

Dores and Essich Community Action Plan A vision of our future 2024 – 2034

Commissioned by Dores and Essich Community Council
Funded by Statkraft
Prepared by: Impact Hub Inverness



June 2024

Table of Contents

<u>1. INTRODUCTION – ABOUT THIS PLAN.....</u>	<u>3</u>
1.1 ABOUT THE DORES AND ESSICH AREA	3
<u>2. THE CURRENT LOCAL CONTEXT – THE COMMUNITY</u>	<u>4</u>
2.1 POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLDS.....	5
2.2 HOUSEHOLD SPACES.....	7
2.3 TRANSPORT.....	8
2.4 ECONOMIC ACTIVITY	9
2.5 HEALTH	10
2.6 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND GROUPS	10
2.7. TOURISM.....	10
<u>3. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION.....</u>	<u>11</u>
3.1 WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID	12
3.1.1 THE POSITIVE ASPECTS ABOUT LIVING IN THE DORES AND ESSICH AREA	12
3.1.2 CHALLENGES IN THE DORES AND ESSICH AREA, NOW AND IN THE NEXT 5-10 YEARS.....	13
3.1.3 COMMUNITY PRIORITIES FOR THE FUTURE.....	17
3.1.4 DORES BEACH.....	19
3.1.5 OTHER THINGS PEOPLE WOULD LIKE TO SEE.....	21
3.2 LOCAL SCHOOL CHILDREN – WHAT THEY SAID	22
3.3 STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS.....	23
<u>4. COMMUNITY PRIORITY ACTIONS - THE NEXT 10 YEARS</u>	<u>25</u>
<u>5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</u>	<u>39</u>
<u>APPENDIX ONE – COMMUNITY SURVEY.....</u>	<u>40</u>
<u>APPENDIX TWO - COMMUNITY GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS CONTACTED.....</u>	<u>45</u>
<u>APPENDIX THREE - DROP-IN DAY COMMENTS.....</u>	<u>46</u>

1. Introduction – About this Plan

This community action plan is the result of extensive consultation and engagement with people in the Dores and Essich Community Council area (hereafter referred to as the Dores and Essich area). Commissioned by Dores and Essich Community Council (DECC), the purpose of this plan is to:

- Gather existing views of the community - Local people are the best source of knowledge about their communities, which leads to better decision-making.
- Understand the community's priorities and aspirations for the future.
- Set out the main – and most viable – priorities for the community to take forward over the coming 10 years.

The aims of the commission are to generate a 10-year Community Action Plan (CAP) with the community and with DECC, establishing what services, facilities and buildings are feasible and have the community's support to meet the aspirations of the people of the Dores and Essich area. The timing of the Plan's development is important given the proposed large-scale renewable energy project that is planned for the area, and the opportunities and challenges that this presents.

While the document itself may have the DECC name on it, its contents reflect what has been – and still is – a collaborative community journey. This also reflects what happens next, as it is outwith the scope of DECC's remit to take these initiatives forward on its own. But it gives DECC and others a mandate to represent the views of the community and to influence other key players in the area. It will also give guidance to DECC to enable and support other groups and organisations to take on and run with activities of their own.

Accordingly, our vision for the Dores and Essich areas is to cultivate a vibrant, resilient, and sustainable community that cherishes its natural resources, supports its people, enhances infrastructure and amenities and fosters strong community spirit through collaborative effort.

1.1 About the Dores and Essich area

The Dores and Essich area lies southwest of Inverness, starting at Torbreck and running along the shore of Loch Ness. Dores is the main settlement in the area, located approximately in the mid-point, and 10km from Inverness. It stretches northeast of the loch to encompass the settlements of Scaniport and Essich. Its total population was approximately 360, and an adult population of 285, in the 2011 Census¹. There has been a small amount of new housing construction since, suggesting the population may have grown. Over the last ten years or so, the school roll in the local primary school, Aldourie, has seen some degree of variation, going from 31 in 2012, dipping down to 22 in 2015, then rising to 31 again in 2020. It is now back down at 23.

¹ Taken from the current available [Scottish Government census data](#). 2022 census data is not yet publicly available at community council level but should be available through Highland Council by the end of 2024.

From 2006-2013, Clune Farm at Dores was the site of a music festival, RockNess, which saw between 20,000 and 35,000 festival goers visit for 1-3 days. As part of the festival arrangements, a community benefit fund was established, and this was administered by the Dores Community Development Trust, an organisation set up for this purpose. Although the festival ceased over ten years ago, the Trust continues to make available small grants to support community initiatives as well as education bursaries to local young people.

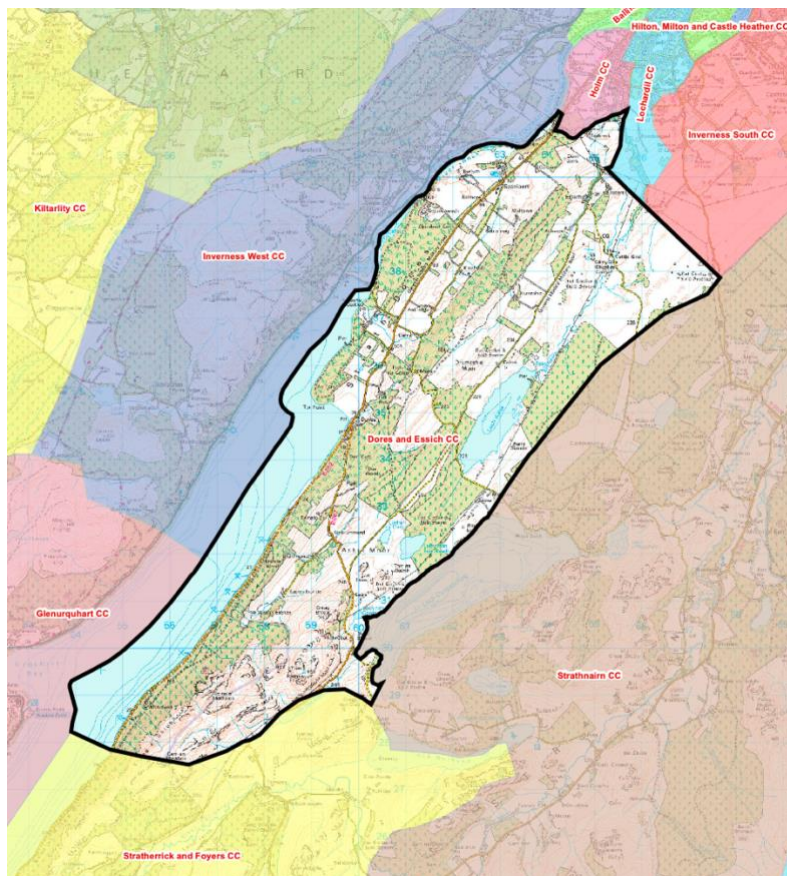
The area has a number of important local assets - both natural and built - including a community-owned village hall in Dores. There is a primary school just outside of Dores, in Aldourie. In terms of services, other than a gift shop and a local pub (Dores Inn), there are no retail outlets in the area with the Dores post office having closed down.

The area is very scenic, with Dores itself sitting on the shores of Loch Ness. As such, it is one of the easiest points of access to the Loch for locals and visitors alike. The beach at Dores enables access to the loch for amenity purposes and is a popular spot for swimmers, and general water sports activities. This includes swimming, fishing, walking, and paddle boarding. It is also very popular with people wanting to wild camp and/or have summer barbeques. The famed 'Nessie Hunter' is also based on a small area of ground between the car park and the beach, and acts as an additional draw for visitors.

2. The Current Local Context – The Community

The Dores and Essich Community Council area extends for 72 sq.km and has a population density of 5 people per sq km. It is a rural community within commuting distance of Inverness, and due to its scenic location on the side of Loch Ness, it is very popular for visitors from the local area, and also much further afield. It is one of the easiest spots to gain access to Loch Ness.

Dores and Essich Community Council Boundary, April 2011, Copyright The Highland Council.



2.1 Population and Households



Population of 285 in 2011
 Population density of 5 people per sqkm, which is lower than the Highland average
 There were 142 households in 2011, with an average household size of 2.54 people per household.

Table 1 below shows the age profile of the area in 2011 (Highland Council Community Council Census Profiles)². This shows that the Dores and Essich area had a higher proportion of people aged 16-29 yrs. compared to Highland and Scotland, particularly of 5-15 yr. olds, which suggests a young population, and a population of family households. This is backed up with the profile of household size, shown in Table 2. Conversely, there was a lower proportion of people aged 60 years and over compared with Highland and Scotland. The figures are slightly out of date but are the latest accurate figures available.

² https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/11093/profiles_for_community_council_areas

Mid-year estimates³ for population for 2021 show an estimated 12.9% increase in population along the south of Loch Ness, which is a larger area than that covered by DECC. The estimated age profile in 2011 shows a decline in younger people, and an ageing of the population as a whole

Table 1 Age Profile of residents in Dores and Essich, Highland and Scotland, 2011.

