



Blair Atholl Community Action Plan: Looking to 2030

Compiled Summer 2023

Supported by

Blair Atholl & Struan Community Council

Blair Atholl & Struan Initiative

Blair Atholl Village Hall

Blair Atholl Primary School

Blair Atholl Country Life Museum

Atholl Estates

Local Businesses

Facilitated by Voluntary Action in Badenoch and Strathspey



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I. Summary

In January 2023, Blair Atholl & Struan Community Council, together with Blair Atholl & Struan Initiative, Blair Atholl Village Hall, Blair Atholl Primary School, Blair Atholl Country Life Museum, Atholl Estates and local businesses, decided that they wished to carry out a review of the community action plan for the village, which had been previously undertaken in 2014. The purpose of revisiting and updating the plan was primarily aimed at giving these key community organisations, along with a range of other groups in the village, plus public and private sector stakeholders, a strong mandate to move forward with tackling current and emerging issues, as well as leading on new community projects, identified as priorities by the residents and businesses of Blair Atholl & Struan during the process in spring 2023.

With support from Voluntary Action in Badenoch & Strathspey, the community-led steering group, comprising representation from the organisations listed above, agreed that they would seek the views of local residents and businesses on a number of key questions. This was achieved via a survey which was personally delivered to every household by volunteers - as a paper copy, which was also accessible online. In addition, the questions contained in the survey were also raised with some targeted groups that were identified as being harder to get accurate/quality information from. This was undertaken by members of the steering group going out with the survey questions to places and events where it was considered that individuals or groups falling into this category might be approached.

The process was entitled **Blair Atholl & Struan Community Action Plan: Looking to 2030**. In previous action planning carried out by the community, the focus was on activity mostly lasting up to a 5-year span. Given the increased need now to also focus on longer-term goals, particularly in relation to the environment and the economy, residents and businesses were asked to consider where they and the community wanted to be by 2030, so generating, more or less, an 8-year set of plans and aspirations.

Examples of **Blair Atholl & Struan's recent successes** with community projects and action planning include:

1. Upgrade to the Village Hall
2. Increased free public toilet provision
3. Community orchard in the park
4. More floral displays
5. Improvements to Struan caravan site
6. Social lunches in the Hall
7. Work starting on community garden

To help add to these achievements, residents were encouraged to take part in the community action plan review in 2023. However, this time round people were invited to think not only about what might be achieved together, but that the projects the village was being asked to consider, would be ones that would help Blair Atholl & Struan develop a more sustainable future. This is set against a backdrop of life post-Covid, the challenge of finding new volunteers plus the changing economic and climate situation we find ourselves in.

The Blair Atholl & Struan community action planning process adhered to the National Standards for Community Engagement to ensure all of the following elements were fully taken into account during the community-led initiative:
Impact, Communication, Methods, Working together, Planning, Support and Inclusion.

See [Section 4. Community Engagement](#) for further details on the 7 Standards.

2. The Community

Blair Atholl is located in Highland Perthshire, and built about the confluence of the Rivers Tilt and Garry in one of the few areas of flat land in the midst of the Grampian Mountains. The Gaelic place-name Blair, from blàr, 'field, plain', refers to this location. Blair Atholl incorporates Struan, Calvine and Bruar and is a somewhat unique place in the Cairngorms National Park, as here the countryside, economy and community are greatly influenced by Blair Castle and its related activities through Atholl Estates. This ancient seat of the Dukes and Earls of Atholl with its private army, is probably one of the best known of the Scottish castles and the magnificent building is an iconic centrepiece in this landscape.

The characterful village of Blair Atholl sits in a traditional rural setting where hill farming is an ongoing occupation and this is echoed in its visitor attractions and architecture. The Atholl Country Life Museum in the village has displays on the social history of the area and can be visited throughout the season. The proximity of the much acclaimed House of Bruar retail outlet, provides the area with a second major employer as well as an additional draw for tourists who are the cornerstone of the community's economy.

