



Renfrewshire Local Development Plan Focus Group Research

Report

by



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Contents

	Page
1. Introduction	3
2. Our Approach	5
3. Focus Group Findings	7
3.1 Stimulating development/Inward investment	7
3.2 Town centre regeneration and retailing	10
3.3 Housing	17
3.4 Transport	21
3.5 Health and the environment	25
3.6 Waste disposal	27
3.7 Flooding	29
3.8 Renewable energy	30
3.9 Ageing/declining population	31
4. Concluding Comments	32
Appendix 1: Focus Group Discussion Guide	34
Appendix 2: Survey of Focus Group Respondents	46

1. Introduction

This document presents the key findings to emerge from a programme of focus group research among members of the Renfrewshire Public Services Panel on the main issues they believe should be recognised by the forthcoming Renfrewshire Local Development Plan.

The current Development Plan covering the Renfrewshire area consists of the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Structure Plan and the Renfrewshire Local Plan. These two documents provide the planning policy framework for Renfrewshire. However, since 2006 major changes have been introduced to ensure planning is more inclusive, enabling people to get more involved in shaping the Development Plan for their area. The Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 introduced many new processes and procedures to help everyone become more involved in planning.

Under the new Planning Act existing Structure Plans will be replaced with Strategic Development Plans (SDPs). The existing Renfrewshire Local Plan will also be replaced with the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan (LDP). The new Renfrewshire Local Development Plan will be prepared by Renfrewshire Council's Planning Department involving all interested parties such as the public, residents' groups, Government organisations, land owners, etc. The LDP will cover the whole of Renfrewshire and will still have a range of policies and proposals covering various topics such as employment, retail and housing.

The process for preparing LDPs has also been revised under the 2006 Planning Act and a key change is the need to prepare a Main Issues Report. This is not a draft version of the finished plan; its purpose is to identify the significant issues that the new Renfrewshire Local Development Plan will need to address and plan for in the next 10 years.

Public engagement and consultation early in the LDP process is crucial to ensuring the final LDP has been shaped by people who live, work and visit the area. The Public Services Panel Focus Groups are one of the avenues being utilised by Renfrewshire

Council to deliver effective early participation in the LDP process. It is hoped that through participating in the focus groups and attending a Stakeholder Conference on 10th May 2011, Panel members will be able to guide the Council to producing the right plan for Renfrewshire by identifying the key challenges for Renfrewshire which could be presented in the Main Issues Report.

Section 2 of our report outlines our approach to the assignment while Section 3 contains the views expressed by focus group respondents against each of the main issues identified. Our concluding comments are presented in Section 4.

2. Our Approach

Our approach to the focus group programme is considered below in relation to the following:

- The focus group discussion guide
- Focus group recruitment
- Moderation

2.1 Focus group discussion guide

The principal aim of the focus groups was to get a better understanding of the key issues which members of the Renfrewshire Public Services Panel (PSP) believe should inform the Main Issues Report and therefore contributing to the forthcoming Renfrewshire Local Development Plan.

A discussion guide was prepared by the Council (see Appendix 1) which set out the background to the focus groups and identified the key themes to be covered in the discussions.

2.2 Focus group specification and recruitment

To ensure there was adequate coverage across the Renfrewshire area, the Council specified a requirement to hold one focus group in each of the five Local Area Committee areas (LACs).

In early March, Hexagon Research and Consulting wrote to a sample of approximately fifty Panel members per LAC, explaining the nature of the focus groups and inviting them to attend. A Freepost envelope was provided to enable potential respondents to indicate their interest in attending. We aimed to recruit approximately eight respondents for each focus group and one week before the groups were due to be held, a full complement had been secured for each venue.

2.3 Moderation of Focus Groups

The focus groups were held on Tuesday 15th and Wednesday 16th March at the following venues:

LAC	Date and Venue	Respondents
Renfrew and Gallowhill	Tuesday 15 th March 11am McMaster Centre, Renfrew	7 respondents (5 male, 2 female)
Houston, etc	Tuesday 15 th March 2pm Cargill Hall, Bridge of Weir	6 respondents (3 male, 3 female)
Johnstone and Villages	Wednesday 16 th March 11am Johnstone Town Hall	8 respondents (5 make, 3 female)
Paisley North	Wednesday 16 th March 2.30 pm Gallowhill Community Centre	7 respondents (3 male, 4 female)
Paisley South	Wednesday 16 th March 7pm Gleniffer High School	7 respondents (3 male, 4 female)

Each focus group lasted approximately one and a half hours and respondents were paid a fee of £20 to attend. The discussions were recorded (with the permission of those attending) and a detailed transcript of each made, allowing the use of verbatim quotations to illustrate our report.

The Council also prepared a short questionnaire for focus group respondents to complete at the end of the focus group, covering the issues raised during the discussions. The findings are presented in Appendix 2 and reference is made to selected results in our Concluding Comments (Section 4).

3. Focus Group Findings

The views of focus group members are considered below in relation to the following key themes:

- Stimulating development/Inward investment
- Town centre regeneration and retailing
- Housing
- Transport
- Health and the Environment
- Waste
- Flooding
- Renewable energy
- Ageing/declining population

3.1 Stimulating Development/Inward Investment

Respondents were initially asked to identify, unprompted, what they felt were the main issues affecting Renfrewshire. Concerns about the local economy and the need to stimulate economic development emerged as the single most important issue:

Creating jobs, for young people in particular, must be the number one priority for Renfrewshire. Compared to when I started working thirty years ago, I'd say there is only about 10% of the jobs left; manufacturing, shipbuilding and the like have all been decimated.

Bridge of Weir respondent

Renfrewshire is a very good place and rivals anywhere else in Scotland, it's just that we went through twenty five years of decline and the planners need to arrest that and encourage more industrial growth.

Paisley North respondent

The support infrastructure would need to be developed hand in hand with the attraction of business, but the attraction of business is the catalyst. It has to happen first otherwise the other developments will not be sustainable.

Paisley South respondent

All the other discussions about housing or transport net to nothing if there isn't a plan for the economy; first and foremost, we need a means of stimulating growth and attracting industry.

Renfrew respondent

Attracting new industries to the area has to be the biggest issue facing Renfrewshire.

Johnstone respondent

There was also a consensus the focus should be on attracting small businesses from a wide range of industry sectors. However, one respondent felt Renfrewshire should aim to re-establish itself in international markets, while another respondent cautioned on the pitfalls of attracting industry from overseas:

The town, and across Renfrewshire as a whole, needs a number of small industrial businesses to locate here. That would lead to other small businesses setting up to supply them, then there would be the boost to the shops and pubs because people would have a bit more money. This encourages more people to move in and provides a boost for the schools, leisure facilities, health services and so on.

