

School Route Audit Report

Portknockie Primary School, Moray

March 2023



We are Living Streets, the charity for everyday walking. Our mission is to achieve a better walking environment and inspire people to walk more.



Living Streets

We are Living Streets, the UK charity for everyday walking.

We want to create a walking nation, free from congested roads and pollution, reducing the risk of preventable illness and social isolation and making walking the natural choice. We believe that a walking nation means progress for everyone.

Our ambition is to get people of all generations to enjoy the benefits that this simple act brings and to ensure all our streets are fit for walking.

For more than 90 years we've been a beacon for walking. In our early days our campaigning led to the UK's first zebra crossings and speed limits. Now, our campaigns and local projects deliver real change to overcome barriers to walking and our ground-breaking initiatives such as the world's biggest Walk to School campaign encourage millions of people to walk.

Progress starts here: one street, one school, one step at a time.

Walk to school campaign.

Living Streets' Walk to School campaign supports over 900,000 children in 3,500 schools to walk more through national schemes and events including Walk to School Week, and WOW – the walk to school challenge, making it one of the UK's leading behaviour change campaigns for young people.



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1 Executive summary

We are Living Streets, the UK charity for everyday walking. We are working with Portknockie Primary School to facilitate, encourage and increase everyday walking in Portknockie village.

On 17th March 2023 we conducted a School Route Audit (SRA) by walking around a planned route identifying, discussing and recording factors that encouraged or discouraged everyday walking. The group included pupils and staff from Portknockie Primary School and Community Council representatives. The audit was facilitated by Living Streets Scotland staff. The issues identified were then discussed before agreement was reached on key short- and longer-term priorities that would improve the walking environment.

Key issues affecting routes for walking to school in Portknockie are:

- Lack of a safe crossing point on the A942 in front of the Portknockie Primary School.
- Poor pedestrian environment close to the school due to inconsiderate parking and street layout.
- Narrow or absent footways on routes used by pedestrians to access the school.

Recommendations discussed through the SRA included:

Short Term

Introduce 20mph speed limit on all local streets around the school including the A942.

Install signage/and or visual cues to slow drivers on the roads approaching the school.

Encourage more parents to 'park and stride' and avoid accessing the streets around the school by car at drop-off and pick-up times.

Long Term

Install formalised crossing on the A942 in front of the school.

Improve the road and footway layout near the school on Seafeld Terrace, Bridge Street (A942) and Haig Street to prioritise pedestrians.

Introduce parking and vehicular traffic restrictions on Haig Street.

2 Introduction

What is a School Route Audit?

The Living Streets School Route Audit (SRA) methodology is a way of effectively involving pupils, parents and other community stakeholders in the process of evaluating the quality of the walking environment around schools. SRAs explore the walking routes to schools from the viewpoint of the people who currently or could use them, not just those who own or manage it. SRAs provide recommendations to overcome physical and emotional barriers to walking to school and can feed into schemes to ensure places are fit for walking for all journeys.

The School Route Audit aims:

- to identify barriers to walking to school and encourage families to choose to walk.
- to identify ways to reduce the effects of vehicle traffic on people who walk and cycle.
- to improve connectivity and the general attractiveness of routes to school; and
- to identify improvement measures, priorities and suggest a course of action.

Throughout the report, the term pedestrian refers to people of all ages and all levels of mobility and includes people who may use mobility aids including wheelchairs and mobility scooters.

Background

The audit was undertaken in Portknockie, particularly on the streets around Portknockie Primary School. The audit was commissioned by Moray Council to support their Active Travel Strategy.

Objective 6 of the ATS – 60% of all journeys to school will be walked or cycled by 2027.

- *Continue to promote the use of the Living Streets Travel Tracker programme in Primary Schools.*
- *Audits of safe routes to school will be carried out for all Moray schools.*

Methodology

The key part of an SRA is a group walk around the study area to identify and discuss issues that encourage or discourage everyday walking. Participants were given a brief introduction on the purpose of the SRA and examples of the types of issue to look out for. While on the audit they were invited to comments on their perceptions and experiences, with facilitator prompts where needed. Living Streets staff undertook a pre-audit walk to understand the local context and any technical issues in the walking environment.

At the close of the session, issues raised were summarised and reviewed. This approach led to being able to build consensus on some issues and establish areas where there were diverse views and priorities.

