



# Alyth Community Action Plan Focus Group and Social Media Engagement Report October 2021



## Contents

|                         |      |
|-------------------------|------|
| Acknowledgements        | p.3  |
| Introduction            | p.4  |
| Focus Groups            | p.7  |
| Social Media Engagement | p.11 |
| Conclusion              | p.16 |

## Acknowledgements

### **Acknowledgements**

Thank you to Alyth Development Trust, the Alyth Community Support Group and the Community Action Plan Steering Group volunteers for their support during this process.

Funding for this work has been provided by Rural Perth & Kinross Leader, and Perth & Kinross Council.<sup>1</sup>

The cover photograph has been provided by Steve Taylor.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> This report has been adapted from the Stakeholder Report template provided by STAR Development Group through their Community Futures Programme.

<sup>2</sup> Taylor, S., 2021. *View From The Top of Alyth Hill* [accessed 6 December 2021]

## Introduction

### **Background**

**What is a focus group?** In this report, this refers to groups of people who have an abiding interest in our town, either through a commercial or personal connection. This report summarises the findings of the ***Focus Group Meetings*** carried out in Alyth from May to July 2021.

The meetings were carried out as part of the community engagement process and will help to inform the preparation of our Community Action Plan (CAP) 2021 - 2026.

To complete the CAP, additional consultation has been carried out including a Community Views Survey, Stakeholder Interviews, Youth Surveys, a Visitor Survey and other community outreach. Feedback on all the community engagement was provided at an event on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

### **Focus Group Meetings**

**How were focus groups selected?** During the Stakeholder Interview and surveying process, it became apparent that there were engagement gaps, particularly concerning youth engagement due to COVID-19 restrictions. Additionally, there was initially a lower response rate than expected for the surveys. As a result of this, we opted to have traditional focus groups, pop-up stalls and a couple of 'Travelling Tea Parties' for the Community Action Plan. The pop-ups and tea parties have been treated as 'Pop-up Focus Groups.'

We also utilised social media as an engagement tool. This is being treated as a virtual focus group.

It is important to note why pop-ups and social media were utilised as engagement tools.

For a variety of reasons (e.g. accessibility issues, time restraints), not everyone will complete a survey form. Pop-ups and social media gave the community the opportunity to have their say in which was the most convenient to them.

Traditional focus groups were carried out by Laura Rodger (Community Connector) with assistance from Grant Train (CAP Steering Group) and Russell Willis Taylor (Alyth Development Trust).

'Pop-up Focus Groups' were carried out by the Community Connector and a number of steering group volunteers, including Kevin Coe, Bruce Houston, Cathy Scott, Russell Willis Taylor, Steve Taylor, Grant Train and Eleanor Whipps.

Virtual Focus Groups were managed by Kevin Coe and the Community Connector.

A minimum of 377 people were engaged with via this medium.<sup>3</sup> This number comprises 59 people from traditional focus groups, 98 virtual and 220 people attending pop-up stalls and the travelling tea parties.<sup>4</sup> Below is a list of consulted groups:

- Alyth Development Trust
- Alyth in Bloom
- Alyth Youth Partnership (ages 9-15)
- Community of Alyth

---

<sup>3</sup> Figure based upon recordings which are verifiable.

<sup>4</sup> The pop-up stall attendance was likely greater than this. The Community Connector was not present at all pop-up stalls. This number comes from the attendance figures from the pop-ups the community connector was present at.

- Pop-up Stalls
- Travelling Tea Party
- Social Media
  
- Explorer Scouts (ages 14-17)
- Scouts (ages 9-14)
- Strathmore Tots

This report summarises these findings.

Due to the slight differences in questions asked and the number of responses generated, social media will be discussed separately in this report.

## **Focus Groups**

This section details the findings of traditional focus groups, social media comments/messages and pop-up focus groups. Responses are recorded in the following categories:

1. What Do You Like About Alyth?
2. What Would You Change?
3. What's Missing?
4. What Positive Actions Can the Town Take to be More Eco-friendly?

### **1. What Do You Like About Alyth?**

- The Community
- Clubs for young people (AYP, Scouts, Explorer, Guides, etc)
- Friendly
- Walking trails
- The play-parks
- Christmas lights
- Musical Society
- Volunteering Culture
- The bike park
- The museum

- The burn

## 2. What Would You Change?

- Bigger library
- Bigger museum
- More houses
- Second goal needed at Jubilee Park
- Need a stronger adult presence in town (some teenagers create a negative image and everyone is tarred with same brush)
- More variety of trails at the bike park
  - drifting track
- Overcrowded buses
  - not accessible if more than one wheelchair/buggies don't fold down
- Venue hire is too expensive for Community Groups (Ogilvie Rooms for £20 a month, but around triple that).
- More funding opportunities for community groups
- Improved park facilities (Mill St Park has nothing for older children, Jubilee Park has nothing for younger ones. This is difficult when you have children of different ages).
- Need a better paths network (published routes that say whether they are buggy/wheelchair accessible).
- Initiative to do up the shop frontage