Renfrew respondent

Small business is the trigger to reviving our towns.

Paisley North respondent

There is no point focusing on any one sector to attract into Renfrewshire, we should be looking at a wide range of job types and industries. We need a mixed economy.

Johnstone respondent

I'm involved in international shipping and over the last fifty years we've become a backwater in the world economy from being at the forefront. We need to get ourselves back into a position where we manufacture locally and sell internationally.

Bridge of Weir respondent

The Council needs to be wary of attracting foreign investment because there is a history of companies relocating here, taking advantage of the deals that are offered to them and then leaving after a few years.

Paisley South respondent

There was a belief Renfrewshire could be an attractive location for businesses, citing the airport and the presence of Rolls Royce in particular. However, many respondents felt more needed to be done to ensure the skills base in Renfrewshire was strengthened to ensure the labour pool was also seen to be a key selling point and could compete against locations elsewhere in Britain and abroad. In particular, there needs to be a greater recognition of the value of vocational training for those not interested in pursuing academic qualifications:

We do have a lot of plus points. We have an international airport down the road and an aircraft engine manufacturer with a worldwide reputation.

Renfrew respondent

A guy from Vodafone was on the radio recently saying they source most of their product from China. That has led them to put their research and development in China. To get the right people for this, they are moving universities there. The intellectual base is moving away from us and we need to counter that.

Bridge of Weir respondent

We need someone to look at the intellectual and skill needs of industry and make sure we have an educational system which can meet these. And we need to have an apprenticeship system back in place.

Paisley North respondent

Part of the problem is that a lot of the university and college courses are not geared to train students for specific industries or careers. There are too many vague and generalist courses. They might help the young person to learn how to analyse or to reason, but that's a real luxury these days. There should be a more direct link between courses and industry.

Renfrew respondent

There is too much emphasis on getting academic qualifications at school and then going on to university which I think is just a way to keep the dole queues down for a few years. There should be more attention given in schools to those who want to do vocational qualifications and the development of better links with local employers to give work experience.

Paisley South respondent

The last government put so much emphasis on getting people to university, but what are they going for, to do Media Studies or Home Economics? That's not going to help them get a job or suggest to prospective employers we have a skilled pool of labour. Not everyone has the brains to be a doctor or a lawyer; we need a much greater focus on vocational training.

Johnstone respondent

I worked in the school sector for a long time and I still think there is far too much emphasis on the academic side. There is a bit of a change happening now, but it's just an afterthought and not a determined effort to ensure those not academically minded have an education relevant to the job market.

Johnstone respondent

3.2 Town centre regeneration and retailing

There was a widespread view across all of the focus groups that Paisley town centre had declined significantly. From a having a vibrant retail and entertainment heart, it had changed to one where the shops were perceived to be of poor quality and where a lot of retail units were vacant :

Paisley High Street has been a disaster for more than ten years and now there is a recession it's very unlikely anything will be done soon. All we have are pound shops and charity shops. Even in the Paisley Centre, there are umpteen units that are not being used.

Paisley North respondent

We came back to Paisley just over twenty years ago after living in the south of England and Paisley had loads of shops then. It felt alive and there was a lot of

activity. When you said you came from Paisley, people were impressed by that. But over that time we have seen the town decline and Paisley is now a poor, poor place. There are pound shops and charity shops and shops with big stickers in the windows saying 'imagine toy store'. Is that meant to make it look better? Asking us to imagine there are real stores inside?

Bridge of Weir respondent

If I lived in Paisley I'd be very worried. It has become a ghost town.

Renfrew respondent

That trick in Paisley where they tried to make the empty shops look occupied doesn't seem to have drawn any new businesses in to the town.

Johnstone respondent

There was a recognition that other towns in Renfrewshire and elsewhere had suffered a similar fate and the opening of large, out of town supermarkets was largely blamed for the decline:

We're not alone in this. There was an article in the paper recently which listed a whole series of towns which have between a quarter and a third of shops empty. The only place in Scotland on the list was Paisley.

Renfrew respondent

There used to be plenty of shops in Renfrew town centre but the reason they shut was that the people of Renfrew wouldn't use them. If they had been used, they would have stayed open. People took their business to the supermarkets and that was it.

Renfrew respondent

Focus group respondents also felt the decline of Paisley's town centre had been exacerbated by five further factors:

- The difficulties and cost of parking (in comparison to out of town stores)
- The town's one way system

- Concerns about violence and anti social behaviour
- Poor quality recreational facilities
- High business rates

Why would I drive from Erskine through an awful one way system trying to find a parking space that I have to pay for when I can drive another ten minutes to Braehead, find acres of free parking and a far greater selection of shops?

Bridge of Weir respondent

There is no free car parking either and that puts people off coming into the town to shop. The Council seems to be anti-car.

Paisley North respondent

Part of Paisley's problem is the terrible traffic system that was introduced and the cost of parking. Both of those help to put shoppers off from coming into the town. You can go to Silverburn or Braehead and you don't have to pay to park. The town really isn't helping itself in that respect.

Renfrew respondent

People are frightened to come into the town at night. There are very few Police about and that taxi rank is like Dodge City.

Paisley South respondent

The authorities need to make it safe to come into Paisley. I was a special constable for five years and the town centre on a Friday, Saturday and Sunday was a total no go area. People won't come to use the restaurants and other facilities because they're scared in case they get attacked.

Paisley North respondent

My real concern is that I'm fearful of going into Paisley because of the drug addicts. A lot of them come into the town to steal from the shops to help pay for their drugs. Or they come in to get their giros and then hang around intimidating people.

Renfrew respondent

There are plans to build some housing in the town centre. In theory, that's a good way to give the town centre more life, rather than it just being shops and offices which close at six in the evening. But I came out of the town hall one evening and there was a bunch of youths drinking and shouting and I thought, do I want that on my doorstep? No thanks.'

Paisley North respondent

I took my kids to the museum because it used to be regarded as a great day out. We were in for all of fifteen minutes; it was filthy, dull and dreary. There was nothing in it to hold your interest. When you went into the hall, there was one display of paisley pattern, just one display of our world famous design. There are a lot of very important and influential people who have come from Paisley yet the museum was a travesty.

Bridge of Weir respondent

Going into Paisley used to be important not just for shopping but also from a social and recreational point of view. I meet up with a group of friends every few months for lunch. We all live in different parts of the country and recently it was my turn to host the lunch in Paisley. So I looked on the internet for 'restaurants in Paisley' and all it came up with was KFC and McDonalds. There are very few good restaurants in the town.