The river Garry flows through the heart of the area, linking the communities together and it is clear that this area has a rich military history, much of it central to Scotland's history. The community is keen to maintain its traditional character, evident in the look and layout of the main street, the village hall, the ancient watermill and the Atholl Arms Hotel.

Blair Atholl residents and in particular those involved in tourist sector businesses, also recognise the need however for ongoing growth in housing, job opportunities for younger people and the strengthening of the trade sector involving service and tourist industries, which is a challenge particularly due to the bounding nature of the local geography (River Tilt) and the conservation status the whole village enjoys within the estate walls.

Residents see themselves as self-reliant with a strong sense of community and a 'do it ourselves' attitude, in no small part due to their being slightly distant from other settlements. Local businesses promote Blair Atholl as the gateway to the Cairngorms National Park which they feel increases its tourism potential significantly.

In looking to the future, residents want to enjoy a balanced community life with an adequate number of families and facilities retained in the village. Businesses want their brand of tourism to meet the needs and expectations of a competitive market, keeping the local

economy buoyant and well maintained. This together with a continued strong connection with the land will in turn ensure that Blair Atholl continues to thrive as a viable community.

Community Organisations

There are a considerable number of community organisations/groups which work for the benefit of the community and are almost entirely run by volunteers. These include: Blair Atholl & Struan Community Council, Blair Atholl & Struan Initiative, Blair Atholl Village Hall, Blair Atholl Country Life Museum and Blair Atholl Primary School Parent Council, amongst others.

Community Assets

Village Hall (recently refurbished to a high standard)
Memorial Park including play area and sports pitch
Public Toilets

Local Businesses

There are numerous local businesses, across many sectors, operating out of the Blair Atholl / Bridge of Tilt area, which over many years have been extremely well represented by The Atholl Glens (TAG), the local business/tourism association. At the time of compiling this report, the TAG committee and website are under review in order to evaluate how best to advertise and support the community.

Blair Atholl & Struan businesses include hotel and self-catering accommodation, gift and food outlets. A number of tradespeople, together with farmers, crofters, people employed on estates and carrying out other kinds of environmental work plus artisan industries make up the working heart of this community.

So there is a lot to appreciate about Blair Atholl, this picturesque Highland Perthshire village of approximately 600 people.

3. The Process

The Blair Atholl & Struan community consultation period ran from March to June 2023 and during this time, the way in which the community action planning process was carried out, broadly fell into four stages. These were:

- 1) Gathering Information
- 2) Data Sorting and Collation
- 3) Involving People & Refining Ideas
- 4) Community Action Plan (CAP) document production

Within the four stages of the process, the following questions were asked by the steering group.

Gathering Information

- What do we want to know?
- What questions will we ask?
- What methods will we use?
- How will we do it?

Data Sorting

- What does it involve?
- How will we do it?
- Who will do / assist with this?
- In what form will we present it back to the community?

Involving People & Refining Ideas

- What stakeholder groups do we need to involve?
- How (& where) will we present the information gathered so far?
- How will people in the community help refine the information?
- Who will assist with this?

CAP document production

- What will it include?
- Who will put it together?
- How will it be presented to the community?
- What happens to it next?

In addition, the steering group also considered what timescales and key dates they wanted to aim for and how they would deal with communications & publicity - ensuring that these elements were robust, so the process was as inclusive as it could be.

The fifth and most crucial stage of the whole action planning initiative, involves delivery of the plan by the Blair Atholl & Struan community and other stakeholders. Essentially this deals with questions such as:

- Who will take responsibility for the CAP?
- How will it be driven forward?
- How will it be monitored and evaluated?

There is more detail on how this can be achieved in [Section 7. Next Steps](#).

Gathering Information

There was a lot of discussion about the nature and precise wording of questions in the survey, as the steering group wanted to revisit questions asked in previous community-led action planning, to re-establish what specific things people liked about Blair Atholl & Struan and wanted to keep in the community. They also wished to encourage the community to look to an 8 to 10-year horizon, and consider how it might tackle some of the trickier issues such as care for the environment, supporting younger and older residents, employability and transport. So questions were employed which were broadly framed, to allow responders to bring up a wide range of issues and ideas without being led.

