will be able to provide a voice on behalf of the people and communities across your neighbourhood.

What's in it for you?



Following a recent training session provided by SCDC in partnership with ACC/AHSCP, the community had this to say about community engagement:

"Talk to us and talk to us early. Don't make decisions and then get it approved by us. Communities have knowledge and skills to know what's best for us. We're the local experts about our places"

"Community Engagement is where people grow"

If you are interested in getting involved in helping achieve these aims in your local community, follow this link to find out more: [Our Communities - Community Planning Aberdeen](#) or email localityplanning@aberdeencity.gov.uk.

Meet your Locality Planning Team

We understand the importance of working with communities to build a thriving environment for everyone. By engaging with local communities through our dedicated locality planning team, we aim to become more receptive, supportive and action orientated. Community input is extremely valuable to this work.

The Locality Planning Team includes staff from Aberdeen City Council and the Aberdeen City Health and Social Care partnership working together to support improved outcome across all our localities and neighbourhoods. In the South Locality your locality planning contacts are Iain, Jade and Teresa.



Iain Robertson,
Transformation Programme
Manager, Aberdeen City Health
and Social Care Partnership



Jade Leyden,
Community Development
Manager,
Aberdeen City Council



Teresa Dufficy, Community
Development Officer,
Aberdeen City Council

Please take a moment to complete this [survey](#) and let us know how we can enhance our service delivery and collaboration with you. Together we can make a positive impact and create a place where all people can prosper.

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Aberdeen City - Central Locality

Annual Outcome Improvement Report 2022-23



Central Locality Neighbourhoods:

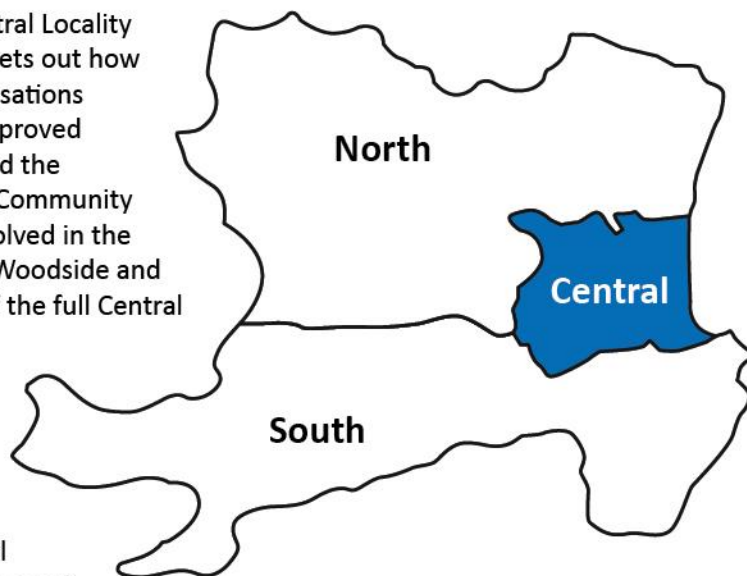
Ashgrove, City Centre, Froghall, George St, Hanover, Hilton, Midsocket, Old Aberdeen, Powis, Rosemount, Tillydrone, Seaton, Stockethill, Sunnybank, West End and Woodside



Community Planning
Aberdeen

WELCOME

Welcome to our second annual report against the Central Locality Plan first published in 2021. The Central Locality Plan sets out how Community Planning Aberdeen and its member organisations will work together and with communities to deliver improved outcomes for the 14 neighbourhoods in the locality and the locality as a whole. The Locality Plan was prepared by Community Planning Aberdeen staff and community members involved in the Central Locality Empowerment Group and Tillydrone, Woodside and Seaton Partnership. Click on the links to view a copy of the full Central Locality Plan and Summary Locality Plan. Also see the end of this report to find out more about the organisations and community groups involved in preparing the plan.



This report provides an update on progress made against the priorities that were identified in the Central Locality Plan. It includes information about key activities and initiatives and also the impact that these have in the Central Locality and in target neighbourhoods. The information and data within the report demonstrates success in many areas. However, we also recognise where we need to do better and have identified priorities for improvement next year.

Our focus is always on impact on outcomes for communities. Central to our approach is involving and empowering communities which we have made clear in our new Community Empowerment Strategy published in 2022. Behind the scenes, Community Planning Aberdeen has also made some changes to ensure member organisations are working better together to empower communities. Our new locality planning team has been in place since February 2023 and epitomises our renewed vigour for working together with local communities. This report provides an important baseline for how we are currently performing in the Central Locality and a commitment to improvement going forward.

This report is split into the following sections:

Our Economy	page 3
Our People	page 9
Our Place	page 18
Community Empowerment	page 20



OUR PRIORITIES

The Central Locality Plan 2021-26 sets out two priorities to improve our local economy:

Priority 1: Reduce the number of people living in poverty

Priority 2: Ensure people have the digital means to ensure they do not miss out on opportunities

PROGRESS MADE DURING 2022/23



Supporting communities who experience poverty & our most vulnerable families

Community food provision and community pantries

With food prices rising at the fastest rate in 40 years we have been working with CFine to increase access to affordable food across the locality, particularly for our most vulnerable communities and low-income families. Through our community food pantry project, we have focused on increasing access to affordable food in our priority neighbourhoods which include Tillydrone, Woodside, Seaton, Ashgrove Stockethill and George Street in the Central Locality. Recognising the challenges people can face attending one of our fixed food pantries, a mobile food pantry was launched in September 2021. CFine has 192 members of the Central Locality shopping at the pantry at Poynerook Rd on a regular basis. The mobile food pantry also had 810 visits from residents of the Central locality during 2022-23.