Paisley South respondent

The rates for some of these shops are too high. The Council needs to recognise that and reduce the rates across the board to help those retailers who are sticking it out and to attract new ones in. Surely half a loaf is better than none.

Paisley North respondent

I had a friend who owned a shop in Paisley and he had to close down because he couldn't afford the rates. A lot of the premises are owned by the Council, so they are shooting themselves in the foot by charging high rates and forcing retailers to close.

Johnstone respondent

There was also a feeling the recent town centre improvements had not made any impact on reversing the decline:

What the Council calls town centre regeneration is just cosmetic; improving a few footpaths and the like. It hasn't regenerated the life of the town in any way.

Paisley South respondent

The regeneration of Johnstone town centre has improved things aesthetically, but that's as far as it goes.

Johnstone respondent

When respondents were asked to identify what would help to reverse the decline of Renfrewshire's town centres, there was a significant level of support for curtailing the development of out of town retail centres:

The Council conducted a survey on the impact of the massive Tesco they're building in Linwood on town centre shopping and stated 54% of shops in Johnstone would close. How in God's name is that contributing to the regeneration of Johnstone town centre? The supermarket is going to be in Linwood where there is poor public transport, so if you live in Johnstone and you don't have a car, it's going to be a double whammy.

Johnstone respondent

All the big retail centres like Silverburn and Braehead should be curtailed because they are taking trade from the smaller shops in our towns. If we had more vibrant town centres with a strong retail sector, that would provide more stable employment and in turn ensure more money circulated through the local economy.

Bridge of Weir respondent

There needs to be some radical thinking about continuing to allow these big supermarkets to be built because they are leading to the closure of lots of shops in our town centres. For example, companies like Tesco should only be given permission to build an out of town store on the proviso they also take over some

of the empty town centre locations, even to run a Tesco butcher or a Tesco greengrocer. It can still be Tesco but at least there is an alternative to going to the out of town stores and it would help to keep the town centres alive.

Renfrew respondent

One of the Ayrshire Councils was slated recently for refusing permission for an ASDA to open on the edge of town. Their reasoning was that if ASDA opens, half a dozen existing shops will shut. People are only starting to realise the impact these big stores have on town centres. And of course the supermarkets now provide a lot more than food so the impact is even greater, a wider range of town centre shops is now under threat.

Paisley South respondent

You can't blame people for going to the supermarkets if the prices are cheaper, there is greater choice and it's easy and free to park. But I agree; some radical thinking is needed if we are going to save our town centres.

Paisley South respondent

I don't want to find there is only one place to do your shopping, in a big faceless supermarket on the edge of town. It almost becomes a functional experience and not one that you can actually enjoy.

Johnstone respondent

Encouraging more retail development in the town centres was considered particularly important for older residents and those who did not have access to a car:

It's all very well saying there is Braehead, but if you don't have a car it's not exactly the handiest place to get to, so we need shops in our town centres as well.

Renfrew respondent

If they could put an ASDA or other supermarket in the town centre, say in the old Arnotts building, that would be great for a lot of people who don't have a car and can't get to the out of town supermarkets.

Paisley South respondent

To lose more shopping facilities from Paisley would be a disaster for someone like me who doesn't have a car. At the moment I can get a bus from Foxbar into the town for my shopping but if more shops closed it would be very difficult to see where else I could go without quite a long journey.

Paisley South respondent

Respondents felt the town centres needed a wide mix of uses to help revitalise them, encompassing offices, shops and places of entertainment:

I think there has to be a bit of everything in the town centre; a place to work, shop and be entertained. But we don't even have a cinema; the nearest one is in Linwood or Braehead.

Paisley North respondent

Maybe they should look at the farmers' market and try to develop that more, create an enjoyable retail, social and entertainment experience to draw people into the town centre, even if it's only for one or two days a week.

Johnstone respondent

One respondent commented on other small towns in Scotland that seemed to be bucking the trend of shop closures and felt the planners must make it a priority to revitalise Renfrewshire's town centres:

It doesn't have to be like this. There are market towns that are thriving. I was in Castle Douglas at the weekend and it has a really bustling town centre. It has umpteen clothes shops and shoe shops, a local ironmongers, butchers' shops, the lot; there is a really good retail mix where you can get most if not all of your shopping and it's only a small market town. Paisley is the biggest town in Scotland but the centre is dead. Johnstone is the same, and look at Linwood. The Council must see this as a big priority.

Paisley North respondent

There was also some discussion in the Paisley South focus group on whether the Council should concentrate on reviving Paisley town centre at the expense of other towns and villages across Renfrewshire:

The Council needs to decide if Paisley is to be the hub for Renfrewshire. If so, and they expect people to travel in, they need to make adequate parking provision.

Paisley South respondent

I agree more should be done to improve Paisley town centre but not at the expense of other communities. There are a lot of villages and estates where the infrastructure is very poor and the planners need to do something about bringing more life back to these areas too.

Paisley South respondent

3.3 Housing

There was a clear view among respondents that there was an oversupply of private housing and a concern some developments had been built on unsuitable sites:

If you look around there are plenty of 'For Sale' signs and loads of empty houses, so that would suggest there isn't a problem with the availability of housing in the private sector anyway.

Johnstone respondent

There has been too much private house building. Builders will build and sell and they don't care about what the town will look like when they've finished. Too much building has been allowed and the houses can't be sold now and it's having a detrimental effect on the town.

Renfrew respondent

I think we have a case of the 'cart before the horse'. We have loads of private housing available but not the industry to draw in employees who would want to buy these houses.

Johnstone respondent

Down at Ferry Village, they've built so many houses they can't sell them. I've heard Social Work are using them or they are being rented out. That changes the nature of the area; I know some people who have bought down there and they are not happy about the way the area has changed. One friend says there are different people in the flat beside her every few months and the tenants don't really care how they treat the area.

Renfrew respondent

The housing that has been built in Renfrew down by the river shows we haven't learned any lessons. It is very poor quality and in an area that is prone to flooding. They are deteriorating before your very eyes. They are right beside the river, beside the rats. And the smell sometimes is terrible. The Braehead shopping centre is the magnet but it's very poor land and they should not have built houses on it. That was not a good decision. That's a slum of the future.

Bridge of Weir respondent

In Paisley, new houses were built about one hundred yards from the tannery and they wondered why they couldn't sell them.

Paisley North respondent

An even greater concern among respondents was the lack of good quality affordable housing. The right to buy policy had taken a lot of the best Council housing into the private sector and had not been replaced. There was also a concern that the Council housing which was available was of poor quality:

A lot of the good Council houses have all been bought so the quality of what is left is very poor; young people who are cannot afford to buy a flat don't have much of a chance of getting a decent place with the Council.

