



Alyth Community Action Plan

Visitor Survey Report

October 2021



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Acknowledgements

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The Visitor Survey was carried out by the Community Connector with support from the Community Action Plan (CAP) Steering Group, Alyth Development Trust and the Alyth Community Support Group.

The format of this report is an adaption of pre-existing templates provided by Star Development.

The cover photograph has been provided by Steve Taylor.¹

¹ Taylor, S., 2021. *View From The Top of Alyth Hill* [accessed 6 December 2021]

Introduction

Alyth's Community Action Plan:

This Visitor Survey was carried out over the summer of 2021 in Alyth as part of the Alyth CAP engagement process. Several other methods of engagement were also utilised, including:

- Community Views Survey
- Young People's Survey (12-17 years old)
- Children's Survey
- Pop-up Stalls
- Travelling Tea Party
- Focus Groups
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Social Media Engagement
- LoveAlyth Community Feedback Event

The CAP process is being carried out by the Community Connector with the support of the CAP Steering Group, which comprises members from a cross-section of backgrounds. This process has been funded by Leader, with guidance and support provided by Star Development. All views and insights which have been ascertained throughout the engagement process will inform the Alyth Community Action Plan for 2021-2026. The Plan is a roadmap for how we will, over a five-year period, make Alyth a better place to live, work and visit. However, it is important to note that the final plan will be a living document, subject to regular updates and open to further consultation as and when necessary.

Method

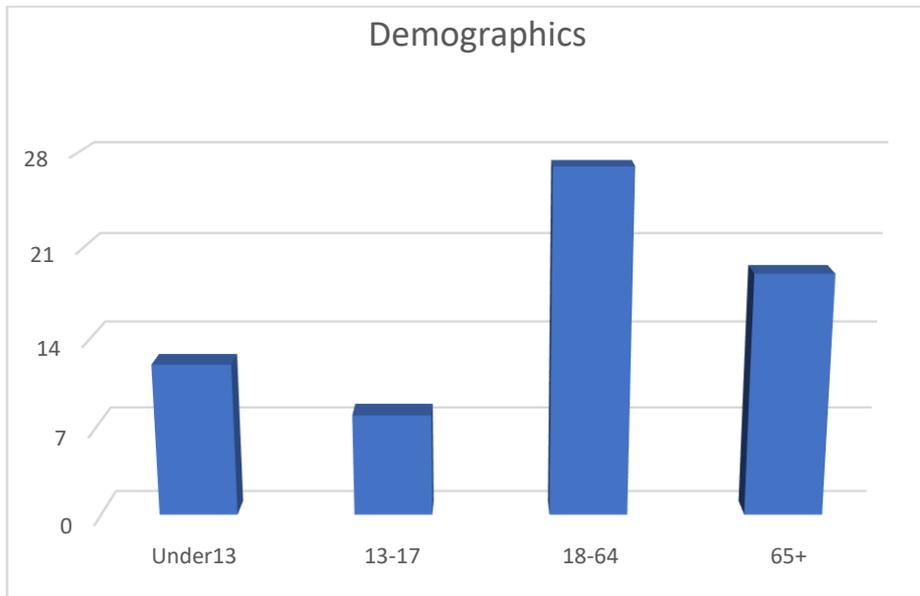
During the summer, Alyth attracts a significant amount of visitors.² This is for several reasons, such as being a gateway to the Cairngorms, being situated on the Catechan Trail and being in close proximity to popular golf clubs. Due to the prominence of tourists in Alyth, it was important that their views were taken into consideration as part of our engagement process. The Visitor Survey form was developed from that used for Burntisland's Visitor Survey during their CAP process, and then approved by the Alyth CAP Steering Group. The Visitor Survey was carried out by the Community Connector and volunteers from the CAP Steering Group, all of whom were provided with lanyards and the tools necessary to collect responses. Because tourists pass through the Market Square regularly, visitor surveys were carried out alongside the Community Views Survey at our various Pop-up Stalls and Travelling Tea Parties. Those who were conducting the surveys approached (or were approached by) visitors, who were then asked if they would like to complete the survey. The visitor was then asked questions, with the surveyor filling in responses on their behalf. While most people who were approached were happy to answer questions, some people chose not to participate, probably because Scotland was slowly transitioning out of lockdown at the time of the survey. As such, many were reluctant to mix with people who were outside of their bubble. To try to combat this issue, the survey was also available online. Posters were made and circulated which would allow visitors to scan a QR code in order to access the survey, but in the end this proved to be of limited value, generating few returns.