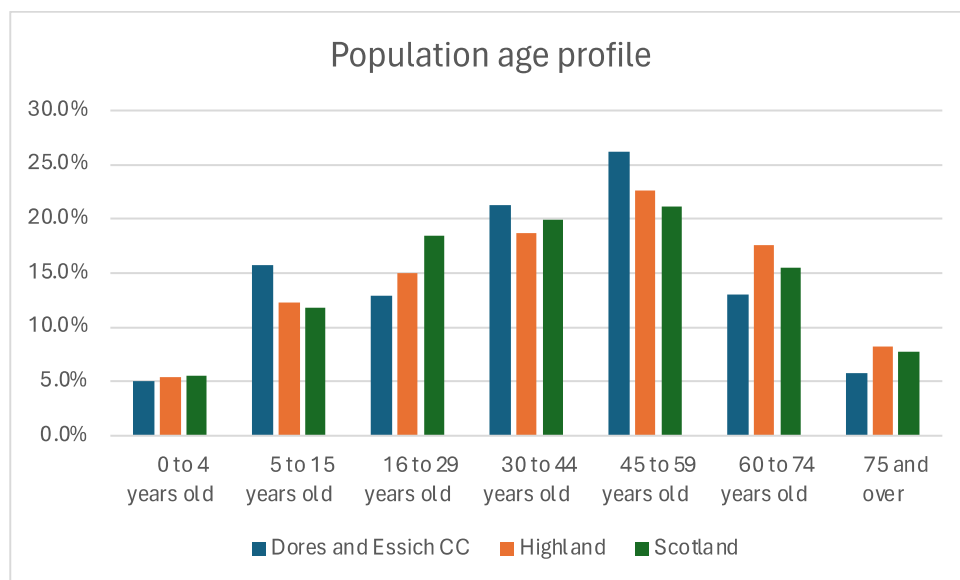
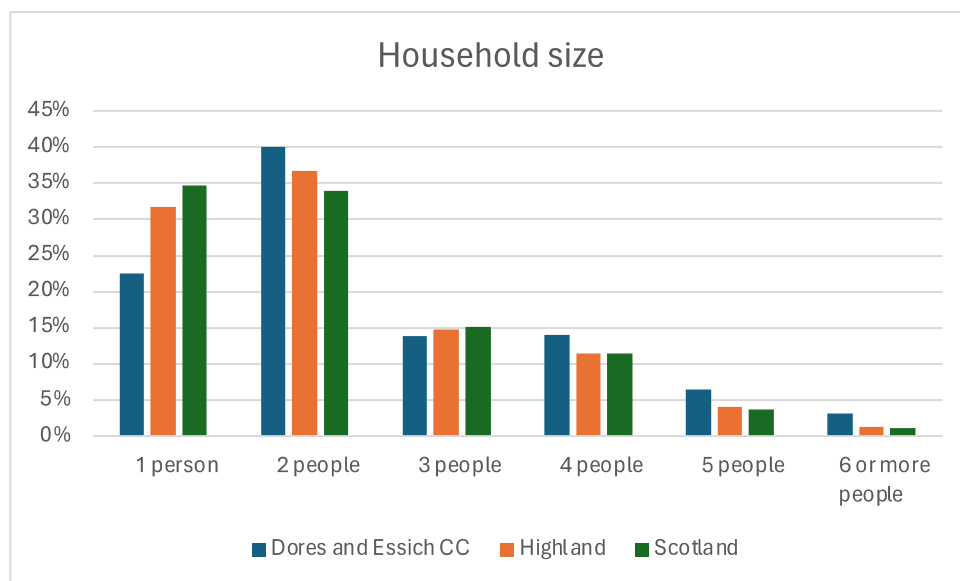


Table 2 below shows that single-person households make up a much smaller proportion of households in the Dores and Essich area in relation to Highland and Scotland. Conversely, 2 person households, and family groups were much more prevalent.

Table 2 Household Size, Dores and Essich CC, Highland and Scotland, 2011



³ <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/population-estimates/small-area-population-estimates-2011-data-zone-based/mid-2021>

2.2 Household Spaces

In 2011, the occupancy rate of properties in Dores and Essich was broadly similar to that in Highland and around 92% of all dwellings. In Scotland as a whole, it was almost 96%. The level of properties being empty due to their use as second/holiday homes was marginally lower than Highland as a whole, but greater than in Scotland (5.2% for Dores and Essich compared to 5.7% for Highland and 1.5% for Scotland). Anecdotal evidence suggests that this may have changed since the 2011 Census, with Dores and Essich seeing an increase in the use of properties for second and holiday homes.

The housing types in Dores and Essich are very different to the Highland average, with a considerably higher proportion of detached properties in the area: in fact around 50% more properties are detached in the area compared to Highland as a whole. This is to be expected from a rural area with a low population density. Detached housing forms around 60% of the stock in Dores and Essich. As might be expected from this profile of dwelling type, owner-occupation was the predominant tenure in Dores and Essich. The second most frequent tenure was private rented accommodation, which is at a noticeably higher rate than in Highland as a whole (see Table 4).

Table 3 Accommodation Type, Dores and Essich, Highland and Scotland, 2011

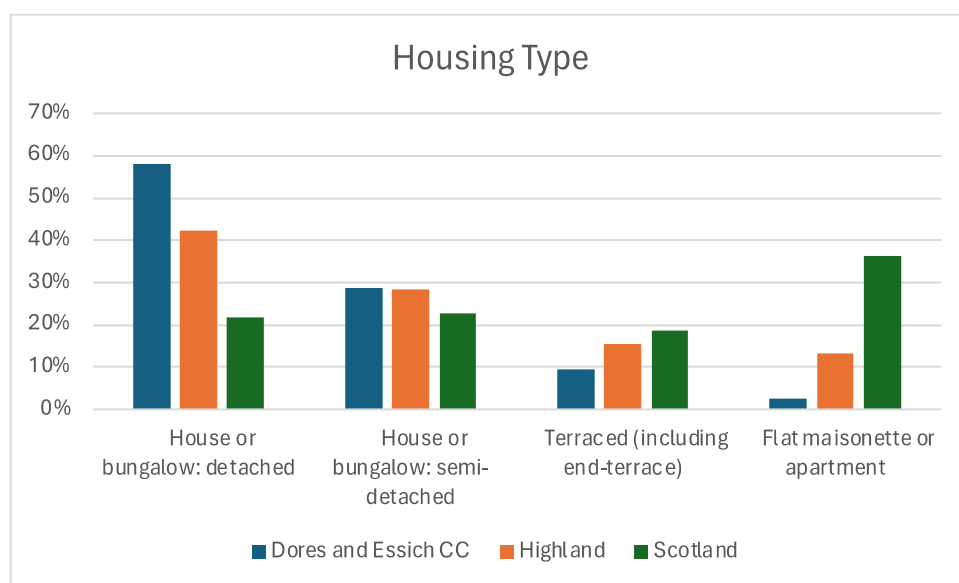
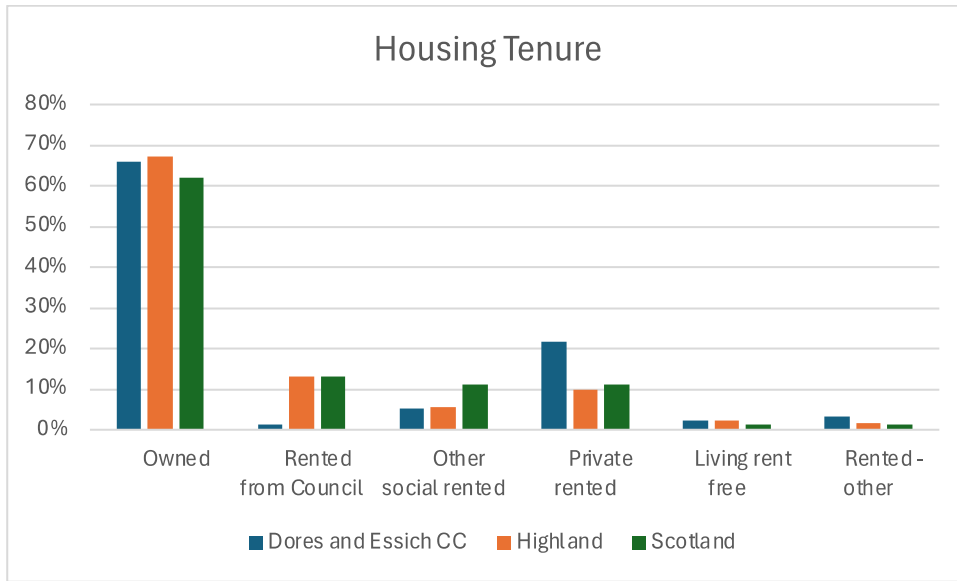


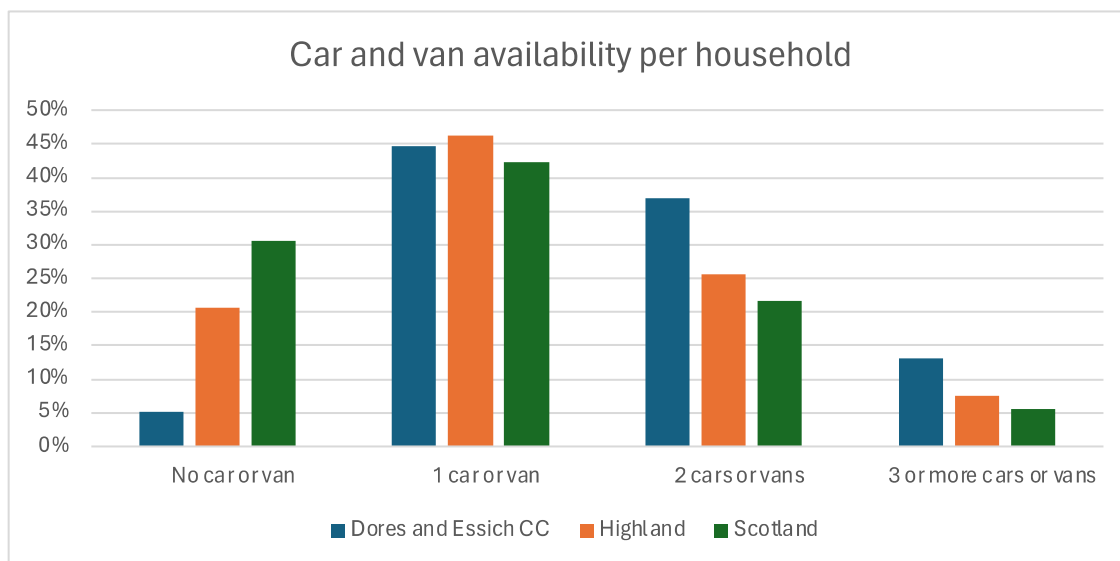
Table 4 Housing Tenure in Dores and Essich, Highland and Scotland, 2011



2.3 Transport

Reflective of the rural nature of the Dores and Essich area, car ownership levels are very high, especially in comparison to Scotland and Highland. Around 5% of households had no car, compared to around 20% and 30% for Highland and Scotland as a whole. Conversely, around 37% of households had 2 or more cars (25% in Highland and just over 20% in Scotland), and 12% of households had 3 or more cars in Dores and Essich, compared with less than 10% for either Highland or Scotland. While this might be indicative of the relative wealth of the area, it also reflects its rurality and suggests a lack of local employment and services, necessitating high levels of car ownership. This is not without cost to households, and the need for a car may impact unevenly on residents, and in some cases mean a car is run by the household at the detriment of other things.