Paisley South respondent

It's not just young people. I've got about five or six friends who couldn't get decent housing from the Council and they have had to rent privately and they're paying through the nose for it.

Paisley South respondent

We need to improve the quality and supply of social housing. Linwood and Bridge of Weir was built for Chrysler, to house the incoming workers. But the Right to Buy policy have seen most of these sold off to the sitting tenants. That's great for the tenants at that time but it severely affects the stock of affordable rented housing for future generations. Only the rubbish was unsold. Now young people on low incomes who can't afford to buy have very few housing options available to them.

Bridge of Weir respondent

The big problem now is that home ownership is beyond the reach of a lot of first time buyers because of the big deposits that are needed. That would suggest there is a need to provide more rented housing, either private or with the Council or housing associations. The Council has an enormous waiting list so there is clearly a need for more social housing.

Johnstone respondent

I was offered a flat in the high flats but I turned it down because of all the junkies. I was lucky to get a mortgage but if that hadn't been possible, I don't know what I would have done. I certainly didn't relish the idea of bringing my daughter up in a place like that.

Paisley North respondent

Another major concern among respondents was that not enough attention had been given to the infrastructure needed to support some housing developments. It was felt this had created social problems as well as contributing to traffic congestion and the loss of green space:

There are a lot of houses where there are no facilities for the local community.

Paisley South respondent

One of my concerns is that there doesn't seem to be much account taken of the impact of these big housing developments on the local infrastructure. Plenty of mistakes have been made in the past where estates have been built which are

very poorly served by shops or public transport. We don't seem to learn from the past.

Johnstone respondent

There is a proposal for 1,200 houses in Bishopton at the old ROM which is going to cause more traffic chaos. If there is at least one child in each of those houses, what schools are they going to go to?

Renfrew respondent

There is a problem in Bishopton where they were talking about using the ROF site to build 2,000 houses, but that has gone quiet because of the recession. But you can't have everywhere built up, there needs to be a balance with the preservation of open spaces.

Johnstone respondent

One respondent also singled out the poor quality of former New Town housing as an issue which needs to be tackled:

Some of the housing stock needs to be rebuilt as it is of very poor quality. A lot was built in the 1970s with breezeblocks and it would be better to demolish this and rebuild using better quality materials. For example, in the houses in Erskine you could shoot peas through the walls; the sound insulation in them is terrible and I'm sure that leads to neighbour disputes and other social problems.

Bridge of Weir respondent

As well as the need to deal with the poor supply of housing in the social rented sector, some respondents felt shared ownership housing should be encouraged as well as a focus on building one and two bedroom properties for small households and housing to suit an ageing population:

A lot of young people don't want Council housing so more developments where they can part rent and part buy would be good.

Paisley North respondent

We also need the builders to concentrate on smaller properties, small blocks of flats with one and two bedrooms.

Bridge of Weir respondent

More and more elderly want to live in their own homes and stay out of residential care so we'll need more housing built to suit older people, sheltered housing and housing suitable for people with mobility problems.

Johnstone respondent

3.4 Transport

Respondents were concerned the public transport system serving Renfrewshire was not adequately integrated, resulting in poor connections between services, poor coverage of part of the network, inadequate timetabling and not delivering the benefits of a unified approach to ticketing:

I was in Berlin recently and you can buy a three day ticket which covers all local transport; the buses, trams, metro and the intercity express trains. We have nothing like that in Renfrewshire. There is a Zone Card and if you are retired there is a free pass, but there is no integrated system. For example, if somebody works at IBM in Greenock and stays at Inchinnan, there is nothing that connects Inchinnan to Bishopton where there is a very limited bus service down to Greenock. So you either have to drive part of the way to get a connection, and if you work in shifts, you will almost certainly have to drive the whole journey. So how can you attract industry, saying you have the labour pool and the housing available, but there isn't a decent public transport service for employees to get to and from work?

Johnstone respondent

The trains are owned by First Group and a lot of the bus services are too, but you can't buy a ticket to cover a journey where you use both the train and the bus. You have to buy individual tickets for each part of the journey and that is a lot more expensive. It's the ticketing arrangements which drive the costs; the costs are higher at each step of a journey. It just doesn't make any sense.

Paisley North respondent

There is a complete lack of an integrated transport system in Renfrewshire. You can get some buses between nine and five but not everybody works those hours. Equally, not everybody has leisure time between nine and five.

Johnstone respondent

The bus timetable is geared to people working nine to five, but that doesn't suit everyone's working arrangements. It also doesn't encourage people to go out in the evenings without their cars.

Bridge of Weir respondent

The public transport network is more than adequate up to the early evening and then it virtually disappears. The bus companies say not a lot of people go out at night, but that's because there are no buses. If we had a cinema, you couldn't come out from seeing a movie and get a bus home.

Paisley North respondent

I find the bus service, with all the different bus companies, very disjointed. There doesn't seem to be adequate coverage of some parts of the city and they stop really early. I presume that's because of the violence.

Paisley North respondent

The rail network was regarded by most to be more efficient, but it was felt connections to the stations and parking facilities need to be improved:

The rail network is great but the problem is getting to the train stations. I take the train into Glasgow everyday but I'm not on a bus route, so I have to take the car so far and then walk to the station.

Paisley South respondent

There needs to be better car parking facilities at railway stations to encourage people to use their cars for as little of their journey as possible. Apart from the environmental benefits, people cannot use their cars to the same extent because of the high price of fuel, so it would help people save on their travelling costs too. If they have to spend a lot on petrol to commute to work, they are less likely to

spend as much in the shops or on entertainment and that will cause a downward spiral in the economy.

Paisley South respondent

I'd like to see a bit more use of the railways; we lost a lot of local lines and it would be great if some of these could be re-instated. We still rely too much on the car and the planners should encourage the development of the public transport network.

Paisley North respondent

In terms of the road network, there was a lot of criticism of recently introduced traffic management systems in Renfrew and Paisley. In Renfrew, respondents felt this had contributed to greater traffic congestion and did not meet the needs of cyclists:

Doing away with St. Andrews roundabout and putting in traffic lights was probably the biggest mistake the Council has ever made. Previously, the traffic was able to flow through the town; it might be busy coming from one end and quiet coming from the other but the traffic moved reasonably well. Now there are big build ups of traffic because of the traffic lights.

Renfrew respondent

Even the High Street is down to a single lane; it was always a double lane before.

