

BATHGATE LOCAL PLACE PLAN 2024-2034



Bathgate people care. We care about our town, its identity, its success, its community, and its future.

Our Vision:

To protect and further enhance nature and the natural beauty of the Bathgate Hills as they reach down to a thriving town of Bathgate that is vibrant, well connected, supported and climate resilient - a town ready for the future.

Our Aim:

To ensure the continuing growth and prosperity of the town by encouraging economic development that is both sustainable and inclusive. By collaborating with the local community, West Lothian Council and various other agencies, we aim with this plan to create a new future for the town; a future which takes into account the surrounding natural environment and will maximise opportunities building on the town's rich and significant history.

Our Priorities:

The community are clear that Bathgate has now grown beyond the point that the current infrastructure (doctors, dentists, schools etc) can effectively support. They seek commitment that no further development will be considered/approved until the infrastructure is in place to support the current population. They are reassured by the advice from Fiona Hyslop that there is no demand for Bathgate to support further growth based on future West Lothian growth predictions. They are pleased to hear that future WL growth needs will be absorbed by other parts of West Lothian.

If / when development does recommence, the community have identified a number of brownfield sites suitable for the future, and they support the need for social housing. Greenfield sites and areas of Common Good should be protected.

Bathgate will not return to the 1980s shopping town of old, but it can reemerge as a new attractive destination. To achieve this, the community proposes that more is done to promote Bathgate's impressive heritage and stunning green spaces, including the Bathgate Hills, diversifying land use to bring more returns / benefits to community and landowners alike.

Safety and access are key issues for people of all abilities, and proposals are put forward to address both.

The Bathgate Community Council presents this Local Place Plan in order to assist West Lothian Council in identifying community needs, strengths, aspirations and challenges, and to give voice to the Community's wishes for the future of its place and people.

The community must be consulted and included in decision making going forward.

Foreword

Bathgate is a place of rich and chequered history. Long before its establishment by the charter of King Malcolm IV, people settled, worked, traded, and worshipped in this area. In the consideration of land-use here, heritage and function have always worked together. Nearby lies the important neolithic site of Cairnpapple, dated to around 4000 B.C.E, and the geologically unique Bathgate Hills so beloved of the town's citizens. The landscape is peppered with standing stones and echoes of a past barely explored.

Part of the history that brings a smile to Bathgate bairns young and old involves a yearly pageant honouring the place as the dowry gift of Robert the Bruce on the occasion of his daughter's wedding to Walter Steward; this event's re-enactment keeps a strong sense of Bathgate's roots awake in our younger generations, as well as being immense fun for all.

Today's Bathgate was born out of an economic boom with the arrival of weaving, followed by the establishment of a town council, the foundation of Bathgate Academy, the siting of the world's first commercial oil refinery as well as the exploitation of coal and the siting of various steel and iron foundries. Later times saw Bathgate's fortunes falter amid the loss of heavy industries, culminating in the 1980s closure of the British Leyland Factory. Such challenges did not stop the town growing from a population of 5000 in the 1870s to 23,000 now. With excellent travel connections and a vibrant services sector, there could be great opportunities for business to flourish in Bathgate again but much attention is needed to fully realise this potential.

The area has been the inspiration of poetic luminaries Alexander Hamilton and Henry Shanks as well as the home of groundbreaking scientists like Sir James Young Simpson, the discoverer of the anaesthetic properties of chloroform, and the Rev. John Fleming whose work on natural history and zoology influenced Charles Darwin's theories. The town can also boast of such sporting heroes as Bernard Gallacher, twice Ryder Cup champion, and Olympic athlete Elliot Bunney called the 'Bathgate Bullet'. Finally, the world's favourite Time Lord is a Bathgate Bairn! Past and present, there are many notables who demonstrate that Bathgate does not want for vitality or talent. It is a place of lively soul that deserves better than to dwindle into just another commuter town.

How to positively shape the future with new ideas and practical solutions is the focus of Bathgate's people in this Local Place Plan.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the many local residents, community groups, businesses and organisations who committed so much energy, enthusiasm and thought in contributing to this plan.

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Introduction and Background to the Bathgate Local Place Plan

Background and Who We Are

The Bathgate Local Place Plan was created out of public response to a draft set of proposals originally presented to Bathgate Community Council for consideration in late September 2023. The proposals suggested sweeping changes to the Bathgate Hills. Local opinion was galvanised and within a few days an opposing petition had attracted over 1500 signatures. At this meeting, in addition to giving a voice to local opposition, a group of volunteers came forward and agreed to assist the Community Council in creating this document, Bathgate's Local Place Plan.

Contact Details:

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BCC Planning Sub-Committee email: bccplanningsc@gmail.com

Purpose of Local Place Plan

This document is a 'Local Place Plan' in accordance with the requirements of the Town & Country Planning (Local Place Plans) (Scotland) Regulations which came into force on 22 January 2022. This place plan has been prepared by the Bathgate Planning Sub-Committee of Bathgate Community Council, an eligible 'Community Body' under the Regulations. A Local Place Plan is a community driven plan created in accordance with Section 14 of the planning (Scotland) act 2019, in order to encourage communities to become more active in defining the future of their places and futures. A Local Place Plan gives community bodies the opportunity to highlight issues, priorities and aspirations for the area, as informed by the community itself regarding the future development and use of local land.

Local Place Plans *"have a statutory role in shaping the planning process. They will require to be taken account of by the council when it is preparing the next LDP and the council will have to demonstrate how LPPs have influenced the process."*

<https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/74184/Local-Place-Plans-LPPs-Guidance>

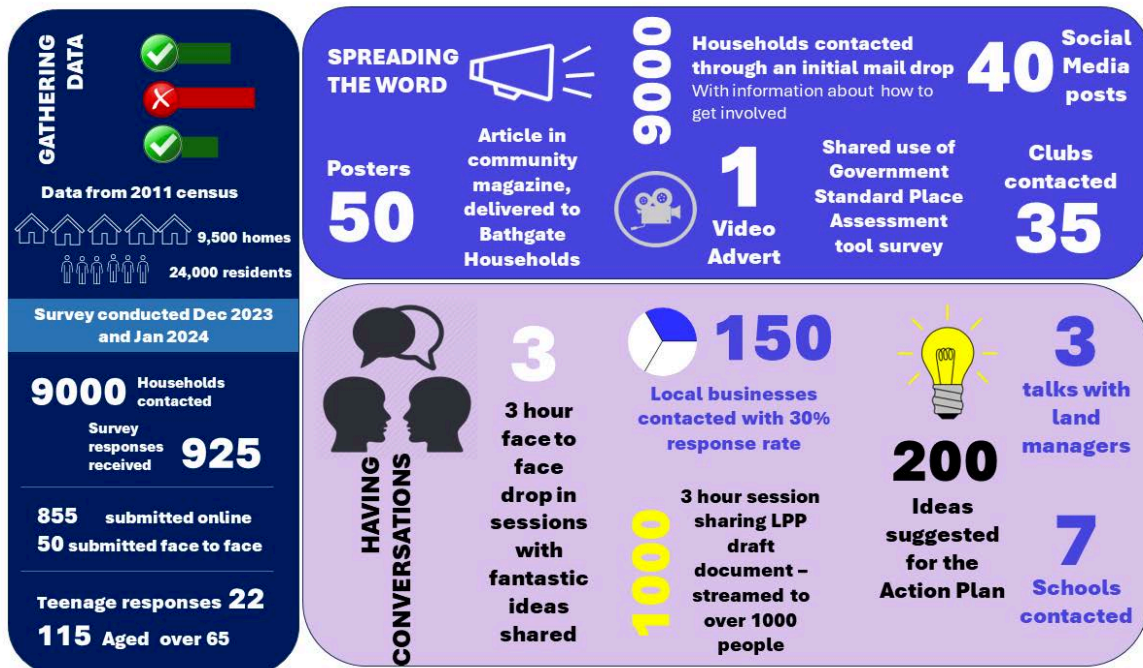
This plan was developed through community consultation, and with regard to:

- (i) the [Local Development Plan](#) for the land to which the Local Place Plan relates.
- (ii) the [National Planning Framework \(NPF4\)](#)
- (iii) the [Strategic Housing Investment Plan \(SHIP\) 2021-2026](#)
- (iv) the [West Locality Plan 2019-2022](#), published for the area covering the land to which this Local Place Plan relates.

The Bathgate Community Council presents this Local Place Plan in order to assist West Lothian Council in identifying community needs, strengths, aspirations and challenges, and to give voice to the Community's wishes for the future of its place and people.

Methods of Engagement

The local Bathgate consultation process was very widely publicised in a number of ways so that everyone was aware of the opportunities to make their voices heard.

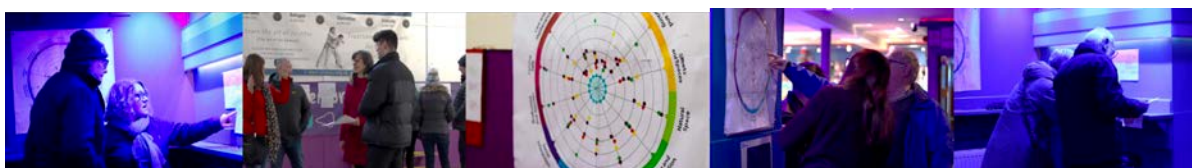


Among the methods of engagement used, we relied heavily on the Place Standard Tool, a government survey application, which functions specifically for the purpose of assessing place and creating such plans. For the purposes of this Local Place Plan, the Dumfries and Galloway Local Place Plan Template has been used. However, the government's Place Standard Tool labels the issues of focus so clearly it seems efficient to use their headings and list the assets/ opportunities/ needs/challenges associated with each one, leading into the Action Plan.

A team of 33 local volunteers distributed leaflets to homes in Bathgate reaching 9,000 of the 9,500 residences. They did this at short notice while battling with Storm Jocelyn. Huge thanks for their efforts!



Three face-to-face consultations sessions attracted 30 - 40 people who came along and shared thoughts and ideas over a coffee. Excellent contributions from all. Big thanks to the Dreadnought Rock and Scout Hall for providing their premises for free.



We considered previous community feedback from the **Big Bathgate Survey** undertaken by Bathgate Community Council in 2017. A significant number of similar themes have re-appeared during our consultation, now with much greater emphasis.

The **West Lothian Local Development Plan**

provides reassuring declarations which underpin much of what the Bathgate community is saying.

We have extracted a few key elements below which complement Bathgate Community views.

We understand that this Local Place Plan will be used to help create the next WL Local Development Plan, and trust that a number of these key principles are carried through to the next version, along with considerations based on NPF4.



“Important to note that without the necessary infrastructure requirements having been satisfactorily addressed, the council will be unable to support development proposals”

“The scale, layout and design of any proposed buildings shall be appropriate to the character of the site and the surrounding area and shall not adversely impact on any special historic, environmental assets, natural heritage designations or landscape interests”

“While it is not possible to identify specific types of new tourism which may seek to locate in West Lothian, the council is supportive, in principle, of enhancing the area’s tourism potential”

“A typical characteristic of WL settlements is a significant imbalance between public and private sector housing and it is one of the council’s ambitions to achieve a more diverse housing mix in order to help create more socially and economically balanced communities”

“A green network is concerned with the linking up of areas of open space. Central to the concept are the principles of connectivity and multi-functionality ... particularly the delivery of high quality sustainable places, active travel and drivers towards more efficient use of land”

“In order to balance the often conflicting demands of economic growth and reducing carbon emissions, and other negative issues arising from transport, the spatial strategy set out in the LDP prioritises development that reduces the need to travel, facilitates travel by public transport... and provides a safe and convenient environment for walking and cycling”

We fully support NPF4's definition of the Six Qualities of Successful Places

1. Healthy
2. Pleasant: Supporting attractive natural and built spaces
3. Connected: Supporting well connected networks that make moving around easy and reduce car dependency
4. Distinctive: Supporting attention to detail of local architectural styles and natural landscapes to be interpreted into designs to reinforce identity
5. Sustainable: Supporting the efficient use of resources that will allow people to live, play, work and stay in their area, ensuring climate resilience and integrating nature positive biodiversity solutions.
6. Adaptable: Supporting commitment to investing in the long-term value of buildings, streets and spaces by allowing for flexibility so that they can meet the changing needs and accommodate different uses over time

We also support NPF4 Spatial Planning priorities

To deliver sustainable places, Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Plans in this area should support net zero energy solutions including extended heat networks and improved energy efficiency, together with urban greening and improved low carbon transport.

To deliver liveable places, Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Plans in this area should pioneer low carbon, resilient urban living by rolling out networks of 20 minute neighbourhoods, reuse of brownfield land, future proofing city and town centres, accelerating urban greening, investing in net zero homes, and managing development on the edge of settlements.

To deliver productive places, Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Plans in this area should target economic investment and build community wealth to overcome disadvantage and support a greener wellbeing economy.

This raises a great opportunity for Bathgate

The world is facing an uncertain future, economically, environmentally and socially. The key to handling this will be community resilience and an ability to adapt, supported by an engaged local council, active business investment, and Scottish government support.

Bathgate is very well placed, with clear willingness from the community to engage, an excellent mix of empty buildings and brownfield sites to support social and first time homes for local people in the centre of town, green field open spaces to enjoy, supported by active travel improvements to allow easier access, and some interesting ideas emerging about alternative fuel sources nearby. If successfully designed, planned and managed, Bathgate could become a great example of a thriving town that is vibrant, well connected, supported and climate resilient - a town ready for the future.

Context/Description of the Area

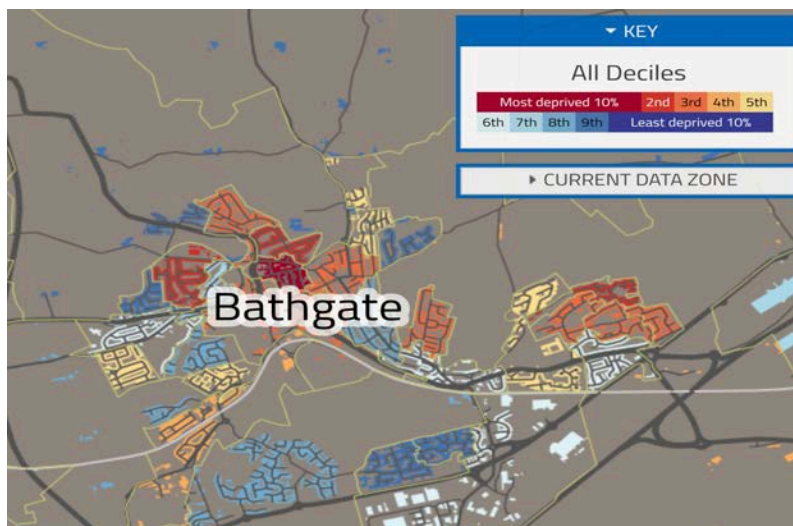
According to the National Records of Scotland, the population of Bathgate was 23,600 in mid-2020, making it the second largest town in West Lothian after Livingston. Between 2020- 2021 the county's population rose by 1% which was higher than the national average for that year of 0.3%.

Bathgate has a variety of housing options. This includes council houses, private rental, a home to buy, or a sheltered accommodation. The number of households in West Lothian had increased between 2021 to 2022 by 1% compared to the Scottish average of 0.8% which is a 25% greater increase than the mean for the country. Furthermore, the average house price in Bathgate as of 2018 sat at £161,244 with a median of £143,00, comparing this to Glasgow City's mean and median housing price £160,427 and £136,995 respectively, showing that Bathgate had higher housing prices than Glasgow City.

As the average age of mothers giving birth in West Lothian remains the same, the number of births have decreased overall. Alternatively, the standardised death rate in West Lothian had increased from 9.8 per 1000 in 2021 to 11.4 in 2022. This is contradictory to the national average which had seen a decrease from 2021 to 2022 of 11.6 to 11.5, making West Lothian one of the 7 council areas in Scotland to see an increase in death rate between those years.

There are five primary schools and one secondary school within Bathgate itself: the secondary school being Bathgate Academy, the other secondary schools are St Kentigern's in Blackburn and Armadale Academy - attendance at these other secondary schools is based on a mix of religion and catchment area.

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is a tool that measures the relative level of deprivation across different aspects of life in Scotland, such as income, health, education, crime & housing. According to the SIMD 2020, Bathgate has a mix of areas including an area that is among the 15% most deprived areas in Scotland, and areas that is among the 15% least deprived areas in Scotland.



In terms of transport, Bathgate has a railway station that is part of the Edinburgh–Helensburgh line, which connects it to Edinburgh Waverley, Livingston, and Helensburgh. The train service is fairly regular and heavily used. There are several bus services that operate in Bathgate, connecting it to other towns and cities in West Lothian as well as Edinburgh, however these services are considered less frequent and less reliable. Bathgate is located near the M8 motorway, which links it to Edinburgh, Glasgow, and other destinations in Scotland, so travelling by car is a preferred option for many. Bathgate has some cycle and walking paths and routes that allow you to explore the town and its surroundings by bike or foot.

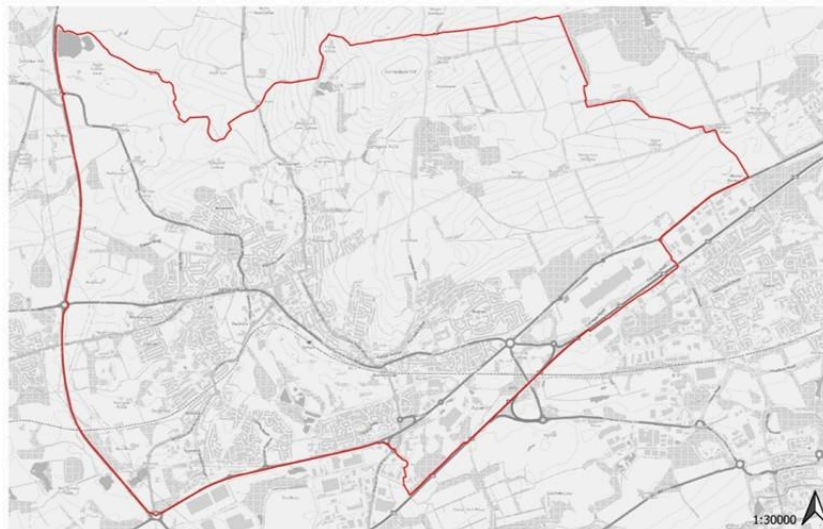
Bathgate has a primary care (health) centre that houses three GP surgeries, a pharmacy, and other health services. There are other pharmacies around the town that service people's health needs. The nearest hospital is St John's Hospital: This is a general hospital that provides acute and specialist services, such as accident and emergency, surgery, maternity, and cancer care. It is located in Livingston, about 7 miles from Bathgate.

Bathgate is a semi-rural town in West Lothian, Scotland, that has various environmental aspects and issues. Some of them are:

- **Climate:** Bathgate has a temperate oceanic climate, with mild summers and cool winters. The average annual temperature is about 9°C, and the average annual rainfall is about 800 mm. Bathgate is exposed to strong winds and storms from the Atlantic Ocean, especially in winter.
- **Pollution:** Bathgate has been affected by air pollution from various sources, such as traffic, industry, and agriculture. Bathgate has an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) declared for nitrogen dioxide along the A89 road corridor, where the annual mean objective of 40 µg/m³ is exceeded. Bathgate also has a problem with noise pollution from the M8.
- **Biodiversity:** Bathgate has a rich and diverse natural heritage, with various habitats and species of flora and fauna. Bathgate is home to the world's oldest known reptile fossil, which was found at East Kirkton Quarry. Bathgate also has several nearby sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs), such as the Bathgate Hills, the Bogburn Flood Lagoons, and the Polkemmet Country Park, where rare and protected species such as the great crested newt, the otter, and the water vole can be found.
- **Sustainability:** Bathgate has several initiatives and projects that aim to improve its environmental sustainability and reduce its carbon footprint. Bathgate also has a network of cycle paths and routes that encourage active travel and reduce car dependency. Bathgate also participates in the Keep Scotland Beautiful campaign, which promotes litter prevention and environmental improvement.