Table 5 Car Ownership, 2011



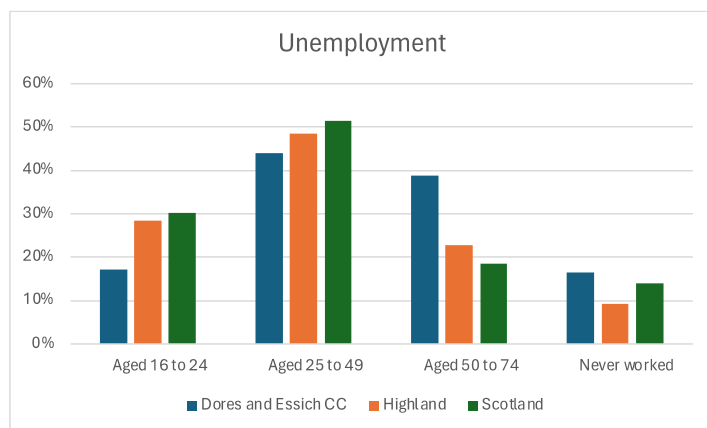
There are two bus services that operate from Dores to Inverness, Stagecoach’s number 16 service and the Highland Council’s 14 service. There are 5 runs in each direction during the week, and 3 on a Saturday. On weekdays, it is possible to use the service to arrive in Inverness for 8.45am, making it possible to use it as a commuter service for those working in the centre of the city. Neither service runs on a Sunday.

2.4 Economic Activity

A significant majority of the population aged 16 to 74 are economically active (76.8%), with over half of the population in some form of employment. Full-time employment is the more common employment status making up 40%, 16% are in part-time employment and a notable 13.4% in self-employment, which is higher than both the Highland (11%) and Scottish (7.5%) average of self-employment. The unemployment rate in the area is slightly higher than in Highland (4%) but comparable to the Scotland average (4.8%).

Levels of economic activity are slightly higher than both the Highland and Scotland average, with 23.2% of people being economically active. The percentage of retired individuals is lower than in Highland and Scotland, this aligns with the higher economic activity observed. Table 6 below shows the unemployment rate in Dores and Essich in 2011, across the board unemployment rates are lower compared to Highland and Scotland, however there is a higher proportion of individuals aged 50 to 74 who are unemployed, suggesting there may be potential challenges in employment for older age groups in the area.

Table 6 Unemployment by age, 2011



There is a higher proportion of individuals that work in the agriculture/forestry/fishing sector (6.9%) and construction (11.2%) compared to Highland and Scotland. This is not surprising as the few local employers in the area operate within these sectors. Wholesale and retail (14.2%), accommodation and food services (7.4%), education (8.2%) and health and social work (15.7%) were other highly represented sectors within the area. Skilled trades occupations are more prevalent in Dores and Essich (19.1%) than Highland (16.9%) and Scotland (12.5%). Individuals in managerial and professional roles are comparable to Scotland but there are less people working in sales and customer service roles and more manual professions such as plant and machine operatives.

Overall, the Dores and Essich community area displays a dynamic labour market with a community that is notably economically active with relatively low unemployment rates.

2.5 Health

The general health of the area is largely positive with nearly 60% of the population stating their health was very good and a further 31% expressing it was good, which is higher than both Highland and Scotland averages. There are also fewer people in the Dores and Essich area providing 1 to 19 hours of unpaid care, however, the percentage of people providing 50 or more hours of unpaid care is comparable to Highland (2.3%) and Scotland (2.5%).

2.6 Community facilities and groups

Although the Dores and Essich area does not have a huge population, there are still several key community facilities, groups and local businesses operating in the area that are an integral part of the community. The Hall provides an important venue for some groups to meet, and is also used for community events such as curry nights and a Burns Supper which help to bring the community together. Active groups in the community are shown below.

- Dores Craft Group
- Dores Senior Citizens group
- Dores Village Hall Committee
- Dores and Essich Community Council
- Dores Community Development Trust
- South Loch Ness Action group
- South Loch Ness Access group

Situated 7 miles from Inverness is Aldourie Primary School, a small rural school serving the communities of Dores and Scaniport and now neighbouring community, Foyers, due to the temporary closure of Foyers primary school. It is the only school in the Dores and Essich area. At present, the school has two teachers and 23 pupils. The associated secondary school for children in the Dores and Essich area is Inverness Royal Academy.

The Dores Inn is located in the centre of Dores village on the shores of the loch, and is used by locals and visitors alike. Although there is no local food shop, there is a small gift shop, and depending on the season, two small hot drink/cake outlets centred on the beach area. A small play park is located at the back of the beach, although some of the equipment is now dated. A newer play park is located in the centre of the village.

2.7. Tourism

Dores is a popular tourist destination for people living locally, and also visitors from much further afield. They are drawn by the easy access to the world-famous Loch Ness, and one of the very few beach areas on the loch. The beach area not only gives a place to sit by the loch, but also easy access to the water for watersports such as swimming and paddleboarding. There are a number of woodland walks around the beach, and the area is used by people wild camping and for barbeques in summer. The well-known Nessie Hunter is located on a site by the car park at the beach, which is an additional draw for those from further afield. The car park at the beach is under pressure from visitors arriving in cars and

coaches, and on a summers day it is very quickly full, putting pressure on other areas of the village.

3. Community Engagement and Consultation

A Community Action Plan needs to be informed by the views and aspirations of the local residents, and the preparation of this CAP involved four key forms of public consultation and engagement during April and May 2024:

- Community survey, available online through SurveyMonkey with paper copies also made available from a local collection point for those that preferred to complete it offline. It was promoted through direct email by a local resident to all those on a database held locally, and supplemented by personal contact from a representative of the Community Council for those not on the database. Posters promoting the survey were placed in strategic places around the community, and it was promoted on local websites and FaceBook pages. Information about the survey was also included in the newsletter to parents at the primary school and shared on a closed FaceBook group for parents. A copy of the survey is included at Appendix 1. In total, 47 surveys were completed, representing 16.5% of the population. A separate survey report is available upon request.
- Two open drop-in sessions in the community held in the Dores Parish Hall. One was during the day at the weekend (May 18th, 10-3pm) and the second was on a weekday evening (May 23rd, 5.30-8.30pm). The purpose of these events was to gather additional feedback on the findings of the community survey, and they were attended by 21 people over the two events. Some, but not all, of these people had also completed a survey previously. The vast majority of those attending a drop-in lived in Dores itself. These events provided useful additional feedback and comments on the 7 main priority areas to emerge from the community and pupil surveys, which were: Roads and traffic; Car parking; Toilet provision; Housing; Play park improvements; The Beach area; and Care for the elderly. An opportunity to comment on other issues that were raised was also provided as well as a chance to add additional areas for consideration. People attending were also asked what one small project, or 'quick win' they would most like to see. Appendix 3 gives all the comments made at both sessions.
- Survey of primary school children, led by the School, and specifically designed for children For the lower school, a teacher-led discussion was used to help pupils complete the survey. The upper school pupils were asked to complete the survey directly. Responses were received from 22 pupils out of a possible 23.
- Interviews with local stakeholders. A list of people/organisations contacted is provided in Appendix 2. In each case, three attempts to establish contact were made. A total of 8 responses were received out of the 18 people contacted.

Table 7 Community and school survey responses

Total responses to survey	47
Total responses from primary school children	22 (out of 23 pupils)
Total responses	69 - this represents 24% of the total population, based on 2011 census figures (16.5% if pupil responses excluded) *

* Survey response rates on this type of work are typically between 5% and 20%, so both 16.5% and 24% are very good response rates.

3.1 What the community said

From analysis of the free text responses to the survey and the conversations at the drop-in sessions, two key things emerge. On the positive side, people living in the Dores and Essich area were very positive about the local community and environment and appreciate the benefits of living where they do. On a less positive note, a sense of frustration was expressed at the lack of progress on a range of key issues over the last decade or more, particularly when sites had been identified for developments such as a car park, public toilets, and housing that could have had a positive impact in the community had they been progressed.

3.1.1 The positive aspects about living in the Dores and Essich area

An emerging theme that was evident throughout the community survey and drop-in sessions was that people place high importance on the natural environment, rurality, and landscape of the Dores and Essich area and there is a strong desire to protect the area's natural beauty and rural characteristics.

“The natural environment is a major aspect of living in the area which needs to be protected through minimal and controlled development.”



“The Dores and Essich community have incredible areas of natural beauty such as Dores Beach, and neighbouring woodland, and Torbreck Wood. I would very much like to see these protected for the future. The Aldourie Estate and Aldourie Primary School are also areas I would like to see protected for future preservation.”

Several respondents expressed that despite it being a small area, there is strong community spirit, particularly within Dores, which people held in high regard.

“Community spirit, feels safe, feels like just the right number of people to live here”

“Good community spirit focused around Dores.”

3.1.2 Challenges in the Dores and Essich area, now and in the next 5-10 years

The key pressing challenge people raised for now and moving forward was around the impact that the numbers of visitors, and their behaviour, has on both the physical environment and the safety of the community. These challenges ranged from the volume, size and speed of traffic to and through the village of Dores, vehicle parking on the roadside reducing visibility and also blocking access, littering and other anti-social behaviour, beach fires, and general environmental degradation.