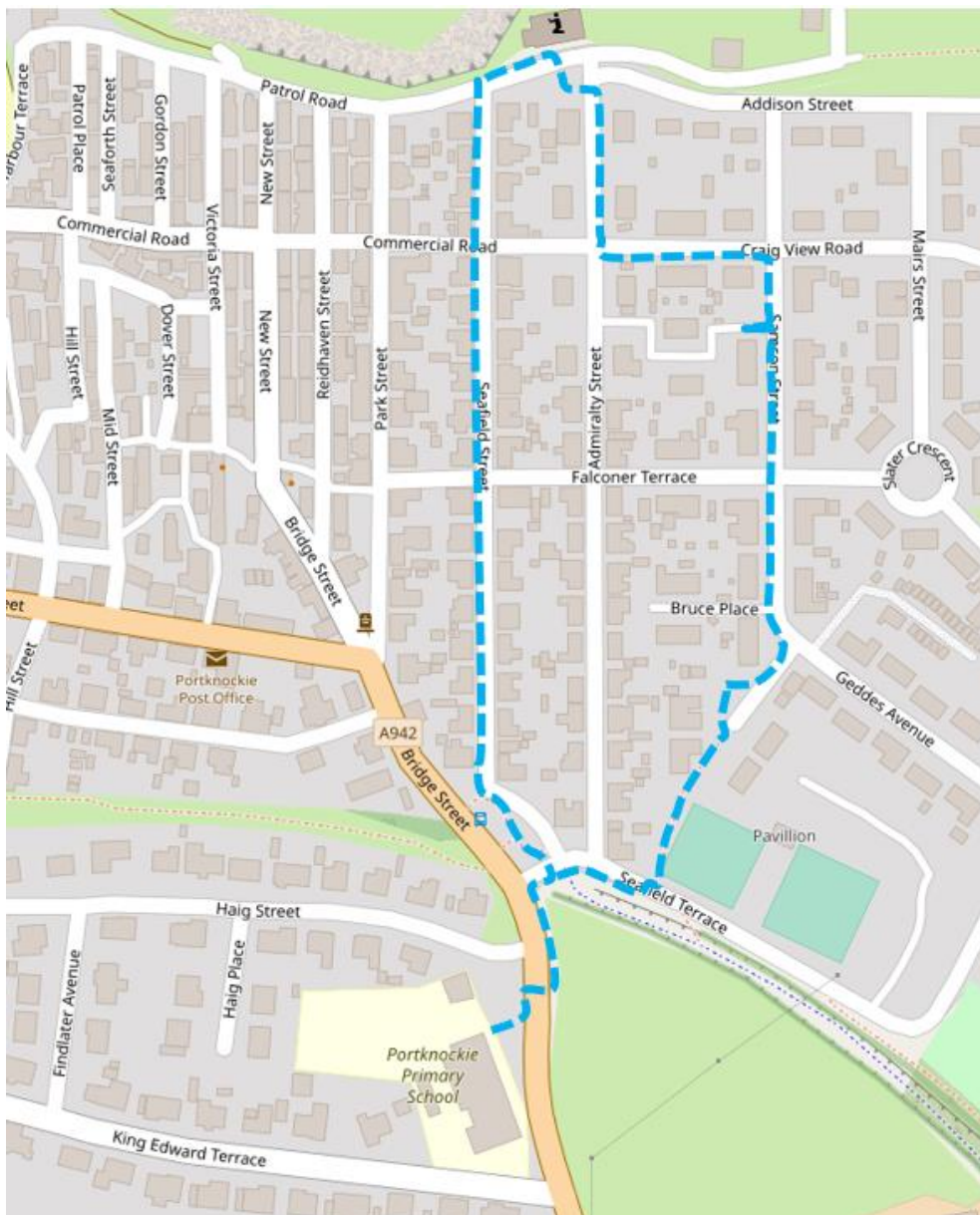
During the audit walk, participants were asked to consider the issues listed below:

Road layout and space allocation	How much space is given over to cars? How does this affect people walking?
Crossing points and desire lines	How easy is it to cross where you need to cross? Are there long delays at crossings? Is there adequate time to cross? Are pedestrian routes direct and uninterrupted?
Footway surfaces and obstructions	Are pavements smooth, well-maintained, wide enough, free of obstructions and clutter? Are pavements and routes accessible for all users?
Facilities and signage	Are facilities accessible for all users? Is there clear signage? Are there places to sit?
Maintenance and enforcement issues	Are vehicles parked safely and legally? Is there litter, debris or graffiti? Is infrastructure damaged or in need of repair?
Personal security	Do you feel safe walking here? Is there enough lighting? Would you walk here after dark?
Traffic	Traffic speed and volume, air pollution, noise and smell – does it feel dangerous?
Aesthetics	Is the area pleasant to walk in? What do you like or not like?
Places to play and socialise	Are there play spaces, activity spaces and seating areas? Are they in safe locations?