The in-person surveying took place at pre-scheduled times, agreed by the Community Connector and the Steering Group volunteers. Doodle polls were utilised to allow volunteers to sign up for timed slots which worked best for them. The Visitor Survey forms were analysed by the Community Connector, who then produced the final visitor report. Russell Willis Taylor and Kevin Coe (both of Alyth Development Trust and the CAP Steering Group) proofed the document before it was then passed on to the CAP Steering Group via email to allow for any other amendments and considerations to be made. A follow-up meeting was held with the Survey Team to share their experiences.

² The Stakeholder Report can be accessed by visiting www.alyth.online

Respondent Demographics

A total of 42 Visitor Survey forms were completed, representing a total of 76 people in the following age demographics:

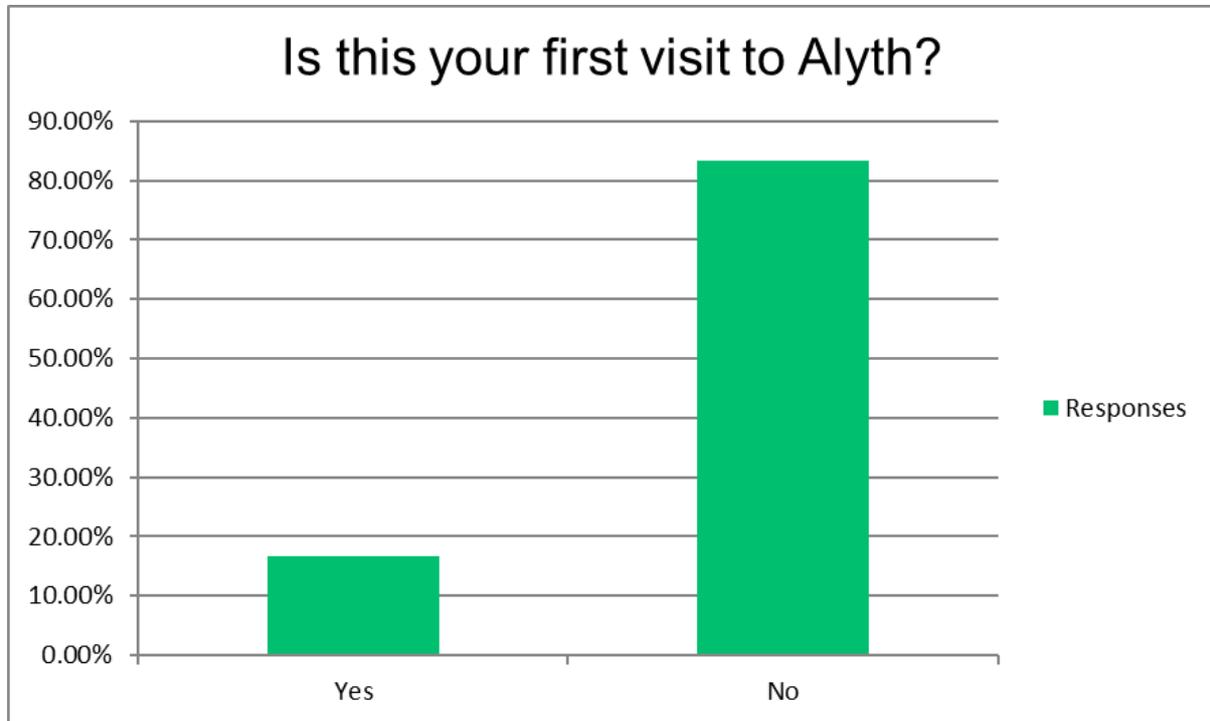


These demographics are indicative of families visiting the town. However, the majority of respondents were adults who were either passing through the area or taking part in active travel (walkers and cyclists).