A further challenge was around the changing population age profile. There was general acknowledgement that the population in Dores and Essich is getting older, and that the services and care that this older population needed were not currently being delivered. People did not see this situation easing in the near future, but rather, they envisaged it getting worse. At the drop-in sessions, almost everybody told a tale of somebody they knew that needed care or support but was unable to access it, with the gaps being filled in an ad hoc way where possible by family, friends and neighbours, or through unnecessarily long hospital stays. People joked about having to get older but not need any care, but also not being able to die because there was no room in the cemetery either.

At the other end of the age profile, reducing numbers of young people was a concern as it was seen to threaten the viability of the local school, as well as the general sense of a thriving community.

It is not surprising that many respondents expressed the desire for a controlled and responsible approach to any future developments, but many were not opposed to seeing future developments. Several respondents highlighted the need for housing in the area, particularly to accommodate young families including affordable and social housing, which in return could support the local school to remain open.

There was consensus from respondents for community facilities to be improved and developed over the next 10 years, with emphasis on developments for residents rather than tourists. This included facilities for children such as a play park, improved broadband and phone connectivity, picnic benches and local amenities such as a shop, restaurant or bar.

“Improved full-fibre internet access and mobile phone coverage.”

“Focus on residents not visitors, maintain football pitch & parks. More community activities and facilities and better parking”

Roads and traffic were also mentioned by several people as an area they would like to see developed over the next 10 years. The need for improvements in this area became more evident when respondents were specifically asked about it later in the survey. 81% of respondents expressed concerns about road safety in the community. Speed limits and people speeding in the area were of particular concern and some respondents called for a review of speed limits between Aldourie Primary School to Dores. One person suggested a 50mph speed zone between Torbreck to Dores.

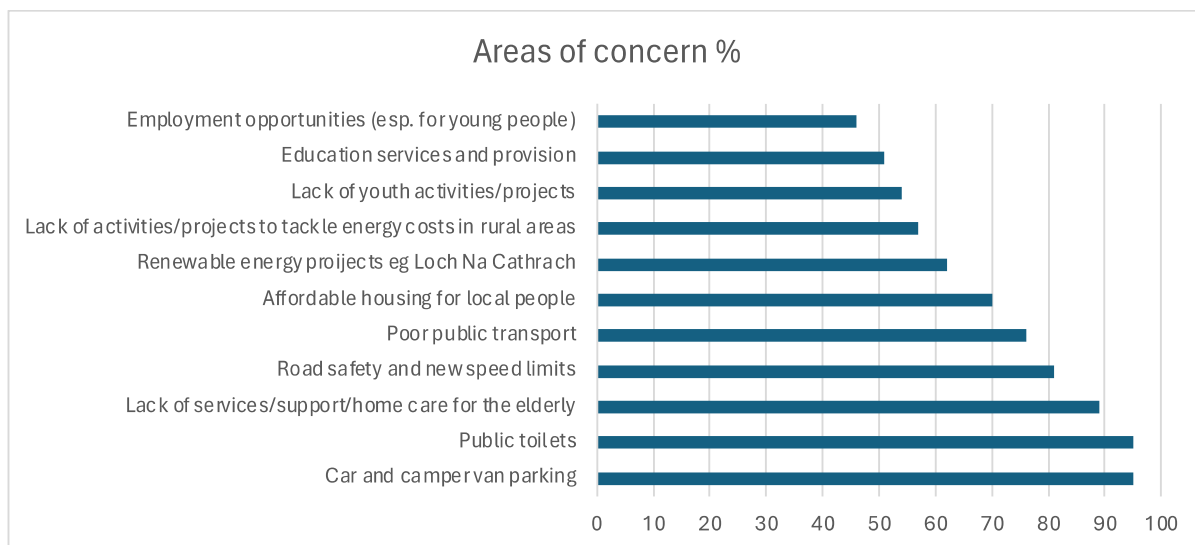


“I suggest reducing the speed limit next to the school all the way to Dores. It makes me feel uneasy to think of my child walking alone by a busy road. Additionally, the village speed limit is 20 mph, but very few people follow it, and there is no monitoring in place.”

“Speeding through the village of Dores and the road between Dores and Inverness is shocking. Islands or speed humps ideally would be a good measure for Dores to try and tackle speeding drivers. The new 20mph does not work. Young people are constantly speeding through the village and are often heard at night time speeding off.”

Respondents were asked if they were concerned about a variety of issues locally. The response rates are shown in the graph below. This clearly shows that car parking and public toilet provision were the two main areas of concern, closely followed by the lack of care and services for older people in the community. Other traffic related areas such as road safety and public transport provision were also of significant concern. Whilst affordable housing was also a concern for 70% of respondents, respondents were keen to emphasise that it was housing provision more generally of all tenures that was an issue.

Table 8 Areas of concern



Respondents were also able to specify any additional areas of concern, and 16 people did. Issues raised related to the condition of the beach and the adjacent car park, paths and surrounding areas. Several people noted that there was more scope for partnership between the public and private sectors in relation to these areas, as the land is in private ownership but is widely used by tourists and the public, and this impacts on the whole community. One person raised poor broadband provision, and another flooding due to poor draining on the roads.

Although recognised by some (2 respondents) for its economic and positive benefits, the high levels of tourism and the strain it puts on local infrastructure was mentioned by almost 20 respondents.

“Tourism, roads are not equipped for volume of cars, camper vans etc especially over summer season.”

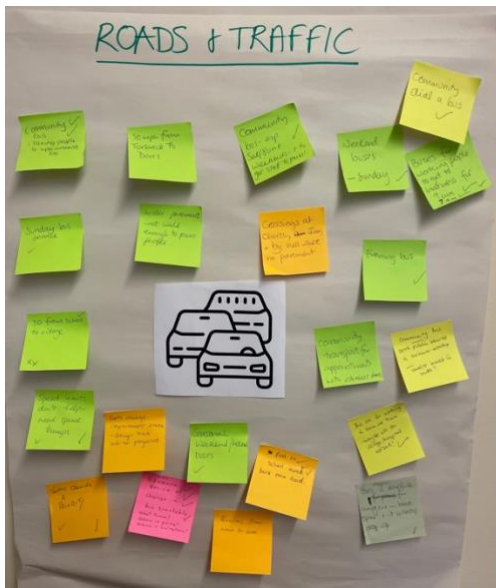
“The increasing popularity of Dores beach in the summer and the impact of the increased traffic and parking issues this generates.”

When specifically asked about particular facilities in the community, 95% of respondents said they were concerned about car and camper van parking and public toilets. This is in line with previous comments on infrastructure issues. Many respondents stated they would like to see additional car parking developed with some suggesting specific places of where additional parking could be located, types of parking/services that could be offered and alternative methods of transport that might help ease the strain:

“The unused football pitch could have a change of usage. Pay and display. No overnight parking.”

“Rent or buy the playing field behind Dores beach and turn it into a car park with some campervan spaces. Rent or buy the Dores Inn car park and restore it. Create limited free

parking for the Inn only, and paid parking elsewhere (or validate parking for customers of the Inn). Create a shuttle bus service in the summer between Inverness and Dores for Inverness locals and tourists.”



The need for more public toilet facilities was highlighted by many with reference being made to neighbouring community, Foyers, and the need for something similar to the new toilet block that has been installed there.

A further area of concern, highlighted by 89% of respondents, was lack of care services for the elderly. In addition to the immediate challenges, respondents also identified that with an aging population in the community, there is potential for this to become more of an issue.

Public transport was also identified as an area that could be improved, in particular the provision of more buses including in the evenings and on a Sunday. A recurring suggestion throughout the survey was to increase bus services during the high tourist season so visitors do not need to drive, which would help reduce the pressure created by high volumes of traffic, and run smaller buses in the low season so local residents still have sufficient public transport options.

A key emerging theme from the survey was the need for housing in the area, particularly to support local families to be able to stay in the area. 70% of respondents stated that they were concerned about affordable housing options for local people. Several respondents commented on existing plans for housing that have been in the pipeline for a number of years but have yet to be developed. Suggestions were also made for new housing developments to give priority to local residents first.

Around half of the respondents commented on Loch Na Cathrach (formerly Red John) Pumped Storage project and / or other renewable energy developments in the area, while many acknowledged that the Loch Na Cathrach project is going ahead there is still a residual concern being expressed about the future impact and risk of the project. There was a desire

that in the future, projects were not looked at in isolation and there is a more holistic approach taken which includes proper assessment of potential community benefit and gain from such projects.

“They should be looked at as one large project, and the impact from all the renewable energy developments in the area should be considered as a whole.

Is there a clear need for these projects? Who benefits from them, the share holders of the companies, this should be changed!

A reduction in the price of electricity for people living in the Highlands should be forced by Scottish Gov, instead we pay the highest elec prices in the UK, despite generating most of the elec. The impact on local house prices should be considered, as well as the impact on the wellbeing of residents.”

An opportunity was given for people to raise any other concerns not already covered in the survey. Around a third of the respondents took this opportunity, with many raising concerns already covered such as the need for better partnerships with the landowners around the beach areas, flooding concerns, path maintenance, the loss of the Ranger service, other comments related to inadequate fibre/broadband/mobile coverage, a lack of police and policing, and noisy boats.

“Actually flooding is a concern as the drains and some burns can’t cope when we have a lot of rain. One in particular is the area near the bottom of the Old Clune track which creates a pool of water that overflows across the cycle/pedestrian path and runs downhill to the school. This causes issues when cars drive at speed and path users get soaked from the spray that is generated from the vehicles as they cannot avoid these areas when there is oncoming traffic. This happens at quite a few areas along the cycle/pedestrian path from the school to the village.”