3 Audit location

The Audit surveyed the area around Portknockie Primary School. This included the area at the front of the school, the A942 Bridge Street, Haig Street, Seafield Street, Admiralty Street, Craig View Road, Samson Street and Samson Place. The group walked in a clockwise direction starting from the school site. Areas for investigation in the School Route Audit were identified by Living Streets and agreed by Portknockie Primary School.

Map of area



© Open Street Map

— — — Audit route

School background

Portknockie Primary School is a co-educational non-denomination school with a current roll of 62 pupils from Primary 1 to Primary 7. There are extensive grounds around the school including a staff car parking area, raised flower beds, tarred playing areas and a large grass area which is used for outdoor play and PE activities. The playground has painted games to encourage children to play cooperatively. The school building dates from 1876. Portknockie Nursery, a Moray Council Partner Centre, is within the school grounds and provides care and education to children from ages 2 to 5 years.

Portknockie Primary School takes part in WOW and they use the Travel Tracker to log children's journeys to school. The school regularly features on the leaderboard for national active travel competitions such as the WOW Top Ten, indicating a high level of engagement and awareness of active travel issues.

Area context

Local area

Portknockie is a coastal village in Moray with a population of approximately 1,230 people. The name is derived from the Scottish Gaelic Port Chnocaigh, meaning "the hilly port". The village dates from 1677 and was a significant herring port during the nineteenth century. Several commercial fishing boats are still based in the village harbour.

Portknockie was connected to the railway network in 1886, which boosted its trade and tourism. However, the railway station closed in 1968. The village is a conservation area, with many of its traditional stone houses and fishing cottages preserved. The most famous landmark is Bow Fiddle Rock, a natural arch formed by wave erosion, which resembles the bow of a fiddle. It is a popular spot for birdwatching, photography, and rock climbing.

Portknockie is part of the Moray Coastal Trail, a scenic walking and cycling route that links the villages and towns along the coast. It also hosts an annual gala in August, which features a raft race, a fancy dress parade, and a fireworks display.

The population of Portknockie was recorded as 1,270 in the 2011 census and it ranks between 6 and 8 on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020.

4 Audit and surveys

Audit details

Living Streets staff identified the audit route on a visit to Portknockie on 15th March 2023. On 17th March 2023 the audit was carried out with 9 pupils from Portknockie PS, a staff member, 2 members of Portknockie Community Council and Living Streets Scotland staff.

A survey was conducted to gather information from parents, school staff and other members of the local community. 27 surveys were completed (Appendix 2).

Participants' observations

This section provides a description of the observations made by participants during the audit and from the surveys.

The comments below include the participants' recommendations for improving the walking environment.

- *The main road crossing is a nightmare. The speed of the traffic coming in from the farm end into the village is atrocious. Near seen a few bairns knocked down. The junction at the top of the tennis court road (with 2 other junctions straight after) is too wide and again bairns near get knocked down there too with cars coming down from the main road.*
- *Cars often speed through Portknockie where there is only one suitable crossing for children to cross.*
- *There is nowhere in Portknockie that is so far away from the school that it can't be walked to. It is ridiculous the amount of children that are collected by car even on a lovely sunny day.*
- *The whole area outside the school should be a 20 zone.*
- *There are several inconsiderate drivers round the school area, one of whom works at the school, who don't slow down or take proper care when driving around the school area. Parents can also park in awkward places, making it hard to see any traffic coming, therefore dangerous for children to cross.*
- *Lowered kerbs are always blocked by parent cars. Cars are parked at the junction lines blocking a clear visual of traffic coming. Car speeds is too fast at that times of days when children are walking to/from school.*

- *Too many speeding cars, the roads would benefit from a lower speed limit and more traffic controls directly outside the school grounds.*
- *Traffic is too fast coming into Portknockie and by the school. The cars parked right up to the junction and along the road is dangerous for the kids as they can't see the traffic.*
- *Stop people parking on the yellow zigzags and right on the crossing. Stop folk also parking close to the road.*
- *My children walk to school every morning, we live on Victoria Street but the children know to walk along the bottom onto Seafield Street and up that way as the route is a bit safer.*
- *The speed some traffic come into and out of the village across from the school is quite fast sometimes and can be a higher volume of traffic in the mornings. Speed bumps would be ideal to force cars to slow down here or take an alternate route away from the school gates entrance. Too many cars park at the side of the road dropping off and picking up kids at an area where some kids need to cross the road but with the cars parked it makes it hard for the kids (and adults) to see any oncoming traffic past them for safely crossing the road.*
- *Even on wide streets, some people still park on the pavement, and we have to walk on the road.*

Survey Results Highlights

Full results from the survey can be found in Appendix 2.