About the Respondents and Their Visits

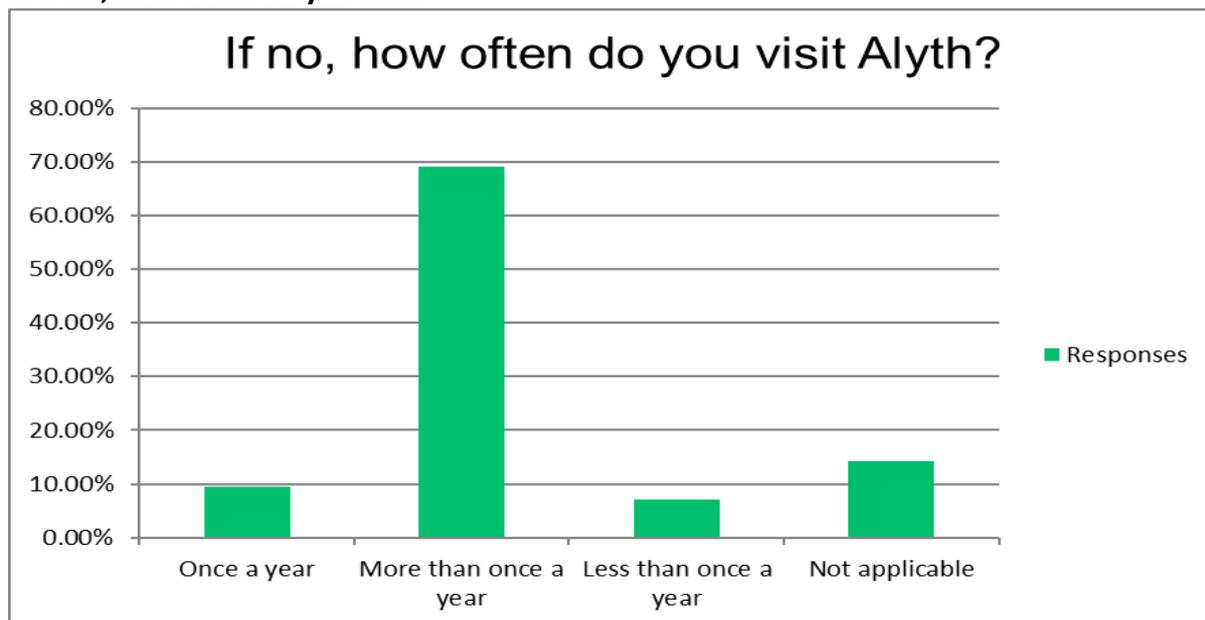
This section addresses questions 1-6 of the Visitor Survey.

1. Is This Your First Visit to Alyth?



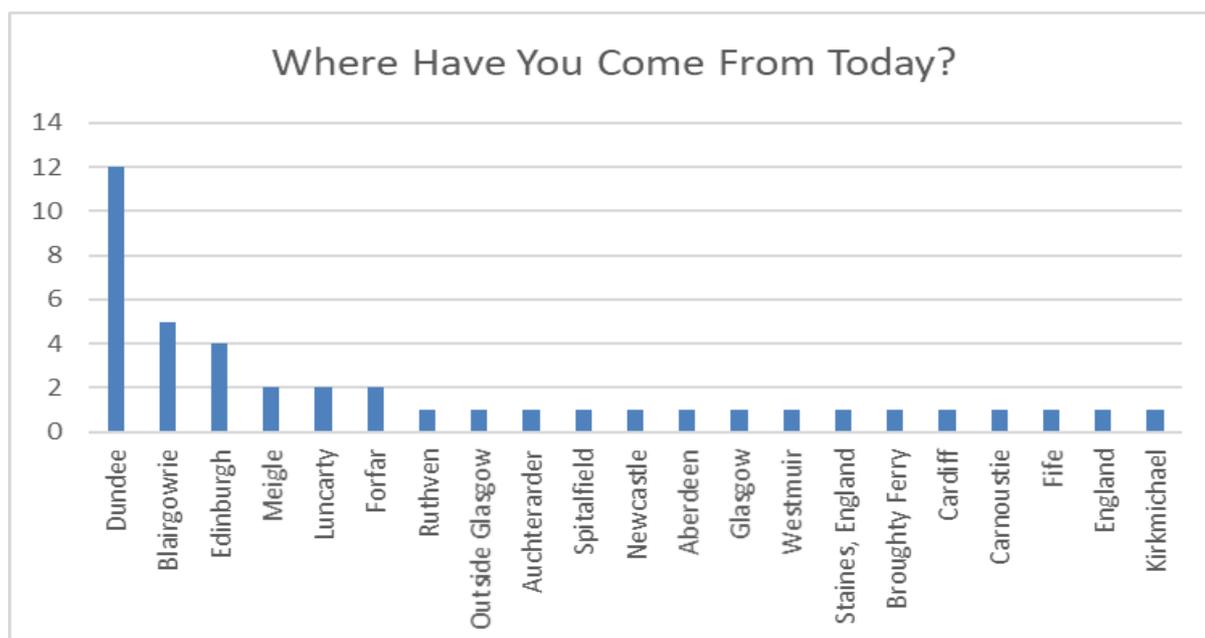
Judging by the responses, this could indicate that Alyth is reliant upon returning visitors. This point is illustrated by the fact that over 80% of respondents had visited Alyth before. It is further emphasised by the responses to question 2.