Maps of Area covered by this Local Place Plan

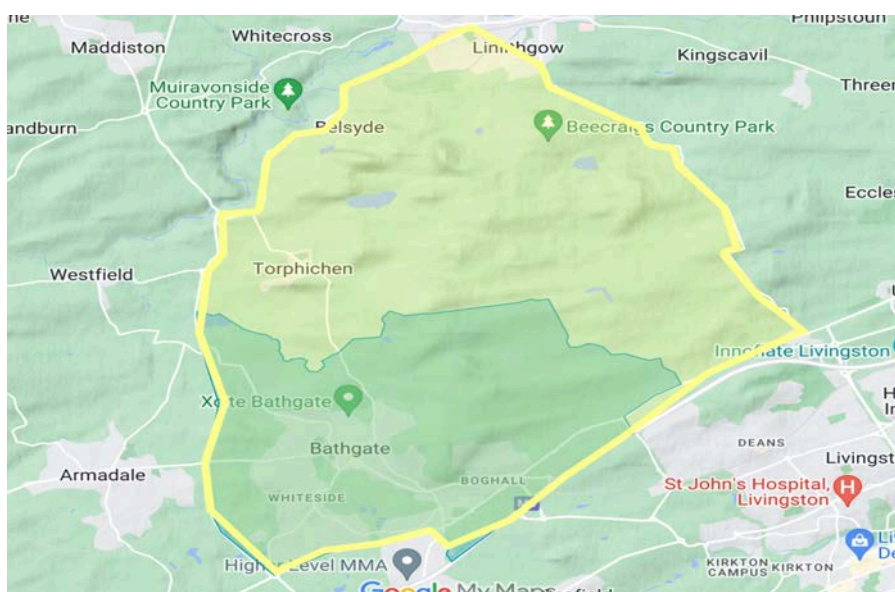
This first map shows the geographical boundary of Bathgate Community Council. This is the area considered when creating this Local Place Plan on behalf of the local community.



An online 'Google My Map' version is provided to allow the reader to zoom in and out, and review key community considerations in more detail.

[Bathgate Google My Map Link](#)

This second map spans across the Bathgate Hills, overlapping with neighbouring community councils, where we all have a shared love of the hills. Given the positive strength of feeling about the Bathgate Hills we have included community suggestions about the hills within this local place plan. We will work with adjoining communities to consider and promote ideas outside of the Bathgate CC boundary.



Community Feedback Summary

<p>Bathgate people care. They care about their town, its identity, its success, its community, and its future.</p>	<p><i>Direct community quotes from survey</i></p>
<p>The community has great ideas about how to protect and improve Bathgate in future, and they need to be included in decision making.</p>	<p><i>“I would like to have my say in the future of my town”</i></p> <p><i>“I care what happens in the area I live in”</i></p>
<p>The community is not especially concerned about how you re-route people around Bathgate, they want to attract people into it, with easy, safe, access to the town and the Bathgate Hills.</p>	<p><i>“putting forth views and ideas for the future growth and protection of our town and the Bathgate Hills”</i></p>
<p>They believe that there are three key assets that could be used to better promote Bathgate: its history; the stunning open spaces and hills around it; and its ease of walking around the town centre, accepting some key improvements are needed here.</p>	<p><i>“the Bathgate hills are a joy to have”</i></p> <p><i>“More needs to be done to tell of Bathgate’s history”</i></p>
<p>The community acknowledges that Bathgate is well connected in terms of transport, with strong rail and road links. It has a centre, green spaces, a theatre and cinema, and community events.</p>	<p><i>“Trains to Glasgow and Edinburgh are good”</i></p> <p><i>“Lots of paths and good places to walk”</i></p>
<p>In terms of identity, views vary hugely between those who have lived here for a long time (whether Bathgate Bairns or not) and those newer to the town. People with longer experience recognise how much it has changed, and not always for the better.</p>	<p><i>“Proud to be from Bathgate”</i></p> <p><i>“Now quite ashamed of Bathgate”</i></p>
<p>Community spirit is still strong when there are chances for the community to come together, with the Bathgate Procession, Christmas Lights switch on, and music festivals being specifically valued. The community would like more of this to encourage people to actively engage everyone and bring footfall to the centre.</p>	<p><i>“Bennie Museum is fab!”</i></p> <p><i>“Procession is great!”</i></p> <p><i>“events not necessarily inclusive of different cultures”</i></p>
<p>Having covered the positives, the community are clear that there are some fundamental changes needed to improve what is seen as the growing, obvious, deterioration in how Bathgate looks and feels.</p>	<p><i>“Disappointed in what is happening to our town.”</i></p>

<p>Safety is the number one priority with a number of people saying they no longer visit Bathgate Centre given the anti-social behaviour visible day and night. Many with wheelchairs, buggies, scooters or dogs cannot safely walk around because of illegal parking on pavements. Interestingly, most people feel quite safe in their own streets, it is Bathgate Centre that raises big concerns. The lack of a working CCTV, lack of a traffic warden, and barely minimal police presence are raised many times.</p>	<p><i>“Most of the people of Bathgate are good people”</i></p> <p><i>“Parked cars on pavement on main roads can make it extremely difficult when out with wheelchair or prams”</i></p> <p><i>“Traffic wardens back please”</i></p>
<p>Services and infrastructure are creaking at best, with doctors, dentists and chemists under obvious strain and no longer able to support the population growth that has been allowed to happen. As the West Lothian Development Plan says many times, further development cannot be allowed to take place without the infrastructure being in place, not just planned, to support it. This includes stopping new developments, and those that have already come forward but do not yet have detailed planning approval.</p>	<p><i>“Infrastructure does not match the level of population Bathgate now has.</i></p> <p><i>Development has to stop until infrastructure catches up”</i></p>
<p>Social interaction is mixed. There are some great clubs, hobby groups and opportunities for people to come together but these aren’t well advertised, so many people don’t know about them. Konect magazine is valued for its great communication. Other regular updates are needed to let people know what is happening, and not only using social media.</p>	<p><i>“There are many opportunities if you seek them out”</i></p> <p><i>“not very many things to do at all”</i></p> <p><i>“Need more widely advertised opportunities to meet and socialise”</i></p>
<p>The youth of Bathgate are mentioned many times, not as huge trouble makers, though there will always be some. They are mentioned as there are very few places for them to safely enjoy being together. The Community Centre served this purpose until it was demolished, and the new Partnership Centre does not have space or facilities to support them.</p>	<p><i>“More things to keep youngsters off the streets and get them joining in on sports, learning skills etc”</i></p> <p><i>“Not much for teenager”</i></p>
<p>In terms of look and feel, Bathgate Centre is described as run down, depressing and embarrassing, with many empty derelict buildings, too much litter and a soul-less steelyard. Great ideas have been put forward about safer paths, better lighting, more planters, seats, markets, art on empty buildings, litter picking events with clubs and schools etc,</p>	<p><i>“Bathgate is a run down ghost town.”</i></p> <p><i>“Now quite ashamed of Bathgate”</i></p>

<p>but safety must be addressed alongside this, or people will still avoid it coming into the centre of town.</p>	
<p>The old Dreadnought Hotel raises big concerns within the community, for its derelict look, but now more importantly due to its safety risks. The community wants to know how it can be saved, made safe and used again, with an urgent answer requested.</p>	<p><i>“The old dreadnought hotel is an eyesore, it doesn’t do bathgate justice.”</i></p>
<p>The train service is highly valued, the bus service is seen as much more limited and less reliable, especially on Sundays.</p>	<p><i>“Good train service”</i></p> <p><i>“More regular bus services to encourage less cars around town centre.”</i></p> <p><i>“Options to hire bikes”</i></p>
<p>Cycling and walking would increase if it was safer to do so, especially to the Bathgate Hills - safer access was raised many times, this would support the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the local community. This is also important if we want to promote Bathgate as a destination complemented by easy access to the hills, creating a reason to visit Bathgate.</p>	<p><i>“Better foot and cycle paths to the Bathgate hills, and beyond”</i></p> <p><i>“No public transport up to the likes of Beecraigs”</i></p>
<p>Housing is very mixed in Bathgate, and the community sees many opportunities to make better use of empty central buildings to create small starter homes, both as social housing and for first time buyers. A town centre where people both lived, worked and socialised would immediately make it more vibrant.</p>	<p><i>“Over populated makes bathgate difficult”</i></p> <p><i>“More affordable social housing badly needed”</i></p> <p><i>“There’s no incentive for older people to down size and free up large homes”</i></p>
<p>Lastly, the community wants to be consulted before future decisions are made about their town. The recent Bathgate Survey and Bathgate Hills petition prove how willingly and promptly the community responds when asked for their views. The overwhelming opinion is that this does not currently happen and that this is not acceptable.</p> <p>Councillors and Community Councillors need to engage directly with the local community to ask their opinions more often. This doesn’t need to be wide reaching surveys (as we have just done). It should be targeted to the key issue being considered at the time.</p>	<p><i>“This is the first survey I have completed in Bathgate and I am born and bred in the town.”</i></p> <p><i>“Council don’t care.”</i></p> <p><i>“Engage with everyone as much as possible”</i></p> <p><i>“Keen we see something come from this survey”</i></p> <p><i>“Influence - we will find out after this survey”</i></p>

Assets/Opportunities/Needs/Challenges

The Green Spaces of Bathgate

Assets

One of the most positively perceived aspects of life in Bathgate is its green spaces. While the Bathgate Hills take pride of place, these spaces in and around the town bring the benefits of enjoyment and exercise, ecological balance and a sense of community for days of pageant and fun.

Many areas serve different purposes and have different needs. Examples include the Wester Inch Woodland Walk, where newts inhabit the ponds and wildflowers grow, the Bathgate Water where frogs, toads, weasels, deer, and woodpeckers are seen, Bathgate Meadow Park, great for picnics, festivals and football, and Balbardie Park of Peace with its facilities including a BMX track, 'Peace Mile', play area, outdoor gym equipment, and leisure centre. If well preserved and maintained, these and other green spaces around town contribute greatly to quality of life in Bathgate.

Challenges

It is generally understood that no place can be all things to all people; a nature reserve cannot have the glaring bright lights of a street, a children's park cannot have the thick scrub of a woodland area. The issue is when people feel they cannot get to their destination unless they walk through an area that makes them feel unsafe. Alternative routes, appropriate lighting, level paths, less litter & a palpable police presence can all contribute towards remedying these issues.



Photo by Malcolm Hill

Needs

Regular and frequent upkeep is always an issue. The greenspaces need to be well connected. Waterways need to be kept clear from pollutants and rubbish; more bins and more specific dog mess bins are needed and must be regularly emptied, paths must be kept clear, lighting needs to be upgraded where necessary. Vandalism is a constant problem. The result is not only a limitation of land use, but an inevitable lowering of mood that affects many: a place that is depressing to be in has a deleterious effect on people.

Opportunities

Projects to enhance and protect areas like the Bathgate Water should be taken forward and boosted.

A feasibility green blue network study of landscape connections with active travel routes (embedding the nature network) throughout Bathgate and into the hills needs to be undertaken.

There is an opportunity to work with the supermarkets to reduce trolley theft.

Awareness and education are paramount alongside a zero tolerance policy.



Photo by Ross Findlay

Consideration of Green Health policies (<https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/contributing-healthier-scotland/our-natural-health-service/green-health-partnerships>) could be considered as a potential way of enhancing the health of people and their place. The two are deeply connected.

The council can support the establishment of volunteer groups to help with maintenance and promotion. Groups like the Friends of Meadow Park should be given as much support as possible. These places can be fantastic for outdoor education & the monitoring of local wildlife, as well as encouraging sports activities, and creating allotments and local community gardens. Some could become sensory gardens, easily accessible for all including those with impairments & health conditions in line with the West Locality Plan.

Recreation and Play

<p>Assets</p> <p>Bathgate has a good proportion of children’s play areas and open green spaces, and these are reasonably spaced out to service most areas. xCite offers many indoor activities on a paid basis.</p> <p>The Bathgate Hills offer wonderful peaceful spaces, if you have the means to get to them.</p> <p>The over 50s club is appreciated for the clubs and social activities that it offers, and Knightly Gaming is host to many activities for different ages.</p>	<p>Challenges</p> <p>A number of local sports centres within West Lothian have now been closed, increasing demand for what Bathgate xCite has to offer - but not everyone can afford to use it.</p> <p>While smaller children are catered for with play areas, there are few places for youth to go on a free basis, or if there are, then these are not well known. This results in youth being seen to hang about in the streets, and being viewed as anti-social.</p> <p>The hills have limited access options other than for those with a car, or those able to walk for miles on country roads.</p> <p>Litter is noted as a significant issue at all open spaces.</p>
<p>Needs</p> <p>The community has raised a significant voice about the need for a place for youth to socialise and learn sports or skills.</p> <p>Older people also feel worried about the ever growing size of the 50+ group, and the emergence of waiting lists to join groups. Could something be done to address this and create community spaces where people of all ages can just meet up?.</p>	<p>Opportunities</p> <p>Subsidise groups for children to attend?</p> <p>Football parks which are more accessible for everyone, not just community football clubs.</p> <p>Create somewhere for older children to enjoy, including activities/sport structured to allow for a trajectory of competitive success (e.g. a rock climbing wall and basketball hoops) recognised by their peers and the community.</p> <p>It would be good to think about areas that are aimed at adults/families and older people, not just children.</p>

Facilities/ Services

<p>Assets</p> <p>Survey responses regarding services and facilities have tended to vary considerably. Bathgate has plenty of pubs, diverse restaurants, and beauty parlours, as well as a Napiers herbal shop, an ornaments/antiques shop, and several large supermarkets. Infrastructural facilities however are much more concerning.</p>	<p>Challenges</p> <p>A town centre with badly pitted roads, where derelict buildings stand close to the main thoroughfare, and a pawn shop and money station hold central sway, gives a very specific signal of quiet depression. This does not attract entrepreneurial optimism, especially if, as some survey commentators claim, rates in the centre of town are too high, see Work and Local Economy</p>
<p>Needs</p> <p>Infrastructural facilities are an area of priority concern to many respondents. From the survey and consultations, the message is forthright; emphasis needs to be on developing local infrastructure to the extent that it supports current population needs as a priority. This situation is perceived as one of ongoing failure.</p> <p>Amenities and necessities falter, infrastructure faces neglect and disintegration, medical services do not cover current needs, schools, parking, and roads barely sustain the requirements of the community.</p> <p>Such a situation is untenable long term.</p>	<p>Opportunities</p> <p>The difficulties of attracting business to the centre of town are mentioned below, but one remarkable potential solution emerged out of discussions. More businesses might be attracted to Bathgate on the basis of free or cheap local energy. Geothermal power is currently being investigated as a source of potential renewable energy: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mine-water-heat https://www2.groundstability.com/major-grant-to-connect-gateshead-homes-to-coal-authority-mine-water-energy-scheme/</p> <p>Much of Bathgate is built above abandoned mines, so the potential for the town could be enormous. It would be of obvious benefit to Bathgate's citizens. From the business point of view, reasonable rates and cheap energy would be a very tempting combination, with a resource at once more reliable and less obtrusive than wind power. The use of geothermal energy and other energy sources (e.g hydroelectricity and solar power) could bring an extraordinary positive rise in quality of life to Bathgate. Its potential should be cautiously and thoroughly explored.</p>

Work and Local Economy

<p>Assets Bathgate has a strong hospitality / entertainment sector, with cafes, restaurants, pubs, and nearby entertainment venues. It is well served by supermarkets.</p> <p>Farming/agriculture/landowning enterprises remain important to the area. The town does not have a sense of large-scale unemployment, possibly because many of those living here commute to work in other towns/cities.</p> <p>The option of alternative forms of energy, including a possible battery farm nearby, and options for geothermal energy supplies could bring alternative jobs to the area if they are designed, accepted and go ahead.</p>	<p>Challenges With people increasingly inclined to buy online or take their money to larger outlets elsewhere, retail struggles, though service providers may have more chance of success. Nonetheless survey respondents mentioned their readiness to buy in town, if they can get there, park there, and find things to buy there. The Saturday Bathgate market has been well received, but there are simply not that many interesting shops in the centre of Bathgate. Outlying parts of the town sometimes have very few if any facilities. The result is that those residents take their interest and their money elsewhere, money that could, if spent locally, contribute to desperately needed repairs/improvements in infrastructure which might then help the town attract more business.</p>
<p>Needs Much more infrastructural support is required in almost every aspect of life in Bathgate. If infrastructural support cannot properly sustain the local economy, eventually the local economy cannot sustain infrastructural maintenance.</p>	<p>Opportunities Opportunities for tourism and business opportunities for farmers are covered elsewhere in this document. Other possibilities could involve the regeneration and re-use of old buildings, Other possibilities could involve the regeneration and re-use of old buildings and more market days for local produce; one respondent noted that <i>“West Lothian Producers Market becoming increasingly visible and popular. They are holding an event at Strathbrock (Broxburn) in February as well as their regular Muireston (Livingston) event. Can we include as a possible regular event in the precinct? Brings the many producers of WL together and the towns, could possibly encourage people from the town and beyond to Bathgate town centre.”</i></p>

Consider cheaper rates for businesses, and loyalty schemes to help local retailers (e.g as in the Linlithgow scheme [Shop Local - One Linlithgow](#)) Given the price of petrol, there may be more local opportunities for people to spend their money in town, e.g. the holding of a farmers market, beneficial to local producers. Survey comments indicate a readiness for more shops in Bathgate. If people are ready to spend money in restaurants, they may well have money to spend on products as well as services, clothes, shoes, books.

There is also the opportunity to support new businesses through mentoring and sponsorship. The council could help with pointing new businesses in the right direction, improving networking opportunities and providing connections. This in turn could lead to more positive land use in terms of business.

Housing and Community

<p>Assets</p> <p>Land and housing in/around Bathgate is an asset that has been capitalised upon extensively. Real estate is attractive here due to Bathgate’s excellent travel links. Efficient and easy rail and road connections make it prime commuter territory, and pleasant views/access to countryside add to its allure.</p> <p>Here are some West Lothian "big town" population stats covering 2001-2021 source https://www.citypopulation.de/en/uk/scotland/</p> <p>BATHGATE +52%</p> <p>BROXBURN +20%</p> <p>LIVINGSTON +10%</p> <p>LINLITHGOW -5%</p>	<p>Challenges</p> <p>Commuters live in Bathgate, work in Edinburgh or Glasgow, shop in Livingston, enjoy online communities or communities where they work. Where is the link to the local community? Where do people meet, grow families, work, spend money, feel welcome? This is the danger of a community losing any sense of individual place, becoming a true ‘sleeper town.’ It is certainly an issue for Bathgate, where housing estates seem to spring up warren-like, without an increase in schools/medical facilities/bus routes to provide infrastructural support.</p> <p>Wester Inch is a prime example of this. Residents there were promised a village, but doesn’t even have a community space. Without shops and community hubs, this kind of ‘village’ is just a large housing estate with no centre and no heart. This actively negates any sense of community, because such residents often feel they belong neither to Bathgate nor anywhere else.</p>
<p>Needs</p> <p>A major core principle repeating throughout consultations is that in Bathgate, housing development must wait upon infrastructure. Bathgate’s citizens want to focus upon what is needed now, rather than expanding/adding extra pressure on already inadequate resources. Infrastructure must improve to match current requirements.</p> <p>The community want to significantly slow or stop further development in and around Bathgate until the infrastructure is in place to support it (e.g. doctors, dentists, schools).</p>	<p>Opportunities</p> <p>Local MSP Fiona Hyslop has reassured us publicly that the government has neither need nor intention to build more in/around Bathgate, so this is the time to consider what/why/where development is allowed.</p> <p>Excepting places where brownfield sites act as buffers to parks and natural spaces, the space behind Morrisons being an example, the people of Bathgate do not generally object to potential specific brownfield development or the repurposing of derelict sites considered on a case by case basis, but only when there is infrastructure to support it, and provided local people are consulted and listened to (See Influence and Sense of Control)</p>

This includes new developments, and those that have already come forward but do not yet have detailed planning approval.