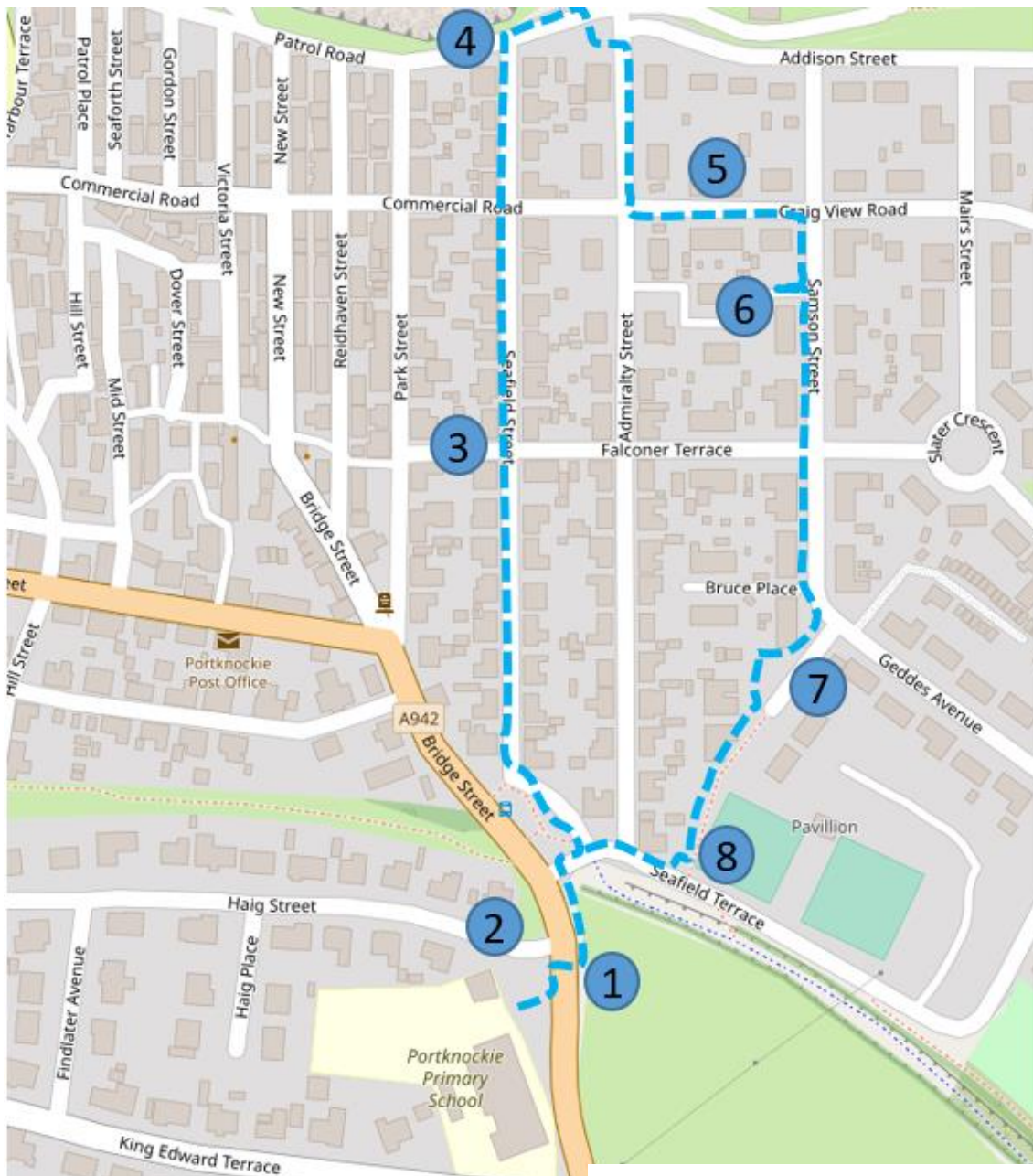
In question 2, parents were asked how their children usually travel to school. 87% of respondents reported that their children usually make active travel choices and walk, cycle or scoot to school.

In question 4, respondents were asked to categorise concerns which cause barriers to walking and active travel to Portknockie Primary School. The top four concerns reported were:

- Traffic – speed and amount.
- Inconsiderate parking.
- There aren't enough safe crossing points on the journey to school.
- Road and footway layout.

