

## APPLICATION FOR FUNDING

In order to minimise delays in processing your application please complete all sections as fully as possible. Plans and or information can be attached in support of the application form.

**Name of applicant(s) (to whom funding would be payable)**

Auchterarder Community Bus Group (ACBuG)

**Project Name:** Auchterarder Town Bus Service

**Project address/location (please attach a location plan)**

Carol Duncan

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The initial proposed operational coverage of the Auchterarder Town Bus Service is as detailed on the attached town plan (Appendix A) which incorporates four connecting core routes (Appendix B).

The Town Bus Service will operate within the settlement boundary of Auchterarder as defined by the adopted Local Development Plan, whilst also serving the new housing developments at *Castlemains*, *Kirkton* and *Townhead*.

**Project proposal overview**

The organisation's purpose, as approved by the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR), is to provide a new public transport service for inhabitants living in Auchterarder and surrounding area that supports community development.

Focusing on people in need by reason of age, ill-health, disability or residential isolation; helping them to participate in community life and access local services/facilities.

The project concentrates on the LAP priority areas of *Accessibility of Services* and *Community Transport*; within the wider Community Plan Strategic Objective of *Supporting People to Lead Independent, Healthy and Active Lives*.

In the decade up to 2011, the number of people aged 65 and over in Strathallan rose by 22%, whilst the number of people living in one person households rose by 15% to 27% of all households.

ACBuG was specifically formed to address requests from the local community for enhanced public transport provision.

A community-wide survey was undertaken in autumn 2017 (see Appendix C), which included some responses from residents already living in the new housing developments. Nearly 230 residents engaged with the survey and the results were subsequently analysed (see Appendix D).

For a proportion of the local community carrying out relatively straight forward daily activities, such as shopping or going to a medical appointment, is difficult or even impossible. Social isolation is a real issue for some residents.

Increasing opportunities for people to be able to participate in their community is the key focus for ACBuG.

ACBuG has gained charitable status as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), Charity Number SC048669.

An options appraisal of potential transport solutions was undertaken. The clear preference is for ACBuG to procure a suitable PSV licensed bus operator to deliver a Town Bus Service. This will not be provided commercially and will require financial support to operate.

ACBuG is receiving considerable support within the local community including from St Margaret's Health Centre and the adjacent Community Hospital, the Community Council, Auchterarder Network and elected representatives.

The initiative has an initial four year business plan, with the first two years focusing on introducing the Town Bus Service and embedding it as a key resource within the local community. In Years 3 and 4 the focus will shift to ensuring the future financial stability of the bus service, with ACBuG members concentrating on fundraising, which will complement an increasing stream of fares revenue.

#### **Project output (What is the project seeking to achieve?)**

Whilst the Town Bus Service will run with no restrictions, being open to all members of the local community within the operational footprint, the timetabling and routing will specifically target use by the elderly and disabled, those having a medical need and those residents at risk of residential isolation.

ACBuG have specified the key operational requirements to be met and these will be put out to tender. The specification aims to address key needs that were highlighted as part of the community-wide survey.

By the end of January 2019, the final proposed routing of the Town Bus Service will have been subject to ratification via community organisations, Councillors, the Community Council and through local press/social media.

The Town Bus Service will be operated by a low floor, wheelchair accessible, vehicle that is able to penetrate the main residential areas in Auchterarder. Road restrictions mean that the vehicle will probably have sixteen passenger seats. It will operate six days a week (Mon - Sat), with frequencies set to facilitate different journey purposes. The routing will serve community based facilities, whilst also allowing inhabitants to visit friends in other parts of the town.

Residents who face significant difficulties in accessing local health care and chemists will be able to reach them directly and at convenient times for clinics.

Similarly the bus will help to facilitate independent living by providing convenient, low cost, access to local shops - and onward travel to Perth and Stirling using the existing local bus network. A joint ticketing initiative will be an integral part of the overall project.

A significant proportion of the targeted users (elderly and disabled) will be eligible for National Entitlement Cards (NECs) and, consequentially, will receive free travel on the Town Bus Service through the Scottish Government's Bus Travel Concession Scheme.