The community of Bathgate also needs an explanation for the failure to provide the infrastructure indicated on the masterplan at Wester Inch. This is reflected in the survey results that strongly show how lack of control is felt throughout the community.

The community want to significantly slow or stop further development in and around Bathgate until the infrastructure is in place to support it (e.g. doctors, dentists, schools). This includes new developments, and those that have already come forward but do not yet have detailed planning approval.

Social Interaction

Assets

There are many clubs, volunteer groups and activities lending themselves to social interaction in the town. Places like Knightley Games with its D&D hub, board games and cafe, can draw in families, as well as young people. There are gyms and sports facilities, golf and a bowling club, a Karate club in Wester Inch, as well as Bingo and the Regal Theatre.



Photo by Visit West Lothian

Challenges

While the Bathgate Procession brings the community together and encourages social interaction and community spirit.



There are few community hubs specifically for the young, so to some extent, it can be no surprise that loitering occurs. (see **Play and Recreation**)

Needs

Though opportunities for social interaction exist, they need expanding upon and promotion, as they are generally not well known throughout the town and the cost is prohibitive for many people within Bathgate.

Opportunities

Greater variety of assets and support for these to establish (e.g. special rate reduction for business targeted to younger people) All the assets mentioned could be expanded upon in some way or other.

Identity and Belonging

Assets

There's pride among 'Bathgate Bairns' old and new, but there is also inclusivity and acceptance of diversity. This is one of the town's strengths, and should be encouraged. Identity changes as towns grow, but the history of Bathgate and the surrounding area is incredibly rich and culturally fascinating. Those who know of it often feel a greater connection to the place. Celebrations like the Procession bring people together and create a stronger sense of community. Through culture and celebration people gain connection with where they are, a sense of rootedness. Awareness of the past creates a deeper sense of belonging; the history of the town can add greatly to its future.

Needs

Identity and Belonging need much more than a strong sense of the past. There must be ways of inclusion alive and vibrant now, where people can meet and make friends. Enjoyable ways in which people can get involved in their communities should be more widely publicised, and a greater spread is required.



Photo by Bennie Museum

Challenges

The detrimental effects of housing estates with no real connection to town or community are mentioned elsewhere (see **Housing and Community**)

As more people come to live in Bathgate, infrastructure must be available to them. Immigrants and asylum seekers in particular need places to stay that afford them dignity and respect, as well as help to settle in, assistance with language, medical care for mental and emotional trauma as well as more overt physical issues. Most of all, they cannot be left to simply be alone with no work, no money, no company, and nowhere to go. Community assistance must be found for them. Integration is key.

Opportunities

Bathgate has its own unique identity and pride in its place in the history of Scotland. The area would benefit from appropriate exploration of local archeological sites.

A Heritage and Art trail linking Bathgate to the hills should be developed. This would include a signage strategy for all heritage assets.

The Bennie is a splendid museum of social history, and other museums and galleries would also bring a difference to the aspect of the town, as well as keeping the past alive.

Possibilities include a gallery celebrating the town's military past, and a museum of Earth Sciences, the latter appropriate given the area's importance in terms of geological history. At the NMS Collections, it was revealed that so many fossils were discovered locally there was no ready storage for them, and they ended up discarded. There is no need for such waste to occur. Bathgate has plenty of empty facilities that could be upgraded to display such finds.

Feeling Safe

Assets

There is a general positive feeling towards having more visible police presence in the town.



While most people said they felt safe in their own streets, many raised concerns about safety in the centre of town, both during the day and at night.

Currently our local force manages a number of initiatives such as Keep Safe; Park Smart and advise commercial premises about security and safety of their buildings.

During consultation, police signposted us to: 'Secure by design' a strategy of the UK government to protect citizens and businesses from the threats posed by poorly secured consumer connectable products.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/secure-by-design>

Needs

For the safety and reassurance of citizens it is necessary for police to be visible and active. It has been remarked that the public desk of the local police station needs to be open more often.

Challenges

Many respondents say they do not feel safe in Bathgate. They mention badly kept and ill-lit paths and roads, vandalism, gangs of youths, fires set, anti-social behaviour on George Street and in other places, mid-day drunkenness, smashed bottles, substance abuse, verbal abuse, incidents of people exposing themselves, sex worker activity etc. There is a sense that the police are nowhere to be found, and that if CCTV is present at all, it is either not working or no-one is there to view it.

Opportunities

A healthy relationship between residents and law enforcement is always useful, and here it would alleviate much anxiety if the police were not only often present but seen to be present.

Good lighting is imperative, and where routes go through darker areas, alternative routes should be clearly available.

Post Survey consultation has confirmed that there are insufficient resources to enable the station to be opened on a regular basis.

Given numbers of police within West Lothian it was also noted that having them out of cars, and on the streets, could mean slower responses to emergencies elsewhere.

Action to explore options to expand or include community based initiatives is key.

Increasing a mixed community of residents within and close to the town centre should be encouraged.

Lighting is currently being upgraded around Bathgate.

Care and Maintenance

Assets

Bathgate citizens respect council workers and volunteers for their care and maintenance. There is civic pride and a readiness to help. An attitude like this is a great asset.

Many volunteers take part in litter picks, with West Lothian having the largest litter picking group in Scotland, and Bathgate in Bloom worked hard to keep the centre of Bathgate looking colourful in summer, however, we understand that Bathgate in Bloom is not operating currently. Initiatives like Bathgate in Bloom deliver great benefits to the community and should, if possible, be re-instigated.



Photo by Enterprising Bathgate

Needs

There is a prevalent feeling that neither buildings, roads, nor paths in and around Bathgate are being properly maintained. The appalling state of the roads themselves is covered in other sections. The condition of these amenities raised almost universal disgust among respondents, not just due to their condition etc, but because of the sheer amount of litter on and around them. Litter makes land use difficult and potentially unhealthy/ dangerous, as well as limiting business opportunities like tourism. The Bathgate Hills area continues to be a place where people dump rubbish.

Challenges

Derelict sites give the town a dilapidated air and create a lasting impression of decay.

Foremost among such sites, given its prominent position, is the old Dreadnought Hotel. Buildings left to rot in this way discourage new investment as well as being potential environmental health hazards and actively dangerous. The old Dreadnought Hotel may easily be a meeting place for drug users, and is in prime position to cause immense damage and risk to life if a fire is started there. Even without the threat of arson, falling bricks and tiles could well pose a threat to passers-by. The building could just as easily be one of the town's major assets, and needs a Compulsory Purchase Order if the owners cannot be legally induced to accept their responsibility for the upkeep of their property. Purchased and restored, this building could be a huge asset to the town.

Opportunities

One interesting suggestion referred to the maintenance of highways left litter-strewn by people who drive past and throw their rubbish out of car windows. A consultation respondent cited Sponsor-A-Highway or Adopt-A-Highway schemes of the kind found in the United States, where groups/businesses sponsor a given length of road/kerbside, and keep it clean.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adopt-a-Highway>

It was generally agreed that more bins are needed, especially for dog mess, and that awareness should be raised. Fly-tipping continues to be an issue, Large skips/bins are needed and regular emptying of bins is necessary. Ease of access to recycling centres would help many householders, who find themselves time-poor when it comes to making appointments to get to the recycling plants. People are ready to recycle, but better results come from making it easy for them. The appointment system needs review to see if it has affected levels of attendance and if so to change back to the earlier system.



Photo from royalty free Pixabay

There is also the opportunity to teach about the need for litter picking and recycling. One respondent described a scheme they had seen in action where local classes of children are taken out for litter picking sessions in their neighbourhoods. Given appropriate age/clothing and safety measures, this would be one way to inculcate the lessons of civic pride into young minds.

Request that the Council works with Keep Scotland Beautiful to develop a series of campaigns increasing mindfulness with regard to the dangers of litter in town and countryside.

There is also the opportunity to work in partnership with the takeaways of Bathgate to find a solution, while allowing their businesses to flourish and encouraging responsible waste disposal behaviour.

Influence and Sense of Control

Assets

Given the chance, the people of Bathgate are very willing to connect with their local government.

There is much generosity of spirit and positive desire to improve this community for the good of all who live here.



Challenges

The survey demonstrates a widespread perception that West Lothian Council pays little or no attention to the needs of Bathgate's people.

Examples of this include the recent Sibbald's Brae development, which created widespread shock and disillusionment with government process. Sibbald's Brae was a greenfield site, its development repeatedly protested by local councillors, the community council and residents alike. Nonetheless, the Scottish Reporter approved the destruction of this environmentally important area for private development. There was no explanation given and short of taking the matter to court, no redress for the people of the town.

This kind of incident poisons the relationship between local government and citizens.

As one respondent remarked concerning yet another repeat planning application; 'when does 'no' actually mean 'no'?' A planning application is knocked back, the developers wait a while then try again, presumably in the hope that the citizens get too weary to care, the council gives up and agrees, and when the council does hold out, the government overrides via the Reporter. Such issues create a deep and lasting unfavourable impression for the townsfolk. There is a strong sense of democratic deficit.

Needs

It is not clear to the people of Bathgate as to how local governance works, and who is responsible for what.

Opportunities

A diagram on the West Lothian Council Website and in the Jim Walker Partnership Centre showing the relationships and responsibilities between the Council, the

Local government must be seen to listen and to take action accordingly, showing tangible commitment to results, transparency, and accountability. Discussions and consultations must not devolve into talking shops with nothing done.

government, planning, and various other groups would clarify the structure of governance in town. A short video showing 'Who does what ? Who do I ask?' would also help clarify roles.

2024 sees the Scottish Government's Consultation 'Democracy Matters,' put in place which should inspire much engagement and involvement, provided results are seen.

Moving Around

Assets

Routes are considered generally adequate around the town, though more safe walkways up into the hills are needed.

Re-routes are not considered necessary. Upkeep is a serious issue.

Needs

Respondents describe the roads around Bathgate as 'dire' and worse. Many are in very serious need of repair, pitted with deep cracks, ruts, and potholes, increasingly dangerous to cars, cyclists, and pedestrians alike. Cycle lanes can be problematic, and some respondents have described the problems of getting prams and wheelchairs caught up in tarmac puddles. **Getting around Bathgate for those with mobility issues is such an important and wide-ranging matter that this document dedicates an appendix to it, see Appendix B.**

Drumcross Road towards old Bangour has been specifically mentioned regarding its need for widening and resurfacing, and the S bend at Petershill needs specific attention, possibly traffic lights and/or widening to make it less dangerous for pedestrians. Roads within the Bathgate Hills are sometimes used for reckless driving, and there is a need to review speed limits through rural areas with housing. Clear signage is needed to indicate passing places and to highlight that pedestrians will be using the road.

Challenges

Bathgate is an old town surrounded by agricultural land; narrow roads are often unavoidable. Re-routing is considered unnecessary, respondents preferring their money to be spent on roads already existing into and around town. Plausible safety solutions do exist, and road maintenance cannot be endlessly deferred. At the very least, existing roads into/through town require significant repair.

Opportunities

Schemes like the Active Travel Plan and Quiet Roads have much to offer the area around Bathgate. There are concerns re pollution levels along the A809 corridor. One suggestion was the use of moss banks as bio-accumulators in this area.


The Community is keen to safely access the hills via footpaths that do not run on a road.



Photo by Ross Findlay

Also, when driving, speed limits, rumble strips and signage could support responsible driving in a rural environment with narrow roads that are occasionally used as race tracks. Another example would be to realign the entrance to Xcite Bathgate which is challenging to navigate.

Public Transport

<p>Assets Excellent train links are considered one of the greatest advantages of living in Bathgate. Dial-A-Bus services have returned under the name of WLcomBus, a door to door supported transport service to supermarkets and shopping centres for people who cannot use standard bus services.</p> 	<p>Challenges Vandalism at bus stops can result in a lack of timetables and schedules. Bus stop digital signage is an obvious solution to this, and also would inform passengers of potential delays/cancellations.</p> <p>Bus services received very mixed views with many finding the services inadequate and unreliable. Some locations now have limited buses during the week and none on Sunday.</p>
<p>Needs Standard bus services need to be more frequent and reliable; obviously buses are subject to traffic delays, but some respondents mention instances of buses not turning up at all, especially on Sundays.</p> <p>There is a need to initiate public transport facilities throughout the hills.</p>	<p>Opportunities Services like WLcomBus are not generally well known and need to be publicised, maybe even extended; those travelling to hospital might well be inclined to use such a service if more widely known. This would reduce car usage and parking issues. Could the Council work with medical services in Bathgate to instigate support for people to access hospitals and other medical facilities out of town?</p> <p>The possibility of a community run bus in the area should also be explored.</p> <p>A summer bus service or shuttle to Beecraigs would reduce car use on the roads, and encourage local tourism, though noted by the WL Rangers that when this was trialled previously it was little used. They suggested one standard bus route between Linlithgow and Bathgate that could have one stop added at Korean War Memorial as a way to gain some public transport access.</p>

Traffic and Parking

Assets

Respondents varied in attitudes towards traffic, with a general sense that it tends to flow in and around Bathgate relatively easily .

Availability of free parking is seen as a strong benefit, and a parking survey in 2022 identified that few car parks are at capacity all day.



Challenges

Moving traffic seldom seems to be an issue, but parking is mentioned often by respondents. The idea of charging for parking spots met with uncertain responses, some believing that it would stop people 'hogging' spaces all day, others saying that people would just look for free spaces.

Illegal parking on pavements is seen as a real issue, and this creates risks for wheelchair users, people with buggies and mobility scooters and those with dogs, who find themselves having to walk on the road.

A major issue for mobility challenged drivers is that drop-kerbs are not always placed alongside disabled parking spaces.

One respondent pointed out that there are approximately 5 EV charging points in the town, and that more might be useful. However, it was also mentioned that disabled parking spots should not be removed in order to facilitate these charging points.

Needs

Illegal parking and cars parked up on kerbs were cited as potentially dangerous nuisances that need to be restricted. Traffic wardens were suggested as a way to combat this issue.

The introduction of some one hour parking spaces may alleviate the issue of people hogging parking spaces, and allow a quick 'basket' type shop, benefiting local businesses.

Opportunities

Respondents' opinions were mixed as to whether there are enough car parks in town. Digital signage giving direction to where car parks are and how many spaces they have available might clarify whether there is actually sufficient parking in Bathgate or not.

One respondent suggested reconsidering the entire double yellow line system through town, returning to a

To make getting across roads safer for sight-impaired people, tactile indicators should be attached to the underside of traffic light boxes.

Example:<https://www.radixtactile.com/rotating-cone-tactile-equipment/>)

There are already issues for many using traffic light buttons, as these are often head height and parallel to the road. The result is that in order to push the button, a wheelchair user may well have to push themselves out slightly into the road. This is easily solved by moving buttons in towards the pavement.

basic consideration of what function they are actually fulfilling in each instance.

There could be an opportunity to reduce congestion on Hopetoun street. A feasibility study should be conducted looking at traffic flows in Bathgate in order to facilitate usage of other streets, for example opening Main Street on to Waverley Street, to encourage shoppers to Jarvey Street.

One suggestion was that from the top of George Street down to George Place, one way traffic should be allowed, with diagonal parking on the right side coming down, reinstated trees, and disabled parking top, middle and bottom, with speed bumps on the road. ANPR cameras in the precinct could allow disabled parking.

Bike lanes should be positioned outside of, rather than between, kerbs and floating car spaces. This would allow people with mobility problems to climb kerbs for steadiness.

Noted that Edinburgh has just become the first city in Scotland to enforce a ban on pavement parking. Could this be introduced in Bathgate?

Streets and Spaces

Assets

If well looked after, there are plenty of potentially beautiful spaces and streets in Bathgate. Volunteer groups are ready to help.



Challenges

As cited in other sections, maintenance and safety is a serious issue. Zero tolerance of damage, vandalism and graffiti is required.

The Dreadnought Hotel is one of several derelict sites whose neglect detract from Bathgate's safety and attractiveness. These need to be cleaned up, repaired or replaced.



Needs

None of the above can work without issues of safety being addressed as a priority. Streets and spaces need to be kept clean and safe. CCTV is needed, as well as good lighting and police presence.

The Precinct has safety issues with regard to its paving which gets slippery when wet. As one respondent said 'feet are fine, walking sticks not so much.' The paving gets so slick that stick/crutches easily lose purchase and may slip, causing a fall, dangerous to the elderly and others who might have mobility issues.

Bathgate pavements generally are in such a terrible state that one respondent described a screw jolting out of their new mobility buggy when they made their way down North Bridge Street.

Opportunities

Flowers in planters and care taken of statues and monuments can render a lot of charm to the old town. The Precinct is somewhat blank, excepting St Davids Church/Cinema. Sculptures and street art along with market stalls and events in George Place could cheer the place up, and attract respondents to return to the town centre. The potential of green/biodiverse roofs and walls should be considered.

The revamp of the McLagan fountain is very welcome; accompanying information about the life of Peter McLagan would be edifying and appropriate given Scotland's readiness to embrace diversity. Though the original mechanisms of the fountain are in the Bennie, it would be a hopeful sight and symbol of Bathgate's future if the fountain could be made to work again. Even a flower bed around it would be a pleasant addition.

Looking beyond Bathgate - The Bathgate Hills

Assets

Public opinion has been loud and unambiguous on this point; The people of Bathgate value the green spaces of their place and in particular they cherish the surrounding hills. The area is beautiful as well as a geological and paleontological geodiversity and biodiversity treasure trove

<https://www.nature.scot/landforms-and-geology/importance-geodiversity>

In terms of public health, the years of pandemic and lockdown revealed the Bathgate Hills as an immense boon to the mental and physical health of residents. Not only do the Hills create a sense of pride in belonging and a connection between people and place, but when so many were feeling trapped or anxious, surrounded by screens full of bad news, the Bathgate Hills provided opportunities beyond four walls, bringing a sense of perspective, a reality of beauty and strength.

Post consultation discussions noted that National Parks may not be the best example to use for regional parks as they have a lot more funding and legislation and a different remit.

<https://www.nature.scot/enjoying-outdoors/explore-regional-park> has info on regional park status and Scotland's 3 regional parks. Funding comes from the local authorities, not central government. Also noted that West Lothian already contribute to the Pentland Hills regional park.

<https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/protected-areas-and-species/protected-areas/local-designations/regional-parks>

For proposals and actions outside of the Bathgate boundary we will work with adjoining communities to consider and promote our ideas.



Photo by Vanessa Cordner

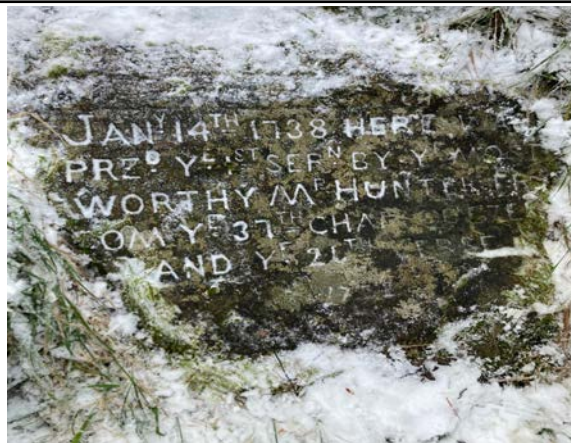
Challenges

Protections for the Bathgate Hills cannot be sustained without the positive engagement of local farmers and landowners as part of our community. As can be seen from examples like Northumberland National Park and Dartmoor, regional park status can help these important businesses to thrive in ways old and new. This can become a powerful opportunity to create new and publicise already existing support, from advisory services to business help and broader access to agri-environment climate schemes, as well as Farming In Protected Landscape programmes. All these can all help to make high value stewardship a more attractive option than selling land to private developers.