Renfrew respondent

The Council was told time and time again if they extended the pedestrian side to the detriment of the vehicles, it was going to cause mayhem. That's exactly how it has turned out. There is no need for Renfrew to have a pavement goodness knows how wide.

Renfrew respondent

There's not a single cycle lane anywhere. If the traffic is due to the expansion of neighbouring areas and these are attracting families with kids, cycle lanes would encourage more kids to ride their bikes and also encourage more drivers out of

their cars. To have pavements which are maybe eighteen feet wide is crazy; there's plenty of room there for a cycle lane.

Renfrew respondent

My husband is a cyclist and he has to take all sorts of indirect routes to avoid the worst of the traffic because he thinks it's too dangerous.

Renfrew respondent

Renfrew residents felt the authorities had missed an earlier opportunity to route traffic away from the town. Now, with the expansion of Bishopton and Erskine and the development of the Braehead shopping centre, the traffic had increased significantly:

There was a planning proposal about forty years ago to bring a road down Braehead and extending across to Inchinnan but it was rejected. It was a short-sighted decision because that would have been an ideal solution to the problems we have now. The only way to sort the problem out is to make a bypass around the town. But the people with businesses here would be against that and that's one of the reasons it was knocked back originally. So it's not just a transport issue, it is a business issue too and the business lobby won.

Renfrew respondent

When the go ahead is given for something like Braehead, the Council just thinks that will be good, everyone will benefit, but they don't seem to think through the implications a major development has on the existing infrastructure. No thought was given to the congestion these developments would cause.

Renfrew respondent

What's causing the traffic problems? You have Bishopton and Erskine growing beyond all recognition, if there is an accident on the M8, everything comes through Renfrew, and Braehead is expanding beyond belief. These are all putting huge pressures on the road network through Renfrew, the traffic has increased tenfold but they have done nothing in Renfrew to cope with that.

Renfrew respondent

As identified in Section 3.2, in Paisley there are concerns about the one way traffic system and a lack of adequate (and free) car parking:

When the Council introduced the one way system in Paisley, that was the death knell. They also need to look at the car parking because I can go to Braehead and park for nothing.

Paisley South respondent

There is no free car parking and that puts people off coming into the town. The Council seem to be anti-car.

Paisley North respondent

3.5 Health and the Environment

Respondents recognised the importance of the local environment in providing opportunities to improve the health and well being of residents, and as outlined in Section 3.3, there was a view that some residential areas have been developed with very few or no facilities to encourage healthy activity:

In Paisley there is a big territorial problem for young boys and it would be a lot better if kids could have sports or a youth centre in their local area so they don't have to cross into another gang's territory. Foxbar and Glenburn in particular don't have any facilities for kids. There is the Glenburn Resource Centre but that's only open twice a week for that age group for one hour.

Paisley South respondent

Some of the estates are like deserts, there's nothing there to support the development of communities; no shops or leisure facilities.

Johnstone respondent

Of even greater concern was a view that the Council was closing leisure and community facilities and which would have a detrimental impact on the health of local communities:

Closing Johnstone and Elderslie baths and moving the pool is not a viable solution for a lot of older people. There is no bus that goes up that way but even if

it was easy to get to, we can't use the baths during the day because the school will be using it.

Johnstone respondent

The Council is also closing community halls so have to look at other options to run a healthy living group. We are using the Baptist church but have to limit the class size to 25 because of the space. We have more demand than that, so we are looking at the possibility of running more than one class a week but it's not easy.

Johnstone respondent

Before they closed the school down, it used to open the swimming pool to local people and it was very well used. But the new school doesn't have a pool so that's another facility lost. And the pool at the Lagoon is atrocious; it's impossible to swim in it, it's just a fun pool and that's no good if you want to swim for exercise.

Paisley South respondent

With the budget cuts looming, I hope the Council is not going to be short sighted about the health needs of Renfrewshire residents. I hope they don't just think about the short term and allow recreational facilities to run down.

Renfrew respondent

Many of the focus group respondents also recognised that some of the existing parks and open spaces were underused and were concerned the Council would use this as a sign they were not needed. However, respondents stressed that any lack of use was primarily because of a concern about anti social behaviour or that the facilities were often run down:

Planners can look at the lack of use of parks and other leisure facilities and assume they are not wanted, but a key reason is that there is a security issue with most open air venues. If these facilities were safe for families to use or for kids to use on their own, there would be a lot more people using them.

Johnstone respondent

I wouldn't be happy with my kids coming down to the tennis courts to play because they would come back without their racquets. So some sort of warden is needed. I think wardens come through the park in their van and sit over at the bowling green, but they are only there for a short period of time. If we knew these facilities were secure during certain times, they would be used.

Renfrew respondent

There are parks in Paisley but they need to be made safe. I wouldn't take my Guides along there because you have the druggies. The wardens come in now and again but there needs to be a presence in the parks all the time they are open otherwise people won't know when it's safe to use them.

Paisley North respondent

The park is a disgrace. They put that skateboard thing in but it wasn't policed and it was vandalised in no time. You wouldn't use that park at night time because of the druggies.

Renfrew respondent

The local parks are very underused. There's a pitch and putt in one but it never seems to be open and the tennis courts in the other park are a mess.

Paisley South respondent

3.6 Waste disposal

Focus group respondents were aware of the drive towards a 'zero waste' policy and supported moves to increase recycling rates across Renfrewshire. However, there were mixed views on dealing with excess waste through incineration or a large scale recycling facility within Renfrewshire. For example, some respondents felt Renfrewshire should take responsibility for the waste it creates rather than transferring it for others to deal with:

There were protests in the past when an incinerator was proposed for the Ferry but the technology has improved a lot since then and they can take all the gases out of the process. So I agree, there are things that could be done to build a plant to handle our excess waste. If was sited near a public building like a hospital, it

could supply it with power from the incineration process. For example, what's to stop the use of land at the Southern General where the water treatment plant used to be?

Renfrew respondent

There was a programme on TV last night about a plant in New York which incinerates rubbish and generates electricity from it. Maybe that's an option which could be explored further to deal with our excess waste.

Bridge of Weir respondent

We're going to run out of landfill and we need to think of the next generation anyway. We have to accept our responsibility to deal with our waste and not pass it on to another authority. It's just a matter of where an incinerator would be sited. There is a lot of poor industrial land which is now derelict. Surely, there would be a site available which did not encroach on housing or recreational areas.

Paisley North respondent

Some generation has to say things have to change, and I don't see why it shouldn't be ours. We should be proactive rather than reactive about dealing with our waste so I agree a solution could be found within Renfrewshire.

Paisley North respondent

The second biggest shipment out of Greenock is rubbish, going to China or India for reprocessing. Now, why can't we be using that here?