2. If no, how often do you visit?



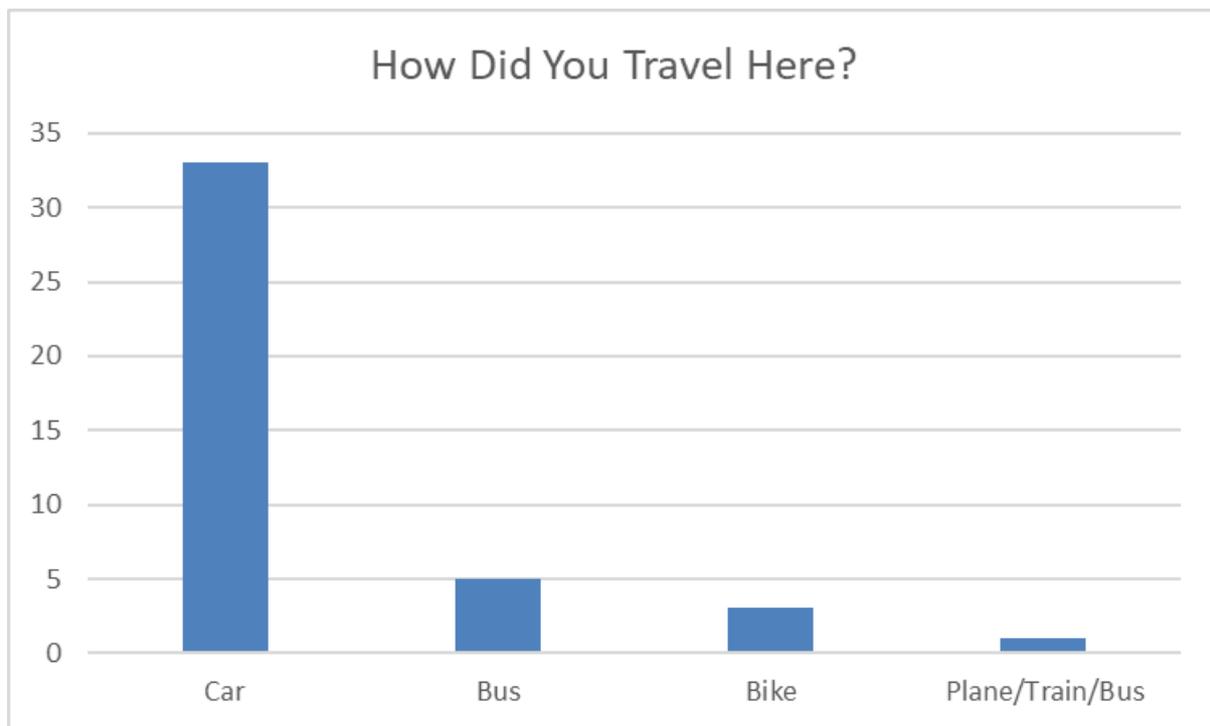
This graph demonstrates that almost 70% of respondents visit Alyth multiple times per year. However, these results should be considered in the context of COVID-19. As we transitioned out of lockdown, it was a prominent theme across Scotland and the rest of the UK that it would be best to stay local. As such, it could be worthwhile asking these questions again once we are further removed from the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. Where Have You Come From Today?