Affordable Food Providers in Central

[CFine](#) operates a mobile food pantry on Thursdays at:

-Tillydrone Church 1pm-1:40pm

-Seaton Aulton Pitches 1:50pm -2:20pm

The [Woodside Pantry](#) is also available in the Central Locality, alongside other local [Food Banks](#).

Supporting communities with financial inclusion

Ensuring that household income is maximised through the uptake of unclaimed benefits is a key aspect to supporting households to come out of poverty and improve their financial security. There continues to be barriers which can mean people do not claim benefits they are entitled to, such as stigma of claiming, unaware of what they are entitled to, and onerous applications processes.

We have made progress with a number of initiatives to help remove these barriers. For example, we launched the online benefit calculator last year to help support more people to find out what benefits they are entitled to. This has been accessed 7274 times across the city during 2022/23, with 887 of those being from the Central priority neighbourhoods. We have also taken action to identify households who should be entitled to Pension Credits and have contacted them directly by letter. Using this approach 410 households were identified from across the City which qualified for Pension Credits. Finally, a booklet for families was developed to increase awareness and uptake of child benefits such as Education Maintenance Allowance and School Clothing Grants. The booklet targeted families and provided guidance on how to claim. Across the City 2749 families benefited financially by accessing additional benefits with 1067 families in the Central Locality benefiting financially by accessing additional benefits.

Fuel poverty/ affordable heating



Staying Warm & Well Winter Roadshow

Thursday 8 December, 10am - 2pm
Central Library, Rosemount Viaduct, Aberdeen

Pop in for a free cuppa and chat to friendly staff who will share information and advice.

WARM SPACE
We are open and the heating's on

Icons: WiFi, Home, Cup, Book



As the cost of living increases it is important that we work together to do everything we can to support every household in Aberdeen. We have been working together with partner organisations across Aberdeen to provide a range of public warm spaces that will provide an opportunity for people to come together, share and use resources. Every warm space is unique however all warm spaces offer a friendly welcome and comfortable environment to meet friends or socialise. There are 18 warm spaces across the Central Locality but of course people are free to visit any warm space across the City. You can find your nearest warm space by visiting [here](#).

As well as providing warm spaces we have been increasing awareness of the support available to households during a variety of community events and we have trained frontline staff. As a result of the promotion of support available and an increase in home visits to deliver insulation and energy efficiency measure a total of £134,464.52 fuel bill savings was made last year across the Central Locality.

Support English as Second Language (ESOL) families to access services

The CLD Adult Learning Team assessed 900 learners in the year 22/23 (which included over 600 Ukrainian Learners). The assessment learners were either offered a class or sign-posted to the most appropriate provider for their ESOL needs. The Adult Learning team has delivered 197 classes at an average of 45 classes per term. That is an average of 150 learners per term receiving a minimum of 2 classes per week. The classes range from pre-beginner to pre-intermediate. In addition to our mainstream classes, we have offered additionality of walk and talks, employability short courses and x2 ESOL for the Care Sector which has resulted in all but 1 participant either getting employment or a paid placement.



Strengthening opportunities for Business Growth.

Support development of Social Enterprises and small businesses.

Local community start-ups benefit everyone. Not only do they help get people back into employment, they can also create new jobs and bring new money into the community. We are delighted to have secured local community support for people wishing to start their own business. Through Business Gateway we now have a Community Business Advisor attending the Tillydrone Community Campus to provide a monthly drop-in service. Over the last 12 months the service has attracted an average of 2 attendees per drop in which has resulted in 8 people starting their own business.



Social Enterprise, Community Case Study

Seaton Community Café, Seaton Community Centre

The idea for the community café grew from a post covid plan to encourage over 55s back into a social environment. Initially we formed a Community group with help from ACVO for the Constitution and offered a free Soup & Sandwich Lunch with transport and entertainment once a month. A year later we run the event twice a month and frequently sell out, capacity is 28 for each event and we get around 40 customers a month. In addition, we ran the Seaton Warm Space and the Seaton Pantry.



We had always intended to open a Community Café and the Warm Space Initiative, and the Community Pantry allowed us to meet more of the community. Now we had a real idea of what we wanted to achieve and why, the Cost-of-Living Crisis just made us even more determined.

With initial funding from the HiF fund and support from Communities and Health and Social Care Partnership we opened the Café in its current form four months ago. The café is open twice a week in the afternoons and attracts around 70 customers each week. There were seven volunteers for the Soup & Sandwich team, all of whom passed their Food Hygiene. In addition, we had four committee members, but we soon added another six. These volunteers also supported the Pantry which ran twice a week.

We work with a range of partners - Fresh Wellness, Aberdeen in Recovery, Shmu, Tree Life and CLICC to promote use of the café, pantry and the community centre. We are members of Social Enterprise Scotland and are intending to continue the development of this. In addition, we are working on a new Green project with Nescans which will include the target of Carbon Zero. For the Café we plan to develop an external catering service, initially for fellow Third Sector groups with a view to expanding. Plans and costings are very positive although we need to consider working towards becoming a SCIO which will allow us to access funds.





Developing approaches to support employment opportunities.

Local employability support and job opportunities

Supporting people into employment is a top priority for the locality. Over the year we have delivered a range of employability support events targeted at people who face barriers and challenges. For example, we have delivered sessions for people over 50, people with a disability and people living in our priority neighbourhoods in the Central Locality.

Partners Aberdeen City Council, Skills Development Scotland, DWP and Business Gateway have also delivered 'Your Route to Work' sessions through our ABZ works initiative. These are aimed at young people living in priority neighbourhoods who are disengaged from school, school leavers, work returners and their wider families. During these sessions participants can find out information on how to get into employment, training, education or volunteering as well as receive money and benefit advice. There were 16 attendees at the Tillydrone event. Exit surveys were completed with a small number of event attendees. Everyone who attended and who provided feedback felt the event was useful or very useful and all would be likely to visit a future event.