5 Audit Findings and Recommendations

Map of findings



© Open Street Map

--- Audit route 1 Observation locations

1 A942 in front of Portknockie Primary School

Issue: Lack of safe crossing point. Participants felt it is difficult to safely cross the road and can take some time to find a safe gap in the traffic.

Recommendations:

Install formalised crossing on the A942 Bridge Street.

Reduce speed limit to 20mph



2 Parking on Haig Road

Issue: Inconsiderate parking on Haig Street makes it difficult for pedestrians to cross to the school entrance.

Recommendation:

Introduce parking restrictions to ensure a clear line of sight for pedestrians crossing the road.



3 Blocked drains

Issue: Several blocked drains on Seafield Street causing ponding at junctions.

Recommendation: Remedial work to unblock the drains and a produce a maintenance schedule for keeping them clear



4 Pavement Parking

Issue: Despite wide carriageways in the village, pavement parking by numerous vehicles was observed during the audit.

Recommendation: The Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 bans pavement parking, double parking and parking at dropped kerbs. A public information campaign should be run to inform drivers of these laws.



5 Patrol Road

Issue: Lack of footway

Recommendation: Install footway to improve pedestrian environment around picnic bench area at Admiralty Street and Patrol Road junction.



6 Samson Place

Issue: Ambiguous footway and road layout – footway is used as a driveway. Audit participants found this confusing.

Recommendation: Improve the pedestrian environment in Samson Place with clear pedestrian priority.



7 Path by tennis courts

Issue: Participants felt this green area could be made more attractive.

Recommendation: consider widening path, installing seating, and other elements to make the space more welcoming, interesting and useful to residents.



8 Seafield Terrace

Issue: Seafield Terrace by the tennis courts and bowling green is used by drivers as a 'park and stride' carpark and is busy at drop off and pick up times from school.

Recommendation: Install signage and a formalised crossing point to give pedestrian priority and help promote the P&S scheme



6 Conclusion

A School Route Audit was undertaken with individuals from the Portknockie Primary School community to identify issues that may discourage people from walking.

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS

- The speed of the traffic coming into and out of the village is observed to be too high and poses an unacceptable risk for pedestrians, especially children
- The main road crossing and the junction near the tennis court road makes pedestrians feel vulnerable and should be redesigned to slow traffic and improve pedestrian priority
- The parking behaviour of some drivers is inconsiderate and obstructs the visibility and accessibility of the pedestrians
- There is a lack of suitable crossings and traffic controls for children to walk to school independently and safely
- Despite high walking rates in general there is an overdependence on cars for travelling short distances within the village

PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS

- An improved crossing point should be installed on the A942 Bridge Street, with speed reducing features
- The main road and the junction near the tennis court road should be narrowed and redesigned to make them safer for pedestrians
- The school area and the village entrance should be designated as a 20mph zone, with traffic calming and improved crossing points to help control the speed and movement of vehicles
- Parking restrictions should be advertised and enforced to prevent drivers from blocking the visibility and accessibility of pedestrians, especially on the yellow zigzags, the crossing, and the junction lines
- A public information campaign should be run to inform drivers of the new laws that ban pavement parking, double parking and parking at dropped kerbs, as per the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019.

- A footway and paving should be provided around the picnic bench area at Admiralty Street and Patrol Road junction, to create a dedicated space for walkers to enjoy the views
Samson Place should be improved as a pedestrian-friendly environment, with clear pedestrian priority and amenities such as seating and landscaping.
- Signage and a formalised crossing point should be installed to indicate pedestrian priority and help pedestrians cross the road safely

BEHAVIOUR CHANGE ACTIONS

- Pupils at Portnockie Primary School should continue to engage with WOW, the walk to school challenge using the Travel Tracker to record their journeys to school. Living Streets Scotland staff have provided support to the school to engage with all aspects of the programme; including school visits and promotion of initiatives to increase active travel.
- Portnockie Primary School staff should continue to work with pupils and the Parent Council to update the School Travel Plan. Living Streets Scotland staff will be able to assist with this process.

This report is being submitted to both members of staff at Moray Council and Portknockie Primary School so that recommendations can be considered and actions undertaken. Portknockie Primary School and the local community are able to use this report as a testimonial to request improvement works alone or alongside any other developments, and to help with their School Travel Plan. Portknockie Primary School should also work to carry out action points and ensure their longevity, calling on residents and parents to help and support.

Suggested Action Plan

Living Streets has produced this Action Plan for the school based on the outcomes of the School Route Audit process and specific recommendations that the school can implement. The barriers to walking identified are outlined in the table below alongside possible actions to overcome them and encourage more walking to school.