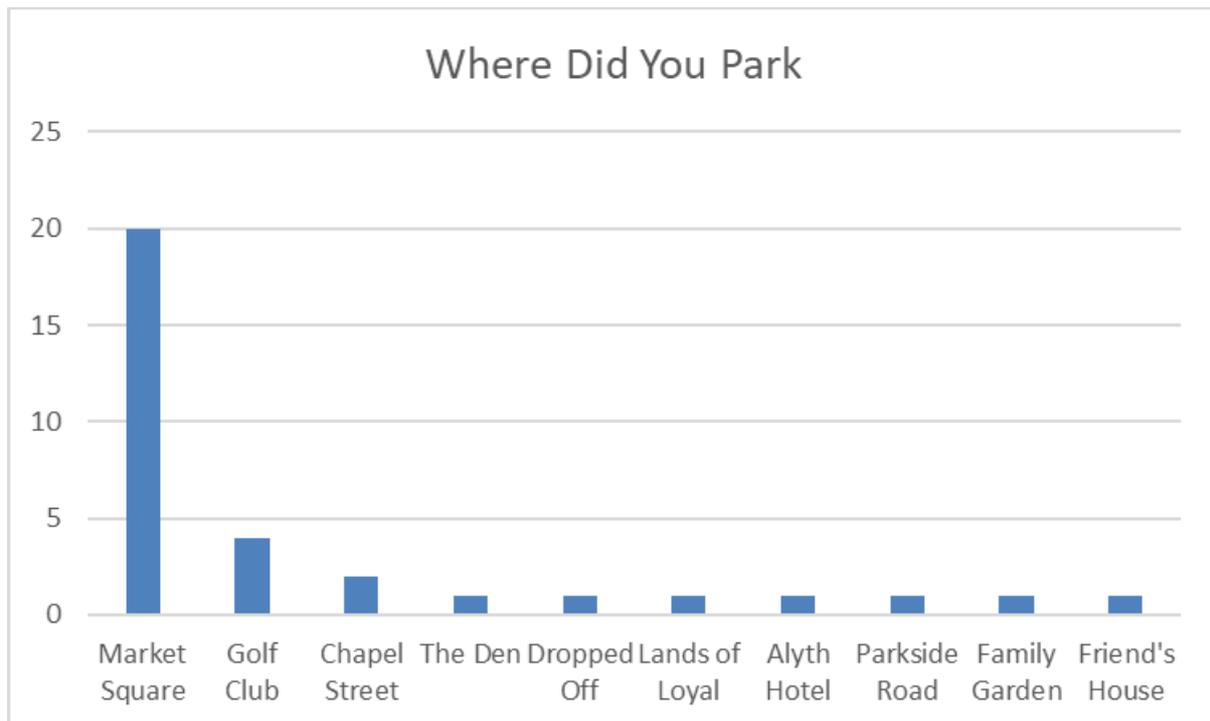
The chart above indicates that half of respondents live within a 30-minute drive of Alyth, and the vast majority within a two-hour drive. Conversations with those from further afield (England/Wales) indicated that they were travelling to visit family whom they had not seen since the start of the pandemic.

4. How Did You Travel Here?



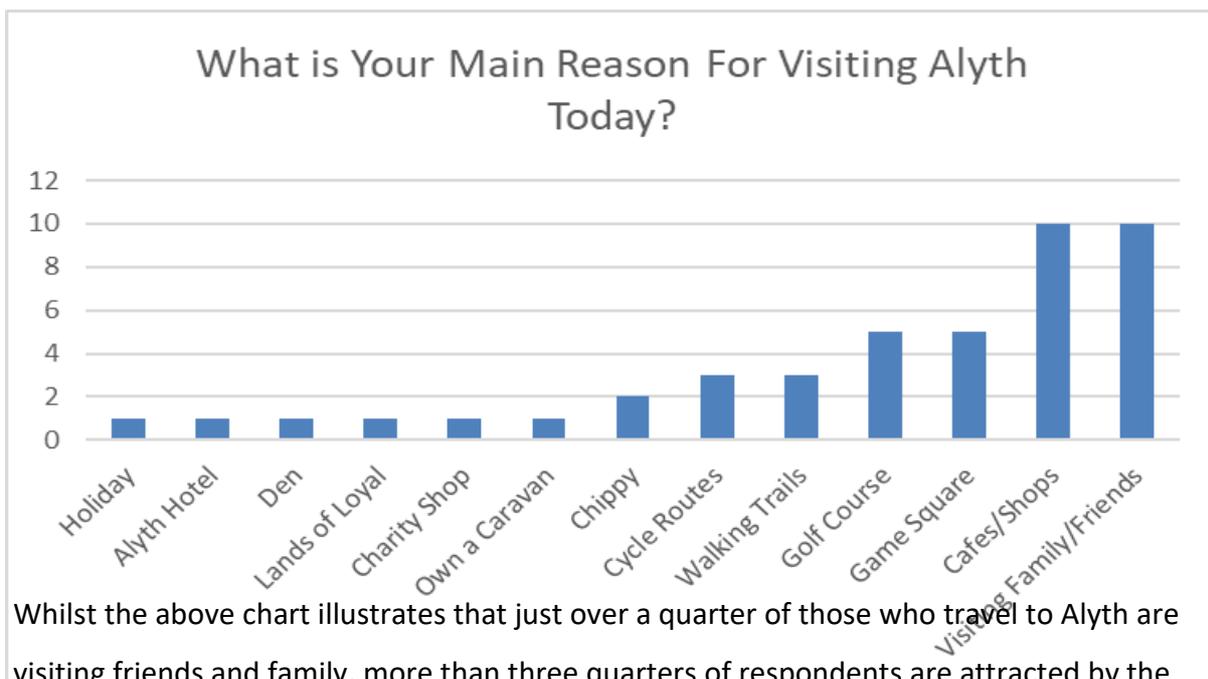
This indicates that most people who travel to Alyth do so by car (over 78%).