For those bus users that will pay a fare, the resultant income will help contribute to the future sustainability of the Town Bus Service, although there is always likely to be a requirement for on-going financial support.

The practicality of the Town Bus Service operating via Muirton and Strathearn House, and serving Grand Eagles - at least one or two days a week - is being proactively investigated. It may be possible to include these extensions in the initial phase of development (although they are currently not shown in Appendices A and B) but, if not, they will be taken forward when the core bus routes have become established.

Ultimately the success of the Town Bus Service will be judged on passenger usage - and a number of KPIs will be agreed, utilising data from the electronic ticket machine on board the bus. However ACBuG intends to 'get underneath the aggregated statistics' to better understand who is using the service - and the associated community benefits that are being achieved. ACBuG will endeavour to identify gains in terms of social inclusion, much of which will be at a person-specific level.

Whilst not a primary objective of the project, a significant indirect benefit of the Town Bus Service is that it will help reduce 'unnecessary' car trips into central Auchterarder, resulting in improved general access, less pressure on car parking and reduced air pollution.

#### **Amount of funding requested**

£150k over four years from the Auchterarder Community Facilities Fund (ACFF), with the requested phasing being as follows:

- £50k paid 2019/2020
- £50k paid 2020/2021
- £25k paid 2021/2022
- £25k paid 2022/2023

This profile of grant income will complement the anticipated growth in passenger usage and fares revenue.

It is hoped that any award criteria imposed by the Council will be flexible enough to allow the expenditure profile to be altered somewhat - by either party - to reflect actual operational experiences.

#### **Details of what the funding will be spent on**

The vast majority of any funding award from the ACFF, together with monies received from other trusts/funds, will financially support the operation of the new Town Bus Service. This type of expenditure is clearly in accordance with one of the 'community facility' enhancements identified for the ACFF.

The Town Bus Service, given its operational coverage, has the potential to benefit a very large part of the Auchterarder community, with it being the key public transport resource in the main residential areas.

ACBuG have specified the key operational requirements to be met in a specification that will be put out to tender in early January 2019, and which will include a number of timetable options. It is also expected that the final awarded contract will require the successful contractor to reduce the required subsidy levels in Years 3 and 4 of the contract - in response to growing revenue income from passengers and, potentially, other operational opportunities that may arise.

The procurement process will have a clear timetable for receipt and assessment of tenders, with the contract award linked to ACBuG being successful in their various funding applications.

Until the results of the transport procurement exercise are analysed it is not possible to accurately predict the exact costs of the transport provision. However given prevailing tender costs for supported local bus service provision in Scotland, the annual subsidy for a comprehensive Town Bus Service in Years 1 and 2 could be £100k+. ACBuG will however endeavour to provide an effective, cost efficient, community-led, transport solution.

In addition, an element of any ACFF monies received may be used on promotional activity for the bus service together with contributions towards roadside infrastructure (including bus shelters).

ACBuG may also support key one-off events in the community by funding dedicated transport from the commercial or voluntary sector.

Should the performance of elements of the overall bus service project not meet trustee expectations - or underlying demand exceeds capacity - timetable and/or route changes will be considered. In addition, any evidence of unmet or new community demand will be investigated to see if it is viable to accommodate them.

The advantage of operating a registered local bus service is that there is the flexibility to change it, in conjunction with the Council's Public Transport Unit (PTU), through a legal process managed by the Scottish Traffic Commissioner.

#### **Summary of any other funding sources which will be used in addition to requested funding**

ACBuG are applying to a number of other funding sources, including:

<b>Funding Body/Fund Name</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Date of Application</b>
Communities Investment Fund	£35k	Application completed. To be submitted early January 2019
Friends of St Margaret's Trust	£100k+	Being applied for in January 2019
Funding New Transport Initiatives in the Community 2018/2019	£10k	Application submitted and awaiting outcome
Auchterarder Common Good Fund	Circa £15k	Being applied for by end of February 2019
Auchterarder & District and Community Trust	Circa £35k	Being applied for by end of February 2019
Other local Trust Funds and potentially the Big Lottery Fund	To be decided	To be decided

If the application for funding from the ACFF is successful it will be a very important milestone is allowing the project to go ahead.