Bridge of Weir respondent

There will always be the NIMBY problem for a development like an incinerator, so it would need to be far away from any residential areas. If there was derelict industrial land available, that might work.

Johnstone respondent

However, there were just as many respondents were opposed to the building of an incinerator or large scale recycling plant in Renfrewshire, primarily because of the controversy over where the plants could be located:

Across Scotland, we're going to be moving soon to a zero waste policy. There are major constraints on landfill and there will also be limits on incineration, so recycling will be the only option. East Renfrewshire, Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Councils are looking to form a partnership and my concern is that Renfrewshire could become the disposal hub for the partnership. It's not going to be landfill as this will be taboo from 2015, so it will either be an incinerator or a big recycling facility which would be massive compared to the recycling centres we have at the moment. I would want to know if this is going to be the case and where it would be sited. It's going to be unsightly and there will be lorries thundering in and out all day long.

Paisley South respondent

If I thought there was a proposal for one near me (an incinerator or large scale recycling plant), I'd be dead against it. It can be a very polarising issue. People agree with the principle but they don't want it near them.

Johnstone respondent

It's got to be cheaper to incinerate waste locally than shipping it thousands of miles to be treated, but it's political suicide. No-one would want an incinerator built near them.

Renfrew respondent

An incinerator or a processing plant in Renfrewshire might only create a hundred jobs but where are you going to site it? That's the issue that will bother a lot of people.

Bridge of Weir respondent

3.7 Flooding

Flooding was not perceived to be a major issue by focus group respondents. Those from Renfrew said there used to be flooding problems at the Ferry but work has just been completed which should provide greater protection from future flooding. A few other respondents mentioned flooding occurring occasionally near Linwood but there was also a view measures had been taken to deal with this:

They have just finished the work down at the Ferry to help protect against flooding. I've got a photograph of my model boat sailing up Ferry Road and I'm up to my knees in water. Hopefully this won't happen again because of the new works.

Renfrew respondent

There used to be problems of flooding on the some of the land around Linwood. There have been some works carried out which seems to have worked in stopping the flooding.

Johnstone respondent

You get some flooding down my way but that's because I'm near the Linwood marsh; it must be the lowest lying bit of Paisley.

Paisley North respondent

3.8 Renewable energy

Without the option of wind turbines or a coastline to try wave and tidal power respondents were unsure about the potential for Renfrewshire to develop renewable energy sources. However, there was a view they would support more work to investigate other options for renewable energy:

There should be encouragement of renewable technologies but without a coastline to try wave and tidal, it's difficult to see what the focus should be on.

Renfrew respondent

If wind turbines are not an option in Renfrewshire, and many people say they don't work very well anyway, it will be important to see what other options are available. I would certainly support looking at how Renfrewshire could develop sources of renewable energy.

Paisley South respondent

A few respondents felt the only viable alternative was solar energy, but the costs of installing panels on residential properties made this cost prohibitive:

My roof faces south and irrespective of bright sunshine or not, solar panels on the roof and a good storage facility could meet all my energy needs. That was with 13% efficiency and the panels are a lot more efficient nowadays.

Renfrew respondent

We don't have a coastline so that really leaves solar, but it takes so long to get your money back on your investment. If the cost of the units could come down, that would make it more viable. Maybe as traditional fossil fuels become more and more expensive, that might also tip the balance towards solar being economically viable.

Paisley South respondent

3.9 Ageing/declining population

Focus group respondents agreed that if the population was ageing, this needed to be recognised in how services were delivered in the future. However, there was a belief the solution to reversing the trend was through economic development. By attracting industries to Renfrewshire, this would encourage young people to remain or attract other young households to relocate to Renfrewshire:

Renfrewshire has had a tough time from decades of industrial decline. This has made it difficult to get young families to stay here; they need to go elsewhere to find work. So that's how you deal with the problem – if Renfrewshire's economy could be improved and more jobs created, the younger folk would stay and others would move here to take up the new jobs.

4. Concluding Comments

The focus group programme with members of the Renfrewshire Public Services Panel provides a high level of agreement with the key issues the Council suggested might be included in the Main Issues Report and therefore recognised by the forthcoming Local Development Plan. However there were five in particular which respondents singled out as being particularly important:

Stimulating the economy and attracting inward investment - this was regarded by most respondents as the most significant issue of all and, if tackled, could act as the catalyst to help with the improvement of other issues, particularly town centre regeneration, housing, leisure and transport. This view was also reflected in the short questionnaire respondents were asked to complete, which indicated that almost three quarters (72.4%) felt job opportunities are inadequate (see Appendix 2 for details).

Retailing and town centres - this emerged as the next most serious issue (and confirmed by the survey which showed 81.3% rate the town centres as 'poor'). There was a widespread view the regeneration efforts had been largely 'cosmetic' and more urgent action was needed to restore the vitality of Renfrewshire's town centres. Respondents called for a better mix of retail, employment and recreational uses (the survey also found that virtually all respondents (93.8%) would like to see more community facilities in town centres).

Housing – respondents felt there was a need for good quality, affordable housing across Renfrewshire (the survey showed only 3.6% rated this as 'good') as well as housing to cater for the needs of a growing elderly population (only 11.1% said in the survey that current provision was 'good'). There was also a widespread view that some existing housing areas lacked an adequate infrastructure, particularly in relation to shops and leisure facilities. The survey has confirmed this by showing that 75% of respondents do not feel the distribution of community facilities is appropriate and 78.1% do not feel there is adequate and easily accessible retail provision in their local area.

Transport – there was criticism that Renfrewshire lacked an integrated transport network (the survey showed that 43.8% felt it was 'poor' while fewer than one in five

(18.8%) said it was 'good'). There was also some criticism that recent housing and retail developments did not adequately take account of the impact these would have on the road network (40.6% said the road network is poor, while only 25% rate it as 'good').

Health and the Environment – respondents were concerned the underuse of parks and open spaces might be seen as a measure these facilities were not required. In contrast, respondents regarded these facilities as important to the health and well being of Renfrewshire residents but there was a concern over anti social behaviour at these sites and a view the quality of facilities was poor. Allied to this, there was a concern the closure of leisure and community facilities would also be detrimental to health.