Issues / Findings	Suggested actions for Moray Council	How can the school support?	How can residents support? Who else can help?
Pedestrians feeling vulnerable at crossing points and near the A942 in the area of the school	Review signing / gateway cues for motorists passing the school on the A942 Install permanent speed reduction features in the area outside the school	Update travel plan (see appendix 3) Continue to participate in the WOW walk to school challenge to promote walking and travelling actively to school	Residents and community support the production of an updated travel plan Parents support active travel choices of pupils and interventions to promote walking and reduce car dependency Local Councillors support measures
Inadequate crossing facilities on A942 near Portknockie Primary school	Upgrade pedestrian crossing point/s in line with speed reduction measures i.e. introduce a raised table with crossing point		
Vehicular dominance in streets nearby the school	Enforce parking restrictions and improve footway design for pedestrians		
Park and Stride route from Seafeld Terrace well used	Enhance and promote Park and Stride route from Seafeld Terrace to encourage greater use		

Appendices

Appendix A

Portknockie Primary HUSS 2022

Appendix B

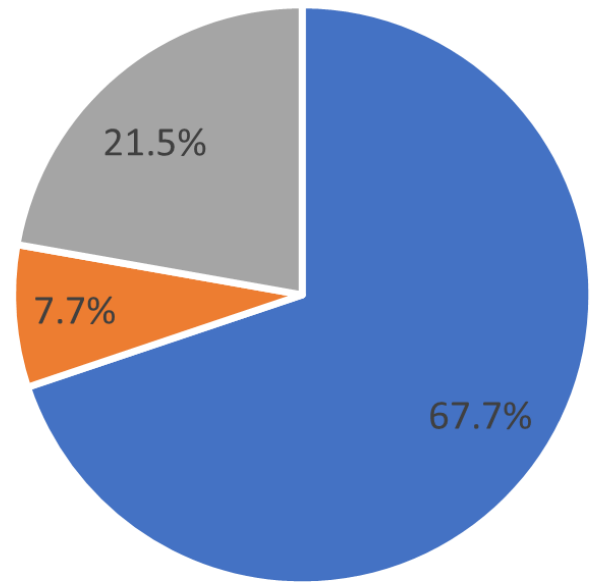
Survey responses

Appendix C

Travel Plan (Tea towel)



Portknockie Primary HUSS 2022



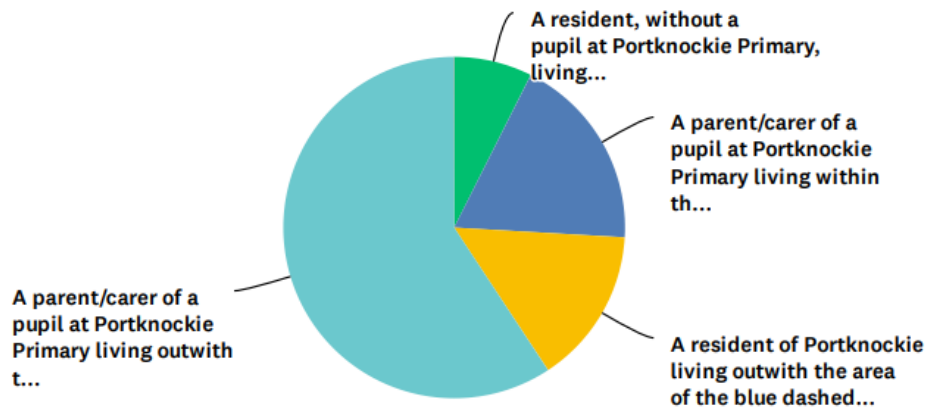
■ Walk ■ Park & Stride ■ Driven

Appendix B

Survey responses.

Q1 Are you (Please see map insert)

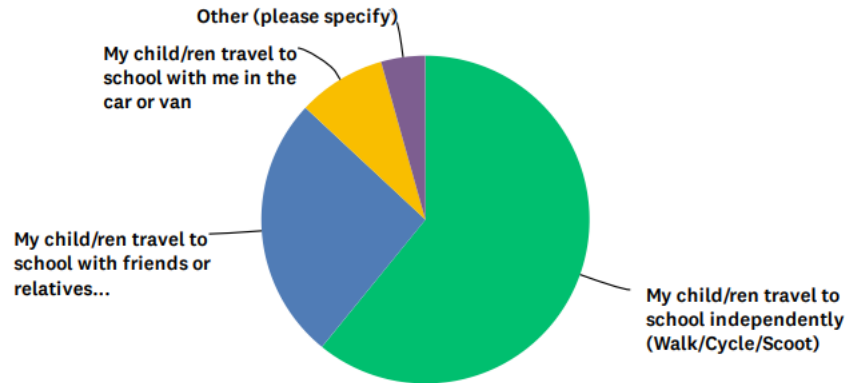
Answered: 27 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A resident, without a pupil at Portknockie Primary, living within the streets bound by the blue dashed line on the map.	7%	2
A parent/carer of a pupil at Portknockie Primary living within the streets bound by the blue dashed line on the map.	19%	5
A resident of Portknockie living outwith the area of the blue dashed line.	15%	4
A parent/carer of a pupil at Portknockie Primary living outwith the area of the blue dashed line.	59%	16
A member of staff or visitor working or accessing the school site.	0%	0
Other (please specify)	0%	0