The paper version covered just two sides of A4 and the survey asked 3 questions:

- 1) *What do you like about living in Blair Atholl & Struan?*
- 2) *What changes would you like to see for the community by 2030?*

(Perhaps consider how as individuals, or as a community, we can improve the environment, address the climate emergency, develop our local economy, increase social and leisure opportunities and widen local cultural experiences)

If you could improve just ONE of these things, what would it be?

- 3) *Are there any new projects (large or small) that you would like to see happening in the community? Or any existing projects that need to be sustained?*

The survey also asked:

Would you be willing to get involved in any projects you are interested in? YES / NO

If Yes, please provide contact details.

This last additional question was included to try to encourage more people to come forward to help with projects that were of particular interest to them, in order to counteract the reduction in volunteer numbers, that had come about in recent years and especially following the pandemic.

It was decided that all households would receive a paper copy of the survey through their letterbox and this was carried out by a team of community volunteers, who over a period of a few days, delivered 280 copies out into the community. This method helped to deliver an inclusive process of community engagement, where everyone had the opportunity to respond to the survey if they wished and they were able to do this via hard copy, which could be deposited back into one of the centrally located survey boxes, or online via QR code which enabled the community to access the survey on a range of devices.

Data Sorting

All of the responses came in either online via Survey Monkey, by hard copy into CAP-branded boxes left at locations in the village, or from information collated at events put on for specific groups in the village. Surveys were returned from the community's school pupils and these responses highlighted the ideas and opinions of young people living in the area.

Every comment was recorded and categorised, so that everyone would be able to 'see' their voice in the displayed results. The information was sorted into 3 main themes: Social, Environmental and Economic and the number of times a particular issue or idea was mentioned was noted, so priorities could rise to the top of the lists in each themed category. These lists were then prepared for display (see [Section 6. Action Plan – what the community wants](#) and [Section 9. Appendices](#)), so every member of the community could see what had been said and get involved in the next stage, when ideas were refined and solutions to issues sought.

Involving People & Refining Ideas

The process culminated in **Blair Atholl & Struan's Big Conversation**, which took place over a full day in June 2023 at the Blair Atholl Village Hall. At this 10 hour drop in event, the results were offered back to the community and time given for reflection and discussion around the topics. During the day, all of the residents who attended were asked to consider the top priorities that had been identified from the process under the headings of Blair Atholl & Struan:

- A Socially Connected Community
- A Climate Conscious Community
- An Economically Thriving Community

They were asked to look at those areas of particular interest to them and write on action plan templates aimed at refining ideas by looking at questions such as: *What specific action needs to be taken to achieve this priority* and *Who needs to be involved?*

CAP document production

All of the comments and pieces of information given by the public during the Big Conversation event were collected and incorporated into this report, which now belongs to the Blair Atholl & Struan community and will be used as the basis for ongoing community development in the village over the next 10 years, with support from the community's organisations and all other relevant stakeholders from the public, private and voluntary sector.

Also a list of all those who came forward offering to volunteer their help with certain projects was compiled and will be held by the team taking the action plan forward (referred to as **Team Blair Atholl** for the purposes of this report).

4. Community Engagement

The National Standards for Community Engagement are good-practice principles designed to improve and guide the process of community engagement.

They are clear principles that describe the main elements of effective community engagement. They provide detailed performance statements that everyone involved can use to achieve the highest quality results and the greatest impact.

The standards are particularly helpful for communities - their organisations and groups - to help them involve their members or the wider community in shaping the services and changes they need, and to make sure they accurately represent members' or the community's views in the decision-making processes.



5. Survey Responses

Thanks go to the 136 residents and businesses in the Blair Atholl & Struan area who contributed so meaningfully and thoughtfully to the community survey – this number represents 23.4% of the community's population and includes responses from school age residents. Also to the 37 people who attended the Big Conversation drop-in event at the village hall.

For a full list of what came out of the survey responses, see [Section 9. Appendices](#) (list of appendices below). These show all comments made by the community in answer to the survey questions, prioritised in order of the number of people who mentioned them.