ABZ WORKS
Your route to skills, training and work

Your Route to Work
Thursday 1st June 2023
Drop-in 4pm - 7pm
Tillydrone Campus, AB24 2UY

We'll help you plan for your future and provide information on work, training, education and benefits.
The event is open to all including school leavers and people looking to return to work.

Free to attend
Refreshments provided
Register here - <https://bit.ly/44Unkor>

Logos: ABERDEEN City Council, Scottish Government (Programme no H-ABZ01), Department for Work & Pensions, Skills Development Scotland

Increase the number of Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships

We are committed to creating accessible pathways to both employment and education, two such paths are Modern and Graduate apprenticeships. These apprenticeships offer people the opportunity to blend academic qualifications while also gaining practical experience on the job. This enables people to earn as they learn, creating more realistic and inclusive opportunities for local people. Across Aberdeen City, North East of Scotland College (NESCoL) data shows that the promotional events for employers and potential apprentices, focus groups with pupils from St. Machar Academy, as well as the introduction of incentives for employers through the Apprentice Employer Grant where employers were offered £5k on recruitment of a new Modern Apprentice (MA) have resulted in a 36% increase in [Modern Apprenticeships](#) from 157 in 2019/20 to 214 in 2022/23.







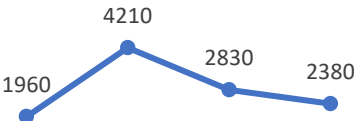
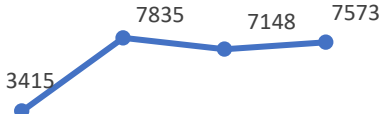






Improved digital access and increase skill base across the community

Digital Access

Through our digital improvement project, we have seen positive outcomes for both digital access and skills. This work included the promotion of existing access and new access to digital devices such as library computers, council digital resources and universities. In addition to this Silver City Surfers continue to offer face to face tuition for over 55's in the City helping them to become more comfortable using digital tools, and offering support to community members in the central locality at the Central Library.

79.4% of City Voice respondents in the Central Locality reported they had at least basic digital skills.

Tackling Poverty		
<p>Food Insecurity</p>  <p>9.7% of people in the Central Locality worried they would not have enough to eat compared to 18% of people living in Tillydrone, Woodside, Seaton, Ashgrove, Stockethill and George Street. (City Voice 46, 2022)</p>	<p>Food Poverty</p>  <p>4.3% of households in the Central Locality ran out of food compared to 1.9% of households Citywide (City Voice 46, 2022)</p>	<p>Affordable Food</p>  <p>1,002 families in the Central Locality accessing affordable food at their local community pantry (mobile and located in Tillydrone and Seaton)</p>
<p>Fuel Insecurity</p>  <p>34.8% of people in the Central Locality worried they would not be able to heat their home compared to 43.1% of people living in Tillydrone, Woodside, Seaton, Ashgrove, Stockethill and George Street. (City Voice 46, 2022)</p>	<p>Fuel Poverty</p>  <p>5.4% of households in the Central Locality have had to seek support for paying for heating, compared to 8.3% of households in Tillydrone, Woodside, Seaton, Ashgrove, Stockethill and George Street. (City Voice 46, 2022)</p>	<p>Fuel Bill Savings</p>  <p>£134,464.52 fuel bill savings made across the Central Locality through energy efficiency measures and support such as provision of 18 warm spaces</p>
<p>Claimant Count</p>  <p>Has decreased after a spike in 2021. 49% of claimants live in central locality priority neighbourhoods</p>	<p>People on Universal Credit</p>  <p>Has increased in the central locality since 2020. 52% of UC claimants live in priority neighbourhoods</p>	<p>Benefit Maximisation</p>  <p>The online benefit calculator has been accessed 887 times by people from Central priority neighbourhoods</p>
<p>Children in low income families</p>  <p>Child poverty has increased in the central locality since 2019. 54% of children in low income families live in priority neighbourhoods</p>	<p>Business Start Ups</p>  <p>8 people in the Central Locality supported to start their own business.</p>	<p>Digital Access and Skills</p>  <p>79.4% of City Voice respondents in the Central Locality reported they had at least basic digital skills. (City Voice 46, 2022)</p>

- Make childcare more affordable and accessible to increase parental employment
- Utilise empty premises to encourage new businesses.
- Grow the number of job opportunities in the locality.
- Strengthen relationships with local businesses.
- Support 50 people to start a business.
- Increase the number of responsible businesses working with Community Planning Aberdeen (CPA).
- Ensure support extends to Priority Neighbourhoods Ashgrove, Stockethill and George Street as well as Tillydrone, Woodside and Seaton.

OUR PRIORITIES

Central Locality Plan 2021-26 sets out three priorities to improve outcomes for our people

Priority 3. Improve Mental Wellbeing of the Population

Priority 4. Ensure People can access services timely through a person-centred approach where the needs of the whole population are considered.

Priority 5. Create safe and resilient communities where hate crime will not be tolerated and develop initiatives which reduce the impact of substance use and anti-social behaviour.

WHAT PROGRESS HAVE WE MADE DURING 2022/23?

Improve Health and Wellbeing

The Health Improvement Fund supports initiatives that improve the health and wellbeing of people across Aberdeen. During 22-23, 68 projects received funding, with initiatives ranging from community gardening and lunch clubs to birthing classes and Virtual Reality (VR) training. In a bid to streamline funding opportunities across the City, the Health Improvement Fund linked up with ACVO Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund and Aberdeen City COVID Recovery Fund to ensure an additional 14 applications could receive funding. Funded projects are evaluated to measure impact and achievement of the Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership (ACHSCP) priorities.