- Introduce traffic-calming measures
- Need better signage of what is here in the town
- The nettles at the back of school are annoying

### **3. What's Missing?**

- Swimming Pool
- Crazy Golf
- Footpath in Jubilee Park
- Accessible park facilities
  - nothing for those who use wheelchairs.
- Community Bus
  - to Blairgowrie swimming pool.
- Classes/clubs for young children (e.g. dance, gymnastics, netball)
- Basketball Courts
- Rugby Club
- Drop-in hangout for young people
- Need a bakery
- Community Cinema
- Shelter for young people (Saw Mill Conversion possibility)
- Trampoline Park

- Climbing Wall
- Creative activity groups for young people
  - dance groups, art groups, etc
- Lack of job opportunities for young people
  - Only really hospitality options and there's not enough to go around
  - admin jobs/construction jobs (apprenticeships/internships) would be beneficial
  - this is a barrier for young people trying to join job market after high school
- Bring Bookbug to Alyth Library
- Permanent activity trail using QR codes
- A skate park
  - mobile skate park
- Community Events
  - Farmers market, Jazz in the Burn, Jam in the Den
- Benches/BBQ benches in the parks
- All purpose sports hall
  - Can be addressed by having access to the Community Wing/School facilities
- Have to leave Alyth to go and play football
  - there are no children's football clubs
- Need public toilets

#### **4. What Positive Actions Can the Town Take to be More Eco-friendly?**

- Hydro-electric
- Build birdhouses in the Den
- Big compost heap
- Community Fridge
- More wind turbines
- Plant more trees
- More bins (especially weighted bins)
- Litter-picks/weekly clean-up in Alyth
- Initiatives to teach people how to grow food.
- Community Car-sharing/Shuttle Bus
- Improved Recycling Centre
- More fast car-charging points

### **Social Media Engagement**

This section details the findings of social media engagement. Our engagement process utilised social media as a tool to reach more people. Statistics for this included:

- Facebook: 46 direct comments, 12 Facebook messages, (excluding 60+ likes and reach of 3000, engagement estimated at 1000)
- Facebook PollsForPages: 39

- Instagram: 28 (excluding reach of 1253, impressions of 2071)

Instagram Poll: 12 votes (11 in favour of a skate park, 1 against)

Comments and messages have been absorbed into the aforementioned focus group categories. Below details the responses of the Facebook PollsForPages engagement.

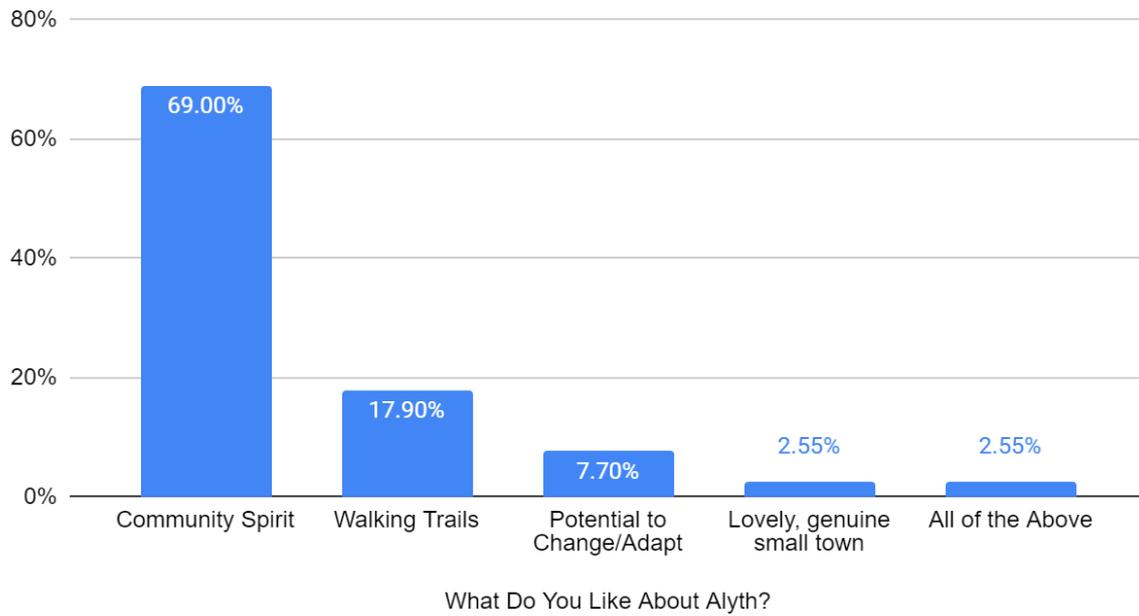
Responses are recorded in the following categories:

1. What Do You Like About Alyth?
2. What Small Changes Could Improve the Town?
3. What Big Changes Would You Like to See in the Town?
4. How Could Alyth Be More Environmentally Friendly?