“I would like to see the access between the church car park in Dores and Dores beach improved. That parking is not fully used, and I think it could be made more appealing if there was a dedicated path and shortcut from there, across the road (crossing?) and across or around the playing field or along the road. The access and surface of that car park need upgrading.”

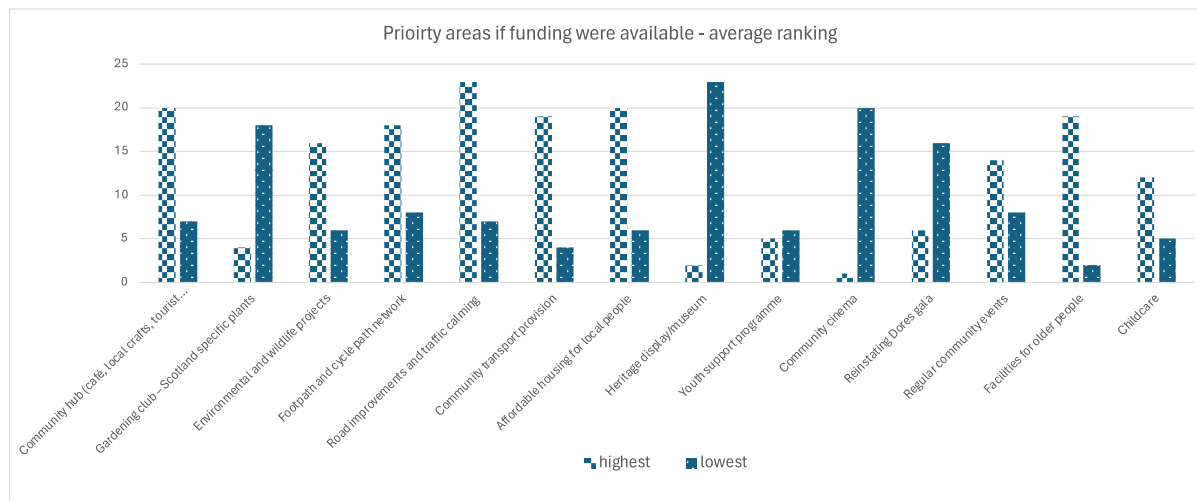
It was not just the approach to energy developments that people felt should be looked at in a more holistic way. The need to take a more strategic overview of the whole Loch Ness area was highlighted in all of the community and stakeholder engagement, with a sense that things were being done piecemeal in a variety of contexts.

3.1.3 Community priorities for the future

The survey asked people to give their top 5 highest priority areas for community projects if funding was available, and also their 5 lowest priority areas. The average ranking for each is shown in the table below, which clearly shows that roads and traffic calming measures were of highest priority overall. Other priority areas were a community hub, affordable housing

for local people, community transport, and facilities for older people. This is consistent with findings in other parts of the survey.

Table 9 Priority areas for funding



“Improve child play parks make more safe, fun and attractive to use for all age children.”

“Don't overdevelop 'facilities'. Nature is attractive and inviting without being 'managed'. Area will lose it's magic if too organised.”

“Building more public toilets. Community hub sounds good, but why tourist information? That doesn't benefit residents, plus every gets tourist info online these days.”

Some of the solutions put forward by the community to address these challenges are shown in the table below (based on the survey and drop in days).

Table 10 Possible solutions

Topic	Potential location
Car and camper van parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In areas already proposed – football field, and by B852 • Between school and village • Church of Scotland car park area. • Beside Dores parish hall. • Area in field belonging to Aldourie Estate has been identified for parking • The Strath • South of village by the loch • Outside of the village • For cars only – no campervans
Public toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next to a new car park • The Glebe • Near to beach/Dores Inn car park/bus stop • Near the Hall • No more toilets needed

Lack of services/support/home care for the elderly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boleskin (or other) services delivered at the Hall • At home care needed • Identify funding for this • Sheltered housing at The Glebe
Road safety and new speed limits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic calming measures such as speed bumps, chicanes, road crossings, especially between school and Dores, and through Dores village • Traffic islands in Dores • Chicanes at ends of Dores village
Affordable housing for local people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The two areas already zoned in Dores – by the Hall and the Church/cemetery • Somewhere between Dores and Scaniport • Torbreck • Behind Torr Gardens. • The Glebe • Between school and village • Needs to be mixed tenure



3.1.4 Dores Beach

Dores Beach is a significant asset and popular destination for locals and visitors alike but it is in private ownership (albeit with public access). Respondents were asked what measures they might suggest to support existing (or new) leisure uses for Dores Beach. This question had 31 replies, many of which talked about multiple aspects of the beach area and gave a range of suggestions for improvements. This is shown in the table below. The results show that car parking is the main area of concern with several suggestions as to how it could be addressed. Some people wanted to see better development of the area for locals and visitors, but a very small minority didn't want to see any more development.

Suggestions for improved parking and toilet provision centred on either the field behind the playing field, or to the west of Dores village by the village Hall.

Table 11 Suggestions for improvement

Topic	No. of mentions	Comments and Suggestions for improvement
Car parking	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better car parking area not linked to Dores Inn

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new access point with its own carpark in the fields behind playing field. • New car parking area adjacent to football pitch with voluntary pay system for parking • Better/more/appropriate car parking • New parking area and access point to the west of the village
Toilets	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply (properly serviced) public toilet facility (7) • Toilet facilities with walkway
Water sports facilities	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a wild swim centre of some kind with changing hut and sauna • New access to the water for swimming/kayaks/paddleboards could be created to the west of the village by the Hall, possibly via development of a pontoon (2) • Paddle boarding/windsurfing/kayak hire and lessons in the summer (2)
Ranger/warden service in summer	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help with path maintenance • Help with policing the area for littering and general spoiling of the natural environment • Continued support from the Highland Council Ranger service
Community ownership/control of the beach area	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take the beach into community ownership and have parking charges to help with the cost of maintenance • Take into community control • Beach area is a 'dump'
Fire prevention measures	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased gorse clearance and/or removal • Better signage saying 'No Fires' • Provision of BBQ pits to contain fires • Controlled burning of undergrowth
Improvements to the play park	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better maintenance of the park • The park is in a state of disrepair • Better development of the park, perhaps with a café/community space as an addition • Nicer, wooden style children's play area
Litter bins	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmentally sensitive metal bins in play park and area at the back of the beach
More benches/more seating	2	
Café/community space	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build an indoor cafe behind the beach, and license to a local manager

Road crossing to the beach	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer road crossing to the park
Camping facilities	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide dedicated camping/campervan facilities
Path maintenance	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Path maintenance at the Castle end is much improved and the same is needed at the beach end
Better bus service to the beach	1	
Wheelchair access	1	

“Improve toilet provision, employ a ranger/warden, maintain paths. prevent litter and fires. damaging area every year, force landlords to take responsibility and get financial support to dig out gorse to prevent fires”

“We need a regular warden, better forest fire regulations, better litter and dog poo regulations, picnic benches and toilets.”

“There is a need to improve the promotion of leisure activities and the appearance of the Dores area to ensure that it is safe and attractive for visitors. The Dores end of the area is currently in disrepair. This lack of maintenance is unappealing to visitors, and the owners of that end of the area should support efforts to improve it. On the other side of the area, there have been significant improvements. If the Dores end of the area is similarly improved, it is likely that more people will use the area.”

“I would not encourage new leisure uses. It is busy enough already!”

“Do not over develop - commercialisation will ruin natural attraction of loch.”



3.1.5 Other things people would like to see

Just under a third of respondents took the opportunity to make suggestions of other things they would like to see. Many of the responses to this covered areas already covered by the

survey, such as car parking, traffic, toilets, and a shop. Other things that were mentioned were more community events and community-focused activities.

“Less car/vehicle-based tourism encouraged.....it’s terrible for the planet, the local environment and for the residents”

“I think the area has huge potential. I would like to see more development in the area and I do acknowledge people's resistance to develop, in particular tourist development. However for a thriving community we need to offer services/experiences for every age - from babies/toddlers to our older generations - and this is something we don't do well at all. We must also acknowledge that we're custodians of the world-renowned area and we are kidding ourselves if we think we can stop others from enjoying what we all enjoy - so we might as well be proactive in developing sustainably to manage this 'outside interest' as well as local interest. I think we should look at the thousands of examples beyond Dores and Essich for how other similar areas manage development and promote a healthy and prosperous community.”

“It is not only affordable housing that is required, it is mixed tenure housing that is needed. Also, housing for first-time buyers, self-build plots, we need the mix”

3.2 Local School Children – What They Said



Pupils were very positive about living in the Dores and Essich area, with 14 out of 21 giving 5 stars to how much they enjoyed living there. The other gave it 4 stars (4 pupils), or 3 (1 pupil). The reasons given were the beach (9), the school (6), and the park (5), with a smaller number citing the view and scenery (4), and one saying ‘everything’. Small community (2)



The things they didn’t like as much were not enough fun things to do after school (7), too much traffic/speeding/too many caravans (7), not enough play equipment or places to play (3), littering (2), and the weather (2). Several pupils said there was nothing they didn’t like about living there. One pupil mentioned the lack of adherence to signage by visiting tourists.

‘Lots of places to go and walk, mountains and hills to explore’

‘Campers leaving mess, too many overnight campervans in laybys’

‘Keep enough children in the school so we have friends’

Table 12 If it was possible to improve one thing in the area what would be your number one priority?

	Number of respondents
Better/more cycle paths	6

A swimming pool	5
More clubs and activities after school	5
A small shop	3
Clean up the area around the loch side and football pitch	2

Activities that the children generally engaged in were very much centred around the outdoors and the local environment, with 13 pupils saying they played outside after school (at home, the beach, the play park), and others mentioned walking or walking the dog (5), football, paddle boarding and kayaking on the loch, and cycling. Tennis lessons at the school were mentioned by 6 pupils, and horse riding (presumably at the local centre) by a further 3. That is, for the most part children were engaged in activities that were locally based and for the most part things that were centred on the local environment. A small number mentioned things in Inverness or further afield such as swimming lessons, gymnastics, and archery.