Appendix i What do you like about living in Blair Atholl & Struan

Appendix ii What changes would you like to see for the community by 2030?



Drawings done by Blair Atholl Primary School pupils to show what they like about living here.

6. Action Plan – what the community wants

Project Themes and Priorities

The CAP sets out the community's vision for the longer term (up to 10 years) with more detailed activity across the 3 specified themes:

- A Socially Connected Community
- A Climate Conscious Community
- An Economically Thriving Community

itemising priority outcomes and actions which are shown in the relevant tables below.

It is important to note that some of the project outcomes will be a “quick win” whereas others will sometimes take significantly more time to plan and execute. To achieve results and outcomes in the short, medium/longer term each high priority project/outcome will have its own activity plan which will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely (SMART) and determined and agreed in the first part of the CAP implementation.

The 3 themes were taken and put into separate groupings, showing what the priorities are for each theme. Within each priority, projects have been listed that have been drawn from the high priorities that came out of the survey data. Further views and information for each priority were sought from those who attended the drop-in events and suggested actions, together with any additional information are outlined below each section.

BLAIR ATHOLL: A SOCIALLY CONNECTED COMMUNITY

Priority: Sustainable public transport provision

- To continue lobbying for better provision of bus & train services for community
- Explore possibility of Dial-A-Bus scheme (community-run?)

Priority: Having affordable places to live

- Investment in more affordable housing for local people to rent or buy, new or existing stock or vacant property
- Investigate community-owned options for housing development

Priority: Sustainable community spaces, delivering for community needs

- Memorial Park: invest in the space for future generations through accessible paths, upgrade of activity areas and planting. Establish 'Friends of the Park'?
- Develop social opportunities for community to come together after Covid
- BA Village Hall: further develop what's on offer and increase usage
- BA Railway station: preservation of building and improve surroundings/road

Priority: Access to quality Health Care

- Create a co-ordinated health care strategy for access to GP and nursing care

PRIORITY: SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC TRANSPORT PROVISION

To continue lobbying for better provision of bus & train services for the community

- More train stops at BA
- Service from BA to Pitlochry with return at reasonable times
- Explore ways of better integration between bus and rail services
- Direct service from village to Perth (bus station?) at least once a week
- Better maintenance of bus stops & access to timetables

Explore possibility of Dial-A-Bus scheme (community-run?)

- See if Pitlochry community bus can be used/shared/borrowed at some times each week, or if there is a possibility to run something more locally

PRIORITY: HAVING AFFORDABLE PLACES TO LIVE

Investment in more affordable housing for local people to rent or buy, new or existing stock or vacant property

- Provision of dedicated accommodation for key workers in health and education
- Also for provision of accommodation to encourage support for local businesses who are offering employment opportunities
- Ensure there are legal conditions in place to prevent housing reverting to open market, so becoming lost as 'affordable' housing for the village
- Identify which properties are vacant or derelict and contact owners to try and bring back into use – see Economic Priority I

Investigate community-owned options for housing development

- Work with CNPA, PKC and Communities Housing Trust to explore possibilities to purchase land at reasonable price

PRIORITY: SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY SPACES, DELIVERING FOR COMMUNITY NEEDS

Memorial Park: invest in the space for future generations through accessible paths, upgrade of activity areas and planting

- Establish 'Friends of the Park'
- Explore with park users to map out where all suggestions might be sited in the park

Develop social opportunities for community to come together after Covid

- Identify people in village who might help deliver community events in line with their skills/interests
- Start a Youth Club for after school activities
- Add to the 'Voices of Atholl' project
- Consider community competitions to engage our children and young people

BA Village Hall: further develop what's on offer and increase usage

- Increase facilities to enable locals to enjoy sports in the hall
- Provide internet connection
- Provide more disabled facilities eg toilets

BA Railway station: preservation of building and improve surroundings/road

- Establish a working group to explore possible uses of building for community use
- Continue to investigate ownership / improvements for station road