Needs

More footpaths and easier ways of access are required up to the hills, so that pedestrians do not have to walk on the road itself. (See **Appendix G** re safer walking access into the Bathgate Hills.)

Overwhelmingly the indications are that no further incursions are welcome in the Bathgate Hills. Though some parts of the hills are designated as a Special Landscape Area, there is a strong sense that more protection is needed from potential dangers like private development and fracking. The moratorium placed on the latter by the Scottish government cannot take the place of permanent protection. As to private development, the constantly recurring suggestion of ring roads through the hills, with the associated potential for private development, is simply an irritant to local feeling. It is highly likely that giving the Bathgate Hills the status of Regional Park would meet with widespread local approval.



Photos by John Matthews

Opportunities

It was suggested by our MSP Fiona Hyslop that the Bathgate Hills be turned into a Regional Park. The opportunities such a park would bring are many.

Tourism

i) The hills are visually delightful and historically important. From farms to mines and the very stones upon which the first dissenters prayed, local social history has been shaped by this extraordinary environment. With appropriate access, the hills are wonderful for many who do not have the wherewithal to reach the great munros of the Highlands; the Bathgate Hills already have a fine reputation among cyclists and hikers. The optimal opportunity would be to build a regional tourism strategy and create more ways that are at once efficient and unobtrusive to help people access the hills by day and spread business when they rest, staying at camp sites or hotels in town, shopping and dining out.

ii) Several mines across the UK and Europe have been successfully opened as tourism attractions (and even wedding venues!). Given the connection between Hilderston mine and the silver used in Scotland's crown jewels, these areas should be investigated thoroughly to find potential tourism areas. The mines under the town of Bathgate hold further potential discussed elsewhere in this document, though noted that safety must be considered..

iii) Beecraigs Country Park is enjoyed by old and young alike. It is a wonderful resource for schools and families, and a great introduction to the Bathgate Hills for those taking their first steps across the landscape. If the Bathgate Hills became a Regional Park, Beecraigs importance would grow as an information centre.

Certain steps could gently monetise aspects of Beecraigs, in order to afford the return of beloved features like the animal enclosures. These include charging for parking (though views on this were very mixed with a number of practical hurdles highlighted*), and the possibility of creating a petting farm for children where families can buy bags of food to feed goats/chickens/ rabbits etc. This model has been used to great effect at various city farms in the UK. It has also been noted that there is no bus service up to *Beecraigs*, which renders it inaccessible for those of our town unable to drive. A well placed bus or shuttle service would remove this issue with ease and increase tourism into the area.

**Noted that Beecraigs has 1 million visits per year and without public transport or active travel routes would struggle to absorb more motorised visitors. For paid parking to work the council would need to employ traffic wardens or a private company to enforce it. They would also need to exclude parking on all the surrounding roads and again enforce this through fines. And there would need to be a clear way to ensure financial benefit circled back to Beecraigs Park.*

For proposals and actions outside of the Bathgate boundary we will work with adjoining communities to consider and promote our ideas.

Environment

On the macro level, as Scotland considers how best to face the challenges of climate change, high value stewardship of the land becomes a necessity, and care of our ecosystems vital. A healthy environment sustains healthy people. Connection between the two brings pride in place, a sense of wellbeing and belonging that strengthens us all.




Photo by Ross Findlay

Action Plan

This section outlines how Bathgate Community would like their ideas to be taken forward, considering development or use of land viewed from a number of perspectives. Each proposal is given a reference code to allow easier link up in the Appendix covering Proposed Changes to the West Lothian Local Development Plan:

Sites supporting climate change adaptation, e.g. renewables or flood mitigation



Ref	Initiative	Why do this?	Who
CC1	<p>Bathgate Meadows Nature Park in the centre of Bathgate has significant support from the community.,</p> 	<p>This project has funding and a team in place to work with local people to create a large, high-quality, accessible and wildlife-rich nature park on former industrial land, regenerating the rivers that run through the town, creating new direct connections between Blackburn, Wester Inch, and the historic town centre and its transport hubs helping inject new life into the town centre, galvanise the town’s newfound role as a thriving suburb & provide a natural space where wildlife can thrive and people can linger.</p> <p>The new project is now entering a key 18 month development stage. This period August 2023 to December 2024 will allow for final delivery plans to the following in the area encompassed within the scoped area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Upgrades to the active travel network ● Improvements to the grass areas and other habitats ● Reformatting of the existing burns and creation of new wetlands, plus ● Improvements to the flood lagoons 	<p>Project team currently in place</p> <p>Local Community</p> <p>WL Council</p> <p>Landowners</p>



Ref	Initiative	Why do this?	Who
CC2	<p>Consider options to Green the Grey and introduce increased planting, rain gardens and trees in and around Bathgate.</p> <p>Conduct feasibility green blue network study of landscape connections with active travel routes (embedding the nature network) throughout Bathgate & into the hills.</p>	<p>This will create green corridors, help with sound buffering, water absorption, water attenuation, noise pollution, vehicle emissions, and make Bathgate more aesthetically pleasing.</p> <p>There are a number of through routes in and around Bathgate that would benefit greatly from this. If designed correctly there will be opportunities for external funding.</p>	<p>Community</p> <p>WL Council</p> <p>Sponsors / Funders</p>
CC3	<p>Examine the mines under Bathgate re the potential of geothermal energy as a renewable energy source, and cheap energy for the town.</p>	<p>There are opportunities to tap into this resource as a primary component of community water and electricity. This offers potential, not just for residential use, but also community and commercial use. Community transport systems could also benefit. There are examples of this working well elsewhere that can be considered.</p>	<p>WL Council</p> <p>Consultants</p> <p>Regulators</p> <p>Involved businesses</p>
CC4	<p>Examine the possibilities of local hydro-electric power as a potential local energy source.</p>	<p>The possibilities of hydro-electricity should be considered, albeit with great care and due diligence, as the environmental effects of dam building would also have to be taken into account.</p>	<p>WL Council</p> <p>Consultants</p> <p>Regulators</p> <p>Involved businesses</p>
CC5	<p>Support Electricity Storage Sites to the benefit of Bathgate</p>	<p>Electricity can be stored by both battery and vanadium electrolyte storage systems, and storage site applications are already coming into West Lothian.</p> <p>Vanadium electrolyte storage systems are a newly developed technology that has the world leader in this field with an established base in Bathgate. Companies such as Infinity Energy Systems have been working with alternative power generation as well as existing</p>	<p>WL Council</p> <p>Consultants</p> <p>Regulators</p> <p>Involved businesses</p>

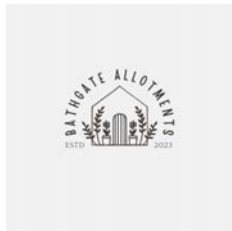
		<p>systems. There is potential to develop a local network to provide the needs of schools, community buildings, a public transport system as well as commercial and residential requirements.</p> <p>How can storage sites be supported locally while benefiting the town residents, clubs and commercial businesses?</p>	
CC6	<p>Consider how to incorporate the Scottish government's climate adaptation plan into Bathgate.</p>	<p>This lays out how the country will protect itself from the impacts of climate change and a warming planet.</p> <p>Bathgate could consider flood plains and flood lagoons, more 'spongy hills', green rather than grey areas to allow water to be absorbed rather than run off, and increased greening overall to help with carbon capture, air quality and a feeling of health and well being.</p> <p>Bathgate community should be consulted directly about the West Lothian Active Travel Plan - as no responses were received when drafted, indicating perhaps the community did not know about this?</p> <p>Bathgate Community should be consulted about West Lothian's new Biodiversity Plan that is currently being considered.</p>	<p>Community</p> <p>WL Council</p> <p>Consultants</p> <p>Regulators</p>

Local initiatives promoting active travel & community food growing

Ref	Initiative	Why do this?	Who
AT1	<p>New Cycle Route</p> <p>WesterInch Link to Inchmuir Road, Whitehill Ind Estate, Bathgate</p> 	<p>Following a lengthy consultation and design last year, the works will now be going ahead.</p> <p>An acceptable design has been finalised & a contractor has now been awarded the works.</p> <p>These works form part of the Active Travel Programme which sets out to provide more active travel opportunities for communities across West Lothian.</p>	WL Council
AT2	<p>Promote and inform safe active travel to and around the Bathgate Hills using existing paths and rights of way</p>  <p>(see also strategic review)</p> <p>We will work with adjoining communities to consider and promote our ideas.</p>	<p>Bathgate Hills Venture Charity was set up by a group of local people passionate about our local hills and their importance to us from every perspective – health and wellbeing, biodiversity, economy, heritage, culture and climate. The aim is to celebrate, protect and enhance the natural beauty and heritage of the hills, with projects for, led by, and driven by the local communities that surround the hills.</p> <p>They run a number of projects each year - a mix of information sharing, walks and conservation activities.</p>	Bathgate Hills Venture Charity

AT3	Publicise social activities already available within and around Bathgate.	Raise awareness and encourage people to get out and about with social interaction and hobbies. Many people have said they don't know what options there are in Bathgate and some clubs would like to encourage more members	Community volunteers (TBC)
AT4	<p>Define Heritage Trail with helpful signage - define strategy and propose to Council for approval and implementation. Detailed design to be completed by Landscape Consultants working with roads engineers if required. (to ensure context and climate sensitive design solutions). Implementation to be overseen by the design consultants.</p> <p>See Appendix F for aspirational / optional safer walking routes.</p> <p>We will work with adjoining communities to consider and promote our ideas.</p>	Create and publicise walkways and easier access into the hills. Bathgate Hills Venture charity are already considering this with support from Parks and Woodland countryside Ranger service, and as a charity, they have the ability to fundraise to help minimise council funding.	Bathgate Hills Venture WL Council Ranger service Landowners
AT5	Review, contribute to, and promote the Active Travel Plan .	Once West Lothian's Active Travel Plan for 2023 - 2028 is released in May 2024, review and contribute to it, feeding in views from this Local Place Plan and community feedback. The need for safer paths, quiet roads, cycle options and 20 minute neighbourhoods is suggested many times in the survey feedback.	Community Volunteers WL Local Access Forum Landowners WL Council

<p>AT6</p>	<p>Appropriate lighting is needed for walkways after dark. Would require council installation. Council could work with the community to identify key locations of lighting. Council would have to install and maintain.</p>	<p>Increase safety and encourage people to feel safer to visit Bathgate centre.</p>	<p>WL Council</p>
<p>AT7</p>	<p>Provision of new segregated two-way cycle path along the south side of the A89 Edinburgh Road in Bathgate, between Guildiehaugh Roundabout and the King Street car park (formerly the old railway station).</p>	<p>This would encourage more active travel by bike, and may reduce reliance on cars.</p>	<p>WL Council</p>
<p>AT8</p>	<p>Create a bus route or shuttle bus to Beecraigs.</p> <p>The West Lothian Ranger also suggested the option of adding one additional stop to the Bathgate / Linlithgow route at Korean War Memorial to provide some public transport access to the hills.</p> <p>We will work with adjoining communities to consider and promote our ideas.</p>	<p>Encourage more people to visit and enjoy Beecraigs and the surrounding hills without the use of a car. Make it easier to encourage and support tourism. Funding could come from a local or larger business with a viable connection e.g. an e-bus could be powered and supported by the battery farm if this goes ahead.</p>	<p>WL Council Or Sponsorship</p>
<p>AT9</p>	<p>Conduct Access Strategy for the hills and Bathgate - linking to Active Travel Plan.</p> <p>We will work with adjoining communities to consider and promote our ideas.</p>	<p>A full and meaningful consultation with the residents of Bathgate would allow all to input their views. This may include inter-connected cycle and walking routes through the town-centre and beyond, controlled and free parking management, consideration of a potential one-way system for the town centre and safe walking, cycling and car routes to the Bathgate Hills.</p>	<p>Community WL Council Landowners Consultants</p>

AT10	Conduct full consultation and impact access report on making travel around Bathgate safer and more accessible for those citizens living with impairments. Implement findings appropriately.	While AT9 might be thought to cover this, many residents living with impairments struggle with needs unrecognised/ ignored by the majority. This must be addressed and amended.	WL Council Consultants
CF1	Bathgate Allotment Scheme 	The Bathgate Community Development Trust published a survey to find out if there was a community appetite for Growing Opportunities in Bathgate such as allotments and community gardens and flowerbeds. The results were encouraging. A new Bathgate Allotment Society formed in Q3 2023 and they are currently in the planning stage.	Bathgate Allotment Society
CF2	Potential community garden at old Bathgate swimming pool site	New idea that may be taken forward by community to encourage community food growth	Community (TBC)

Sites for housing, including for affordable housing, new or retained local employment or new tourism/community facilities

Ref	Initiative	Why do this?	Who
H1	Significantly slow or stop further development in and around Bathgate until the infrastructure is in place to support it (e.g. doctors, dentists, schools). This includes new developments, and those that have already come forward but do not yet have detailed planning approval.	Rebalance infrastructural needs to more than the current inadequate and basic level. Medical facilities are insufficient. Schools are stretched. Dentists are not accepting any new patients etc As WL Local Development Plan outlines many times, development cannot increase until the right infrastructure is in place.	WL Council Bathgate Community Council

H2	Repair and repurpose other derelict sites.	Bathgate will not return to the retail streets of the 1980s, but it can maximise the empty buildings in town and repurpose these for social housing and first time buyers. A centre where more people live, spend and socialise will bring vibrance, flow, attractiveness and well needed funding.	WL Council Owners
H3	Compulsory Purchase Order on the old Dreadnought Hotel: repair, repurpose.	This old hotel is not just derelict and dragging down the look of the town centre, it is also unsafe. Could this be converted and used either as a larger Museum or for social / first time buyer central accommodation?	WL Council?
H4	Napier Avenue - H-BA 5	Greenfield site and area of Common Good sold and proposed for development - should not have been sold, and should remain greenfield.	Council
H5	Land South of Sibbalds Brae and West of Falside Crescent	Greenfield site approved for development - why approve greenfield when brownfield is available for development. Community request that Brownfield sites should be considered as priority in future planning.	Council
H15	Wester Inch H-BA 23	Area of Common Good - should not be considered for development - but is listed as housing area of future	Council
H17	Blackburn Road H-BA 26	Area of Common Good - should not be considered for development - but is listed as housing area of future	
H6 - H14 H16	Variety of areas being considered for housing development	Mix of brownfield and greenfield sites (mainly brownfield). Community request that Brownfield sites should be	


H18-H24		<p>considered as priority in future planning.</p> <p>Propose - if comes forward again in future, approve only after community consultation and when Bathgate infrastructure is in place to support current population size and increase.</p>	
T1	<p>Build a regional tourism strategy based on Bathgate's assets, emphasising the beauty and history of the area.</p>	<p>Step back and consider Bathgate's future. As said above, Bathgate shopping will never return to the retail-heavy streets of the 1980s, and therefore alternative approaches are needed to attract people into Bathgate and investing locally. The surrounding green space and amazing heritage should be considered as real assets and a strategy developed to make the most of this.</p>	<p>Community Local Businesses WL Council Landowners</p>
T2	<p>Examine the mines of the Bathgate Hills for potential tourism possibilities.</p>	<p>Bathgate's industrial heritage shouldn't just live in the past. While the Proclaimers sing about "Bathgate No More" Bathgate should be proud of its heritage and it has many stories to tell. Many other areas who relied on mining have turned this into great tourism opportunities - a great example can be found here: Slate Mines in North Wales one of the best UK family attractions (corrismineexplorers.co.uk)</p>	<p>Community WL Council Consultants Regulators Landowners</p>

Retaining, improving, and expanding quality open space and green/blue infrastructure and play facilities

Ref	Initiative	Why do this?	Who
OS1	<p>Support and publicise green space restoration projects like that of the Bathgate Water, the Friends</p>	<p>Raise awareness and encourage the local community to get involved in shaping and delivery. Many people have said they would like to get involved if</p>	<p>Community volunteers (TBC)</p>

	of Meadow Park and similar groups/green spaces.	volunteering opportunities are available.	
OS2	Increase activity for teenagers such as finding a location for a climbing wall and inside and outside basketball hoops.	There are few activities that teenagers can use, Xcite is a little out of town, so many teenagers find themselves with little to do. Girls and boys need to be catered for. A climbing wall within Xcite or elsewhere would be helpful (like Alien Rock in Edinburgh) and basketball hoops outside (for boys) and inside for girls and boys. Girls are less likely to use MUGA's outside as they are enclosed and they feel vulnerable. Basketball is a sport that can be very inclusive and it is expensive to hire a whole court elsewhere to practise 'shooting hoops'.	WLC Xcite


Conservation of the natural/built environment

Ref	Initiative	Why do this?	Who
CON1	Little Boghead Nature Reserve 	<p>West Lothian Council Ranger Service and the Friends of Little Boghead continue to carry out conservation tasks and tidy up the Park.</p> <p>Little Boghead has also recently won a donation from West Lothian Climate Action Network to plant more trees.</p>	Friends of Little Boghead, supported by WL Council Rangers
CON2	Prohibitively fine fly tipping.	Improve the local environment and generate income for other initiatives.	WL Council
CON3	Get the Bathgate Hills designated as a Regional	Strengthen the protections of the area and its flora and fauna, from	Community Volunteers,

	<p>Park - working in collaboration with local council, landowners and regulatory bodies</p> <p>We will work with adjoining communities to consider and promote our ideas.</p>	<p>further private development and fracking.</p>	<p>WL Council Landowners Regulators</p>
CON4	<p>Get more areas in the Bathgate Hills designated with protections such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas or local nature reserve.</p> <p>We will work with adjoining communities to consider and promote our ideas.</p>	<p>Help protect parts of the hills from a geological or biodiversity perspective, and in doing so, make them more attractive to tourism, and better protected from development.</p> <p>Noted that NatureScot are no longer creating new SSSI's as they are not considered to be working. And Bathgate Hills may not meet criteria for SPA or SAC,</p> <p>May be useful to go Local biodiversity sites and local nature reserves both of which provide some extra protection.</p>	<p>Community Volunteers, WL Council Landowners Regulators Community</p>
CON5	<p>Help farmers and other landowners to find ways of monetising land that does not entail private development/ destruction of it; develop /support /publicise agri-environment schemes, future biodiversity & carbon credits, and help farmers/landowners to access these.</p> <p>We will work with adjoining communities to consider and promote our ideas.</p>	<p>The community is clear that we can't better promote and use the hills to the detriment of local landowners - there must be a benefit for everyone.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - diversifying land use to bring more returns /benefits to community and landowners alike. - seeking /developing collaborative, mutually useful relationships with landowners/agents/ managers to find 'common ground' and think about blended land use - to achieve the returns /impacts above 	<p>Landowners Consultants WL Council Community Volunteers</p>

CON6	Honour areas of Common Good and do not sell or develop on them	Rebuild trust with the community. Clarify position in terms of protecting these areas from development	WL Council Landowners
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Improvements in the town / neighbourhood centre

