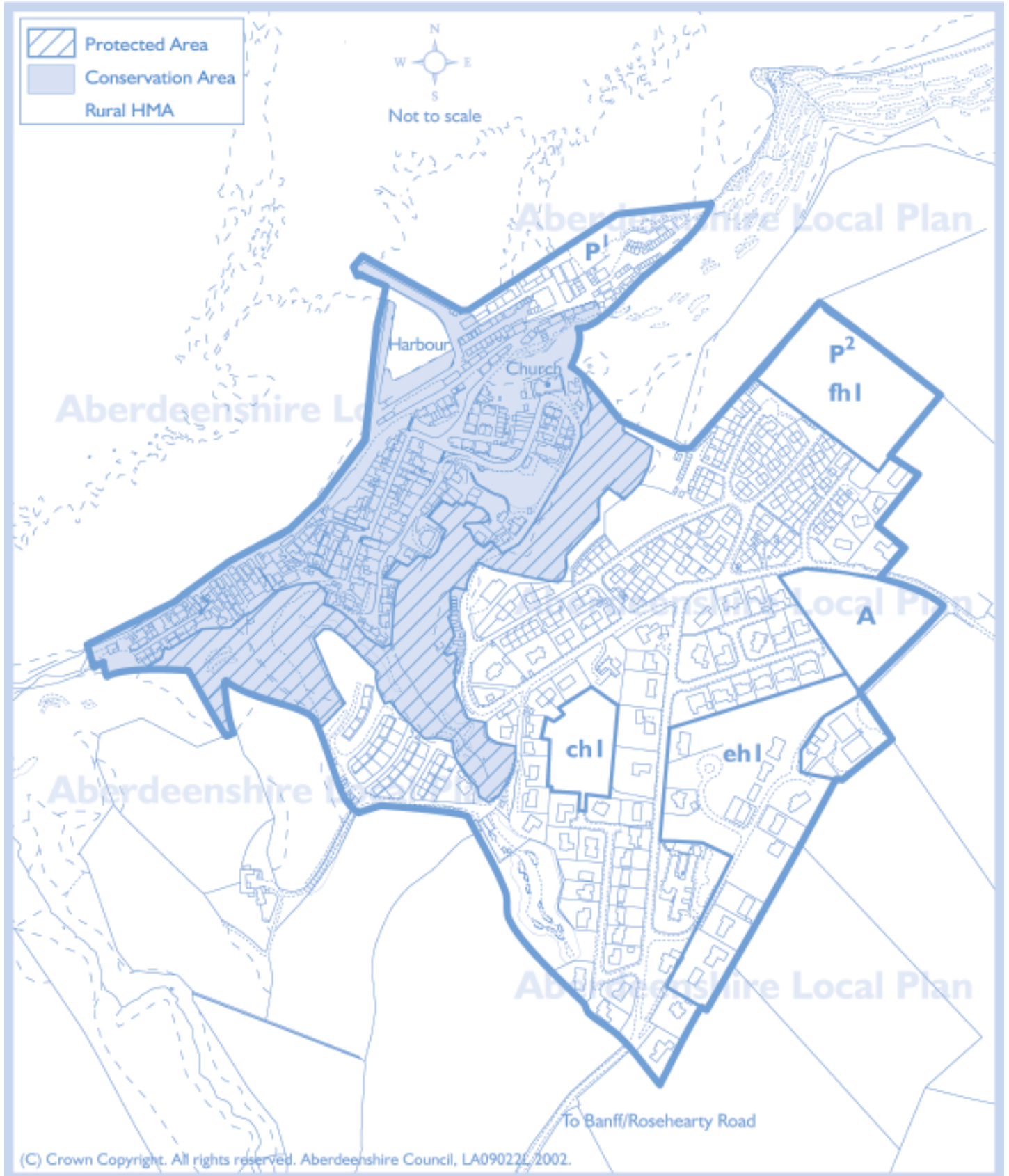




# Gardenstown

## Community Action Plan



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### Origins & Development

Gardenstown was founded in 1720 by Alexander Garden, specifically as a fishing village and was originally known as Gamrie. On the hillside to the west, and visible from most parts of Gardenstown, are the remains of the Church of St John the Evangelist. This predates the village, being built in 1513, and celebrates an even earlier event, the defeat of the Danes here in 1004 at The Battle of the Bloody Pits.

By the 1920s Gardenstown and Crovie together housed around 250 fishermen and 50 fishing boats. This number declined over the following years in the face of competition from the larger and more effective vessels that could operate from other ports.

Gardenstown grew at Crovie's expense after the great storm of 31 January 1953. This washed away the path between the villages together with stretches of Crovie's sea defences, and a number of houses and sheds. Crovie ceased to be viable almost immediately, and many residents moved to Gardenstown. The total population today numbers just over 700.