PRIORITY: ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTH CARE

Create a co-ordinated health care strategy for access to GP and nursing care

- Provide an occasional local surgery (if permanent re-opening is not feasible) eg a weekly mobile surgery in the village or church hall
- Mobile unit for flu vaccinations and baby clinic

BLAIR ATHOLL: A CLIMATE CONSCIOUS COMMUNITY

Priority: Improve village's visual appearance

- Resolve The Lade issue: rebuild the weir
- Tidy, clean, paint in The Square
- Fix pot-holed roads and damaged walls
- Regular litter picks

Priority: Active Travel

- Crossing bridge over the Tilt – improve for pedestrians and cyclists
- Better path network linking Blair Atholl to House of Bruar
- Path extension to Calvine
- Improve footpaths around village for all abilities, incl. to 'Wasted Degrees' bar
- Replace/repair footbridge on west bank of River Tilt, adjacent to caravan park
- Continue to allow Rights of Way & make accessible at Caravan site at Struan
- Handrail at steps at east end of river bridge

Priority: Allow Nature to thrive

- Improve biodiversity at various locations: more planting and awareness raising

PRIORITY: IMPROVE VILLAGE'S VISUAL APPEARANCE

Resolve The Lade issue: rebuild the weir

- Work with the Estate and PKC to put pressure on SEPA

Tidy, clean, paint in The Square

- Support convenience store to improve external appearance
- More dog waste bins and signage
- Clear kerbs of rubbish and weeds

Fix pot-holed roads and damaged walls

- Resolve tarmacking issue leading to station & improve with floral displays. Explore community takeover of approach road to ensure improvements

Regular litter picks

- Way to get more people involved – younger people? Ask for support from Atholl Ranger Service

PRIORITY: ACTIVE TRAVEL

Crossing bridge over the Tilt – improve for pedestrians and cyclists

- Establish a better system for walkers and cyclists to cross
- Traffic lights to control traffic

Better path network

- Linking Blair Atholl to House of Bruar
- Path extensions from Blair Atholl to Calvine & also to Pitlochry (safer access to and on cycle path)
- Footpaths around village for all abilities, including to ‘Wasted Degrees’ bar
- Restore Right of Way at Struan Caravan site – replace removed stile
- See village trails under Economic Priority 2
- Replace/repair footbridge on west bank of River Tilt, adjacent to caravan park
- Install a handrail at steps at east end of river bridge

PRIORITY: ALLOW NATURE TO THRIVE

Improve biodiversity at various locations: more planting and awareness raising

- More wildflower planting
- Install community bird feeders at key locations
- Village ‘Open Gardens’ week
- Illustrated information boards on local wildlife
- Estates to maintain access to walks
- Develop community garden / wildflower meadow at park
- Local wildlife group – offering talks to increase awareness
- Tourism Management Strategy to protect environment

BLAIR ATHOLL: AN ECONOMICALLY THRIVING COMMUNITY

Priority: Bring vacant buildings back into use

- Invest in old buildings/sites (school/garage/surgery) for community benefit

Priority: Increase opportunities to attract tourism and business to the local area

- Continue lobbying for completion of A9 dualling (road safety improvements)
- Refurbishment of Round House & Tilt Hotel to be completed
- Improve visitor information across village and at House of Bruar / Pitlochry, to bring more people into the village to attractions and for things to do
- Village trail for visitors

Priority: Improve opportunities for local employment / businesses

- Explore options for increased childcare provision in area
- Continue upgrade of digital connectivity for residents and businesses

PRIORITY: BRING VACANT BUILDINGS BACK INTO USE

Invest in old buildings/sites for community benefit

- BA railway station
- Struan Primary (address ownership ie PKC (building) & estate (land))
- Manse
- Calvine Primary
- Estate houses (unused)
- Financial support for the community to renovate with eco-friendly features – role for BAASI?