Of the 68 HIF funded projects, 33 were either from bidders based in the Central Locality or aimed to support health improvement activities within Central Locality. The Health Improvement Fund received 122 applications, of which 63 were from, or would benefit Central Locality. **Gerrard Street Lunch Club** received HIF funding to set up a new lunch club at Gerrard Street Baptist Church, run by volunteers. The aim of the lunch club is to



“The volunteers do a great job organising the lunch club, the sandwiches are always tasty!”

provide community members with a free nutritious lunch while tackling social isolation. The club now has a core group attending with friendships being made and is always open for new attendees to pop along.

Volunteering in the Community



We have continued to build our volunteering community across the City that was so crucial during the covid pandemic. Between December 2021 and March 2023, we saw a 17.4% increase in volunteer opportunities being advertised across the City on the volunteer hub run by ACVO. Volunteering across the Central Locality is invaluable in supporting stretched public services. For example, through the Fairer Aberdeen Fund 739 volunteers contributed 114,280 hours of volunteering with a value of over £2m. Over 45,000 people were involved or benefitted from the 36 funded initiatives within the programme and 33 of the Fairer Aberdeen Fund projects benefited the Central

Locality. Another project to support volunteering is Station House Media Unit's (SHMU's) community project to support prisoners in HMP Grampian, offering them post-release support and engaging them in opportunities at SHMU upon release. including employability, volunteering, and meaningful activity.

Supporting Unpaid Carers

In January 2023, Aberdeen City Health and Social Partnership published the new Carers Strategy which acknowledged the huge contribution that Carers make and seeks to support all unpaid Carers in Aberdeen City.

During the development of the new strategy there were several key inputs including: the National Carers Inquiry, publication of the National Carers Strategy from Scottish Government, the dedicated work and support of the Carers Strategy Implementation Group and most importantly the wider consultation and engagement of Carers across the City.

The new Carers Strategy identifies four key priorities to support Carers:

- Identifying as a Carer and the first steps to support
- Accessing advice and support
- Supporting future planning, decision making, and wider Carer involvement
- Community support and advice for Carers

In 2022-23, 431 carers accessed the Quarriers Adult Carer Support Service in the Central Locality which is an increase of 38.1% on the 312 carers who accessed the service in 2021-22.

Since the Respite Bureau started in June 2022, 320 people have been referred for a short break as of March 2023. Three further tests promoting different types of carer breaks were also tested this year, Doorstep Breaks, Scot Spirit and Time to Live. Data from these tests will be evaluated and shared for future learning. More information on the Carers Strategy and how carers can access services and support can be found [here](#)



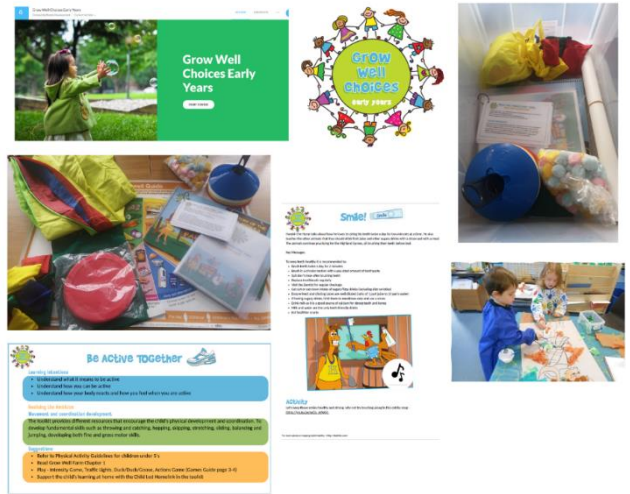
Create opportunities to upskill knowledge and understanding

Use digital tools to support Mental Health and Wellbeing for young people

All schools in the Central Locality offer counselling, and each provides free physical activity to enhance the mental wellbeing of children, regardless of circumstances. The Safer Schools app was launched in 2022 with 100% of schools signed up in the Central Locality. The app includes features to help parents and carers navigate challenges such as absence reporting and safeguarding concerns, as well as develop easier channels of communication. All local parents and carers can access the app, which has been promoted widely in school newsletters. Initial feedback from parents has been positive, and formal evaluation data will be available for future reporting periods. We recognise the role physical activity plays in supporting good mental health and through the Active Schools Programme, all Central Locality schools provide free physical activity opportunities for pupils.



Grow Well Choices early years (GWCEYS) is a toolkit which supports people working with children aged 3-5 to deliver learning about healthy lifestyles. In 2022, in partnership with NHS Grampian, ACHSCP engaged with those using the pack, allowing improvements to be made and the pack to be relaunched. In March 2023, 20 people from the Central Locality attended the virtual awareness session for updated toolkit.



The ACHSCP Public Health Team train practitioners to deliver the **PEEP programme (Parents as Early Education Partners)**. PEEP recognises that parents and carers are children's first and most important educators.

The Peep Learning Together programme supports parents and carers to:

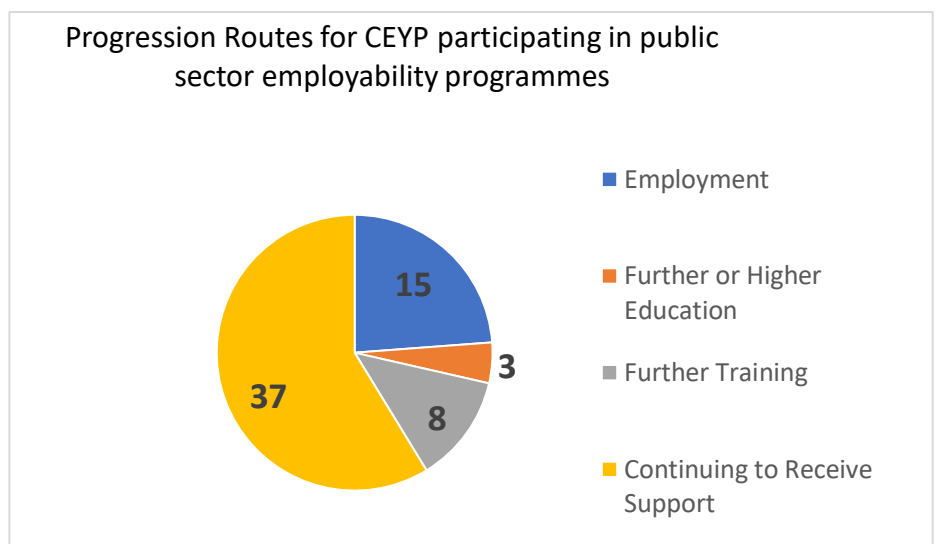
- value and build on the home learning environment by making the most of everyday learning opportunities.
- build and strengthen attachment relationships with their child through listening, talking, playing, singing and sharing books together.
- help babies and children to make the most of their opportunities by becoming confident communicators and active learners, ready for school