Ref	Initiative	Why do this?	Who
TC1	Bathgate in Bloom 	<p>A like-minded group of local volunteers to kickstart community gardening of our local flower beds</p> <p>Could we encourage and support blooms in planters, art installations and placement of cleaned statues plus getting the McLagan Fountain working again? Such initiatives would help make the town more attractive and characterful as well as encourage more volunteers and local businesses to get involved with these improvements.</p>	<p>Bathgate in Bloom plus new community volunteers</p> <p>Sponsorship for plants and planters?</p>
TC2	Reinstate Traffic Warden for the centre of Bathgate.	<p>Clamp down- literally - on illegal parking that is making pavements inaccessible to people with wheelchairs, buggies, mobility scooters and dogs.</p> <p>The charges collected should more than cover the cost of a Traffic Warden salary.</p>	WL Council
TC3	Get CCTV cameras working and regularly monitored.	Clamp down on anti-social behaviour in town, particularly around George Street. Make it safer so that people want to visit the centre of Bathgate to enjoy restaurants, heritage areas and shops.	WL Council

TC4	<p>Re-consider having to make appointments to use recycling centres.</p>	<p>It is accepted that there was a need to cut services given budget constraints, so reopening all recycling centres 7 days per week is not requested (though it would be ideal). What is requested is that the need for appointments is removed, at least for a trial period - this should help reduce fly tipping.</p>	WL Council
TC5	<p>Fix potholes The request is to tackle those that are most urgent ASAP but with a solution that will last rather than a quick fix that deteriorates within weeks.</p>	<p>Reduce the risk of accidents on bikes and foot, and damage to cars/mobility scooters (we had direct reports of damages with costs during the feedback)</p>	WL Council
TC6	<p>Cheaper rates for businesses or rate 'holidays' for 3 years during establishment.</p>	<p>Attract new business and shops into town.</p>	WL Council
TC7	<p>Reintroduce Shop Front Improvement Grants</p>	<p>A 2020 improvement scheme was introduced to help local businesses update and enhance the exterior of their premises. It was hoped that there would be a positive visual impact on the town centre. This was a grant-based scheme with individual grants of up to £750 available. Could this be reintroduced?</p>	<p>WL Council Sponsors</p>
TC8	<p>Greater police presence through town - on foot - rather than in cars. Is the lack of police presence a council funding constraint or a police resource constraint?</p>	<p>Appreciated that police resources are limited, but visible presence, out of cars, in known problematic areas would help minimise anti-social behaviour and make people feel more confident to visit. Post consultation with police officers in Bathgate confirmed</p>	Police


		<p>that they are working with a small team of no more than 4 to cover a large area of rural West Lothian</p> <p>Collaboration between Police Officers, the local community and the Council is key to maximising effectiveness. There is already engagement and initiatives focused on safety. Linlithgow have introduced 'Neighbourhood Alert'; this is a Police community-based messaging platform used by 21 UK police forces including Police Scotland. This could greatly enhance current services in Bathgate. https://www.neighbourhoodalert.co.uk/</p> <p>Working CCTV is absolutely essential, and may reduce the need for police presence, though this is still required as a visual and actual deterrent.</p> <p>Consultation with police in Bathgate confirmed that the town has an extensive CCTV network but currently has no contract for monitoring activity. Action required to reinstate this contract by exploring funding options. This would go some way to supporting our local police force and deter criminal behaviour.</p> <p>.</p>	
<p>TC9</p>	<p>Resurface the town roads, and give thought to drop kerbs and pavements with regard to those who have mobility issues. (See Appendix B - Bathgate from the Perspective of the Mobility Challenged)</p>	<p>Understand that this requires significant funding, but the community could help prioritise areas that are the biggest issue.</p>	<p>WL Council</p>

<p>TC10</p>	<p>Instigate street signage showing where car parks are.</p> <p>Consider fixed road signs, and dynamic digital signage if funding allows.</p>	<p>The 2023 West Lothian-wide parking strategy identified that car parks are not always full to capacity in Bathgate. Signage would better show where parking is possible, and try to alleviate pavement parking (noted that a traffic warden and CCTV are also proposed to reduce this).</p> <p>It would be ideal to install digital signage showing where car parks are and how many spaces they have throughout town - but we appreciate this has a higher cost.</p>	<p>WL Council</p>
<p>TC11</p>	<p>Consider the pros and cons of a one way system through Bathgate, including reopening the precinct on a one way basis.</p>	<p>Encourage easier flow of traffic within the town centre. Want to encourage people in, but also want to make it easier to get around/ park. Opinion is very mixed about whether the precinct should reopen to traffic - this would need proper community consultation.</p>	<p>Community Local Businesses WL Council</p>
<p>TC12</p>	<p>Create places of welcome for the elderly.</p>	<p>The absence of the old community centre is still felt and was commented on by many. Can one of the empty buildings be used as a community space?</p> <p>Can Knightly Gaming be helped to support community use of all three floors of their building?</p>	<p>Community WL Council Sponsors?</p>
<p>TC13</p>	<p>Create a community hub for youth.</p>	<p>As in TC12 the absence of the old community centre is still felt and was commented on by many respondents. Can one of the empty buildings be used as a community space?</p>	<p>Community WL Council Sponsors?</p>

		Can Knightly Gaming be helped to support community use of all three floors of their building?	
TC14	Provision of a local shop or centre for Wester Inch	Add provision to honour original plan for Wester Inch and provide a shop and central meeting place	Developer? WL Council?
TC15	Re-establish trust with Community	Provide a written explanation to the lack of infrastructure provision at Wester Inch. What changed from the original planning permission ?	WLC

This section outlines matters which may not be defined as ‘development’ but nevertheless are also important for Bathgate Local Place Plan, e.g. as litter inhibits land use by making it unhealthy, unsightly, and in some cases dangerous.

Litter management and dog fouling

Ref	Initiative	Why do this?	Who
L1	Support and promote the local litter picking groups 	<p>Make Bathgate more attractive and avoid litter becoming a deterrent to people actively coming into Bathgate or enjoying the surrounding area.</p> <p>There is terrific work going on with the litter pickers and other voluntary groups - it couldn't be done by the council alone.</p>	WL Litter Pickers & new volunteers
L2	Install more bins and more dog mess bins , and place them closer together. These must be emptied frequently. <i>(also included as community project)</i>	<p>Improve the cleanliness and safety of Bathgate for local people and make it visually more attractive for all, including visitors and tourists.</p>	WL Council
L3	Supermarket trolley issues and takeaway litter	<p>Supermarket trolleys are used and then dumped causing waterway pollution and potential harm to wildlife. Working with the supermarkets will help find a solution to the issue. One possibility is to encourage</p>	

		<p>supermarkets to chain and charge for their trolleys.</p> <p>Takeaway cups and boxes are routinely thrown out of car windows in the hills. Work with the outlets to change behaviour by printing the car registration number on the cups so culprits can be prosecuted. Warn customers not to dispose of cups irresponsibly. Campaign for legal change if required. See Welsh Government Initiative (https://keepwalestidy.cymru/caru-cymru/)</p>	
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Improvements to public transport (routes and timetables)

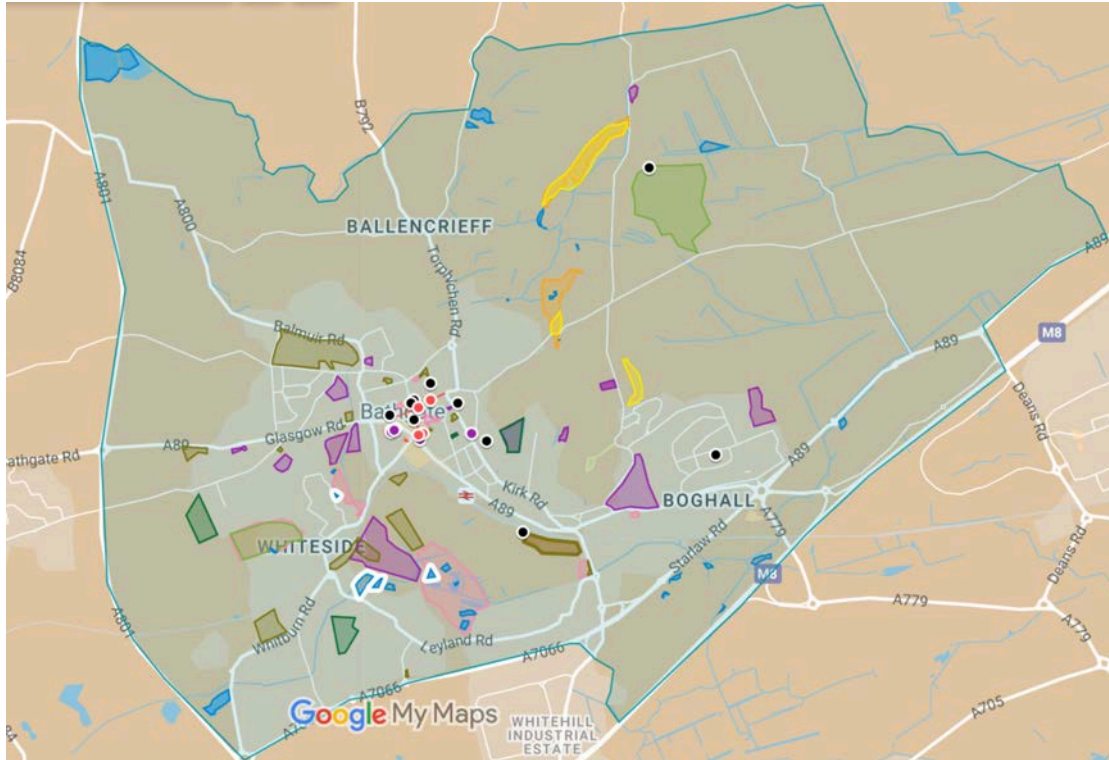
Ref	Initiative	Why do this?	Who
PT1	Install digital bus stops so that time tables etc are less likely to be vandalised and cancellations are clear in advance.	<p>Encourage people to use public transport.</p> <p>Even provision of signs with QR codes taking people to up to date timetables would be an improvement.</p>	WL Council
PT2	Promote and publicise travel services for those who cannot access standard public transport.	Feedback shows that the local bus service is limited and restricts people getting in and out of town and beyond. Services like dial-a-bus (WLcomBus) are not generally well known and should be publicised, maybe even extended.	WL Council & community volunteers (TBC)

Proposals that do not fundamentally impact on long-term use of land, such as occasional activities/events using existing facilities, spaces and places.











Ref	Initiative	Why do this?	Who
F1	Promote and celebrate local festivals like the Bathgate Procession.	Feedback is clear that events like the Procession and Christmas lights encourage a sense of identity and community spirit. The community would like to see more of this type of event to encourage active travel, socialising & community spirit.	Bathgate Procession Committee Bathgate Together
F2	Help the local community understand different roles in the council and the community council.	There is considerable confusion in Bathgate as to how the Council and various organisations fit together. The result is a confusion that makes it hard for land use to even be discussed, because Bathgate citizens don't know who is responsible for what/where.	Help the community understand different roles in the council and the community council.

Asset Development/Retainment Map

[Link to online Bathgate CC Boundary Map with all key areas pinned](#)



Map Key

	Designated Common Good Areas		Areas awaiting Common Good designation
	Listed potential housing areas in LDP or SHIP - brownfield sites		Listed potential housing areas in LDP or SHIP - greenfield sites
	Blue Water - key for flood defence, biodiversity and human wellbeing		Nature Parks
	Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Geologically significant areas		Listed buildings and scheduled monuments (HES)
	Problematic Town Centre areas		Problematic Town Centre hotspots

This Local Place Plan focuses on the geographical boundary of Bathgate Community Council. The vast majority of assets identified, and actions proposed lie within that boundary. Given the positive strength of feeling about the Bathgate Hills we have additionally included community suggestions about the hills within this local place plan. We will work with adjoining communities to consider and promote ideas outside of the Bathgate CC boundary.

Land Based Priorities of the community are to:

- Make the town centre safer and more accessible with working CCTVs, traffic wardens and a level of police presence to reduce anti-social behaviour and pavement parking. Add extra lighting to well used pathways (could fund raise).
- Slow or stop further development until infrastructure is in place to support Bathgate's current population level.
- Continue to protect areas with NatureScot and Historic Environment Scotland designations.
- Ensure that areas designated as Common Good are not sold on or approved for development.
- Review derelict buildings - consider their use as social & first time buyer properties when infrastructure is in place to support it.
- Consider how best to strategically position Bathgate for tourism, net zero, and alternative land use that brings viable benefit both for landowners and the local community.
- Looking at the wider geography around Bathgate, develop safe walking routes from Bathgate into the Bathgate Hills. We will work with adjoining communities to consider and promote ideas outside of the Bathgate CC boundary.

Asset Retainment: Further Designations, Projects & Areas of Interest

Bathgate and the surrounding Bathgate Hills areas have a great number of existing land based designations noting their significance, protecting them from development and major change. There are many areas of interest and some promising projects underway.

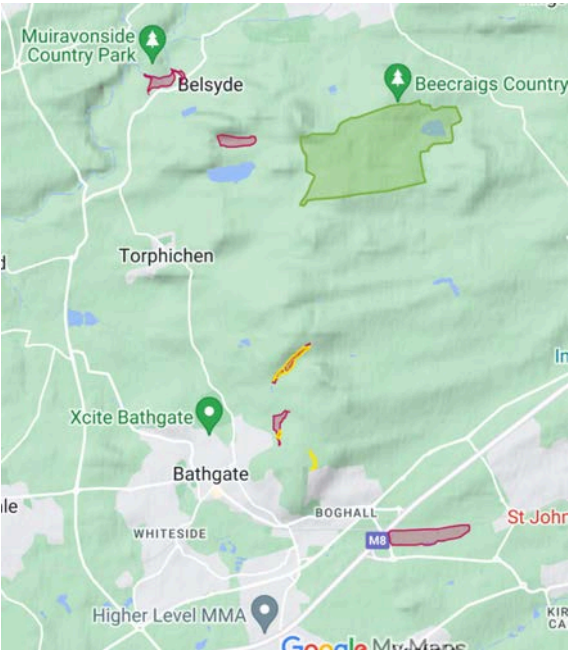
NatureScot Designations

NatureScot have designated a small number of natural and geological areas of significance in and around the Bathgate Area..

Designated Areas - Nature

[Individual styles](#)

- Country Park - Beecraigs
- SSSI - Petershill
- SSSI - Petershill
- SSSI - Petershill
- SSSI - Lochcote Marsh
- SSSI - Carriber Glen
- SSSI - Tailend Moss
- Geological Conservation Revi...
- Geological Conservation Revi...
- Geological Conservation Revi...



[NatureScot Designation Map View](#)

It is interesting how few there currently are, and this is potentially something that should be considered as this Local Place Plan is taken forward.

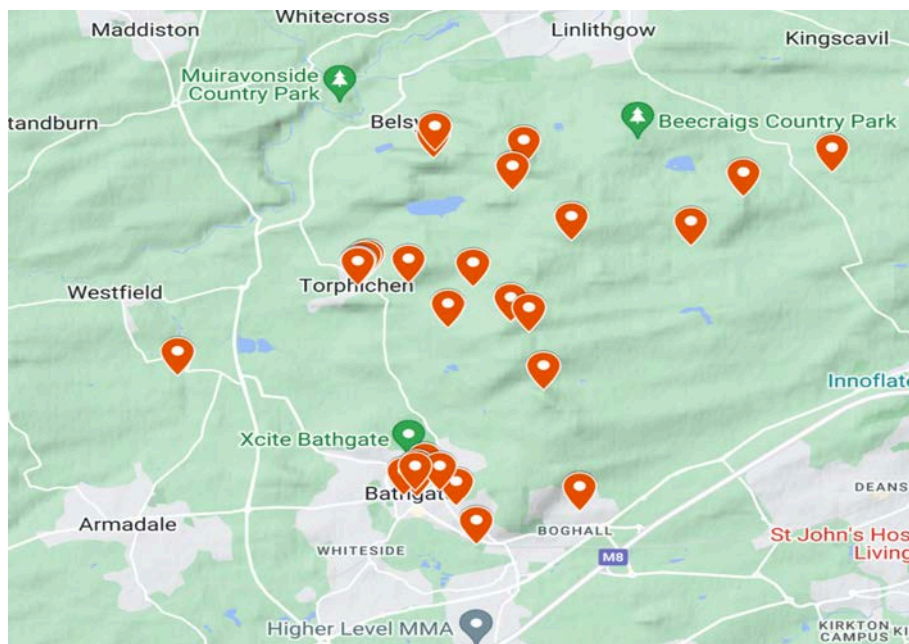
Historic Environment Scotland Designations

Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments

Heritage Environment Scotland (HES) have designated a significant number of Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments within and around Bathgate.

These should continue to be protected, and also be better promoted.

Listed Buildings	Scheduled Monuments
Listed Building Map View	Scheduled Monument Map View
(showing those in categories A-C)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Listed Buildings - HES (Historic En...	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scheduled Monuments - HES (Hist...
Individual styles	Individual styles
<input type="radio"/> (A) BATHGATE ACADEMY - Li...	<input type="radio"/> Cairnpapple Hill, prehistoric c...
<input type="radio"/> (B) HIGH CHURCH OF SCOTL...	<input type="radio"/> Windywa's Silvermine, silverm...
<input type="radio"/> (B) ST DAVID'S CHURCH (CH...	<input type="radio"/> Raven Craig, cairn
<input type="radio"/> (B) THE REGAL COMMUNITY ...	<input type="radio"/> Cockleroy, fort
<input type="radio"/> (B) GATE-HOUSE TORPHICHE...	<input type="radio"/> Hilltop House, coal pit
<input type="radio"/> (C) CHURCH OF THE IMMAC...	<input type="radio"/> Bathgate Castle (ground mar...
<input type="radio"/> (C) EVANGICAL UNION CONG...	<input type="radio"/> Bowden Hill, fort
<input type="radio"/> (C) BOGHALL PARISH CHUR...	<input type="radio"/> Torphichen Preceptory
<input type="radio"/> (C) 22 LIVERY STREET INCLU...	<input type="radio"/> Broomy Knowes, cairn
<input type="radio"/> (B) BRIDGE CASTLE (LITTLE ...	<input type="radio"/> Castlethorn, Fort and Standin...
<input type="radio"/> (B) CATHLAW HOUSE - Listed...	<input type="radio"/> South Mains, homestead moat
<input type="radio"/> (B) WAIRDLAW LIME KILNS - ...	<input type="radio"/> Peace Knowe,fort
<input type="radio"/> (B) BOWDENHILL LIME-KILN...	
<input type="radio"/> (C) KIPPS HOUSE - Listed Bui...	
<input type="radio"/> (C) TORPHICHEN JUBILEE W...	
<input type="radio"/> (C) COTTAGES, THE SQUARE,...	
<input type="radio"/> (C) HOUSE, THE SQUARE, W ...	

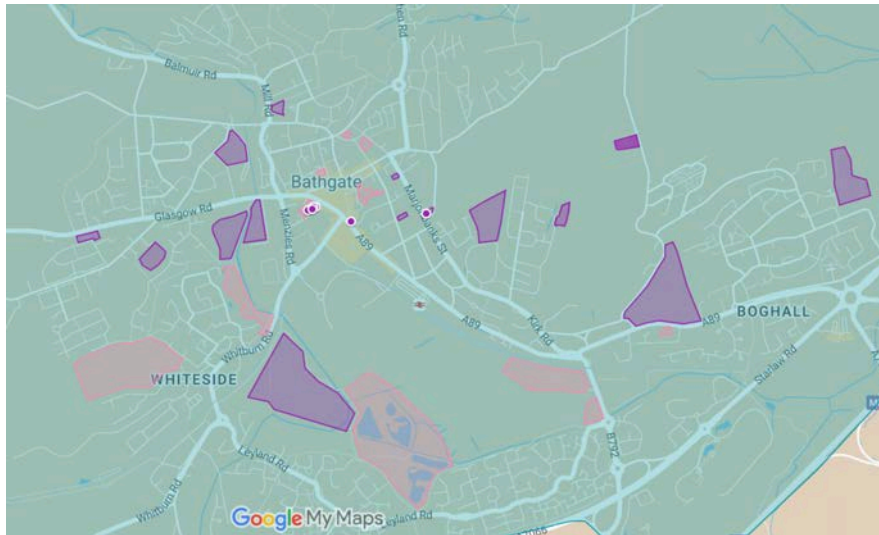


Bathgate Common Good designations

There are areas of common good, already designated, or under investigation. “Common Good” is property owned by a local authority which has been passed down from former burghs. Those burghs would have received it as a gift or purchased it.