PRIORITY: INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES TO ATTRACT TOURISM & BUSINESS TO LOCAL AREA

Continue lobbying for completion of A9 dualling (road safety improvements)

Refurbishment of Round House & Tilt Hotel to be completed

- Support owners to complete

Improve visitor information across village and at House of Bruar / Pitlochry, to bring more people into the village to attractions and for things to do

- Seek support from CNPA and Cairngorms Business Partnership on how to do this
- Regenerate TAG
- More specific tourism signage off the A9 for the village – not just Bruar

- Work on identity/USP for the village – make it different from Pitlochry

Village trail for visitors

- Replace maps in village (TAG?)
- Develop nature trails in and around BA
- Look into a trail similar to the wildcat trail in Newtonmore – with a different (local) focus

PRIORITY: IMPROVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL EMPLOYMENT / BUSINESSES

Explore options for increased childcare provision in area

- Engage with residents and businesses to discover extent and type of need
- Explore possible childcare providers in area
- Could village hall be used as a centre for this during work hours?

Continue upgrade of digital connectivity for residents and businesses

- More EV charging points

7. Next Steps: Delivery

Steps to deliver the Blair Atholl & Struan Community Action Plan

The next steps to start working with the action plan and looking at how parts can start to be delivered will be subject to some discussion within Blair Atholl & Struan's community organisations, but broadly involves **collectively**:

- Setting up a *Team Blair Atholl* (see below) to take the plan forward. Agreeing a chair for a specified period at a time, so will rotate after X months or after X meetings
- Agreeing to adopt the Values and Principles laid out below
- Agreeing what priorities will be taken forward initially
- Managing the project volunteer list that has come out of the process
- Involving all key stakeholders (organisations & individuals) in co-design of project delivery
- Drawing up a more detailed delivery action plan for each prioritised project, identifying aims, actions, milestones, who needs to be involved, key deliverables. (VABS has a template for this.)
- Communicating progress with the community
- Reviewing progress on a regular basis
- Revisiting the action plan as required

Values and Principles

The following values and principles will underpin the way in which this action plan is rolled out and implemented:

- 1) A plan for all - it is the responsibility of the whole community (individuals and groups) to unite and work together for project ambitions to be realised

- 2) Transparency - all ideas should be planned and researched openly with a commitment to co-production where groups contribute to the ideas as they develop
- 3) Partnership - working together with a shared agenda will be at the heart of any activity arising from this plan
- 4) Inclusion - everyone is invited to participate and everyone benefits, regardless of age and ability
- 5) Impact - the success of this plan will be judged on activities which have a positive influence on people and communities
- 6) Involvement - ensuring the community is meaningfully involved in decisions that affect their lives.

Team Blair Atholl

It is very important to ensure the effective delivery of this action plan, for the whole community to work together to implement it, ie a full village approach not just one or two organisations. This approach has been called *Team Blair Atholl* in this report, but of course the community will decide on its own name for these purposes.

Team Blair Atholl will be the forum for agreeing on how the Steps at the start of this section are taken forward, as well as where responsibility will sit in terms of delivering on the Values and Principles outlined above. It will not have a separate legal identity, but simply be a forum called maybe two or three times a year, perhaps by a rotating chair. It should comprise as a minimum, representatives from the 6 organisations who initially steered the action planning process, together with any other community organisations who wish to be involved.

Ongoing community engagement

A process for securing community mandates for projects at key milestones is advisable, so that projects can enjoy broad community support, follow best practice in terms of co-design and allow for those who will be most impacted by a project's deliverables to be involved in the activity.

Volunteer lists

A list of people who have come forward to volunteer in general or for specific projects, has been compiled from a question in the survey and also information given by residents at the Big Conversation event. The Blair Atholl & Struan CAP Volunteer list is a vital part of delivering on the action planning process and those on the list need to be kept informed of how things are being progressed and what part they might be able to play in that.

Levels of Support

The surveys have given the key community organisations in Blair Atholl & Struan, a lot of detailed information coming from a wide sector of the community, regarding their thoughts on issues and ideas for projects that they would like to see taken forward on their behalf.

The priorities fall into two main groups and will require to be tackled in a different way:

- projects which, although some are mid to longer term, are possible for the community to take forward themselves, with some minimal support from the relevant key agencies or support organisations.
- large, complex issues around employment, housing, transport, business support and infrastructure, where the community will require a great deal of long term assistance from various public, third and sometimes private sector organisations in order to take these forward and make a notable difference.