3.3 Stakeholder interviews

Local businesses, estates and community facility and service providers were contacted to take part in more specific stakeholder interviews in order to understand their views and concerns from a business and service perspective. 18 stakeholders were contacted and of those 18, 8 responded by either completing a phone interview or answering questions sent to them by email. Unfortunately, not all stakeholders responded to the request, despite three attempts at contact, which limits the breadth of data collected and potential solutions offered. It also limited the opportunity in some cases to explore the potential for partnership and collaboration.

The concerns expressed by stakeholders echoed those highlighted in the community survey. In particular, issues with the infrastructure, parking, public toilets, wildfires and camping and litter were raised by several stakeholders.

It was acknowledged that the Dores Inn operates the Comfort Scheme from Highland Council to provide public toilets and this is a good temporary solution but not one that is suitable for the long term. In the longer term, it was highlighted that although the Highland Council may provide some funding for the toilets, it is the community's responsibility to develop the project. Furthermore, one respondent suggested any public toilet development should be separate from the Dores Inn but they did not suggest a site and another respondent suggested the hydro scheme as an alternative funding source to build a new toilet block.

The general tidiness of the area was highlighted by several respondents as being a big issue, with the Dores Inn area, car park and beach being the prime spots for littering. One stakeholder noted the negative impact that this has on visitors' impressions of the area and

that more should be done to ensure people who visit leave having had a positive experience. It was suggested that community funding from the hydro scheme could be used to help with maintaining the area and add some features such as artwork or wooden statues. It was also felt that more community involvement in the management of the Dores Inn area would be beneficial.

Several stakeholders underlined the necessity for housing development to accommodate the demand for housing and evolving needs in the community. One respondent recommended an assessment of all the existing housing mix, pinpointing where and what gaps there may be, and using this data to develop a 20 year housing strategy for the area. On the other hand, one stakeholder expressed frustrations that a housing needs assessment and community consultation had already been conducted and a site identified but the project was never executed. This respondent proposed that the community should be consulted again before any housing project is developed as there have been many changes in the community since the original consultation, including new residents with different housing needs. It was also raised that additional housing is essential to keep and bring young families to the area that in return will support the school to remain open as its roll is in decline. No specific sites for development were identified by the stakeholders so further consultation, specifically with local estates and landowners, may need to be done to identify appropriate locations for future housing projects. That said, there were sites identified in the survey and at the drop-in sessions.

Public transport was highlighted throughout the stakeholder interviews as a concern and as an area to be developed. Some suggestions of how transport could be improved included:

- Water taxis to take locals and visitors from one side of Loch Ness to another, reducing the traffic on the roads.
- Park and ride to take people to Dores by bus from Inverness.
- Minibus to help take people to GP and hospital appointments in Inverness.

The need for improved community facilities was a common theme but parallel to this was the requirement for locals to use these facilities in order for them to be sustainable. The village hall in Dores used to be used by several groups and clubs but for various reasons, usage has declined. This included a parent/toddler group but due to the decline in young families in the area, it was no longer viable. A badminton group had used the hall in the past but no longer meets at the hall, possibly due to other nearby facilities such as Inverness Leisure centre. There were plans to redevelop the hall a number of years ago, but it is not currently used enough to merit a new hall. The hall is run solely by volunteers. One respondent suggested that funding from the hydro scheme could be used to develop the hall and reach out to people on the outskirts of Inverness to attend clubs and events. Another suggested that it could be part of the Highland Council's proposed point-of-delivery service centre network, which would bring an income to the hall and also provide access to NHS services, council services, DHSS etc.

4. Community Priority Actions - The Next 10 years

The priorities set out in this plan, which are detailed in the table overleaf, are here because these are the things people living here say matter to them most, and because these are the things that would make the greatest impact on life in the area. It is, therefore, the collective vision and hope for the Dores and Essich area over the next 10 years.

This plan should be seen as the start of the journey with its success dependent on the continued enthusiasm and support of the members of the Dores and Essich community. Many of these actions are major projects in their own right and are outwith the control of the local community to bring to fruition and will require joint working or lobbying of others if they are to succeed. Many have been a community priority for many years but have not progressed, leading to frustration at a local level. Others are much easier and simpler to take forward without further work.

Table 13 Community Action Plan for Dores and Essich over the next 10 years:

Colour coding of table:

Immediate action
Short to medium term action
Longer term action

Project	Changes the community wants to see	Feasibility	Possible locations	Economic, social & environmental impact	Potential sources of funding	Timescale and Next steps
Public toilet provision	New toilet block	Feasible with access to land and funding	At the bus stop or a new car park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for environmental impact due to reduced soiling of local area • Potential for positive impact on Dores Inn as would relieve them of managing the toilets as at present 	Comfort Scheme for running costs. Dores Community Development Trust Fund/ Awards for All/Statkraft community benefit Changing Places funding	Identify suitable sites and establish land ownership. Discuss with Dores Inn who currently run the Comfort Scheme.
Car parking for visitors	Double yellow lines	Feasible	Along the road to Foyers on exit from Dores	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on community safety 	n/a	Council responsibility – make

Project	Changes the community wants to see	Feasibility	Possible locations	Economic, social & environmental impact	Potential sources of funding	Timescale and Next steps
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved access for residents living along the route 		representation to the Council
	Additional car parking provision	Possible areas already scoped out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Church Area adjacent to football field Area next to Hall (temporary) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on community safety Relieve pressure on roads Economic impact as would free up parking at Dores Inn for Inn customers 	Council	Council responsibility – make representation to the Council
	Mobile home parking provision	Possible areas already scoped out and planning in place	On the edge of Dores village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If community run, would generate an income Reduces parking in inappropriate places 	Self-financing: private operator	Outwith control of community: engage in discussion with owner/ operator
	'No parking' signs through the village	Feasible	Throughout the village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved community safety Increased access for residents along the main roads 	Council	Council responsibility
Care services for the elderly	Extend Boleskine community services.	Feasible if Boleskine has capacity – model already being developed	Village Hall	Improved care for elderly	NHS	Discussions with Boleskine and NHS

Project	Changes the community wants to see	Feasibility	Possible locations	Economic, social & environmental impact	Potential sources of funding	Timescale and Next steps
	GP visiting 2hrs/week in Dores Hall		Village Hall	Improved access to health care for whole community, especially those with mobility restrictions	NHS	Discussions with NHS and/or nearest GP practice
	Provide a local house for local carers, with shared facilities for health visits etc.		As part of proposed housing at The Glebe	Improved access to care services for those with care needs	NHS	Discussions with Council and housing developer
Community and public transport	Dial a bus service or community bus		Extension of Foyers bus in partnership with Foyers?	Positive social impact due to increased access for those with mobility restrictions	Dores Community Development Trust Fund/Statkraft	Short to medium term - discuss with Stratherrick and Foyers Medium to long term – investigate potential for own bus/dial a bus scheme
	Park and ride scheme	Possible but would require identification of a site and coordination with a bus service	Site to be identified	Would reduce negative environmental impact	Council	Discussions needed with Council and bus operator

Project	Changes the community wants to see	Feasibility	Possible locations	Economic, social & environmental impact	Potential sources of funding	Timescale and Next steps
	Weekend buses from and to Inverness, especially during the summer season	Feasible		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased social impact • Reduced environmental impact as fewer cars and less parking needed • Increased economic impact as would enable more people to visit 	Could be self-financing	Potential for community bus to operate if one was introduced? Discussions with current operators
	Bike parking spaces near the beach	Feasible		Positive environmental impact as fewer cars and less parking demand	Council, Active Travel monies, Sustrans	Discussions with landowner and council
	Water taxis across the loch	Feasible	Various points along the loch – Dores, Drumnadrochit, Loch End	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce traffic on the roads and reduced pollution • Potential economic benefit for taxi operator, and also local businesses who would be more accessible 	Self-financing – private operator	Discussions would be needed with Council and SEPA
Beach area	Benches and furniture/art at the beach	Feasible with support from local community, businesses and funders	Dores beach	Positive social impact, as the beach would be more pleasant for locals and visitors alike	Dores Community Development Trust Fund/Statkraft Could also be sponsored by	Discussions with local community and businesses to identify anyone who would be willing to support project and

Project	Changes the community wants to see	Feasibility	Possible locations	Economic, social & environmental impact	Potential sources of funding	Timescale and Next steps
					local businesses	funders to find financial support.
	Establish a Friends of Dores Beach	Feasible with volunteers	n/a	Potential for significant positive economic, social and environmental impact	n/a although could benefit from some resources. Awards for All	Establish support for the idea amongst possible volunteers and identify a co-ordinator to lead the group and agree purpose
	Greater fire prevention signage	Feasible with support from landowners and funders.	Throughout the village but Dores beach in particular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased environmental impact as reducing the risk of fires in the area • Increased social impact as potentially reducing the risk of anti-social behaviour, making the area safer for everyone. 	Dores Community Development Trust Fund/Statkraft /Highland Council	<p>Speak with Council to find out if there is any support available.</p> <p>Speak with landowners about potential locations for signs. They may also be willing to contribute to some of the costs.</p>
	Increased shrub clearing to prevent fires	Feasible but need to identify who would do this	Dores beach and surrounding area	Positive environmental impact by reducing the risk of fires spreading.	Landowners owning the land	Discussions with local community and/or businesses to identify who would be willing to

Project	Changes the community wants to see	Feasibility	Possible locations	Economic, social & environmental impact	Potential sources of funding	Timescale and Next steps
		i.e. volunteers, local business.				<p>help and decide on dates / timings throughout the year to clear and maintain areas.</p> <p>Discussions with any landowners about areas privately owned to seek permission to carry out work.</p>
	Reintroduction of a ranger service	Possible but would require a source of funding in place to hire and retain a ranger. No longer funded by Council so need to source alternative funding and suitable person.		Positive social and environmental impact as there would be reduced risk of fires, littering, anti-social behaviour etc.	Local estates/ businesses, particularly those that are impacted by the issues set to be addressed by the ranger post. Could part fund with Dores Community Development	<p>Discussions with potential funders i.e. estates, local businesses, Council.</p> <p>Identifying if any other neighbouring communities are looking for a similar service that could be shared and jointly funded.</p>

Project	Changes the community wants to see	Feasibility	Possible locations	Economic, social & environmental impact	Potential sources of funding	Timescale and Next steps
					Trust Fund/Statkraft Potentially worth speaking with the Council again to find out if this is something they will fund again, or even part fund.	
	BBQ pits to contain fires	Feasible but would need to source funding required to purchase pits, someone to maintain and empty pits and permission from landowners to install pits.	Beach area	Positive social and environmental impact as there would be reduced risk of fires.	Dores Community Development Trust Fund/Statkraft	Identify potential site(s) for BBQ pits and speak with landowner. Discussions would be needed with Fire Service and SEPA, potentially. Source funding to purchase pits.