It is key that these are not sold or transferred for development.

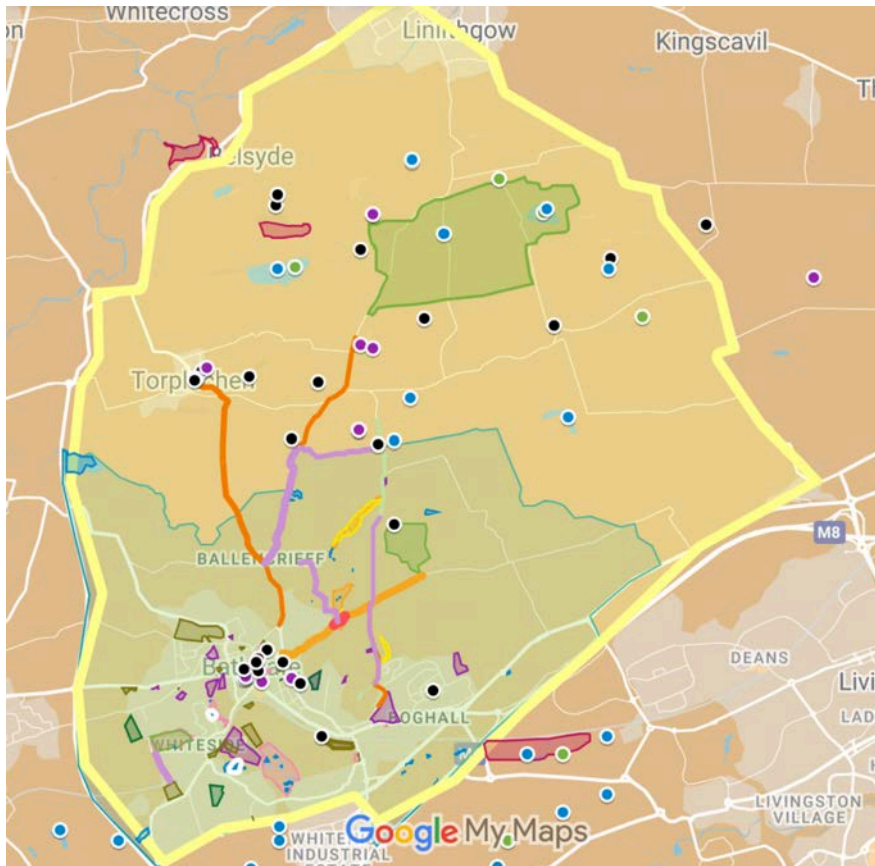
[Common Good Map Link](#)



<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Designated Areas - Common Good...</p> <p>Individual styles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Knock Kirkton Park Meadowpark The Showpark The grounds whereon the “Ch... Land and woodland to the so... Windyknowe Swing Park Creamery Park Limefield Public Park and adj... Public Park at top of Marchw... James Young Memorial Gard... Site of former public baths Park land/former railway trac... Park and Land - Alexandra Dri... Burgh Muir Land where war memorial wa... The Provost’s Lamp The McLagan drinking fountain The Bathgate Provost’s Chain... Statue of Robert Burns Newlands Memorial Stone Oil painting titled Alexander ... The former Burgh Council Ch... 	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Areas being considered - Common...</p> <p>Individual styles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBC - Little Boghead Nature P... TBC - Land that council buildi... TBC - Land on which the Joh... TBC - Land on which Bathgat... TBC - Guildiehaugh Depot (in... TBC - Acredale Car Park TBC - Mansefield Street Car P... TBC - Old Bathgate Parish Ch... TBC - Open space adjacent to... TBC - Land opposite Tesco o... TBC - Open space land betwe... TBC - Woodland and land incl...
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Bathgate Potential based on existing Assets

Putting all of this together, it is clear that Bathgate and the Bathgate Hills have much to offer, if better promoted, with clearer signage & easier active travel access.



Maximising this could be a real asset and a reason to make Bathgate a great place to live and a very attractive visitor destination, as long as a credible number of the community driven concerns and suggested actions on the following pages begin to be addressed.

There are potential options to make parts of the Bathgate Hills a Regional Park (rather than Country Park). This, along with eco-tourism, and alternative ways to consider land use (including potential carbon and biodiversity credits) will give landowners viable alternatives. We will work with adjoining communities to consider and promote ideas outside of the Bathgate CC boundary.

There are options to make the centre of Bathgate more attractive and safe for residents and visitors. Signage for historical points and car parking would be welcomed. But if these are not addressed, then visitors may not stay long enough to discover our many treasures. The restoration of the market is very welcome and another reason to visit, along with good restaurants, pubs, local museum, theatre and cinema. Development of empty buildings into central accommodation for social housing and new starts would make the centre feel more vibrant. Finally, significant improvements are needed in terms of activities for youth and the older generation - who both struggle with easy access to social activities.

Bathgate is reasonably easily accessible by train, but buses are more restricted and less reliable. This may need to be addressed if decisions are made to encourage ecotourism and make getting about easier for residents and their family and friends.

The Bathgate Hills themselves are accessible mainly by car, or by people who can walk for miles. A shuttle bus, or e-friendly alternative, could be considered to ease access. Residents have also requested safer walking routes to the hills. The West Lothian Local Access Forum has just received a draft of the next version of the WL Active Travel Plan where access and quiet roads can be reconsidered. The draft plan is now out for consultation on the council website. Noted that this draft does not include any new safe routes going into the hills from Bathgate but the opportunity to comment on the plan is still available.

Statement on our view of the Level and Nature of Support for this Local Place Plan

We consider the level of local support for this Local Place Plan to be very high, based on responses to the survey and face to face consultations. The nature of this support is broken down and demonstrated in Appendices B, C, D, and E.

Implementation & Tracking

We realise that there are many actions proposed within this Local Place Plan, and acknowledge that these are considered for action across the next 10 years. Many of these proposals can be developed conventionally and independently, but, in order to achieve logical coordination and phasing it would make sense to go further than simply awaiting piecemeal proposals and planning applications from the individual people involved.

Instead, we propose that interested parties, including community volunteers and community bodies, initially work together with West Lothian Council to prioritise them and agree how best to phase their ideal implementation.

In terms of tracking progress, it is inevitable that circumstances and funding etc will change as we move through the next 10 years. To help get further community input, and adjust as things change, we propose that this plan could be reviewed annually, by a combined group comprising WL Council, Bathgate Community Council and Development Trust, Landowners and some members of the community.

Registration Check List

Information required to ensure that the registration process can proceed smoothly:

Registration Requirement

Confirmation of the Community Body's status	Yes
Have 'regard to' National Planning Framework, Local Development Plan and Locality Plan	Yes
Information Notice sent to Councillors and Community Councils	Yes
Statement of proposals as to the development or use of land	Yes
Reasons for amending the Local Development Plan - as outlined in Appendix A	Yes
A map that shows land to which the Local Place Plan relates	Yes
A map showing proposals for development or use of land	Yes
Contact details for organisation	Yes
A statement on the organisation's view of the level and nature of support for the Local Place Plan	Yes

Appendices

Appendix A – Proposed Amendments to WL Local Development Plan

Adopted 4 September 2018

This Local Place Plan is compliant with Government guidelines NPF4 and reflects the views of Bathgate residents who, acting in a stewardship role, appreciate the opportunity to shape the land use aspects of environmental, social and economic development and, support net zero sustainable growth without compromising the opportunity of future generations to do likewise.

In order to achieve this objective, changes are needed to facilitate local living; ensuring Bathgate people can easily access affordable housing, services, greenspace, learning, leisure and work.

Bathgate is an ideal size to enable planned, compact urban growth, optimising the use of land and sustaining/enabling true 20 minute neighbourhoods. This requires the indicative changes below and principally, a bold new vision for Bathgate's future.

Ref	Proposal	Local Development Plan Ref	Changes Required
CC	Climate Change adaptation		
CC1	Bathgate Meadows Nature Park in the centre of Bathgate.	Para 275 POLICY EMG 1	Change to acknowledge Bathgate Meadows Nature Park project is now live and ensure no run off from Whitehill Industrial Estate into Bathgate Waters Support expansion for this policy.
CC2	Consider options to Green the Grey and introduce increased planting and trees in and around Bathgate. Conduct feasibility green blue network study of landscape connections with active travel routes (embedding the nature network) throughout Bathgate and into the hills.	E-BA 3 Wester Inch POLICY ENV 8 POLICY EMG 6 POLICY ENV 8 Para 113 Para 114 Para 123 Para 124	Add other key Bathgate roads that would benefit from woodland buffer Support expansion for this policy. Support expansion for this policy. As above. Support expansion of this. Support expansion of this. Support expansion of this. Support expansion of this.

		Para 125 POLICY TRAN 1 POLICY TRAN 3 Para 158	No change. No change. No change. No change.
CC3	Examine the mines under Bathgate re the potential of geothermal energy as a renewable energy source, and cheap energy for the town.	Para 90 POLICY NRG 1 Para 228 POLICY NRG 4 Page 276 - Energy - Heat Mapping and Heat Networks Page 289	Add potential geothermal to gas and electricity Add potential geothermal options Add potential geothermal options Add potential geothermal options Add potential for geothermal options Add geothermal as possible option
CC4	Examine the possibilities of local hydro-electric power as a potential local energy source.	POLICY NRG 4 Page 289	No change No change
CC5	Support Electricity Storage Sites to the benefit of Bathgate	POLICY NRG 1 Page 276 - Energy - Heat Mapping and Heat Networks Para 242	Add potential of local battery storage areas providing energy benefits for local residential and commercial use Use of heat mapping in reducing carbon emissions and increasing energy efficiency. Possibilities re district/community heating networks, energy centres, waste heat Could include the example of the proposed electricity storage site becoming a social and economic benefit to Bathgate - cheaper/free energy and sponsorship for community needs.
CC6	Consider how to incorporate the Scottish government's climate adaptation plan into Bathgate.	POLICY ENV 8	Support expansion for this policy.

AT	Active Travel		
AT1	New Cycle Route Westerlnch Link to Inchmuir Road, Whitehill Ind Estate, Bathgate	P-117	Add this approved new cycle path
AT2	Promote and inform safe active travel to and around the Bathgate Hills using existing paths and rights of way	P-113	Upgraded paths and improved accessibility to Beecraigs Country Park and Bathgate Hills - note proposed promotion of existing (if limited) safe routes from Bathgate.
AT3	Publicise social activities already available within and around Bathgate, and expand upon these opportunities with special consideration for older groups and older children/teens.	Page 16 Promoting community regeneration Para 106. POLICY HOU 3 POLICY TCR1	Support expansion for this policy, connecting with local community, building personal links to place and land. Support expansion for this policy. Support expansion for this policy. Support this policy.
AT4	Define Heritage Trail with helpful signage strategy and propose to Council for approval and implementation.	Page 30 Para 43	Add the need for access from Bathgate to the Bathgate Hills as a means to encourage active travel and promote tourism through a then accessible Heritage Trail. Enable access to Bathgate Hills for residents and visitors to enjoy walking, cycling, and other forms of tourism.
AT5	Review, contribute to, and promote the Active Travel Plan .	P-39	Clarify position of Bathgate Hills Quiet Roads Initiative once Active Travel Plan is released for review and include summary.
AT6	Appropriate lighting is needed for walkways after dark. Would require council install.	POLICY DES 1	Add provision of required lighting to make key pathways safe
AT7	Provision of new segregated two-way cycle path along the south side of the A89 Edinburgh Road in Bathgate,	P-117	Add this approved new cycle path
AT8	Create a bus route or shuttle bus to Beecraigs.	Para 120	Add bus route or shuttle bus between Bathgate and Beecraigs

AT9	Conduct Bathgate Access Strategy for the hills.	Para 124 P-113	Consider adding Access to Bathgate Hills from Bathgate as a future exemplar walking and cycling-friendly settlement to be developed. Upgraded paths and improved accessibility to Beecraigs Country Park and Bathgate Hills - note proposed Bathgate Access Strategy Review
AT10	Conduct full consultation and impact access report on making travel around Bathgate safer and more accessible for those citizens living with impairments.	Para 24 Para 44,45,46, 47, 48 Para 90 Para 111, 113 Para 133	Extend upon these ideas by ensuring focus upon the infrastructural needs of those living with impairments, and implementing appropriate changes.
CF	Community Food Growing		
CF1	Bathgate Allotment Scheme	Para 183 and Para 184 POLICY EMG 6 POLICY ENV 15	No change. Support for this. No change. Support for this. No change. Support for this.
CF2	Potential community garden at old Bathgate swimming pool site	Para 183 and Para 184 H-BA 28 POLICY EMG 6 POLICY ENV 15	No change. Support for this. Note new discussion about old Bathgate swimming pool site that may be taken forward by community to encourage community food growth No Change. Support for this. No change. Support for this.
H	Housing		
H1	Significantly slow or stop further development in and around Bathgate until the infrastructure is in place to support current population.	Para 96 Bathgate Housing (page 80) H-BA 6 (and all other listed & future developments)	Noted the need to ensure that infrastructure keeps pace with growth. Update this to acknowledge that Bathgate growth has been very significant to date and infrastructure services (schools, doctors, dentists etc) are not supporting current population size, never mind any future

	<p>Additionally, future development beyond that catch up point should only be approved when extra infrastructure has been successfully agreed, designed and delivered (e.g. doctors, dentists, schools).</p>	<p>Para 158 & POLICY ENV 7</p> <p>P7, P8, P9, P10 (school extensions)</p> <p>Armadale Infrastructural needs (page 117)</p>	<p>increase. Further development should not be approved until infrastructure is improved to the point that it is sufficient for current needs. Once at the needs of today, then consider future development plans, but ensure that infrastructure is delivered and is in place before development is approved.</p> <p>Need full catchment review</p> <p>Noted Countryside Belts are defined for a planning purpose - such as where development pressures are likely to cause the unwanted merger of two settlements - change to add risk of Bathgate & Armadale merge.</p> <p>Change to note that school extensions will bring schools in line with current population size rather than future growth.</p> <p>Noted that if Armadale cannot support infrastructure then flow will be redirected to neighbouring districts including Bathgate. As previously stated, Bathgate does not have acceptable infrastructure services to support its own population, never mind taking on more.</p>
H2	Repair and repurpose other derelict sites.	<p>POLICY TCR 1</p> <p>Waverley Street Depot (page 264)</p> <p>Guildiehaugh Depot (page 264)</p> <p>POLICY ENV 27</p> <p>POLICY EMG 6</p>	<p>Residential use on the upper floors of commercial premises in town centres is noted - add use of derelict empty premises</p> <p>Consider this brownfield site for social and first time buyer housing only when infrastructure can support it.</p> <p>Consider this brownfield site for recreational use or for social and first time buyer housing - only when infrastructure can support</p> <p>No change. Support for this policy</p> <p>No change. Support for this policy</p>

H3	Compulsory Purchase Order on the old Dreadnought Hotel: repair, repurpose.	<p>POLICY TCR 1</p> <p>POLICY ENV 27</p> <p>POLICY EMG 6</p> <p>Para 208</p>	<p>Residential use on the upper floors of commercial premises in town centres is noted - add use of derelict empty premises.</p> <p>No change. Support for this policy</p> <p>No change. Support for this policy</p> <p>No change, but the Dreadnought is a strong example of how its decline makes the community feel unsafe and local businesses feel 'down at heel'. There is popular call to resolve this issue.</p>
H4	Napier Avenue - H-BA 5	Listed in Housing Land Audit for 10 house development	Propose this remains as a greenfield site. Initial development plan already rejected.
H5	Land South of Sibbalds Brae and West of Falside Crescent	<p>Listed in Housing Land Audit for 189 house development</p> <p>Also named in Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2021-2026 (page 12) - listing 28 houses for social rent</p>	<p>Rejected by Community, also BCC, also Council - then overturned by Reporter</p> <p>Noted this is one of two greenfield sites approved when brownfield sites available. Propose should consider brownfield first?</p> <p>Also, Community request clarification about decision making process, and when does 'no' mean 'no'.</p>
H6	Standhill Farm H-BA 30	Listed in Housing Land Audit, and noted as NOT EFFECTED as no developer / no consent	Propose - if comes forward again in future, approve only after community consultation & when Bathgate infrastructure in place to support current population size and increase.
H7	Race Road - H-BA 6	<p>Listed in Housing Land Audit for 15 house development</p> <p>Also named in Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2021-2026 (page 10) - listing 40 houses for social rent</p>	<p>Clarify position on 15 or 40 houses.</p> <p>Proposed change - approve only when Bathgate infrastructure in place to support current population size and increase.</p>
H8	Guildiehaugh Depot H-BA 24	<p>Listed in Housing Land Audit for 65 house development</p> <p>Also named in Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2021-2026</p>	<p>Clarify position on 65 or 100 houses.</p> <p>Propose - if comes forward in future, approve only after community consultation & when Bathgate infrastructure in place to support current population size and increase.</p>

		(page 16) - listing 100 houses for social rent	
H9	Former Edgar Allen Works - HB-A 16 & HB-A 17	Listed in Housing Land Audit for 200 house development	Proposed change - approve only when Bathgate infrastructure in place to support current population size and increase.
H10	Bathgate Community Education Centre - H-BA 22	Listed in Housing Land Audit for 6 house development. Also named in Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2021-2026 (page 16) - listing 6 houses for social rent	Propose - if comes forward again in future, approve only after community consultation & when Bathgate infrastructure in place to support current population size and increase.
H11	Whitburn Road (former abbatoir) H-BA 27	Listed in Housing Land Audit for 166 house development	Proposed change - approve only when Bathgate infrastructure in place to support current population size and increase.
H12	Windyknowe / Glasgow Road, (West) H-BA 15	Listed in Housing Land Audit for 46 house development, and noted as NOT EFFECTED as lack of known progress.	Propose - if comes forward again in future, approve only after community consultation & when Bathgate infrastructure in place to support current population size and increase.
H13	Bloomfield Place H-BA 19	Listed in Housing Land Audit for 18 house development, and noted as NOT EFFECTED as lack of known progress.	Propose - if comes forward again in future, approve only after community consultation & when Bathgate infrastructure in place to support current population size and increase.
H14	13 - 15 Glasgow Road (Meadowpark) H-BA 21	Listed in Housing Land Audit for 18 house development, and noted as NOT EFFECTED as lack of known progress.	Propose - if comes forward again in future, approve only after community consultation & when Bathgate infrastructure in place to support current population size and increase.
H15	Wester Inch H-BA 23	Listed in Housing Land Audit for 18 house development, and noted as NOT EFFECTED as not in SHIP (Strategic Housing Investment Plan) However also named in Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2021-2026	This land overlaps with Common Good land - propose change - do not develop.