There were 36 referrals to PEEP from the Central Locality during 2022. Four people from the Central Locality were also referred by Health Visitors to the Family Learning Service.

Positive Destinations for Care Experienced young people

Positive destinations mean that young people go on to attend further or higher education, a voluntary placement, begin an apprenticeship, or go into paid employment. In 2021-22, 96.2% of Central Locality school leavers achieved an initial positive destination which was slightly below the 2020-21 figure of 96.5%, but above the Aberdeen City average of 93.8%. Care experienced young people (CEYP) often face significant barriers to employment and need additional support and mentoring to help them achieve and sustain



employment. We are committed to supporting CEYP to achieve the same outcomes as their peers and one aspect of this is achieving positive destinations, with the ultimate goal of moving CEYP into paid employment. The journey and support required for each care experienced young person varies and through our employability support for care experienced young people project, we are testing a variety of ways to support them, such as a guaranteed interview scheme, tailored employability support programme, pathway planning and induction into work. A good example of youth volunteering is the Saltire Awards, which is the Scottish Government's way of celebrating, recognising and rewarding the commitment, contribution and achievements of volunteers aged between 12-25 in Scotland. Of the 2459 Saltire Award recipients in Aberdeen City between December 2021-March 2023, 541 young people were from the Central Locality.

Supporting priority families via Fit Like hubs

[Fit like? Family Wellbeing Hubs](#) are a group of services working together to support children and young people's mental wellbeing. The Hubs help with:

- Finance and benefits
- Family relationships and communication
- Coping with daily pressures
- Promoting positive emotional and mental wellbeing
- Talking about traumatic things that have happened

The Fit Like Hub operates out of Tillydrone in the Central Locality.



Increase knowledge and understanding of Health Provision in Locality

Granite City Gathering: 24 June 2023

The ACHSCP Wellbeing Team deliver a number of initiatives under the **Stay Well Stay Connected** programme, which targets older people and those with disabilities who are at risk of becoming socially isolated or having poor health and wellbeing outcomes. A number of the sessions they deliver in the Central Locality are set out below:

The Granite City Gathering 2023 was a public health event held on 24 June at Kings Church Bridge of Don. The gathering helped people explore how to support themselves and retire positively. The aim and purpose of the gathering was to help people to understand and explore what a good retirement could look like, in their own communities and have a real sense of purpose and opportunity to contribute.



167 attendees
 Targeted at those aged 45+
 Aberdeen City Residents
 1 Choir
 6 crafting and art groups
 1 Yoga group
 1 gigong and taichi
 Ballroom dancing
 22 community groups and charities
 4 speakers
 20 volunteers

Highlights

- The gathering focused on people who are planning to retire soon, or have already retired and live in Aberdeen
- The event had a number of taster sessions where people could try new activities such as movement with gigone, Tai chi, chair based yoga, sing in a choir, have a boogie at the gathering, try out crafting or an art session
- There was an opportunity for delegates to meet representatives of community groups and charities who told them about who they were, and what services they provide
- The speakers ranged from Horseback, UK; to Japanese wellbeing tips 'Ikigai'; to exploring what an Age Friendly Aberdeen could look like

Boogie in the Bar provides an opportunity for people at risk of social isolation to meet up at a local venue to have a blether and a dance. A monthly Boogie in the Bar is held in Dee Street with an average of 90 people attending throughout the year. Work is underway to create a resource for future Boogies so that they share the same ethos. It is important that we learn from the successes of the Boogies so that future sessions are sustainable and meaningful for those who attend.

Relaxed Match Day Experience aims to create a dementia and neurodivergent friendly environment providing a calm area for those who may have sensory or mental health challenges. The experiences are a truly intergenerational project and benefits can be captured in feedback by both young and older people attending. The Wellbeing Team so far have been allocated 3 sessions for participants to attend, and a total of 18 people from across the city have benefitted to date. Participants include people living independently and people living in care settings. Feedback has been incredibly positive for this project:

"The staff at Pittodrie were extremely welcoming and helpful when we arrived and left."

"The elation created a fantastic atmosphere at the service as others got caught up in the excitement of the day being retold."

Meno & Pause Co-lab Café at Pittodrie Stadium began in March 2022. Sessions are delivered in partnership between the Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership Wellbeing Team and Aberdeen Football Club Community Trust. The first event was a facilitated session to explore what support currently exists in Aberdeen, where the gaps are, and how these could be filled. Sessions continued for 5 months, covering topics including friends and family, nutrition and sharing experiences. As a result of this engagement, all menopause work going forward has been rebranded 'The Mighty Oaks'.

The team has also worked in collaboration with an instructor from Aberdeen Sports Village to provide a menopause course. This included a combination of group exercise sessions, followed by a Q&A and discussion. This has now evolved into a weekly exercise class, delivered at Powis community centre, with the majority of those from the original course continuing to participate. A weekly menopause health walk has also started, lasting one hour, with the option of staying for an additional hour for a cuppa and chat. These walks will be starting in different areas throughout the city in the coming months.