Monitoring, Auditing and Evaluation of the Community Action Plan

Monitoring, auditing and evaluation are essential requirements of any Community Action Plan to ensure it is being implemented. **Team Blair Atholl** will meet regularly to review progress on the plan. Keeping records against each theme and project will be a useful tool to ensure progress is being maintained. These meetings will be open and accessible to all groups and individuals. Evaluation provides an opportunity to reflect and learn from activities, assess the outcomes and effectiveness of a project and think about new ways of doing things.

8. Thanks & Acknowledgements

Thanks for all their involvement and hard work in helping to make the process a success must go to:

- * Blair Atholl & Struan Community Council
- * Blair Atholl & Struan Initiative
- * Blair Atholl Village Hall
- * Blair Atholl Primary School
- * Blair Atholl Country Life Museum
- * Atholl Estates
- * Local Businesses
- * All the delivery volunteers who put surveys through every household's door

Voluntary Action in Badenoch and Strathspey (VABS), as an independent community and volunteering development charity, supported the Blair Atholl & Struan community through this community action planning process and facilitated the steering group meetings, but always following the community's lead in how they wished to proceed.

Community Action Planning (CAP) is carried out with all of the Cairngorms National Park communities on a regular basis at the community's request.

Funding to VABS to facilitate the communities' CAP process is provided by the Cairngorms National Park Authority.

9. Appendices

Appendix i

What do you like about living in Blair Atholl & Struan?

- Safe & peaceful place with strong sense of community, pleasant for all ages
- Friendliness of people, great neighbours, close to family
- Peaceful rural living, access to beautiful scenery, stunning countryside, landscape & beautiful views
- Well connected to rest of the country: North & South via A9, bus & rail links
- The close access to outdoors/nature and native mixture of trees / forests, especially along river Tilt
- Exceptionally good facilities eg fuel pumps, restaurants, small local shops and House of Bruar
- Easy parking & beautiful walks available
- Slow pace of life, quiet
- Surrounded by historic attractions (Blair Castle & Water Mill) and lovely historic architecture
- Beautiful place to live
- Good things for tourists to do and great scope for increased tourism
- School is great & children can walk to primary school, lots of outdoor learning
- MPs and MSPs make themselves visible and available
- Superfast broadband is very positive for the area (individuals, families and businesses)
- Land management and conservation work of Atholl Estates and others in area has created a working countryside, which is also pleasant for leisure
- Free from pollution
- Good response of emergency services to incidents on A9
- Award winning garage and service station
- Holiday park facilities open to general public
- It's been home most of my life
- Provision of community rangers during & post Covid pandemic has been positive for visitors to understand how to respect and enjoy the area
- The microbrewery

Appendix ii

What changes would you like to see for the community by 2030?

ECONOMIC

- Restore closed and deteriorating buildings: Struan primary, Calvine petrol station, BA doctor's surgery (use for accommodation or other community benefit?)
- Continue lobbying Scottish Executive to complete dualling the A9
- Round House to be completed and refurbishment of Tilt Hotel (or use for housing)
- Explore possibilities for increased childcare provision in the area for pre-nursery ages
- Keep supporting the range of shopping options in Blair Atholl & Bridge of Tilt

- Continued upgrade of digital connectivity for residents and businesses
- Concerted efforts to attract visitors into village from Pitlochry & House of Bruar
- Improve visitor information across the village - local attractions and things to do
- Village trail for visitors (scarecrows in gardens?)

CULTURAL

- Support / extend the Atholl Country Museum
- More diversity in cultural heritage tourism (beyond Victorian & Jacobite periods) – use our Pictish period skeleton?