### **1. What Do You Like About Alyth?**

For this question, respondents were given three suggested answers: Community Spirit, Walking Trails and Potential to Change/Adapt.

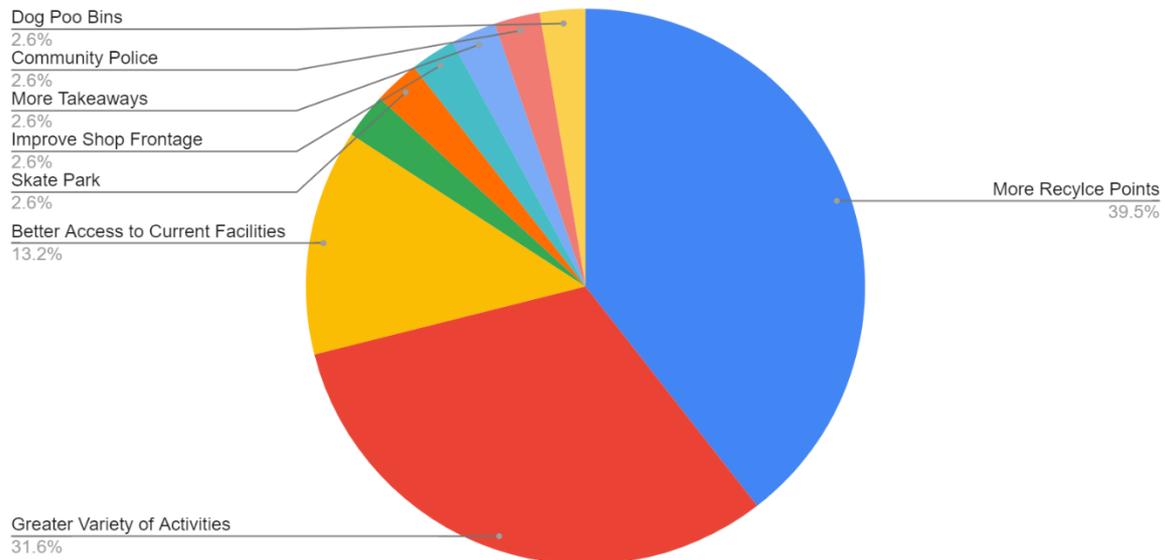
## What Do You Like About Alyth?



It was also possible for respondents to add their own answer. Over two thirds of respondents indicated that Community Spirit was what they most liked about Alyth.

## 2. What Small Changes Could Improve the Town?

For this question, respondents were given three suggested answers: More Recycle Bins, Greater Variety of Activities and Better Access to Current Facilities.