5. Where Did You Park?



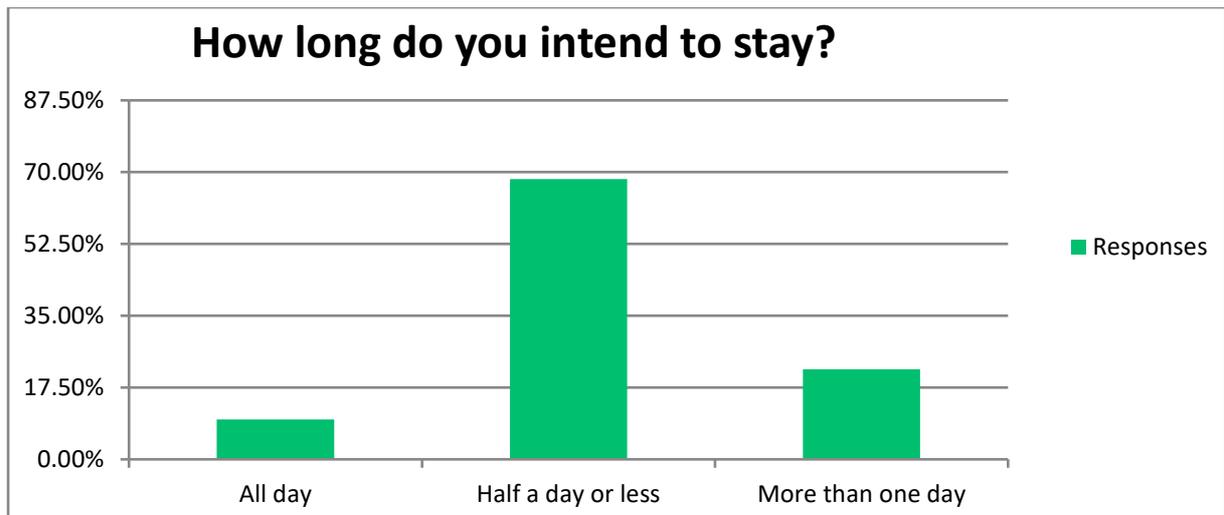
This chart indicates that over half of the visitors who drive to Alyth park in the main square of the town. Those who do not are parking closer to the activities in which they are participating.

6. What is your main reason for visiting Alyth today?



Whilst the above chart illustrates that just over a quarter of those who travel to Alyth are visiting friends and family, more than three quarters of respondents are attracted by the wide range of shops, food places and activities that our town has to offer.