Collectively, the success of this application, and those detailed above, will determine the scale and scope of the transport that can be provided for the targeted groups.

#### **Date by which receipt of funding is preferred**

The transport contract cannot be awarded by ACBuG to the preferred transport operator until the required funding sources have been confirmed.

Ideally the Town Bus Service will start in May/June 2019. Whilst the ACBuG business plan has a four year horizon, the initial focus has been on obtaining sufficient funding to allow the bus service to commence operation and become established over the first two years. Thereafter establishing long term sustainability will be the key focus of the trustees; who will work closely with the Council's PTU.

It should be noted that following the award of the transport contract a legal process has to be undertaken which can take up to 70 days to complete.

From an organisational perspective, it would be preferable if the funding can be paid quarterly in advance. This will allow any upfront costs such as publicity and roadside infrastructure to be covered and allow for the monthly invoices from the bus operator to be paid as per the awarded contract.

Please note that the first period of accounts for ACBuG starts from 31 August 2018 - linked to when OSCR awarded SCIO charity status.

#### **Appendix A: Proposed Route Map**

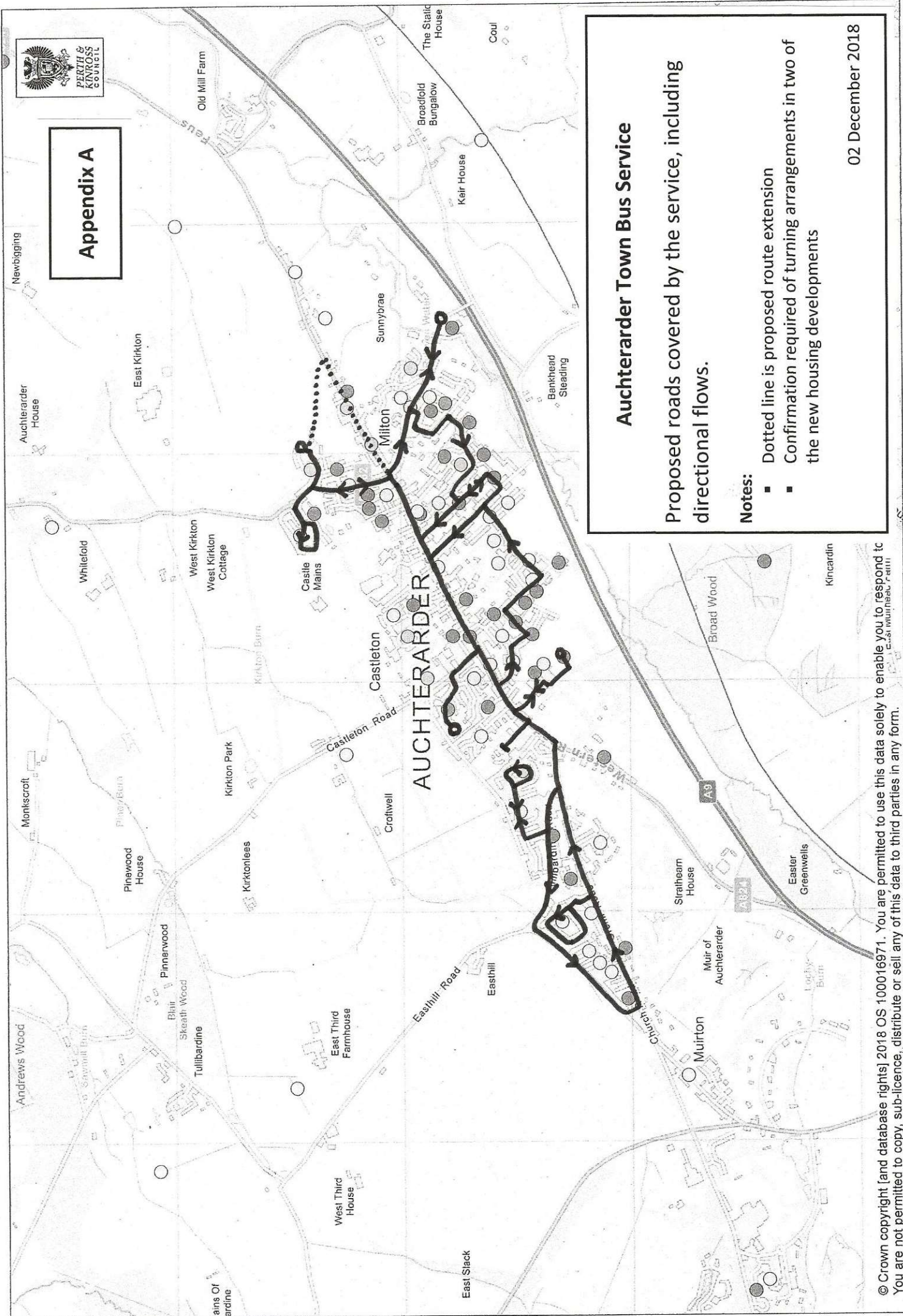
See attached

#### **Appendix B: Proposed roads covered by the Town Bus Service**

See attached



## Appendix A



### Auchterarder Town Bus Service

Proposed roads covered by the service, including directional flows.

#### Notes:

- Dotted line is proposed route extension
- Confirmation required of turning arrangements in two of the new housing developments

02 December 2018

## Auchterarder Town Bus Service

Proposed roads covered by the four connecting core routes


Route	Location	Route	Location