Innovative approaches to health issues



The Tillydrone Health and Wellbeing Project at the Tillydrone Community Flat is an initiative to increase relaxation and wellbeing by providing complementary therapies to Tillydrone residents. Complementary therapies – including Reiki and Reflexology - engage with the patient as a whole person rather than treating a specific symptom or symptoms. Therapies are called ‘complementary’

because they complement conventional health and medical treatments. Many individuals accessing treatments at the Flat are also using conventional medical treatments for long standing physical, mental or psycho-social health conditions. They report the complementary therapies are highly beneficial as a secondary treatment, helping relieve pain, lower stress and enhancing wellbeing and relaxation.

Female, 43

I have a child with Additional Support Needs and every day is different and brings different challenges. The treatments relax me and the mere aspect of taking time out of the day for myself makes me feel that I am my own person. The treatments have a positive impact on my mental health and I really notice the difference if I miss an appointment.

Upskilling communities and partners knowledge of Suicide Prevention

Suicide is more prevalent in middle-aged white males from deprived areas. However, being male, white, middle-aged, and living in a deprived area are not precursors to suicide. Trauma or events that lead up to suicide are more likely to occur in that demographic and this group is less likely to seek help in those circumstances. In an effort to fully understand the leading contributing factors in deaths by suicide in the North East, Police Scotland analysed all Death Reports since the start of 2021 and tracked all contributing factors that were highlighted in the reports including medical and family history and events leading up to the person’s death. These were not geographical or locality specific. The circumstances behind suicides are constantly changing, research is ongoing to keep abreast of these changes and to adapt training, information and resources accordingly in Aberdeen City and across the wider North East. The rate of death from suicide in Central Locality is 10.5 per 100,000, which is below the citywide average of 11.1 per 100,000 of the population.



Create Educational Opportunities

The communities where we live, work and play have a significant influence on our health and wellbeing. Through our good health and wellbeing choices project we have trained 70 people working in our communities with **Making Every Opportunity Count (MEOC)**. MEOC is a brief intervention being rolled out across partners to support staff to make the best of every appropriate opportunity to raise the issues of a healthy lifestyle. Evaluation has shown increases in:

- Awareness of health and social issues that may affect people's health and wellbeing
- Confidence in speaking about issues which may affect their health and wellbeing
- Confidence to undertake a very brief intervention to support people to make positive health and wellbeing choices
- Confidence in the knowledge of health and wellbeing support and signposting to services

Across February and March 2023, six Making every Opportunity Count (MEOC) awareness sessions were held on Microsoft Teams for Library staff. A small number of Communities (Aberdeen City Council) and Third Sector (Aberdeen Football Club Community Trust) staff also attended the sessions to support their work in Warm Hubs. The awareness session lasted approximately two hours depending on the interaction from participants and was comprised of short videos and infographics highlighting health inequalities across Aberdeen City to highlight the importance of MEOC as a prevention and early intervention approach. A breakout room allowed participants the opportunity to consider a delegated scenario and discuss what information could be provided and then each group fed back upon returning to the main meeting area.

Tackling Hate Crime

We are committed to developing a range of community safety initiatives. We continue to tackle hate crime through expansion of Third-Party Reporting Centres and the provision of training to teams who support those victimised by hate crimes. We also acknowledge the need to work with people to improve community safety. In 2022 we established a new youth group co-designed with children and young people, resulting in a 70% increase in the number of 10-16 year-olds attending community activities (from 40 in 2019 to 68). Three new youth groups were also established in priority neighbourhoods. Similarly, we saw a 2.6% reduction in the number of youth disorder calls to the police in 2022. Indeed, latest data shows a sustained 40% reduction in the number of under 18s identified as being responsible for an offence since 2016.



Support those affected by substance use

Raise awareness of substance service and provision

Latest Aberdeen City drug related death data shows an increase from 56 to 62 deaths in 2021. The Aberdeen City Alcohol and Drugs Partnership through its fatal drug overdose projects are focused on reducing drug related deaths through innovative developments and by increasing the distribution of naloxone. Naloxone is an emergency medication that can reverse the effects of an overdose of opioids like heroin or methadone and can save someone's life. Reviews from past drug related deaths have shown that many of those people who died were not in any drug treatment service but had come to the attention of many other services. By increasing the number of services who can distribute and administer Naloxone to those in need, we can get the lifesaving drug out to those people at risk of overdose, as well as to family members/friends of those in need. Over the past year, we have widened access to naloxone by increasing the number of non-drug and alcohol services able to supply and/or administer naloxone. We have seen increased supply of naloxone in each locality, with 226 kits supplied in the Central Locality. As well as naloxone, increasing education and access to a variety of treatments, the Partnership are taking a targeted approach, focusing on interventions and supports required at the various touchpoints. We are seeing the impact of this approach. For example, through our improvements focused on people liberated from prison we have seen a 56% reduction in drug related deaths of people liberated within 6 months.




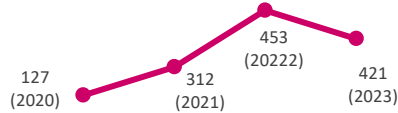








Reducing harms from alcohol use



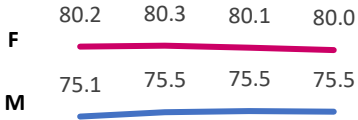
Alcohol is one of five lifestyle behavioural risk factors which contribute to the majority of chronic and non-communicable disease in our population. Throughout 2022/23 we have focused on increasing awareness of alcohol risks and widening access to alcohol interventions and support, including the development of a new alcohol audit screening tool to increase referrals for support both from professionals and individuals directly with a corresponding promotional campaign. As a result of the interventions and targeted campaigns we have seen the number of active clients with Alcohol and Drugs Action (ADA) Duty Drop-in

service in 2022/23 increase in each of the three priority neighbourhoods against the 3-year baseline. In the Central Locality, data shows a 66% increase in clients from AB24 postcodes. Other interventions ADA have taken during 2022-23 include:

- The piloting of a new referral pathway from Police to ADA
- Widening the number of settings for Alcohol Brief Interventions, including HMP Grampian
- Targeted social media campaign and subsequent levels of engagement with the 'Alcohol Aberdeen' online 'quiz'

WHAT IMPACT HAVE WE HAD IN 2022/23?