Q2 If you are a parent/carer how does your child/ren mainly travel to school

Answered: 23 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
My child/ren travel to school independently (Walk/Cycle/Scoot).	61%	14
My child/ren travel to school with friends or relatives (Walk/Cycle/Scoot).	26%	6
My child/ren travel to school with me in the car or van.	9%	2
My child/ren get a lift with friends or relatives.	0%	0
My child/ren is/are taken by arranged school transport – bus or taxi.	0%	0
Other (please specify).	4%	1

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)
1	If we are at home my child walks, if I am at my sisters in Buckie my child has a lift to school.

Q3 Rate how effective you think these measures are to help promote safe and active travel to school and ease traffic congestion around the school.

Answered: 27 Skipped: 0

	NOT EFFECTIVE	SOMEWHAT EFFECTIVE	VERY EFFECTIVE
Walking and cycling promotions. Eg. Walk to School Week	19% 5	48% 13	33% 9
Communications to parents and residents. Eg. Considerate parking guidance.	26% 7	48% 13	26% 7
Part time closures to traffic on some streets.	33% 9	33% 9	33% 9
Speed limits and street design features such as speed tables.	22% 6	37% 10	41% 11
Enforcement of parking restrictions.	26% 7	30% 8	44% 12

Q4 Please categorise the concerns you have which cause barriers to walking and active travel to this school. (please give details including street names etc in the 'Other' box below)

Answered: 27 Skipped: 0

	UNIMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT
Footway quality – surfaces and obstructions	11% 3	44% 12	44% 12
Road and footway layout.	7% 2	44% 12	48% 13
Traffic – speed and amount.	0% 0	11% 3	89% 24
Inconsiderate parking eg. pavement parking.	4% 1	11% 3	85% 23
There aren't enough safe crossing points on the way to school.	7% 2	40% 11	52% 14
It is too far to walk.	81% 22	19% 5	0% 0
Weather conditions.	52% 14	48% 13	0% 0
Routes – accessibility and signage.	37% 10	26% 7	37% 10