Appendix 1

Focus Group Discussion Guide

Renfrewshire Council Local Development Plan Discussion Guide

<p>Introduction (5 mins)</p>	<p>Welcome to attendees,</p> <p>Explain purpose of the event, timescales, next steps.</p> <p><u>Purpose</u></p> <p>To have some discussion around the current characteristics of Renfrewshire, trends, statistics, what is generally happening in and around the area and outline what the individuals of the group feel are the main land use planning issues affecting Renfrewshire.</p> <p><u>Timescales</u></p> <p>October 2010</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commencement of Renfrewshire Local Development Plan (LDP) work in October 2010; <p>November 2010</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Plan Scheme issued (Nov 2010) This document sets out Renfrewshire Council's programme for preparing and reviewing its Local Development Plan, what is likely to be involved at each stage in the preparation of the new Local Development plan and how, when and with whom consultation will take place. Identifies clearly how people can be involved in the process. This document will be updated every year to keep people up to date with what is going on in the process. <p>Oct 2010 – Jan 2011</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with various internal and external groups to gather information on trends, key characteristics, progress on development, generally gaining an overview of the state of Renfrewshire from October 2010 to January 2011. <p>Jan – Feb 2011</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production of a draft State of Environment report, a document that presents all of the environmental trends, statistics, characteristics of Renfrewshire, providing a baseline for looking at the contextual issues of the area. <p>Jan – Mar 2011</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production of a draft Monitoring Statement, a document which provides a review of the performance of the
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	<p>current Renfrewshire Local Plan, how has the local plan directed development within Renfrewshire, has the proposals and policies set out in the local plan been delivered. It also provides an analysis of the emerging trends and characteristics and the policy direction from the Scottish Government so that there is an early indication of potential issues and opportunities identified early in the process.</p> <p>Jan – Feb 2011</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production of a draft Scoping Report, a document that sets out a framework for assessing the potential environmental impacts of the new Renfrewshire Local Development Plan. <p>15 – 16 March 2011</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Service Panel Focus Groups – 15 & 16 March 2011 at five different venues (Renfrew / Bridge of Weir / Johnstone / Gallowhill, Paisley / Gleniffer High School, Paisley) <p>March 2011</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with various internal and external groups to gauge whether the draft documents (State of Environment Report / Monitoring Statement / Scoping Report) capture the key characteristics and context of the area. <p>April 2011</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out a ‘Suggestions for Land Use Change’ exercise which allows developers, landowners, the community, various interest groups, etc an early opportunity to indicate land that they would be interested in bring forward through the Local Development Plan which could be built in the next 5 years. This brings forward potential sites but this does not necessary mean that they are acceptable and will be inserted into the new LDP. All sites need to be sieved and put through a scoring process to see if they are acceptable. There also requires to be an identified ‘need’ for a use. <p>10 May 2011</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder Conference – Large scale event bringing together various groups of people (public, community councils, developers, land owners) in Paisley Town Hall, to present what the Council consider are the main issues coming from all the discussions with internal and external parties, the Focus Groups events, review of the
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	<p>current Renfrewshire Local Plan and the analysis of the current and emerging trends. The aim of the day is for the Council to present what they consider are the key issues for the area and for all attending the conference to express whether the Council are correct in their approach and agree or disagree with the main issues identified.</p> <p>May – Sept 2011</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of Main Issues Report (MIR) and accompanying Environmental Report and completion of Monitoring Statement. The MIR outlines the big issues for the area, highlighting where development should and should not occur. Setting out preferred vision and policy direction along with alternatives if the preferred option is not taken forward. The Environmental Report identifies and describes the likely significant effects of implementing policies in the new Local Development Plan, assessing the effect of proposals and the alternatives. <p>October 2011</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of MIR, Environmental Report and Monitoring Statement – Consultation on all three documents. <p><u>Next Steps</u></p> <p>The points / suggestions / issues raised from the Focus Groups will be gathered together and presented in a report to the Council. These points will be taken on board and expressed and highlighted at the Stakeholder Event in the Paisley Town Hall on the 10 May 2011. These comments will also inform the production of the Main Issues Report, the Environmental Report and the next stages in the preparation of the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan.</p>
<p>Overview of planning System (10 mins)</p>	<p><u>Current planning system</u></p> <p>Why do we have a planning system?</p> <p>The planning system exists to make decision about future development, guide where development should and should not happen and how development affects its surroundings.</p> <p>The planning system exists to regulate the use of land and buildings by granting or refusing planning permission. These decisions made by planning officers on the planning applications are based on the Local Plan for your area.</p>

Development Plans

Set out how places should change, outlines the use of land in our towns, villages, countryside, industrial areas and green spaces, etc and sets out the policies used to make decisions on planning applications.

Development Management

The section within the local planning authority where decisions on planning applications are made.

Have you had any involvement in planning before?

If so was it commenting on a local plan or a planning application?

New planning system and process

Are you aware that the planning system has changed recently?

The current Development Plan covering the Renfrewshire area consists of the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Structure Plan and the Renfrewshire Local Plan. These two documents provide the planning policy framework for Renfrewshire.

The Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006

Since 2006 there have been major changes introduced to ensure planning is more inclusive and people get involved in planning, shaping the Development Plan for their area. **The Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006** introduced many new processes and procedures to help everyone become more involved in planning. The aim was to create a planning system that was fit for purpose.

Strategic Development Plan

Under the new Planning Act existing Structure Plans will be replaced with Strategic Development Plans (SDPs). The Strategic Development Plan that will cover the Renfrewshire area will be the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan. *(People can find out more about the different plans from Renfrewshire Council's website.)*

The New Renfrewshire Local Development Plan

The existing Renfrewshire Local Plan will also be replaced with the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan. The new Renfrewshire Local Development Plan will be prepared by Renfrewshire Council's Planning Department involving all interested parties such as the public, residents groups, Government organisations, land owners, etc. A Local Development Plan will cover the whole Renfrewshire and be

updated and **replaced every 5 years**. The New Local Development Plan will require to be concise, map based documents that **look 10 years ahead** in terms of land use proposals for the area. Although map based, the Renfrewshire LDP will still have a range of policies and proposals covering various topics such as employment, retail, housing, etc. The LDP will therefore provide a framework for where development should and should not occur and provide framework for the assessment of development proposals. *(People can find out more about the different plans from Renfrewshire Council's website.)*

Key Stages in the preparation of the new Renfrewshire Local Development Plan

The process for preparing Development Plans has also be revised recently under the 2006 Planning Act.

Main Issues Report

Following a period of early consultation and engagement with a range of stakeholders, a Main Issues Report (MIR) is prepared and published and there is a 8 week period for consultation, where people tell the Council what they think of the document and whether or not the big issues identified are correct or not. The MIR is not a draft version of the finished plan, its purpose is to identify the significant issues that the new Renfrewshire Local Development Plan will need to address and plan for these issues in the next 10 years. The MIR will present options as to where the new Local Development Plan may go, with preferred options being highlighted by the Council. The MIR for Renfrewshire Council will be prepared and published in early autumn 2011.