		(page 16) - listing 59 + 40 houses for social rent	
H16	Waverley Street Depot H-BA 25	Listed in Housing Land Audit for 18 house development, and noted as NOT EFFECTED as Not in SHIP (Strategic Housing Investment Plan)	Propose - if comes forward again in future, approve only after community consultation & when Bathgate infrastructure in place to support current population size and increase.
H17	Blackburn Road H-BA 26	Listed in Housing Land Audit for 0 house development, and noted as NOT EFFECTED as Access / transport issues	This land overlaps with Common Good land - propose change - do not develop.
H18	Glasgow Road H-BA 29	Listed in Housing Land Audit for 53 house development, and noted as NOT EFFECTED as Planning refused, lack of known progress	Propose - if comes forward again in future, approve only after community consultation & when Bathgate infrastructure in place to support current population size and increase.
H19	Main Street H-BA 12	Listed in Housing Land Audit for 15 house development, and noted as NOT EFFECTED as Lack of known progress	Propose - if comes forward again in future, approve only after community consultation & when Bathgate infrastructure in place to support current population size and increase.
H20	9 Hardhill Road (former Creamery garage) H-BA 18	Listed in Housing Land Audit for 15 house development, and noted as NOT EFFECTED as Consent expired, no progress made.	Propose - if comes forward again in future, approve only after community consultation & when Bathgate infrastructure in place to support current population size and increase.
H21	SHIP Linkston Way?	Named in Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2021-2026 (page 12) - listing 59 houses for social rent?	Propose - if comes forward again in future, approve only after community consultation & when Bathgate infrastructure in place to support current population size and increase.
H22	SHIP Simpson Avenue? Exact location here uncertain	Named in Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2021-2026 (page 10) - listing 19 houses for social rent?	Propose - if comes forward again in future, approve only after community consultation & when Bathgate infrastructure in place to support current population size and increase.

H23	SHIP Jarvey Street? Exact location here uncertain	Named in Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2021-2026 (page 6) - listing 42 houses for social rent?	Propose - if comes forward again in future, approve only after community consultation & when Bathgate infrastructure in place to support current population size and increase.
H24	Community Garden in old Bathgate Swimming Pool site	Named in Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2021-2026 (page 16) - listing 5 houses for social rent	Given small number of houses, propose that other brownfield sites are considered as an alternative and this space is used to create a community garden with resulting, climate, health and wellbeing benefits.
T	Tourism		
T1	Build a regional tourism strategy based on Bathgate's assets, emphasising the beauty and history of the area.	POLICY EMP 7	No change, support for this.
T2	Examine the mines of the Bathgate Hills for potential tourism possibilities.	POLICY EMP 7	No change, support for this.
OS	Open Spaces		
OS1	Support and publicise green space restoration projects like that of the Bathgate Water, the Friends of Meadow Park and similar groups/green spaces.	POLICY ENV 8	No change, support for this.
OS2	Increase activity for teenagers such as finding a location for a climbing wall and inside and outside basketball hoops.		There are few activities that teenagers can use, Xcite is a little out of town, so many teenagers find themselves with little to do. Girls and boys need to be catered for. A climbing wall within Xcite or elsewhere would be helpful (like Alien Rock in Edinburgh) and basketball hoops outside (for boys) and inside for girls and boys. Girls are less likely to use MUGA's outside as they are enclosed and they feel vulnerable. Basketball is a sport that can be very inclusive and it is expensive to hire a whole court elsewhere to practise 'shooting hoops'.

CON	Conservation of Natural & Built Environment		
CON1	Little Boghead Nature Reserve	Para 190 Policy ENV 18	No change, support for this. No change, support for this.
CON2	Prohibitively fine fly tipping.	Para 271	Add details of fines enforceable for fly tipping
CON3	Get the Bathgate Hills designated as a Regional Park	Para 153 POLICY ENV 13	Noted that Bathgate Hills is designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value' (AGLV) Extend this to propose that it becomes a Regional park? Consider Pentland Hills equivalent for Bathgate Hills
CON4	Get more areas in the Bathgate Hills designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas or national scenic areas.	Para 153	Noted that Bathgate Hills is designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value' (AGLV) Change to acknowledge NatureScot designations and propose review into options of other NatureScot designated areas being proposed and ideally agreed.
CON5	Help farmers and other landowners to find ways of monetising land that does not entail private development	POLICY NRG 1	Include consideration of how this can be achieved in the Bathgate Hills, without it being to the detriment of landowners.
CON6	Honour areas of Common Good and do not sell or develop on them	Not currently included	Clarify position in terms of protecting these areas from development
TC	Town Centre		
TC1	Bathgate in Bloom re-instigation	POLICY EMG 6 POLICY ENV 15	Support for this. No change. Support for this. No change.
TC2	Reinstate Traffic Warden for the centre of Bathgate.	POLICY TRAN 1	Add details of how to control traffic and parking in existing town centres

TC3	Get CCTV cameras working and regularly monitored.	Para 150	Change to add safety measures in order to encourage businesses and visitors and residents into and around the town.
TC4	Re-consider having to make appointments to use recycling centres.	Para 271	Include how residential waste, outwith rubbish bins, is supported. Make reference to recycling centre and recommended approaches.
TC5	Fix potholes The request is to tackle those that are most urgent ASAP but with a solution that will last rather than a quick fix that deteriorates within weeks.	Para 48 Para 133	Support for this. No change. Support for this, noting that use of unrepaired roads becomes dangerous for drivers and pedestrians, and limits access to necessary services
TC6	Cheaper rates for businesses.	Para 48	Support for this. No change.
TC7	Reintroduce Shop Front Improvement Grants	Para 48	Support for this. No change
TC8	Greater police presence through town - on foot - rather than in cars. Is the lack of police presence a council funding constraint or a police resource constraint?	Para 24	Support for this, noting that use of land is curtailed when people are frightened of crime. Perception of personal safety greatly influences individual quality of life and commitment to community/place.
TC9	Resurface the town roads, and give thought to drop kerbs and pavements with regard to those who have mobility issues.	Page 116 Para 48	Add section showing commitments for maintenance of existing roads Support for this. No change.
TC10	Instigate street signage showing where car parks are. Consider fixed road signs, and dynamic digital signage if funding allows.	Page 116 Para 48	Add section showing commitments for maintenance of existing roads No change.
TC11	Consider the pros and cons of a one way system through Bathgate, including reopening the precinct on a one way basis.	POLICY TRAN 1 Page 116, points 4,5,6.	No change. No change.

TC12	Create places of welcome for the elderly.	Para 24 Para 48	Support for this, add section on specific social provision for the elderly Support for this.
TC13	Create a community hub for youth.	Para 24. Para 48	Support for this, add section on specific social provision for youth. Support for this.
TC14	Provision of a local shop or centre for Wester Inch	POLICY TCR2 Out of Centre	Add provision to honour original plan for Wester Inch and provide a shop and central meeting place
TC15	Re-establish trust with Community		Provide a written explanation to the lack of infrastructure provision at Wester Inch. What changed from the original planning permission?
L	Litter		
L1	Support and promote the local litter picking groups	POLICY TCR 3 POLICY MRW 8	Review litter levels from commercial and retail premises and agree approach to resolution. Fix at source. Support for this, adding notes that, as litter makes land use problematic and potentially dangerous, it requires specific attention at source.
L2	Install more bins and more dog mess bins, and place them closer together. These must be emptied frequently.	POLICY TCR 3 POLICY MRW 8	Again, review litter levels from commercial and retail premises and agree approach to resolution. Fix at source. Support for this, adding that specific policy be made to cover bins and dog bins, due to their ability to strongly influence land use for recreation /business.
L3	Supermarket trolley issues, waterway pollution, and takeaway litter	TCR 3 Page 286	Support for this policy but noting it requires enforcing, and extension to supermarket premises. Support for this.
PT	Public Transport		
PT1	Install digital bus stops so that time tables etc are less likely to be vandalised and cancellations are clear in advance.	Page 116 Infrastructure Requirements Applicable to all Housing Proposals in Core Development Areas	Add provision that developers should provide funding for digital bus information at bus stops, as well as bus shelters.

PT2	Promote and publicise travel services for those who cannot access standard public transport.	Para 133 Para 70 POLICY HOU 6	Support for this. Support for this. Support for this.
F	Festivals & Occasional Activities		
F1	Promote and celebrate local festivals like the Bathgate Procession.	Para 151	Support for this, including proposed increased use of Bathgate Town Centre
F2	Help the local community understand different roles in the council and the community council.		This could be part of the Consultation of the new Local Development Plan.

Appendix B - Bathgate from the Perspective of the Mobility Challenged

“Disabled drivers and pedestrians have no voice.”

The above is a direct quote from a long term resident of Bathgate, citing the difficulties facing those who live with impairments.

The information and ideas now following can be found throughout the text, but as it is important that all our citizens are heard and respected, it seems appropriate here to consolidate views from this often overlooked minority.

One suggestion was that from the top of George Street down to George Place, traffic should be allowed at least one way but possibly both, with diagonal parking on the right side coming down, reinstated trees, and disabled parking top, middle and bottom with speed bumps on the road. If the Council deemed it necessary to deter all except disabled parking, ANPR cameras in the precinct would help prevent mis-use of available spaces.

Bike lanes should be positioned outside of, rather than between, kerbs and floating car spaces. This would allow people with mobility problems to climb kerbs for steadiness.

A major issue for mobility challenged drivers is that drop-kerbs are not always placed alongside disabled parking spaces.

Disabled parking spots should not be removed in order to facilitate more EV charging points.

The Precinct has safety issues with regard to its paving, which gets slippery when wet. As one respondent said, ‘feet are fine, walking sticks not so much.’ The paving gets so slick that sticks and crutches easily lose purchase and may slip, causing a dangerous fall.

Bathgate pavements are generally in such a terrible state that the same respondent described a screw jolting out of their new(!) mobility buggy as they were making their way along North Bridge Street.

To make getting across roads safer for sight-impaired people, tactile indicators should be attached to the underside of traffic light boxes

(Example:<https://www.radixtactile.com/rotating-cone-tactile-equipment/>)

There are already issues for many using traffic light buttons, as these are often head height and parallel to the road. The result is that in order to push the button, a wheelchair/buggy user may well have to push themselves slightly over the edge of the kerb. This is easily solved by moving buttons in towards the pavement.

From the above it becomes evident that one major need is consultation with those

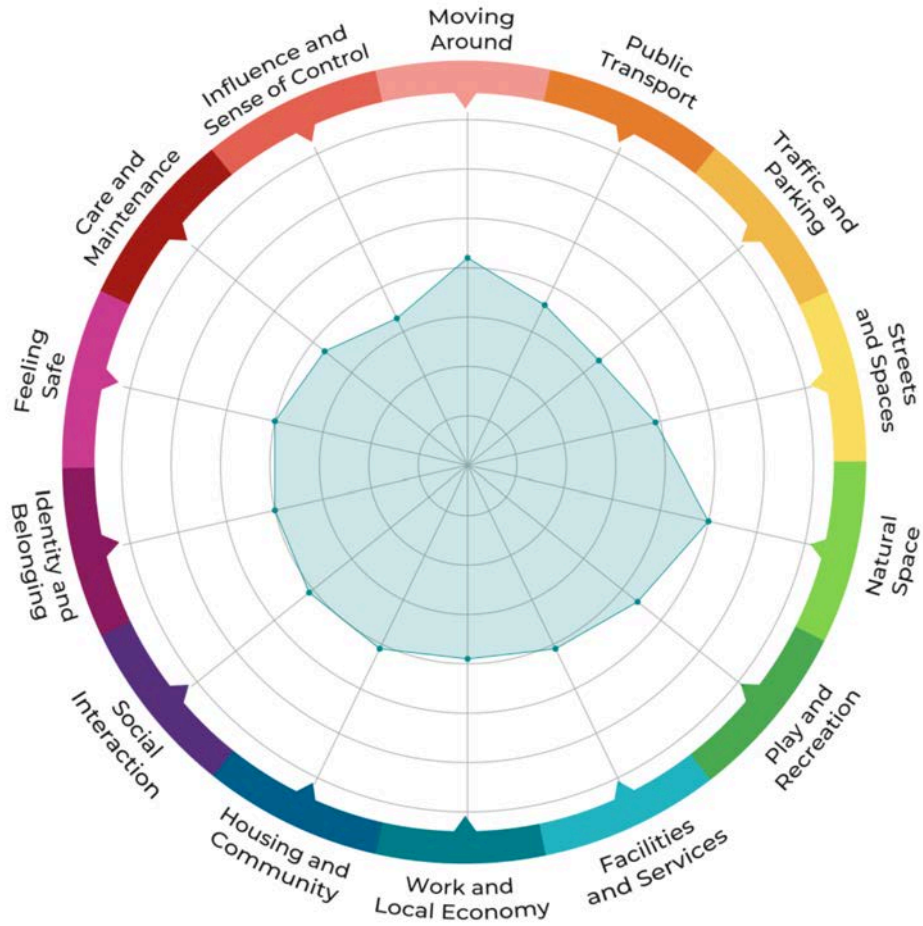
residents of Bathgate who live with impairment. Like most old towns, Bathgate grew with no consideration to minority needs. The 21st century sees a welcome change from old attitudes, but even with the best of intentions, new policies applied indiscriminately may have results just as dismissive as no policies at all. There is a need for mindfulness and care on an infrastructural level. Posited changes should always be considered in the light of impact assessment.

Active Travel Plans and other schemes must be inclusive. It is a wonderful thing to encourage more walking and cycling, and may bring great benefits to individuals and society alike; but this should not be at the cost of those who cannot fully access either. Solutions are needed that allow for all to make their way as safely and appropriately as works for them.

There is also a great opportunity here; Bathgate's roads and pavements are in such a state of disrepair that the situation cannot be ignored without active danger to citizens. Facing such an unavoidable basic requirement creates the perfect time for re-thinking the entire mobility situation throughout. Given thought, application, and listening to the needs of this quiet minority, Bathgate could lead the way on accessibility, making the town a better place to live for all its residents.

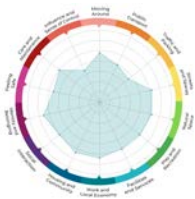
Appendix C - Overall Place Standard Tool Assessment

Overall View

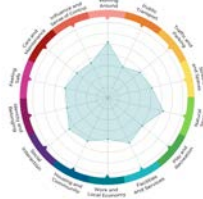


Age band related view

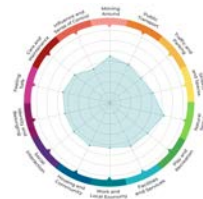
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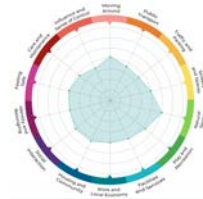
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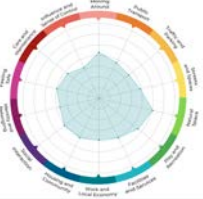
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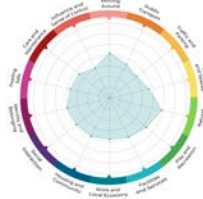
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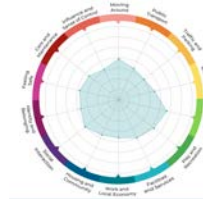
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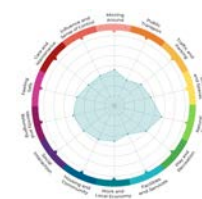
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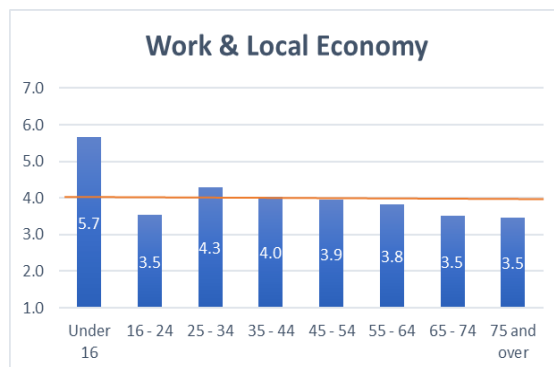
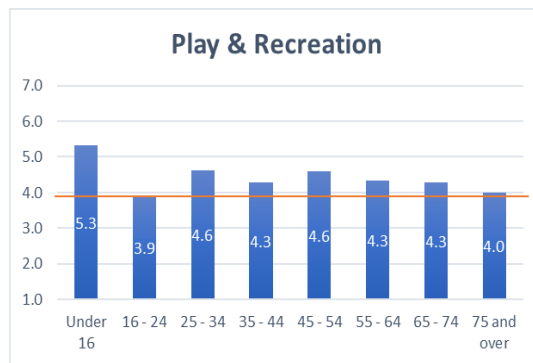
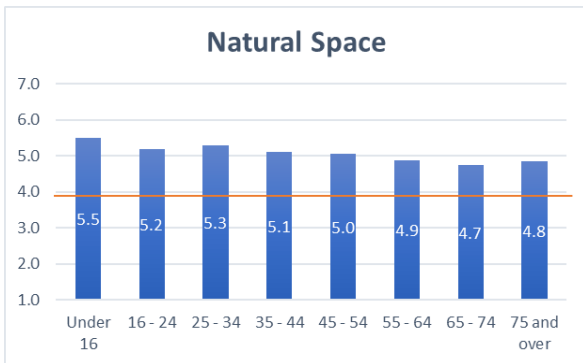
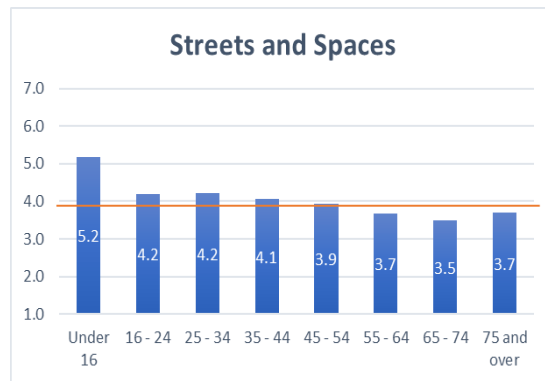
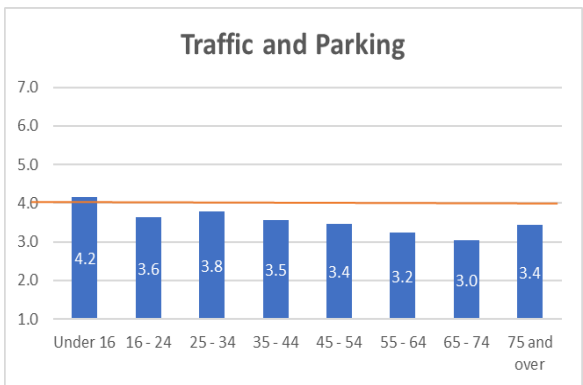
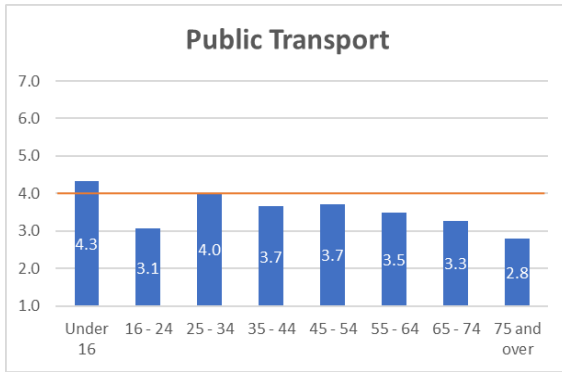
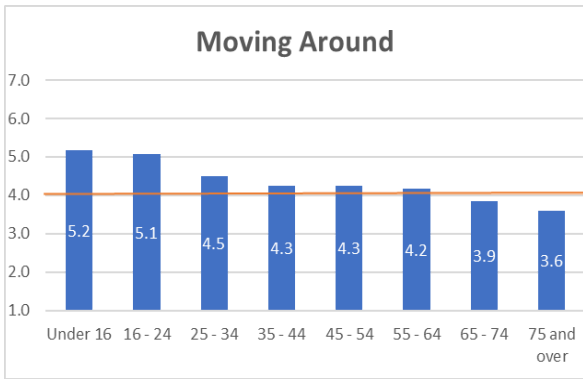
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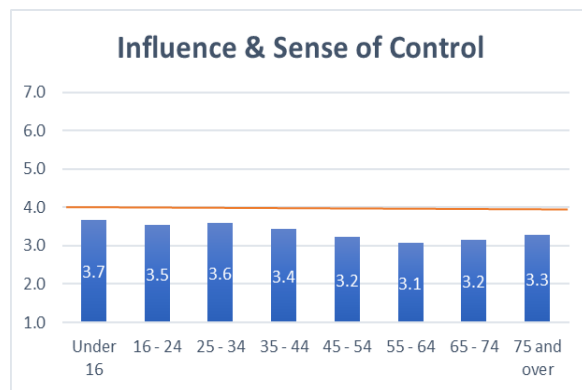
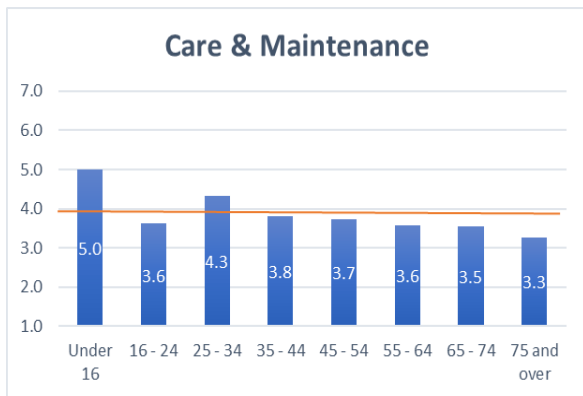
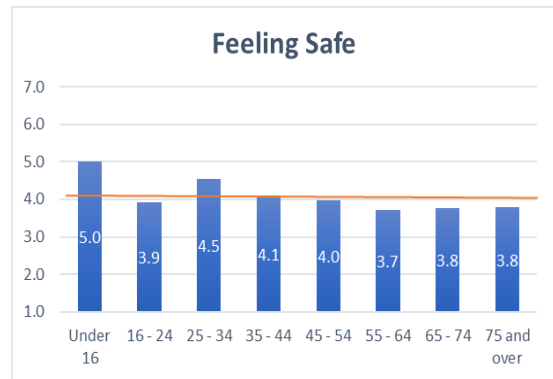
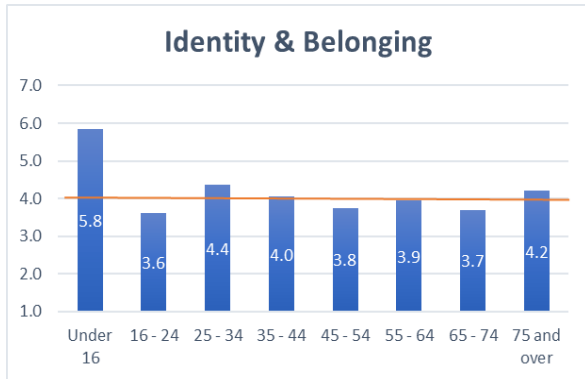
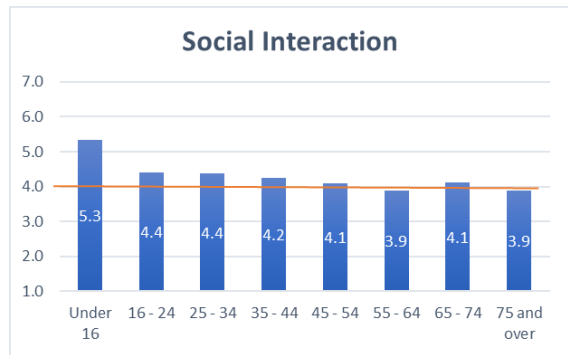
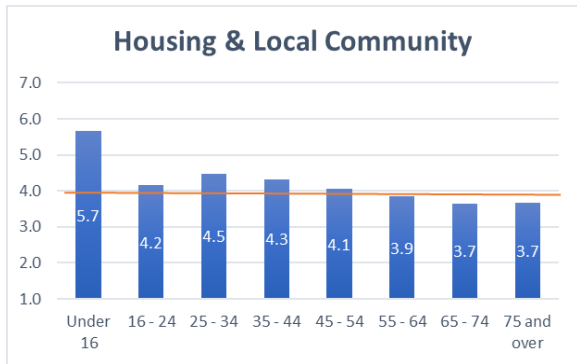