Today, the harbour offers a safe haven for small inshore fishing boats, as well as pleasure craft. Other facilities in the village include a doctors' surgery,

a primary school, a bakery, a butcher, a post office, a general merchants store/petrol station and a hotel.

### Community Activity

The Community Council and the Gardenstown Harbour Trustees have worked on various joint projects over the years, the main one being the upgrade of the harbour.

The Community Council and Gamrie Business Forum have worked together and undertaken various smaller projects within the village such as organising beach clean-ups; heritage exhibition displays; walks leaflets; the inclusion of Gardenstown on Aberdeenshire Council's map for tourists; replacement and renewal of signage; floral displays; graffiti removal; additional dog bins; and the development of a community web site - [www.discovergardenstown.co.uk](http://www.discovergardenstown.co.uk)

The Gardenstown Harbour Trustees also organise a yearly Strawberry Fayre and a number of "Yalla Fish Nichts" throughout the year to help raise funds for the harbour and various other community groups.



*Garden of Troup crest.*



*Gardenstown from St John's Kirkyard.*



*Storm damage at Seatown, Gardenstown, 1953.*



Entrance to village.



Gamrie Bay Court.



Mohr Head.

### Gardenstown: Banff & Buchan Area Plan 2007-2010

The Area Plan lays out under six headings Aberdeenshire Council's intentions for developments and projects for the forthcoming three years. It is drawn up by the Banff and Buchan Area Management Team and adopted by the Banff and Buchan Area Committee. The actions identified in the Plan reflect contact and dialogue with local communities, community

groups, organisations and individuals as well as community planning partners.

The latest version (March 2008) of the Area Plan lists no actions specifically for Gardenstown, but does include other general intentions which might affect the village. In particular the section on Developing our Partnership provides opportunities for addressing issues and suggestions raised in this document.

#### Specific Actions

Heading/Lead Service	Action/Project
<b>Community Wellbeing</b> Transportation and Infrastructure Services (Roads)  Housing	Traffic Management - undertake periodic reviews of traffic management within each settlement and implement new proposals if required.  Traffic Calming - Identify and assess sites then design and install traffic calming schemes  Provide more and better quality accommodation for temporary homeless  Support for vulnerable, sheltered housing and disabled tenants  Work with social landlords/voluntary associations
<b>Sustainable Environment</b> Housing	Upgrade energy efficiency and quality of council houses
<b>Developing our Partnership</b> Chief Executive (Area Manager)	Work more closely with the Police and others on diversion activities, to flag up areas of concern and work jointly to solve problems in communities  Continue to support the work of the Banffshire Partnership and its constituent groups in providing "bottom up" community planning and enabling community aspirations to be met  Support community councils and other community organisations in Banff & Buchan to work up proposals for, and develop community play, sports, recreation and other community facilities to promote vibrant communities and partnership working
<b>Quality Services</b>	Various actions to maximise quality of service

See map on page 2 for Area Plan land use proposals.

Although the headings in the

Area Plan differ from the themes in this Community Action Plan, it is easy to relate them to each other.

## Top Five Priorities in Gardenstown

The five top priorities to emerge from the consultation are outlined below:

Projects which could be undertaken by the community independently

### Remove sheds from High Green (Theme : Local Environment)

These privately owned sheds/stores and garages used to be kept tidy and creosoted and painted regularly. The areas around them were kept weed and rubbish free. In recent years they have fallen into a state of disrepair and the area behind them has become a dumping ground for unwanted items. This constitutes an eyesore when people drive into the village.

Projects which would involve the community in partnership

### Dog fouling (Theme : Local Environment)

As in most communities there is a serious problem of dog fouling probably due to the lack of consideration by a small minority of owners. This is far and away the biggest environmental issue for members of the public. Solutions proposed include applying the Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003 effectively, which would depend on Aberdeenshire Council

employing many more dog wardens; creating dog free zones; and providing more poop bins and signage; educating irresponsible dog owners and encouraging members of the public to report those who do not clean up after their dogs. [P&ES, CSP]

### Cafe (Theme : Community Facilities & Activity)

Up until it closed at the end of 2007 the village had a very good Restaurant/Café. The building had previously been used as a café for a good number of years before it became a restaurant. Its situation on the harbour side made it an ideal meeting place and vantage point for both residents and visitors alike. The general public and possibly Gardenstown Harbour Trustees could become involved in reopening the existing premises, or a new cafe could be incorporated in the proposed youth centre (see next item). [PI, E&R]

### Youth centre (Theme : Community Facilities & Activity)

During April/May 2007 a reality TV programme "The Baron" was filmed in the village. Sadly, shortly after filming was completed one of the contestants, comedian Mike Reid, died suddenly. During his short stay in Gardenstown, he had been struck by the lack of facilities available for the youth of the village. [E&R]

Issues which would require action by an outside agency

### Repairs to seawall and road at Seatown (Theme : Traffic & Transport)

There is great concern in the village, especially amongst Seatown Residents over the condition of the seawall and the poor condition of the road between it and their houses. Although Aberdeenshire Council is prepared to take remedial steps regarding the seawall it is unwilling to take responsibility for the roadway, as it is unadopted. [T&I]

### Other issues raised

Many other suggestions received support, and these are listed on pages 6 - 9.