7. How long do you intend to stay?

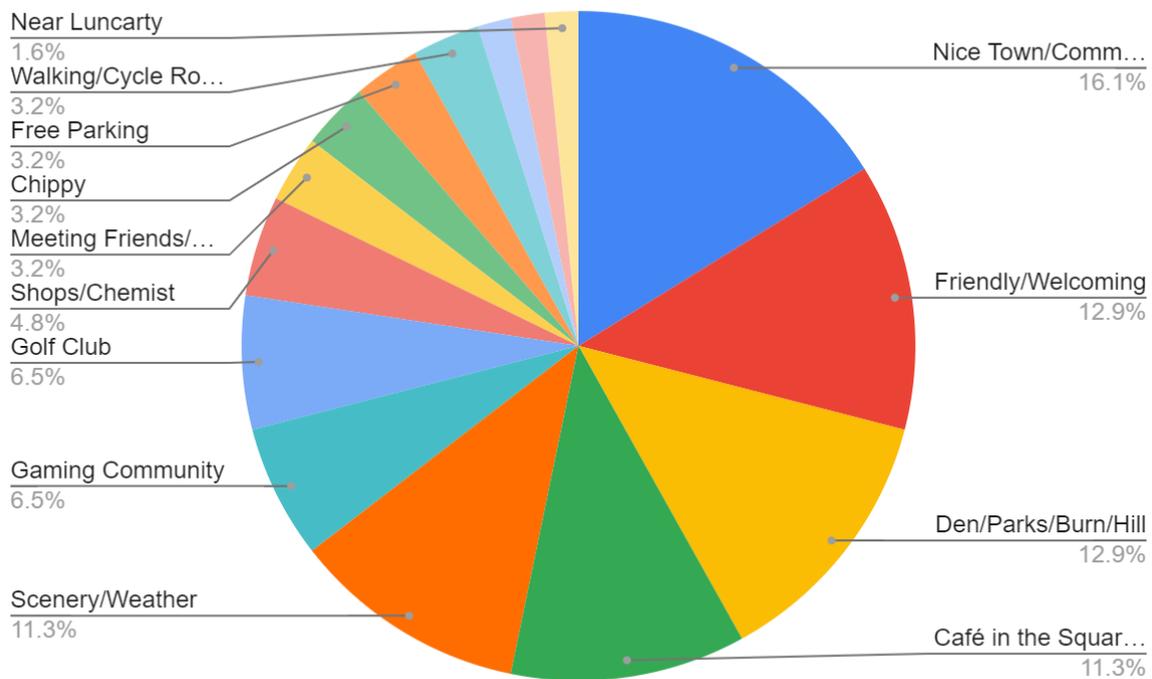


The above chart shows that almost 70% of those who visit Alyth only do so for half a day or less. This suggests that the majority of visitors come to Alyth for specific activities rather than for long periods of time. This ties in with the results of Question 6 which illustrate that three quarters of respondents visited Alyth due to the amenities and activities on offer.

What Visitors Like About Alyth?

This section addresses Question 8 of the Visitors Survey.

8. What Do You Like About Visiting Alyth?



As shown in the above pie chart, it is clear that visitors enjoy visiting Alyth for a wide variety of reasons.

Appearance/Community:

16.1% of respondents indicated that they enjoyed visiting Alyth because it is a nice town with a strong sense of community spirit. Additionally, 12.9% of respondents stated that they liked Alyth as it is both friendly and welcoming. This shows that visitors value the atmosphere of our town.

Facilities and Activities:

<u>Facility/Activity</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Den/Parks/Burn/Hill	12.9%
Cafe in the Square and Kidzone	11.3%
Gaming community	6.5%
Golf club	6.5%
Shops/chemist	4.8%
Chippy	3.2%
Walking/cycle routes	3.2%
Total	48.4%

The above table contains a breakdown of the facilities and activities which visitors enjoyed. 48.4% of respondents like Alyth due to the facilities and activities which we offer. Shops and places to eat are popular with visitors, making up 19.3% of the things that visitors enjoy in the town. However, it is clear from the above table that the activities on offer are a big draw to visitors with 29.1% indicating that it is what they enjoy most about the town.

Location and Accessibility:

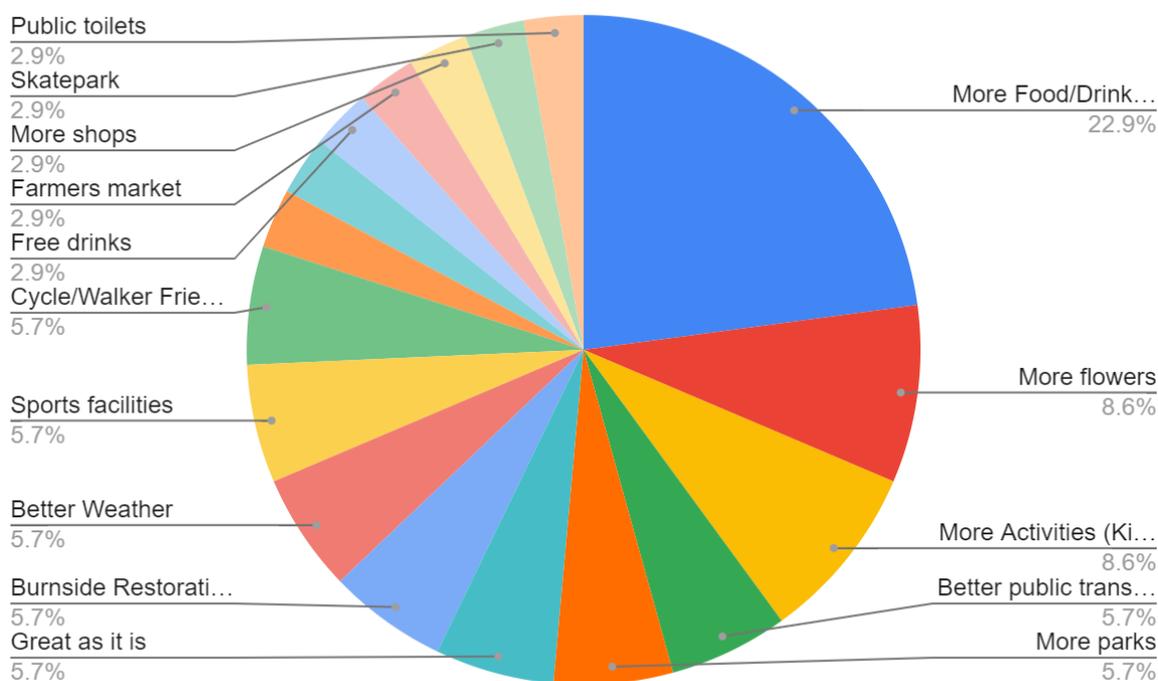
The scenery in and around Alyth was also cited as a reason for why people enjoy visiting the town, with 11.3% of respondents indicating that it is what they like most about the town.