ENVIRONMENTAL

- Resolve the (dry) Lade issue / rebuild the weir: CNPA, MSP, Atholl Estates support and SEPA cooperation
- Improve safe Active Travel on paths and roadways:
 - Crossing bridge over the Tilt – improve for pedestrians and cyclists
 - Better path network linking Blair Atholl to House of Bruar
 - Path extension to Calvine
 - Improve footpaths around village for all abilities, including footpath to ‘Wasted Degrees’ bar
 - Replace/repair the footbridge on the west bank of the River Tilt, adjacent to the caravan park
 - Continue to allow Rights of Way established over years & make them accessible at the Caravan site at Struan
 - Handrail at steps at east end of river bridge
- Fix the uneven or severely pot-holed roads and damaged walls
- Improve approach to railway station adjacent to Hotel - resolve the issue of ownership and tarmac it
- Tidy up around garage, shop next to Atholl Arms, clean and paint in the Square
- Allow nature to thrive:
 - Grass verge at Bridge of Tilt - leave a strip of wildflowers and grass for pollinators and biodiversity
 - More fruit trees in community orchard (cherry, plum, pear)
 - Floral Displays are great - develop/sponsor even further
 - Raise awareness of adders/lizards/slow worms in area
- Regular litter picks in village and from A9 / Reduce dog fouling
- Accessible public toilet provision especially at Bridge of Tilt car park
- Bring back annual Floral/Veg/Craft festival, introduce Open Gardens Day
- Increase diversity of land ownership / reduce control of large land owners / bring more into community ownership
- Clearway at Struan is useful but not always adhered to - good to build on this, more patrols by traffic wardens?
- Reduce deer numbers to aid habitat recovery / More investment for re-wilding and animal conservation
- More EV chargers in village and surrounding area

SOCIAL

- Upgrade public transport links by lobbying for more train stops at Blair Atholl and improve bus services, especially for later in the day. Explore a (community?) Dial A Bus option
- Invest in affordable housing:
 - For families to stay in area and to accommodate employees
 - Without destroying the character of the village
 - Enable housing stock to remain in perpetuity for those resident in the area (particularly relevant to 'affordable housing' that might otherwise become easy to afford second/third homes)
 - Larger estates (Atholl & Lude) encouraged to create their own housing developments or to consider selling pockets of land for community-led small housing developments
 - Look into how more rentable property can be made available
- 2023 is the 70th anniversary of the Memorial Park being gifted to the community - invest in the space for future generations:
 - Upgrade and maintain play park (more for toddlers)
 - An all-weather (covered) play/sports facility for young people in the area (multi-use games area)
 - Clean up tennis court, make accessible and open up
 - Re-mark out football pitch and maintain goalposts for regular football matches
 - Create more planting of trees, wildflower habitat and sensory area (outwith grass cutting areas)
 - Increase path network in park
 - More use of outdoor communal areas for fitness, clubs, bowling green
 - Friends of the Park group to support specific projects and activities
- Continue to offer opportunities for community to come together: social, leisure, volunteering occasions. Musical events (open up 'tent' again), ceilidhs, courses and talks, walking / cycling group, touring arts/concerts, climate café, Christmas market, games night, festivals across the community, community lunches, coffee corner, sport and health activities, accessible to all to reduce social isolation. **Need for a well-supported social committee drawn from across the community if even some of these are to get delivered.**
- Further develop and increase use of Village Hall: volunteers for more support and to help with events, install Wi-Fi, disabled access and disabled toilets, improve acoustics, overnight stays (scout groups) with upgraded facilities
- Better access to local health care services (GP and District Nurse) - create co-ordinated health care strategy
- Preservation of Blair Atholl train station building
- Improve area around railway station
- Retain/improve education opportunities & facilities (primary/secondary)
- Gritting of pavements in the winter
- Renew graphics on village noticeboard
- 20 mph throughout the village
- Improve communication about what is going on in the village, use of social media
- Events on climate emergency for community – what can we do?
- A place to trade items eg Buy Swap Sell.

- Introduce a tool library, book swap
- Support primary school with polytunnel learning and use
- Support elderly community by including them in Christmas events
- Better policing of travellers (and locals) stopping in inappropriate areas
- Concerts at Food in the Park to continue
- Address cold-calling to safeguard older residents (community safety initiative?)
- Revive galas and sales in the park, involve the Pipe Band
- More activities provided by Atholl Estates that community can participate in