Garages.



Damage to seawall/road.



Bracoden Primary School.



Gardenstonw Village Hall.



Gardenstonw harbour from end of west pier.

## Community Facilities & Activity

This theme produced over a fifth of all suggestions, including two of the top priorities (see page 5). Others receiving significant support were:

Projects which could be undertaken by the community independently

**Information boards** would help communication within the village.

There is some demand for **renovating the village hall** and **holding more concerts** in it.

Projects which would involve the community in partnership

The Community Council could work with Aberdeenshire Council to provide **more signage** for visitors. [T&I]  
If Aberdeenshire Council were to provide a third **playpark** - to replace the one removed after destruction by vandals - funds could be raised by the playgroup and harbour trustees, as in previous years, to replace or repair play equipment. [T&I]  
It is felt that **meetings with Aberdeenshire Council members and officers** would help partnership working to provide community facilities and also more generally.

Projects which would require action by an outside agency

There is considerable support for better **public toilets & opening hours**. [P&ES]  
**A better mobile phone signal** is wanted. At present a mobile signal (depending upon which mobile phone network a person is with) can only be received above the Village Hall. Given the geography of the village the only solution would be for the network providers to build a new mast at the bottom of the village, but the cost/reach ratio would probably rule this out. [NP]

There are proposals for a **bowling green** and a **floodlit astro turf area for children**. Carpet bowls at one time were played in the Village Hall and it is understood that the equipment is still there. The only football pitch at the moment is up at Bracoden Primary School [T&I, E&R]

## Jobs & The Economy

Projects which could be undertaken by the community independently

There is seen to be a need for **additional business premises**, as well as for **more jobs**, in the village.

Projects which would involve the community in partnership

Local people would like to see Gardenstown developed as a prime visitor destination. It is felt that local individuals and groups could work in partnership with Aberdeenshire Council and tourist organisations such as VisitScotland and Banffshire Coast to provide **better facilities for tourists**, thereby developing the local economy. [T&I, VS, BC]

## Local Environment

This theme produced the highest number - a third - of proposals, including two of those seen as top priorities (see page 5).

There is significant demand for efforts to be made to improve the visual appearance of several locations in the village, to make it a pleasant place to live and also to be more attractive to visitors.

Projects which could be undertaken by the

community independently

It is felt that local people themselves could contribute to environmental improvements in a number of ways. In particular they could **renovate disused buildings and houses, tidy up garages on Gamrie Brae and remove untaxed and derelict cars**. Other measures include **keeping the village clean** and providing **floral displays**.

Projects which would involve the community in partnership

Further measures to improve the environment might need some input from Aberdeenshire Council. These include **tidying up, and providing litter bins in, the lower village area; regular cleaning of, and better access to, the beach; and an attractive and welcoming entrance to the village**. There is also a feeling that Gardenstown should take steps to **capitalise on its beautiful harbour**. [P&ES, T&I]

Projects which would require action by an outside agency

A common issue raised in the consultation is that the **laird should take responsibility for his land & buildings**. The amount of **litter left in verges** in and outside the village also has attracted criticism. [P&ES]



Main Street, Gardenstown.



Gardenstown harbour.



Beach looking across to Mohr Head.



Gardenstown from Quarry Path above Seatown.



Seatown.



Road along harbours' edge.

## Health

The responses suggest that this is not a theme where people identify issues.

## Housing

Projects which would require action by an outside agency

Three issues have been raised regarding housing: a need for **one bedroom flats and affordable housing** [CS, H&SW, PI]; **locals to have priority in allocation of council houses** [H&SW]; and a **curb on the number of new (unrestrained) build houses** [P&ES].

The lower part of the village is classed as a conservation area. In recent months there has been quite a bit of contention with regards to certain “unsuitable” plans being approved for within this area (glass fronts, balconies, houses not in keeping with the “style” of the village, etc)

## Traffic & Transportation

This theme produced the second largest number of proposals, including one top priority (see page 5) in addition to the proposals below.