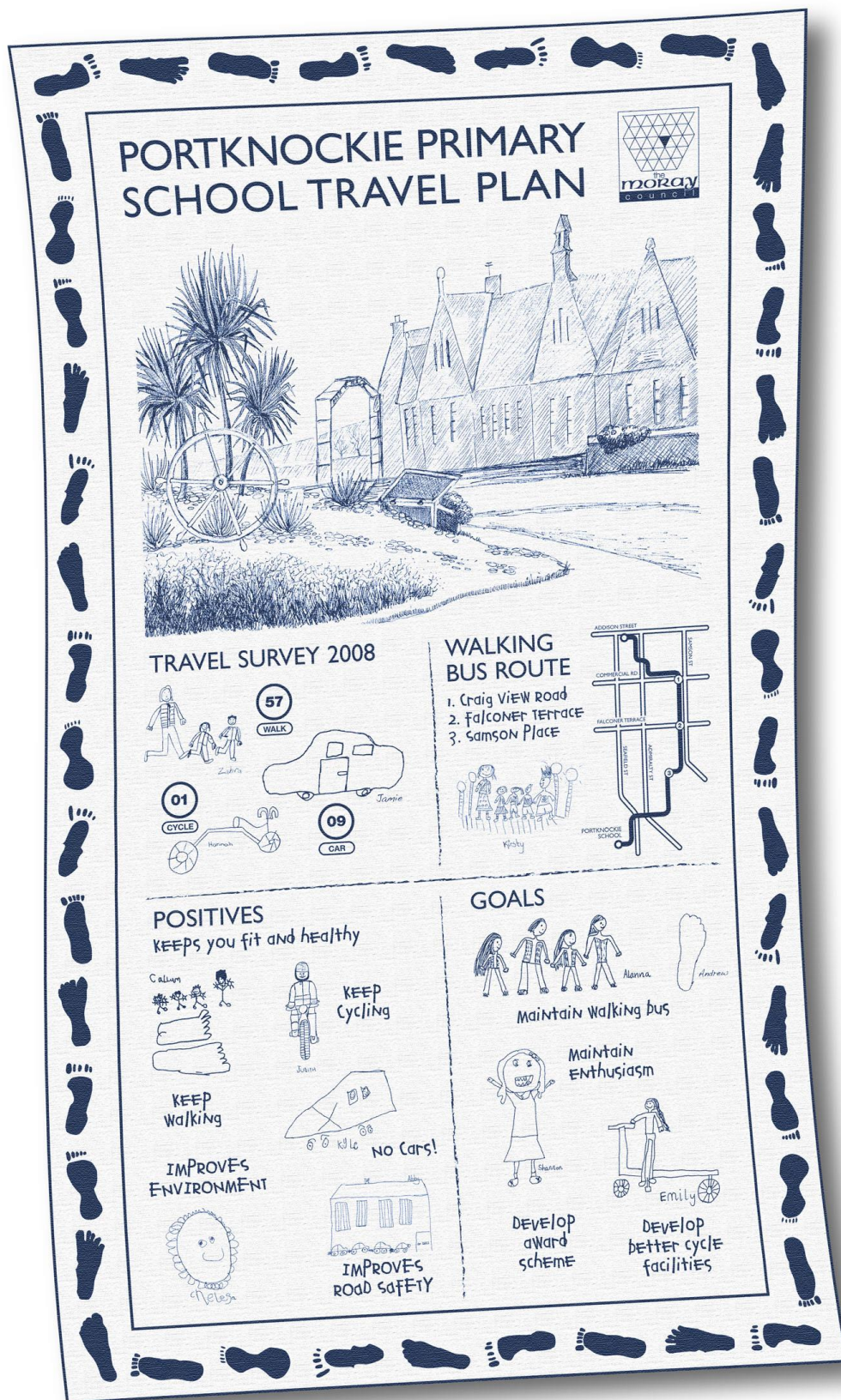
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)
1	The main road crossing is a nightmare. The speed of the traffic coming in from the farm end into the village is atrocious. Near seen a few bairns knocked down. The junction at the top of the tennis court road (with 2 other junctions straight after) is too wide and again bairns near get knocked down there too with cars coming down from the main road.
2	Cars often speed through Portknockie where there is only one suitable crossing for children to cross.

Q5 Additional feedback or comments

Answered: 9 Skipped: 18

#	RESPONSES
1	There is nowhere in Portknockie that is so far away from the school that it can't be walked to. It is ridiculous the amount of children that are collected by car even on a lovely sunny day.
2	The whole area outside the school should be a 20 zone.
3	There are several inconsiderate drivers round the school area, one of whom works at the school, who don't slow down or take proper care when driving around the school area. Parents can also park in awkward places, making it hard to see any traffic coming, therefore dangerous for children to cross.
4	Lowered kerbs are always blocked by parent cars. Cars are parked at the junction lines blocking a clear visual of traffic coming. Car speeds is too fast at that times of days when children are walking to/from school.
5	Too many speeding cars, the roads would benefit from a lower speed limit and more traffic controls directly outside the school grounds.
6	Traffic is too fast coming into Portknockie and by the school. The cars parked right up to the junction and along the road is dangerous for the kids as they can't see the traffic.
7	Stop people parking on the yellow zigzags and right on the crossing. Stop folk also parking close to the road.
8	My children walk to school every morning, we live on Victoria Street but the children know to walk along the bottom onto Seafield Street and up that way as the route is a bit safer.
9	The speed some traffic come into and out of the village across from the school is quite fast sometimes and can be a higher volume of traffic in the mornings. Speed bumps would be ideal to force cars to slow down here or take an alternate route away from the school gates entrance. Too many cars park at the side of the road dropping off and picking up kids at an area where some kids need to cross the road but with the cars parked it makes it hard for the kids (and adults) to see any oncoming traffic past them for safely crossing the road.

Appendix C Portknockie Travel Plan Tea Towel (2008)



Issue record

Issue no.	Written by:	Checked/ approved by:	Issued by:
Draft 01	Name: Fiona Johnston Date: 11/11/2023		
Draft 02	Name: Danielle Angeli Date: 02/02/2024	Danielle Angeli 02/02/24	
Final Issue	Name: C Thompson Date: 06/02/24		C Thompson 06/02/24

**We are Living Streets, the charity for everyday walking.
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