<p>Community Funding</p> <p>33 community projects in Central Locality were funded through the Health Improvement Fund.</p> 	<p>Positive destinations</p> <p>96.2% of school leavers from the Central Locality achieved an initial positive destination in 2021-22, this is similar to the 2020-21 figure of 96.5%, and higher than the Aberdeen City average of 93.8%.</p> 	<p>Young People Confidence</p> <p>41% of S1-S6 pupils reporting feeling confident compared to 35% last year.</p> 
<p>Young People Mental Health</p>  <p>No. of referrals each month to NHSG's children and adolescent mental health services have increased since 2020</p>	<p>Counselling for Young People</p> <p>100% of schools in the Central Locality offer counselling and Active School activities</p> 	<p>Working Together with Parents</p> <p>36 referrals were made to the Parents as Early Education Partners (PEEP) programme from the Central Locality in 2022.</p> 
<p>Young People Volunteering</p> <p>541 young people from the Central Locality received a Saltire Award during 2022.</p> 	<p>Healthy Eating</p> <p>11.7% of people in the Central Locality said they were unable to eat healthy and nutritious food due to poverty, compared to 16.7% in priority neighbourhoods.. 20% of people living in the locality said they ate only a few types of food. (City Voice 46, 2022)</p> 	<p>Unpaid Carers</p> <p>431 unpaid carers were supported in the Central Locality by Quarriers Adult Carer Support Service during 2022-23, this is an increase of 38.1% on 312 unpaid carers supported last year.</p> 
<p>Alcohol Awareness</p> <p>30.8% of people in the Central Locality said they didn't know how many units are in the alcoholic drinks they consume. 42.9% of people living in the Central Locality said they didn't think about units at all. (City Voice 46, 2022)</p> 	<p>Drug Related Deaths</p> <p>226 naloxone kits were supplied in the Central Locality in 2022.</p> 	<p>Drug Related Hospital Stays</p> <p>The rate of drug related hospital stays for the Central Locality in 2022 was 249.6 per 100,000. This is a slight increase from 244.3 per 100,000 of the population in 2021.</p> 

Alcohol Related Mortality Rates	Deaths from Suicide	Life Expectancy
 <p>The alcohol related mortality rate in Central Locality in 2021 was 28.87 per 100,000. This has increased since 2019 when the rate was 25.52 per 100,000 of the population.</p>	 <p>The rate of death from suicide in the Central Locality is 10.5 per 100,000, this is above the citywide average of 11.1 per 100,000 of the population. This is an improvement from 2021 where the suicide rate for Central Locality stood at 13 per 100,000 of the population.</p>	 <p>Has stayed stable in the Central Locality since 2018 for males and females. But it is lower in priority neighbourhoods at 78.1 (F) and 72.8 (M)</p>

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT 2023/24?

- Renewed focus on active and accessible Travel
- Create more opportunities for young people
- Renewed focus on promoting Healthy Weight Management
- Scale up Stay Well Stay Connected programme
- Increase the number of priority families accessing PEEP programme
- Increase the number of people attending Health Issues in the Community sessions and increase the number of trained practitioners

OUR PRIORITIES

The Central Locality Plan 2021-26 sets out one priority to improve our local place:

6. Maximise the spaces in communities to create opportunities for people to connect and increase physical activity.

WHAT PROGRESS HAVE WE MADE DURING 2022/23?



Develop resilience plans

Resilience Plans

Through our community led resilience project, led by Aberdeen City Council and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, a pilot community resilience group in Aberdeen has been established, which is composed of several local organisations. This group are currently being supported to develop a community resilience plan, this will be a flexible document that can be used as a template for further community groups, with sections that can be added and removed, depending on specific risks a particular community might have, including but not limited to flooding. Community resilience packs have been issued across community centres in the Central Locality this year. Example box contents include: small power banks for mobile devices, wind up torches and radios, head torches, table lanterns battery, load hangers, first aid kits, stationary, space blankets, hi vis vests, free standing portable emergency lights. Battery generator packs are also being provided to the 3 existing Community Resilience Groups, to assist the overall response to a power outage emergency.



Supporting outside activities

Promote and improve accessible, active travel

During the year, Aberdeen City Council, in partnership with Big Issue eBikes launched an electric bike hire scheme in the city. [Big Issue E-Bikes](#) are available in 40 locations across the city and aim to make shorter journeys easier and affordable. The scheme will also have a positive impact on our environment.

The City Voice survey found that 16.8% of people in the Central Locality had cycled in the last year compared to the citywide average of 14.8%. People in the Central Locality are most likely to cycle regularly in the city.



Develop Green Space

There are 45 food growing projects in schools, communities, and workplaces as at November 2022, an increase of 42 from February 2022. 15 of the 45 food growing projects are in the Central Locality, with 16 new community run green spaces established as at June 2022.

Woodside Wee Forest The first Wee Forest has been planted in Aberdeen thanks to the joint efforts of Aberdeen City Council’s Environmental Services team, NatureScot, and pupils and staff of Woodside Primary School. The Woodside Wee Forest will join a group of 20 such forests across Scotland which are being planted.