Projects which would require action by an outside agency

An issue which affects Gardenstown and other local settlements is that of **unadopted streets**. There is considerable demand for Aberdeenshire Council to adopt these, at Seatown and elsewhere in the village. [T&I]

Other projects for which there is wide support are: **improvement to the New Ground, skip and Harbour Lane areas; repair crash barriers, steps and railings at High Street and The Green; improved parking at the harbour; a bus shelter for schoolchildren; a better bus service in the evening and at weekends; traffic calming to reduce speeds; a secure footpath above Seatown; and storm gates at the harbour.** [T&I]

## Crime & Community Safety

Project which would involve the community in partnership

As in other communities, there is a call to recognise, and attempt to deal with, **problems with drugs**. [GP, CSP]

There is some support for a **neighbourhood watch scheme** to allow the community to play a part in crime prevention. [GP, CSP]

Project which would require action by an outside agency

Some concern has been expressed about **antisocial tenants**, both private & council. [H&SW, GP, CSP]



*Gardenstown from bottom of Mohr Head.*



*Fishing from the end of the pier.*



*Seatown from beach.*

	Independent	Partnership	Outside Agency
1. Community Facilities & Activity	Information boards Renovate village hall More concerts in village hall	Café [PI, E&R] Youth centre [E&R] More signage for visitors [T&I] Third playpark [T&I] Meetings with Aberdeenshire Council members and officers	Better public toilets and opening hours [P&ES] Better mobile phone signal [NP] Bowling green [T&I,E&R] Floodlit Astro turf area for children [T&I,E&R]
2. Jobs & The Economy	More business premises More jobs	Develop as a prime visitor destination [T&I,VS,BC]	
3. Local Environment	Remove sheds from High Green Renovate disused buildings and houses Tidy up garages on Gamrie Brae Remove untaxed and derelict cars Keep village clean Provide floral displays	Dog fouling [P&ES,CSP] Tidy up lower village area [P&ES,T&I] Provide litter bins in lower village area [P&ES,T&I] Regular cleaning of beach [P&ES,T&I] Better access to beach [P&ES,T&I] Attractive and welcoming entrance to village [P&ES,T&I] Capitalise on beautiful harbour [P&ES,T&I]	Laird should take responsibility for his land and buildings Clear litter left in verges [P&ES]
4. Health			
5. Housing			One bedroom flats and affordable housing [CS,H&SW,PI] Locals to have priority in allocation of council houses [H&SW] Curb on number of new (unrestrained) build houses [P&ES]

6. Traffic & Transportation			Repairs to seawall and road at Seatown [T&I] Adopt unadopted streets [T&I] Improvement to New Ground, skip and Harbour Lane areas [T&I] Repair crash barriers, steps and railings at High Street and The Green [T&I] Improve parking at harbour [T&I] Bus shelter for schoolchildren [T&I] Better evening and weekend bus service [T&I] Traffic calming [T&I] Secure footpath above Seatown [T&I] Storm gates at harbour [T&I]
7. Crime & Community Safety		Recognise and deal with drugs problem [GP,CSP] Neighbourhood watch scheme [GP,CSP]	Deal with antisocial tenants (private and council) [H&SW,GP,CSP]

### Partner codes

Aberdeenshire Council services:

Aberdeenshire Council services:

- E&R Education & Recreation
- H&SW Housing & Social Work
- P&ES Planning & Environmental Services
- T&I Transportation & Infrastructure

Other agencies:

- CS Communities Scotland
- CSP Community Safety Partnership
- GP Grampian Police

External agencies:

- BC Banffshire Coast tourism partnership
- NP Network Providers
- PI Private Investors
- VS VisitScotland

This booklet is one of a series produced by Local Rural Partnerships under the banner Making It Real for a number of communities in Aberdeenshire.

The initiative is sponsored by Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership and Shell, and run by Aberdeenshire Community Economic Development Co-ordinators Forum. The aim is to provide community action plans in an attractive, easy to read, professionally printed format.

The content of each community plan comes from a variety of

previous ones drawn up since 1996 together with update sessions held to gather the latest snapshot of public views on what needs to be done and who could achieve it.

This information can now guide the community and Community Planning Partners in drawing up detailed action plans to implement the top priorities as well as addressing the other issues which have been identified. For each priority or issue this will involve agreeing who should be involved, what resources will be needed and target dates for completion. It is

hoped that this process will be driven by representatives of the community with support - moral, technical and financial - from the relevant Partners.

It is important that this booklet is seen by all concerned as an account of the community's views at the time of the latest consultation, and that it will have to be regularly reviewed and updated. As some projects are completed, other issues will arise and take their place in future versions of the community plan.

Thanks are due to  
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Community Council** for  
organising the meeting in  
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people were consulted, and  
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information on the  
community.

### **BANFFSHIRE PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPING COMMUNITIES**

**The Old School • Boyndie • Banff • AB45 2JT**

**T: 01261 843286 • F: 01261 843598 • E: [bpl.contact@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:bpl.contact@tiscali.co.uk)**

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