3.2% of respondents answered that it was easy to visit Alyth because free parking was available. A further 1.6% enjoyed visiting Alyth as it was not too far to travel.

What Visitors Think Could Improve Alyth

This section addresses Question 9 of the Visitor Survey.

9. What Would Make Alyth a Better Place to Visit?



Hospitality:

Over one fifth of respondents indicated in the survey that they would like to see more hospitality businesses in Alyth, including more coffee shops, more restaurants, more takeaways and more pubs among other things.

Appearance:

14.3% of respondents suggested that improving Alyth’s appearance would make the town a better place to visit. This includes 8.6% of respondents suggesting that there should be more flowers, and 5.7% of respondents adding that it would be great to have further restoration of Alyth’s burn-side.

Activities:

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Activities for kids/teens/adults	8.6%
More parks	5.7%
Sports facilities	5.7%
Walker/cycle-friendly roads	2.9%
Skatepark	2.9%
Farmers market	2.9%
Totals	28.7%

As noted in the table above, a total of 28.7% of visitors indicated that Alyth would benefit from having a wider variety of things to do in the town. It was also indicated in further comments that activities in Alyth are very 'outdoorsy' and that the town could benefit from more indoor activities, such as reopening the Museum.³

Services and Accessibility

Visitors have highlighted the need for public toilets (2.7%). This has been a common theme throughout our community engagement process. Currently, the public toilets are situated inside Café in the Square as part of Perth & Kinross Council's comfort scheme. This means that public toilets are only available during business opening hours.

5.7% of respondents also contended that there needs to be an improved public transport service in Alyth. The town currently has an hourly bus service to places such as Blairgowrie, Dundee and Perth. However, the bus to Kirriemuir is infrequent and connectivity to places

³ Museum was closed at the time of survey response, reopening weeks later.

such as Dunkeld and Forfar is limited. If public transport is improved, it is possible that there may be a decrease in people travelling here by car.

Conclusions

Overview:

The visitor survey was conducted with the primary aim of identifying the ways in which visitors felt that we could improve Alyth.

Secondary to this, the survey also established:

- Age demographics of those visiting Alyth
- How they travelled
- Why they visited Alyth
- What they liked about Alyth

A total of 42 surveys were completed, with 76 respondents being represented.

Data was gathered over the summer of 2021.

Visitor Profile:

The majority of respondents were between the ages of 18-64. The second largest group was those over 65. The smaller response rate from teenagers and children suggests that responses largely came from families and people travelling without children.

Visitors primarily travelled to Alyth by car, with most people parking in Market Square.

Likes and Improvements:

Respondents indicated that they enjoyed a wide variety of things in Alyth. The appearance and community spirit contributed to the overall feel of the town, with many appreciating the welcoming atmosphere. Various activities, including visiting cafes, cycling and attending Game Square were also highlighted.

Whilst the call for more hospitality venues was the most commonly-identified need for the town, the wide variety of ideas suggested for improving the town indicates that visitors believe that there needs to be a greater choice of activities to do in the town.

Process Evaluation:

In an average year, Alyth would attract many visitors over the summer. However, the response rate does not entirely suggest this to be the case. Therefore, it is pivotal that we place this in the wider context of the pandemic. People have been reluctant to travel. Furthermore, many who have felt safe to travel have not wanted to mix outside their bubbles. As Alyth's creation of the Community Action Plan is to be a living document, it could be beneficial to undertake this survey again in 2022 or 2023.