Over 75



Appendix D - Average Scoring by Topic and Age Band





Appendix F - Survey Response split by partial postcodes

where optional partial posts codes given

Partial Postcode	Count	TOTALS
EH48	22	22
EH48 1	25	107
EH48 1A	18	
EH48 1B	6	
EH48 1D	22	
EH48 1E	10	
EH48 1J	5	
EH48 1L	3	
EH48 1N	3	
EH48 1Q	2	
EH48 1R	9	
EH48 1S	4	
EH48 2	51	195
EH48 2A	19	
EH48 2B	7	
EH48 2D	11	
EH48 2E	8	
EH48 2G	20	
EH48 2H	3	
EH48 2J	3	
EH48 2Q	12	
EH48 2R	3	
EH48 2S	18	
EH48 2T	16	
EH48 2U	15	
EH48 2X	9	
EH48 4	26	79
EH48 4A	7	
EH48 4B	3	
EH48 4D	9	
EH48 4G	3	
EH48 4H	4	
EH48 4J	6	
EH48 4L	17	
EH48 4N	4	
TOTAL PARTIAL POSTCODES GIVEN		403

Appendix G - Aspirational Safer Walking Access to the Bathgate Hills

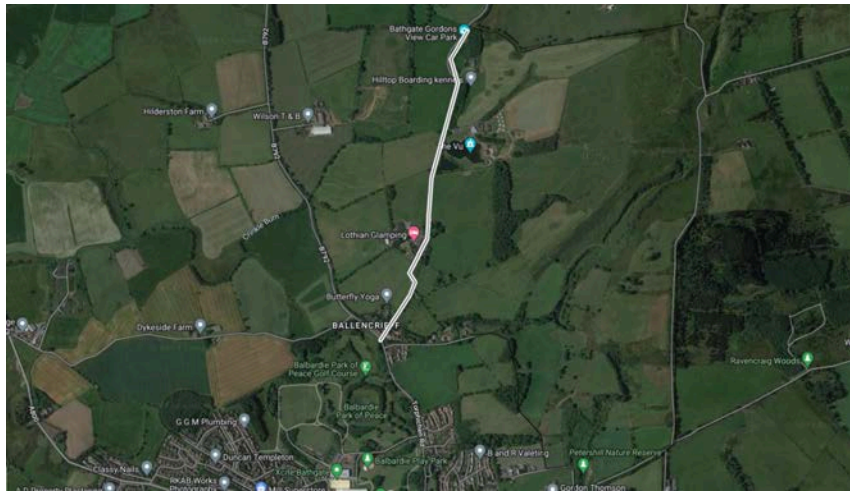
During consultation and post consultation, a number of potential paths to the Bathgate Hills were suggested, some of these are outlined here as examples. The [Bathgate & Bathgate Hills LPP Online Map](#) also contains details of catalogued rights of way across the hills.

Further detailed discussion with the community, landowners, council and adjoining communities to consider and promote our ideas.

i) Routes up through the Bathgate Hills

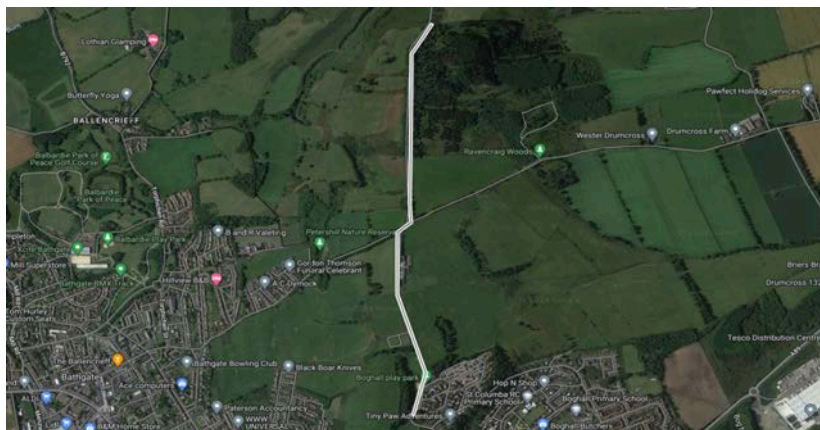
a) Ballencrieff to Gordons View Car Park Route

Proposed path on the right hand side of the road leading up to the car park. This route has been discussed at Bathgate Community Council and a Facebook group was set up to promote this path. Noted that the road is fairly narrow when going through the houses along this road, so not much space for a separate path?



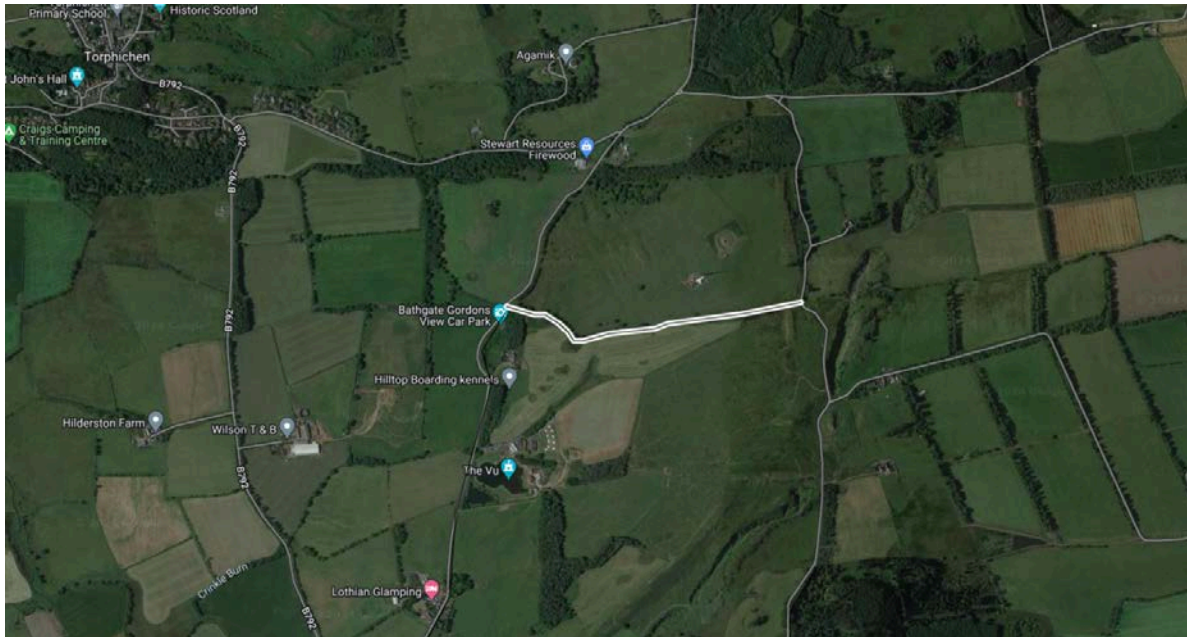
b) Limefield to Ravenraig

This route has been looked at by the WL Rangers walking up from Puir Wifes Brae or Bus to Limefield then following Limefield Road to Drumcross Road crossroads. From Drumcross road onto the Salters road into Ravenraig Wood where there is a path that can be taken rather than walk on the road.



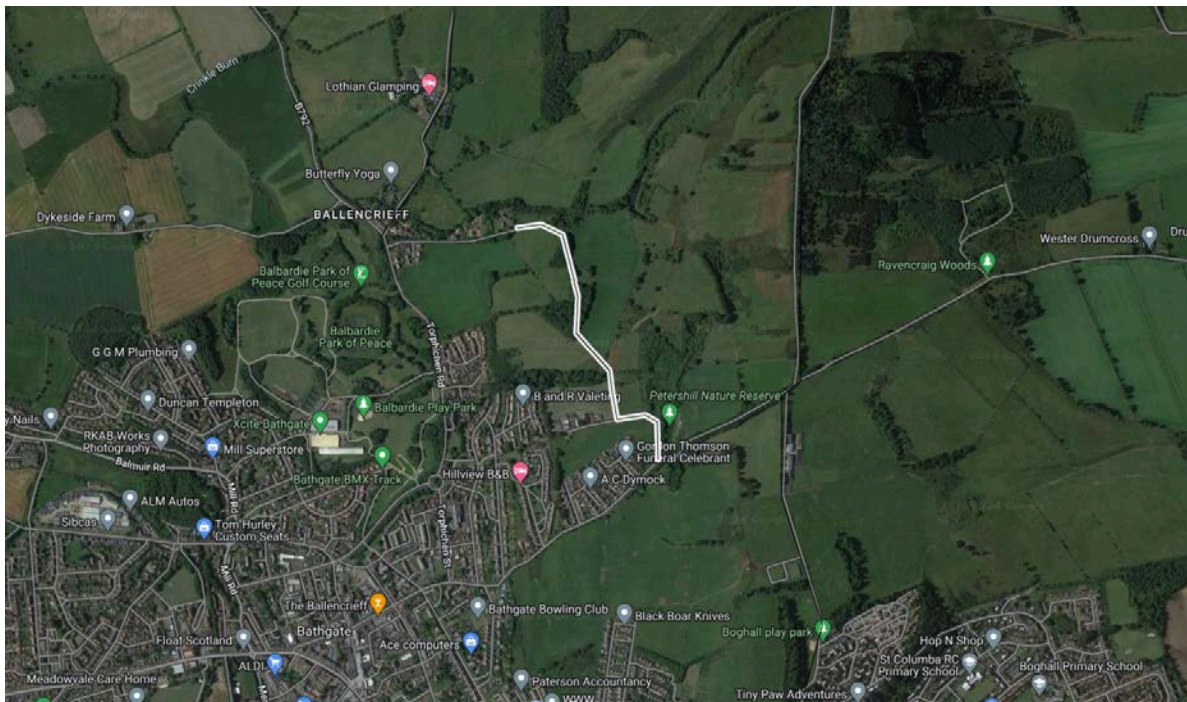
c) Blaeberry Hill to the Silvermines Route

Historical right of way with access via the steel gate above Gordons View car park along the road that leads to Cairnpapple. The route leads to a single gate which leads into the field, then follows the edge of the field down to the stile at the silvermines.



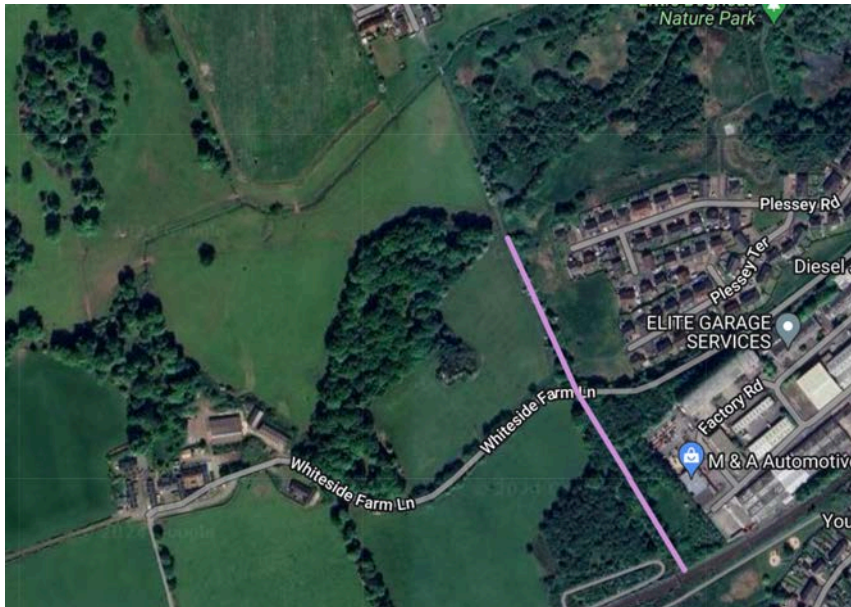
d) Ballencrieff to Petershill

From Ballencrieff Toll road crossing into Farmer Hill's field following the farm track through Sunnyside strip wood along the farm road at Bughtknowes farm. West Lothian Local plan shows this last part of the route on its paper map, but it does not appear on the online map.



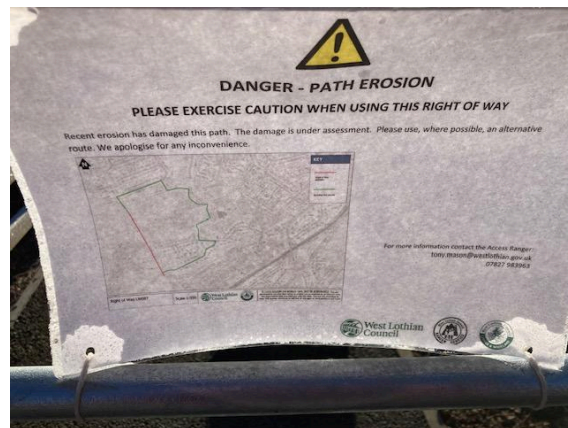
e) Fallside Path

The path will connect areas of Bathgate (and beyond) Example : Windyknowe (the Primary School) & Falside - connecting Birniehill (via the bridge over the railway) and the new development at the old Abbatoir. Further connects the centre of Bathgate (St Mary's primary school, Morrisons, train station etc). Also links the i75 towards Seafield/Livingston and further east. Also links into the i75 towards west to the top of Armadale and Armadale Station. And further west towards Blackridge (and beyond).



Noted that this path is a right of way and has gradually fallen into a state of disrepair. (see document re 'Danger - Path Erosion').

Needs to be sorted/upgraded.



ii) Aspirational Car Park For Bathgate Hills and Kirkton Park

The Bathgate hills are the ideal face of tourism for the town. The Knock, Ravenscraig, Cairnpapple and The Silver Mines landmarks will drive people to the town if properly promoted within and outside of West Lothian. The unique landscape, combined with its lore and geological significance as well as the historic and anthropological significance will pull various demographics in from all over the country and potentially from abroad as well.

The likeliest position to begin pursuing this is the installation of infrastructure and preservation of the landscape.

The first step towards this is the installation of a car park. By driving more individuals into the area, the significance and demand for the construction of paths and trails will increase. A positive placement for this could well be to the west of Limefield Place and east of Marchwood Crescent and north of Kirkton Park (**see map below**). A car park of this design would provide not one, but three usages to the town.

Firstly, Kirkton Park is one of the larger parks in the area. This in combination with the Edinburgh road which runs to the immediate south of the park creates a busy and congested part of town, producing many issues such as dangerous parking and overcrowding, as well as a lack of parking. Kirkton Park has no car park for visitors to both the park and the old Kirk (another historical landmark). The nearest land to solve this is shown on the map, providing a location for the tennis players, bowlers and park visitors. This will also open up more opportunities for events in the park as a greater number of visitors will be inclined to participate.

Secondly, the carpark, if appropriately designed, would present itself as a favourable tourist destination for both locals and visitors. The site provides a view of the whole town and Livingston. This is a much clearer and fuller view of the town than the Vu further to the North/West of the hills. The installation of a binocular telescope would further enhance this tourist spot aiding people in sighting out landmarks over the county. The fear of anti-social behaviour may deter the construction of the telescope; however, the reader should refer to one of the same kind installed at Seafield Law, in a more remote location, which has continued to stand undamaged and in working condition.

Thirdly, this car park is in an ideal location to start a journey into the hills via the Kirkton Quarry. The location shown on the map sits just outside the Bathgate hills and so retains the integrity of the landscape.

There are always necessary caveats with regard to any proposal of this nature; the carpark's size and design would have to be built mindful of the landscape around it, great care would have to be taken in terms of its effect on the surrounding environment. Regular maintenance would be necessary, emptying of bins and vandalism prevention would always be required upkeep. But given these, many tours of the hills for visitors to the town could begin in such a location.



Suggested Location of Car Park