Route A	St Margaret's Medical Centre	Route C	St Margaret's Medical Centre
	High Street @ St Kessog's Pl		Sydney Crescent
	Aytoun Hall		Victoria Road
	Hunter Street @ High Street		Southland Road
	Hunter Street @ Benton Road		Rossie Place
	Benton Road		Kincardine Road
	Castle Drive		Ruthven Street
	Elcho Green		Canmore Place
	Blair Crescent		Montrose Road
	Benton Road opp Raven Grove		Coop
	Eagle Avenue [Turn 1st T jtn]		Spar
	Benton Road @ Raven Grove	Route D	St Margaret's Medical Centre
	Hunter Street @ Benton Road		Tullibardine Road @ Glenorchil View
	Hunter Street @ High Street		Glenorchil Crescent (East)
	Coop		Glenorchil View @ Tullibardine Road
	Spar		East Hill Road @ Colt Gardens
	Townhead		Church Road @ Saddlers Court
	Parkside		Orchil Road @ Drummond Avenue
	Sycamore Ave and [to be confirmed ]		Grampian Avenue (West)
	Parkside		Drummond Avenue @ Orchil Road
Route B	St Margaret's Medical Centre		St Margaret's Medical Centre
	High Street @ St Kessog's Pl		
	Aytoun Hall		
	Abbey Road @ Ruthven Towers		
	Abbey Road @ Aitkens Farm [Turn]		
	Abbey Road @ Abbey Park		
	Abbey Park @ Lundies Walk		
	Lundies Walk @ Orchil View		
	Lundies Walk @ Montrose Road		
	Canmore Place		
	Ruthven Street		
	Coop		
	Spar		
	Castleton Road		
	Castleton Park No 40 [Turn]		
	Castleton Road		

As at 02 December 2018



## Appendix C: Survey Questionnaire

### AUCHTERARDER TOWN BUS SERVICE - SURVEY



A number of community based groups and individuals have been working together to look at how best to establish a Town Bus Service for Auchterarder, similar to those already operating in Crieff and Blairgowrie.

We have found that many local residents currently find it difficult to access the Town Centre, St Margaret's Health Centre, and clubs/societies held in the community halls. A Town Bus Service would aim to make the Town more accessible to all, and help people to be more independent. It would also provide an option for current car users experiencing parking difficulties.