Led by NatureScot, the programme aims to give people the opportunity to help tackle the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss by creating and caring for their own forest in their own neighbourhood.

To create each forest, around 600 native trees will be planted by “Wee Foresters” in an area the size of a tennis court. Volunteer keeper teams will look after the forests over the long term and schools will use the forests for outdoor learning.

The 600 plants, which include alder, cherry, Scots pine, crab apple, holly, juniper, elder, willow, oak, rowan, and hazel trees along with dog roses, broom, gorse, blaeberry, heather, hawthorn, and blackthorn, have been planted by staff and pupils in a grassy area across Clifton Road from the school with help from the City Council’s Countryside Rangers.




Pupils contributed many fantastic designs for the project and the overall winner demonstrated excellent design principals which will fit the Wee Forest ideals.



Woodside Primary School created a fantastic [film](#) to accompany the launch of the wee Forest.

This is a fantastic project, and it is thanks to the efforts of everyone involved that generations to come will enjoy the benefits of these native trees which have been planted in this green space.

WHAT IMPACT HAVE WE HAD IN 2022/23?

Satisfaction with Green Space	Community Growing Spaces	Cycling
 <p>66.5% of Central Locality respondents to the City Voice survey reported being satisfied or fairly satisfied with the overall quality of green/open spaces, compared to 70.2% of people living in Tillydrone, Woodside, Seaton, Ashgrove, Stockethill and George Street. (City Voice 46, 2022)</p>	 <p>45 food growing projects happening across the Central Locality</p>	 <p>16.8% of people in the Central Locality cycled in the last year compared to the citywide average of 14.8% (City Voice 46, 2022)</p>

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT IN 2023/24

- Develop and implement innovative improvements to reduce waste and recycling opportunities
- Support communities across the Central locality to develop resilience plans



Working Together

Community Empowerment Strategy

Community Planning Aberdeen is committed to working with communities to improve outcomes across each locality and indeed the City as a whole. In 2022 we launched a new Community Empowerment Strategy setting out our vision for all communities to be equal community planning partners. A number of improvement projects are now underway to strengthen community participation in community planning and ensure they have a voice and ability to influence what happens to them and their community.



This year, we have been pleased to see the return of in-person community-based events, including two citywide events, the Community Gathering and the Granite City Gathering.



These events provided a great chance to bring our community and partners together, make connections, and share learning and opportunities. Both events were open to people across the City and were an exhibition of community information and provided a chance for attendees to wander around the stalls and learn about the different opportunities to get involved in their local community. There were 25 stall holders on the day showcasing the work they do in local communities and approximately 121 people attended the gathering. Of the registered attendees, 48.6% were from the Central Locality. You can read the Community Gathering report for more information [here](#).

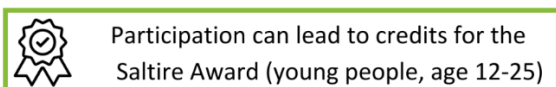
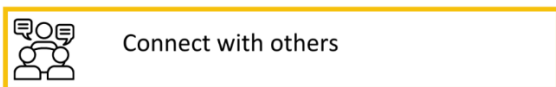
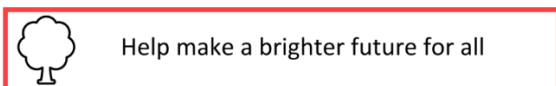
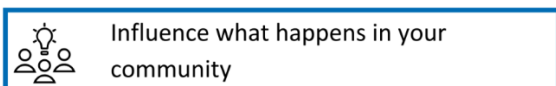
In addition to our citywide events, the Central Locality Empowerment Group (LEG) restarted on 27 April 2023, having not met since early 2022. Meetings are now held on a two monthly cycle and alternate between virtual meetings and in person meetings at a community venue. Meetings provide an opportunity for LEG members to influence and shape delivery of the Central Locality Plan and hold Community Planning Partners to account. LEGs also provide the Locality Planning Team and Outcome Improvement project managers an opportunity to involve community members in their projects and gain valuable feedback. The Woodside, Tillydrone and Seaton Priority Neighbourhood Partnership has continued to meet throughout 2022-23.



Find out more & Get Involved!

The [Central Locality Empowerment Group](#) and the [Woodside, Tillydrone and Seaton Priority Neighbourhood Partnership](#) are two of the main ways we connect with our local communities in the Central Locality. As a member of a LEG and Torry Partnership you will be able to provide a voice on behalf of the people and communities across your neighbourhood.

What's in it for you?



Following a recent training session provided by SCDC in partnership with ACC/AHSCP, the community had this to say about community engagement:

"Talk to us and talk to us early. Don't make decisions and then get it approved by us. Communities have knowledge and skills to know what's best for us. We're the local experts about our places"

"Community Engagement is where people grow"

If you are interested in getting involved in helping achieve these aims in your local community, follow this link to find out more: [Our Communities - Community Planning Aberdeen](#) or email localityplanning@aberdeencity.gov.uk.

Further Information

We understand the importance of working with communities to build a thriving environment for everyone. By engaging with local communities through our dedicated locality planning team, we aim to become more receptive, supportive and action-oriented. Community input is extremely valuable to this work.

The Locality Planning Team includes staff from Aberdeen City Council and the Aberdeen City Health and Social Care partnership working together to support improved outcome across all our localities and neighbourhoods. In the Central Locality your locality planning contacts are Iain, Jade, Graham and Chris.



Iain Robertson,
Transformation Programme
Manager, Aberdeen City Health and
Social Care Partnership



Jade Leyden,
Community Development Manager,
Aberdeen City Council



Graham Donald, Community
Development Officer, Aberdeen City
Council



Chris Smillie, Public Health Coordinator, ACHSCP

Please take a moment to complete this [survey](#) and let us know how we can enhance our service delivery and collaboration with you. Together we can make a positive impact and create a place where all people can prosper.

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