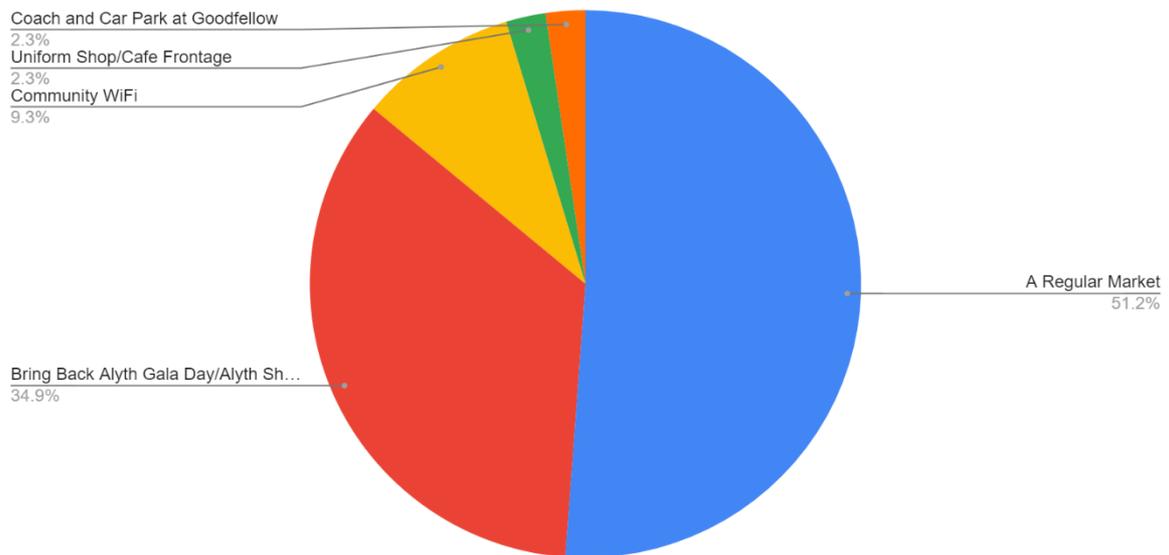


It was also possible for respondents to add their own answer. Responses indicate that residents would like more recycling facilities and a greater variety of activities in the town. The additional responses which were added also come up several times in the Community Views Survey.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> See Community Views Survey for further details. Accessible at: [www.alyth.online](http://www.alyth.online)

### 3. What Big Changes Would You Like to See in the Town?

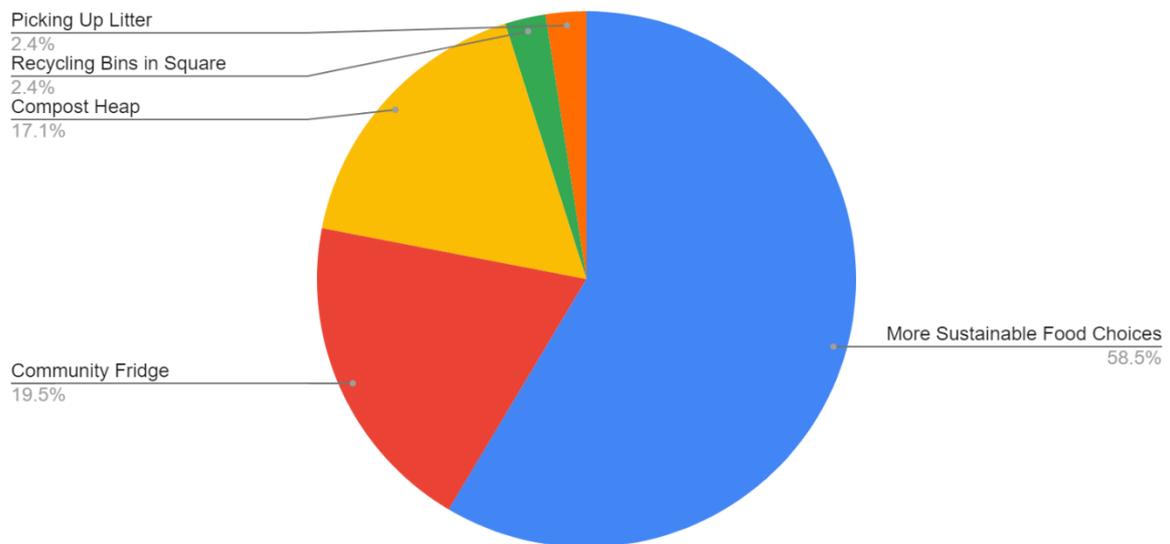
For this question, respondents were given three suggested answers: A Regular Market, Bring Back Alyth Gala Day/Alyth Show/Jam in the Den and Community WiFi.



It was also possible for respondents to add their own answer. Over half of the responses were in favour of a regular market occurring in Alyth. Furthermore, over a third indicated that they would like community events, such as the Gala Day or Jam in the Den to return to Alyth.

#### 4. How Could Alyth Be More Environmentally Friendly?

For this question, respondents were given three suggested answers: More Sustainable Food Choices (e.g. growing our own food/buying local), Community Fridge and Compost Heap (or other community recycling project).



It was also possible for respondents to add their own answer. 58.5% of responses were in favour of making more sustainable food choices, whilst almost one fifth of responses liked the idea of a community fridge. Both options indicate that initiatives to tackle food waste would be well received.

## Conclusion

Feedback from the focus groups is difficult to quantify. Similar or the same ideas were often proposed for different reasons. However, the focus groups did allow for qualitative discussions to take place. This gave context for why certain projects should be a priority. This technique was also particularly effective with regards to engaging with young people in the community. It gave them the opportunity to have their voices heard. Although a young people's survey was available, it is important to acknowledge that this medium is not as popular with younger generations. Conducting the focus groups helped to make up the shortfall in youth participation.

Social media engagement does not offer the depth of responses which were received via other mediums. Furthermore, giving suggested answers could be regarded as pushing a respondent towards a certain way of thinking. However, this is mitigated by there being an option to add a different response. While it is not possible to determine whether the respondents of the Facebook Poll also engaged in other ways, it provided an alternate way for the community to have their say which did not involve having to fill out a long survey.

Taking all of the focus group and social media engagement methods together, a significant number of people engaged. Utilising these different techniques visibly demonstrates the attempt which has been made to offer the community of Alyth different ways of engaging with the process.