Project	Changes the community wants to see	Feasibility	Possible locations	Economic, social & environmental impact	Potential sources of funding	Timescale and Next steps
						Identify person(s) who will maintain and empty pits. Potentially could be part of ranger service if service is reintroduced but if it is not, most likely looking at volunteers to do this.
	Litter bins	Highly feasible, but issue could be regular emptying	Car parks, beach area	Lower levels of littering would have a positive environmental impact	Dores Community Development Trust Fund/Statkraft /Council/ Awards for All	Identify potential locations and preferred style. Hold discussions with landowners.
Traffic safety and calming measures	Road crossing to Dores beach	More challenging as this would require support from the Council to install new crossing.	At road crossing to Dores beach	Installing a road crossing to Dores beach would make the area safer for pedestrians to cross and greatly reduce the risk of road accidents in a busy area, thus having a positive social impact.	N/a – needs to be done by Council	Council responsibility – make representation to the Council

Project	Changes the community wants to see	Feasibility	Possible locations	Economic, social & environmental impact	Potential sources of funding	Timescale and Next steps
	Speed bumps/chicanes at the three road entrances/exits to Dores village	More challenging as Council would be responsible for installing any speed bumps or chicanes on public roads.	Entrances and exits to Dores village	Speed bumps and chicanes used to reduce speeding and improve safety of pedestrians in the area.	N/a – needs to be done by Council	Council responsibility – make representation to the Council
	Path to school moved back from the road		Road to school	Increased community safety	N/a – needs to be done by Council	Council responsibility
	30 mph speed limit from school to village.	Challenging as Council's responsibility	Stretch of road between Dores village and Aldourie primary school	Reduced speed of road users to reduce the risk of accidents on the road and improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly school kids using that path / road to get to and from school	N/a – needs to be done by Council	Council responsibility – make representation to the Council
	Make sure paths are suitable for wheelchairs, elderly, buggies etc	Challenging as Council's responsibility and potentially a big project to undertake.	Various throughout Dores	More accessible paths would have both a positive social and environmental impact as it would allow more people to easily		Council responsibility – make representation to the Council

Project	Changes the community wants to see	Feasibility	Possible locations	Economic, social & environmental impact	Potential sources of funding	Timescale and Next steps
	More cycle paths	Feasibility will depend on where the cycle paths will be. If running them through areas with multiple landowners, it would potentially be more challenging as would require permission from all.	Various – would need greater discussion within the community and land owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased access to nature and cycling would have positive social impact and physical and mental health Some environmental impact, but would focus this on maintained tracks rather than be in an uncontrolled way if people make their own routes Could attract more people so potential economic impact, but could also be negative impact if too busy 	Cycling UK Sustrans	Need further community consultation to establish possible routes
Housing provision	Make plots available for private housing development	Possible but would likely need a multi-stakeholder approach i.e. Council, local landowners, housing developer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The two areas already zoned in Dores – by the Hall and the Church/cemetery Somewhere between Dores and Scaniport Torbreck 	Both positive social and economic impact as it would allow more people, in particular young families, to remain in the area.	Council Highland Housing Partnership Rural Housing Fund Cairn or Albyn Housing associations	Requires discussions with Council and landowners Need to establish up to date housing needs, once the projects identified are completed.

Project	Changes the community wants to see	Feasibility	Possible locations	Economic, social & environmental impact	Potential sources of funding	Timescale and Next steps
		ideally specialising in or with good understanding of community housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behind Torr Gardens. • The Glebe • Between school and village 			Contact Communities Housing Trust
	Key worker housing (link to elderly care)	Possible but depends on availability of suitable housing and lease management	Glebe development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic impact as would create employment • Social impact as would improve level of care 	Speak with community led housing developers, such as Communities Housing Trust , about key worker housing schemes and potential funding.	Discussions with developer working on The Glebe site
Cemetery extension		Project already underway	Already identified	Social impact	n/a	n/a
Football pitch maintenance	More regular maintenance to ensure pitch is usable	Feasible with discussion	Football pitch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social impact from additional location for community gathering, and increased physical activity 	Possible volunteers Dores Community Development	Discussions with land owner, possible partnership agreement with

Project	Changes the community wants to see	Feasibility	Possible locations	Economic, social & environmental impact	Potential sources of funding	Timescale and Next steps
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental improvement 	Trust Fund/Statkraft	maintenance done by volunteers
Community Hub development	Community warm hub	Costly and would need to identify land	Possibly in the Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive social impact as would give venue for community support and services to be delivered • Would likely have negative impact on the existing Hall as community too small to sustain two such facilities, unless it was based in the Hall, in which case the impact would be positive for the Hall through increased use, and greater sustainability 	Creation of new hub challenging in current funding landscape Various sources of funding could be available depending on activities to be included if based on existing Hall facility	Further community consultation required to establish facilities and services desired in a community hub, and then discussion with Hall as to how these could be offered in existing facilities.
Village Hall	Childminding facilities/after school care	Possible but should note that previous parent and toddler group folded	Dores Parish Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive social impact 		Contact CALA to establish if they would be interested in operating in the area

Project	Changes the community wants to see	Feasibility	Possible locations	Economic, social & environmental impact	Potential sources of funding	Timescale and Next steps
More community activities	General statement of more things to do	Feasible but could be challenging to establish specifics.	Village Hall	Positive social impact	Depends on the activities Would need to be community-led by volunteers and reflect people's interests	Further community consultation required to establish facilities and services desired in a community hub, and then discussion with Hall as to how these could be offered in existing facilities.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The process of researching and developing this action plan provides the community with a mandate for taking forward a number of projects over the next decade, and for gathering support from others to help them in the process. The projects identified during this process have been consistent across different methods and also align with historical data and thus to some, the findings may be unsurprising. Although some of the findings may have been anticipated, the consistency and determination shown by the community to see change demonstrates a genuine need and desire for development in certain areas.

The action plan provided lists a number of projects with varying degrees of complexity and timescales. There are some that can be achieved relatively quickly and others that will have a longer timeframe. Those that require a longer timeframe, highlighted in orange on the table, will likely need further consultation and a multi-stakeholder approach to implement.

During the consultation period, it was raised by some community members that similar research has been conducted in the past but there had been a lack of action following on from the consultation period. To mitigate the risk of causing further frustration, it is recommended that DECC uses the findings of the work to liaise with the statutory agencies in particular to demonstrate the aspirations of the community. Also, in conjunction with the Dores Community Development Trust, DECC could look to find ways to move some of the smaller short-term projects forward. This will give evidence to the community that DECC is looking to be proactive and listening to the issues and suggestions raised during the consultation. A simple quick win could be carrying out improvements to the Dores Beach area or creating additional parking in the already identified sites. Both actions should be achievable within a relatively short period of time. However, it is not realistic to expect DECC to complete all of the actions on the action plan alone, for it to be most effective and beneficial it will require a holistic, community approach involving different stakeholders and members of the community. The action plan can be used as a basis to develop local capacity building and volunteering opportunities within the community.

DECC has already commissioned the preparation of a Local Place Plan which will build on the work carried out during the preparation of the CAP, and add further depth to some of the findings.

Appendix One – Community Survey

A community survey on behalf of Dores and Essich Community Council (DECC)

Impact Hub Inverness has been commissioned by DECC to produce a 10-year community action plan (CAP). The purpose of this survey is to find out what the community’s priorities, hopes and needs are for the next decade. The results will be used to see which ideas have the best potential to progress and these will be compiled into the CAP. The CAP will also help inform the development of a Local Place Plan. Public meetings will be held in Dores Hall on Saturday 18th May (10-3) and Thursday 23rd May (5.30-8.30pm).

The survey is designed to get the views of ALL RESIDENTS in the Dores and Essich area, including children. If you would like additional paper copies for other members of your household, please contact us on 01463 715533. Paper surveys can be handed in to Ella MacRae, Cherry Cottage, Dores. Alternatively, you and others in your household can complete the survey, via <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/doesandessichcommunitysurvey>

If you’re able to, we would prefer surveys to be completed online but we welcome all responses. If you would prefer to speak to someone who can complete the survey for you, please call us on 01463 715533. All surveys must be completed by the end of **5th May 2024**. Please try to complete all questions - responses will be treated in confidence.

1. In your view, what’s good about Dores and Essich and that you would want to be protected for the future?

.....
.....
.....
.....

2. How would you like to see the Dores and Essich area develop in the next 10 years?

.....
.....
.....
.....

3. What do you think the main challenges are for the area, now and in the next 5 -10 years?

.....
.....
.....
.....