The proposed service will aim to complement, and not compete with or replace Service 19, or any existing service. It is not anticipated the Town Bus Service will provide school transport to/from The Community School of Auchterarder at the main school start/finish times, or serve Gleneagles Station.

We are very keen to get an understanding of the likely demand for a Town Bus Service and the way in which it should operate. Please take 5 minutes to complete this form if you have any views on a possible Town Bus Service for Auchterarder.

**One form should be completed for each member of your household then returned to Ballot boxes at either Health Centre, Spar Shop, Post Office, Davidson's Pharmacy or Aberuthven Shop, no later than 31<sup>st</sup> October 2017**

Alternatively, go on-line and complete the survey electronically at [www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/7W853WD](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/7W853WD)

**Section 1: About You** Age: ☐ Under 11 ☐ 12 – 17 ☐ 18 – 24 ☐ 25 – 59 ☐ 60 – 74 ☐ 75+

Please enter your postcode:

Do you have any illness or disability that affects your ability to travel? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please give us some idea of your requirements:

**Section 2: Do you/have you ever used existing local bus services (such as Service 19)?**

☐ I currently use regularly ☐ I currently use occasionally ☐ I have never used in the past ☐ I have never used in the past but would consider using a Town Bus Service ☐ never used in the past and would not consider using a Town Bus Service

**Section 3: Which of the following are issues affecting your ability to use the existing bus services?**

Please tick all that apply:

☐ The current bus services do not go where I need them to

☐ The existing bus route is too far away from my house

☐ There are no bus services on my road

☐ The bus service does not operate at the times I need it to

☐ The bus service is not regular enough for me to use it

☐ The timing of the bus service does not allow me enough time before having to return

☐ The timing of the bus service gives me too much time at the destination before being able to return

**Section 4: What types of journey might you want to make on a Town Bus Service?**

Please provide details of the types of journey you may want to make, so that we can consider what the timetable might look like.

One option we may consider is to have a 'demand responsive' type option rather than have a fixed timetable on every day.

Start Point	Destination	Reason	Day/ time out	Day/ time back	Frequency
e.g. Abbey Road	High Street	Shopping	Sat 9am	Sat 10am	Weekly
e.g. Sydney Crescent	St Margaret's HC	Doctor's appointment	?	1 hour later	Ad-hoc

**Section 5: Other Comments**

Would it be useful if some journeys on the Town Bus Service were timed to tie in with specific buses on Service 19/20 from Aytoun Hall/Co-op? If so, at what times?

The Town Bus Service would charge fares, with National Entitlement Cards valid to provide free travel for pass holders. What would you consider would be an acceptable fare for the service - either single journey or day ticket?

**Section 6: If an Auchterarder Town Bus Service were to be introduced, do you think you would use it?**

☐ I would use regularly ☐ I would use occasionally ☐ I would never use

In what way do you feel the Town Bus will improve quality of your life and if you have any other comments or suggestions about a Town Bus Service, please provide them below.

Thank you for completing this survey for Auchterarder Town Bus Group.

As they arise, updates on Town Bus will be published in Lang Toon Times.

## Appendix D: Snapshot of Results from Auchterarder Town Bus Service Survey

- 228 responses to the questionnaire, of which 64% were aged 60 and over.
- 17% have an illness or disability that affects their ability to travel
- 17% not local bus users but would consider using a Town Bus Service
- Which of the following are issues affecting your ability to use the existing bus services?

	Responses	
The current bus services do not go where I need them to	28.81%	51
The existing bus route is too far away from my house	24.86%	44
There are no bus services on my road	40.11%	71
The bus service does not operate at the times I need it to	51.41%	91
The bus service is not regular enough for me to use it	44.63%	79
The timing of the bus service does not allow me enough time before having to return	20.90%	37
The timing of the bus service gives me too much time at the destination before being able to return	20.34%	36
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>177</b>

- If an Auchterarder Town Bus Service were to be introduced, 94% of respondents said they would use it regularly or occasionally.
- 155 respondents specifically commented on the potential quality of life benefits of a Town Bus Service