4. Are you concerned about any of the following issues locally, and if so, please say how this issue could be addressed?

Topic	Issue – yes or no?	How could it be addressed?
Affordable housing for local people		
Employment opportunities (esp. for young people)		
Car and camper van parking		
Road safety and new speed limits		
Public toilets		
Lack of youth activities/projects		
Poor public transport (e.g timetabling, no Sunday service)		
Lack of services/support/home care for the elderly		
Lack of activities/projects to tackle higher cost of energy in rural areas		
Loch Na Cathrach (formerly Red John) Pumped Storage project and / or other renewable energy developments in the area		
Other – please specify		

5. Please specify if there are any suitable locations for the following issues

Issue	Area
Affordable housing for local people	
Car and camper van parking	
Education services	
Road safety and new speed limits	
Public toilets	

Home care for the elderly	
---------------------------	--

6. If funding was available for community projects across the Dores and Essich area, what facilities and services might you like to see? Please tick below which 5 you think are highest priority and which 5 are least priority.

	Top priority (max 5)	Least priority (max 5)
Community hub (café, local craft/artist display area, tourist info, office space)		
Gardening club – Scotland specific plants		
Environmental and wildlife projects		
Footpath and cycle path network		
Road improvements and traffic calming measures		
Community transport provision		
Affordable housing for local people		
Heritage display/museum		
Youth support programme		
Community cinema		
Reinstating Dores gala		
Regular community events		
Facilities for older people		
Childcare		
Other please specify		

7. Are there issues that you feel may emerge going forward into the future?

.....

.....

.....

8. Dores Beach is a popular destination for locals and visitors alike but is in private ownership (albeit with public access). What measures might you suggest to support existing (or new) leisure uses for that area?

.....

9. What barriers do you perceive to community engagement? What improvements might you suggest (eg. clubs, events etc)?

.....

10. Please use this space to add anything else about the Dores and Essich area, or things you would like to see.

.....

The next questions are optional.

11. We hope to get good coverage of the whole of Dores and Essich area, so please tell us which area you live in.

Dores village	
Essich	
Scaniport	
Torbreck	
Midtown	

12. In addition, please note your postcode below.

13. How long have you lived in the Dores and Essich area?

years

14. Are you (please tick one):

Male		Female		Non-binary		Other		Prefer not to say	
------	--	--------	--	------------	--	-------	--	-------------------	--

15. Please tell us which age bracket you fall into (please tick one)

Dores and Essich Community Action Plan, 2024-2034

Under 16		16-24		25-44		45-64		65 or over	
----------	--	-------	--	-------	--	-------	--	------------	--

Appendix Two - Community Groups and Stakeholders contacted

Organisation	Type
Community Council	Community group
Dores Hall Committee	Community group
Dores Community Development Trust	Community group
South Loch Ness Access Group	Community group
South Loch Ness Heritage Group	Community group
Dores Over 60 Coffee Club	Community group
Rossweld	Local business
Makar	Local business
Ness gifts	Local business
Dores Inn	Local business/service/landowner
Aldourie Estate	Local landowner
Scaniport Estate	Local landowner
Iain Cameron	Local landowner
Aldourie Primary School	Public sector/local service
Local Councillors - Chris Balance - Helen Crawford - David Fraser - Emma Knox	Public sector

Appendix Three - Drop-in day comments

Below are the comments made against each topic over the course of two drop in sessions. Where 'ticks' are referred to, these were statements of agreement with the posted comment.

Car Parking

- Double yellow lines in the village car park in the field or near the hall. (one tick)
- Mobile home parking spaces on a small scale, 2-3, for overnight. Not a mobile home park.
- Car park has already been put forward to be implemented ASAP. (two ticks)
- Car Parking next to the football field.
- Charge for parking at the Inn
- Car parking is needed with a safe route to the beach - Safety issue. (one tick)
- Football pitch has been used almost never in the last few years. It could be a pay and display car park with a height barrier and no overnight parking.
- Space for motor homes by the loch but still parking at the village - needs signage. (one tick)
- Keep the football pitch as a football pitch. (four ticks)
- Speed bumps, half way between the hall and junction. (one tick)
- Planning permission for a campervan site, near the school - but the landowner has not done anything yet. Community could buy it but not run it? (one tick)
- Parking areas (church) should have a dog and rubbish bin. (one tick)
- Limited actual park needed near the beach/Inn.
- Overflow can continue to use a temporary car park at church - not ideal as entry/exit is difficult.

Roads & Traffic

- Community bus
- Extra public services in the summer months. Smaller buses in winter.
- Evening bus. (one tick)
- Community dial a bus. (one tick)
- Buses for working people to get to Inverness for 9 am (two ticks) and 7am. (one tick)
- Weekend buses - Sunday. (one tick)
- Community bus, especially Saturday and Sundays (weekends) to get staff to the pub. (one tick)
- Crossing at church, Inn and by the hall where there is no pavement.
- Community transport for appointments with volunteer drivers.
- Bus ok for working in town at 9am but maybe not for college/hospital workers. (one tick)
- Mini Bus - 2 days a week - for anyone to book a space and will collect/drop off. (one tick)
- Path to school moved back from the road. (three ticks)
- Electric bikes would be good.
- Seasonal weekend buses increased. (one tick)

- Well advance notice of change in bus timetable, e.g, What time? Where is it going? And where is it leaving from? (four ticks)
- Dores village improvement scheme - design there but not progressed.
- Traffic calming - a priority. (two ticks)
- Speed limits don't help - need speed bumps. (two ticks)
- 30 mph speed limit from school to village. (one tick)
- Sunday bus service. (one tick)
- Wider pavements - not wide enough for people to pass.
- 50 mph speed limit from Torbreck to Dores.
- Community bus - taking people to appointments etc. (two ticks)

Elderly Care

- All types of care needed.
- Extend Boleskine community services. (five ticks)
- Make sure paths are suitable for wheelchairs/elderly. (three ticks)
- GP visiting 2hrs? Per week in Dores hall (four ticks)
- NHS Highland - increase in demand will increase chances of getting community care. (three ticks)
- No adult care provision. (three ticks)
- Provide a local house for local carers. Assuming at Glebe Sheltered with shared facilities for health visits etc. (three ticks)

Beach Area

- Better control of fires on the beach and a contact number to call. (one tick)
- More bins and bins emptied more regularly. (three ticks)
- Year round warden. (two ticks)
- In the last 2 weeks the police have attended anti-social behavior on the beach 4 times and the fire brigade once. The beach is not under control.
- The public toilets are working excellently (maintenance by the Pub) on busy days there is an almost constant queue.
- The Pub is a commercial business trying to stay solvent. Its car park is full to overflowing on a sunny weekend. Even before they open - leaving them with no parking for their customers. Again the Pub is not being supported with this problem.
- The ranger was doing a great job when he attended but without him there is nobody constructively talking to people on the beach about fires and antisocial behaviour.
- Dores beach is by far this village's greatest asset and yet it seems to be left week on week to the Dores Inn to try and control the mayhem on a sunny weekend.
- Bike parking in several places around the village. (one tick)
- There is a possibility that soon confrontational situations will lead to actual physical confrontations. A warden is desperately needed.
- Rise in anti-social behaviour. (one tick)
- Hoping to get a seasonal warden part financed by the community/Aldourie estate/anyone else willing to fund. (two ticks)
- Better police provisions for serious anti-social behaviour. (one tick)
- Council - smaller bins in car parks that overflow.
- Urgently need a summer ranger. (three ticks)

- Can Aldourie Castle - Wildland - support a warden for Aldourie pier, Torr woods, beach and laybys.

Housing

- Plots of land needed to be sold for private housing.
- Develop planned areas for housing for younger local residents.
- Key worker housing for new developments - linked to elderly care. (three ticks)
- Torbreck site - services to be developed from Ness Castle down to Torbreck.
- Housing planned for Glebe - including a unit of 4 residents plus shared space for joint use (living, kitchen, toilet) - for older folk. (five ticks)
- Housing totally needed - mixed tenure best for all ages. (four ticks)
- Housing, mixture of tenants. (one tick)
- Better system for housing criteria for locals. (one tick)
- Cemetery - we need to push for this to be brought forward to 2024. (five ticks)
- Cemetery is being extended. (five ticks)

Play Park

- Football field in private ownership.
- Football pitch needs to be cut regularly. (four ticks)
- Statkraft investment in the local community. Facilities for the community like toilets. Playing field, pier/jetty.
- Play park/community hub needs to be in the place already identified for the community hub.

Public Toilets

- New toilet - best next to bus stop or Inn, or new car park. (four ticks)
- Toilets need to be near the beach/bus stop/Inn. Public won't use facilities if at the hall. (two ticks)
- Just like Foyers. (one tick)
- For safety, toilets have to be on the beach side of the main road - unless road crossing. (two ticks)
- Need new facilities could be at the hall area as drainage already there or a new facility near the beach area.

Anything Else?

- Lovely village
- Villagers do look after the village - pick up the litter etc.
- Speed bumps would help with antisocial boy-racers. (two ticks)
- Maintain rural nature of village - avoid overdevelopment. (two ticks)
- Grey/black water disposal. Cassette toilet disposal site.
- Who will pay to run this? Users would need to pay. Needs emptied as soon as its full.
- Food and garden waste collection. (one tick)

Quick Wins

- Later Buses in the evening - 7/8pm and a later one.
- Sunday buses - more in the high season. (two ticks)

- Pursue temporary car park on freshly cleared land by hall as offered by landowner. For this summer. (four ticks)
- Bus coming out of town around 11am - bring it back. Was very popular.
- Beach Warden.
- Road safety - white lines on road to stop parking. Should have 'no parking' added going through the village, or double yellow lines. (two ticks)

School

- Falling rolls need more children. (two ticks)

Village Hall

- Extend use to:
 1. Boleskine care.
 2. Childminding.
 3. After school care.
 4. Make the hall a community hub.
- Don't need a cafe - have enough.

Community Activities

- Organised activities for local - more community involvement.

Childcare

- Encourage some to become a childminder - support to set up.
- Could encourage people to move to the area.

Community Transport

- Local employment.