Environmental Report

As the Council prepares the new Local Development Plan it also prepares, in tandem, a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). This is an environmental report that assesses how the LDP might affect the environment and considers how any potential environmental impact might be reduced, mitigated and enhanced. The production of an environmental report ensures that the Council are placing environmental consideration at the centre of the plan making process.

Proposed Plan

A Proposed Plan is prepared by the Council following all of the consultation on the MIR and the SEA. The Council takes all of the comments on board, assesses the current characteristics, the direction from the Government and sets out a plan with policies and proposals to reflect all of the information gathered through the early stages of consultation and engagement. The Proposed Plan will resemble what will be in the final

	<p>Renfrewshire Local Development Plan.</p> <p>Importance of participation and consultation Public engagement and consultation early in the Local Development Plan process is crucial and central to ensuring that the final LDP has been shaped by people who live, work and visit the area. Early participation in the LDP making process is vital as it provides an opportunity to discuss issues and areas for improvement right at the start, so that the plan can address the needs of all.</p> <p>The Public Services Panel Focus Groups is only one of the avenues being utilised by Renfrewshire Council to deliver effective early participation in the LDP process. It is hoped that through participating in this group and attending the Stakeholder Conference on the 10 May 2011, you will be able to guide the Council to producing the right plan for Renfrewshire.</p>
<p>Current and emerging characteristics of Renfrewshire (15 mins)</p>	<p>Demographics:</p> <p>Fluctuating population, between 2010 – 2033, a decrease of 5.3% in overall population within Renfrewshire.</p> <p>Renfrewshire has a higher death rate than that recorded for Scotland as a whole in 2009.</p> <p>Persons aged 60 years of age and older make up 22.7% of Renfrewshire, with a significant increase in those in the 75+ age group.</p> <p>Employment / unemployment:</p> <p>Between 1998-2008 Renfrewshire's economy contracted with the loss of 2,500 jobs.</p> <p>Forecast set to reverse a growth of 2.09% predicated, slightly lower than the 2.32% growth expected for Scotland.</p> <p>Health:</p> <p>Life expectancy for a person living in Renfrewshire is 76.5 years.</p> <p>Renfrewshire has the 4th highest rate of alcohol related death in males in the UK.</p> <p>Renfrewshire has a higher death rate than the Scottish average. Common cause of mortality is from cancer, coronary heart disease and cerebrovascular disease.</p>

	<p>Renfrewshire's relative position in terms of deprivation has worsened in SIMD 2009, in comparison to SIMD 2006.</p> <p>Environment / flooding / drainage / climate change:</p> <p>The target of 42% reduction in emissions by 2020 and 80% by 2050.</p> <p>In terms of carbon emissions since 2005 the trend in Renfrewshire has been a reduction in carbon emissions, Renfrewshire is within the top ten (8th) best performing authority.</p> <p>There are 13,660 properties in Renfrewshire identified as being at risk of flooding.</p> <p>In 2008/2009 Renfrewshire Council increased its recycling performance to 30.5%.</p> <p>Transport:</p> <p>68% of Renfrewshire residents used a car to get to work in 2008,</p> <p>Commuting by rail in Renfrewshire (5%) is slightly higher than Scotland's national average of (4%),</p> <p>38% of Renfrewshire's residents use the bus at least once a week,</p> <p>Only 1% of Renfrewshire residents use cycling as a means of transport to work,</p> <p>Traffic on Renfrewshire roads appears to be increasing by approximately 0.5% per annum.</p> <p>Housing:</p> <p>Renfrewshire's households would grow by a very small margin from 2010 to 2033. In Scotland as a whole, the numbers are set to increase by 21%.</p> <p>Whilst the overall population has declined, the number of households has increased due to people living in smaller households. One adult households predicted to increase from 37% of all households to 44% by 2025.</p> <p>Households headed up by a person over 75 are expected to show biggest increase from 12% at present to 16% in 2025.</p>
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	<p>Retailing:</p> <p>The vitality of Renfrewshire's traditional town centres is put under considerable strain by the influence of Braehead, Silverburn and Glasgow City Centre.</p> <p>Paisley Town Centre has witnessed a continual increase in the amount of vacant commercial units in recent years, 25% of all commercial units were vacant in the town centre. 90% of the units within Linwood Town Centre are vacant.</p>
<p>What are the big planning issues within Renfrewshire? (60 mins)</p>	<p>Aging / declining population;</p> <p>Are there specific issues in relation to accommodating an aging population?</p> <p>There is now more of an emphasis on keeping older people in their own homes rather than in older person's homes, are there the right housing in your area to meet these needs?</p> <p>How can Renfrewshire curb and reverse the declining population, how can we attract a younger generation to live and invest within Renfrewshire?</p> <p>Town centres / village centres / retailing centres;</p> <p>What do you feel about the existing state of retail areas (town and village centres) within Renfrewshire?,</p> <p>What type of place and role should town centres and village centres deliver?,</p> <p>What do you expect to see within a town centre?,</p> <p>What should vacant units be used for, what type of uses should we attract?</p> <p>Is the environment in and around centres an important factor? Should there be more greening of the edges around our towns and village centres?</p> <p>Waste;</p> <p>Where is the most appropriate locations to site such facilities?</p> <p>Renewables;</p>

Where would be the best locations for trying out new renewable schemes?

Stimulating development;

How do we attract inward investment to Renfrewshire?,

Where are the best locations to concentrate new developments?

What are the types of developments that we should be encouraging in Renfrewshire?,

What type of uses are we lacking in the area?,

Health / environment / climate change;

Is increasing access to open space, recreation, services, etc, important within residential areas? Do we have appropriate linkages to open space and recreation?

Does Renfrewshire need more recreational pitches, areas of open space?,

Do you consider that drainage and flooding is a problem / issue within Renfrewshire, have you noticed any improvements / decline in drainage?, would you welcome more corridors where drainage can freely discharge through the area, i.e. open burns, ponds, etc.

How should we try and contribute to reducing the impact on climate change?,

Housing;

Does Renfrewshire have the right housing in the right places?,

How do you feel about the environment within residential areas?,

Are existing housing area well connected to services and facilities?,

Are there any particular types of housing required in Renfrewshire?,

Do you feel that there is any need for additional land to be set aside for new residential sites?,

Regeneration;

	<p>Do feel that the regeneration projects such as the works to Renfrew and Paisley Town Centre, work in Johnstone at Collier Street and Johnstone bandstand, etc?,</p> <p>Are there any other areas where regeneration should be seen as a priority?,</p>
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Appendix 2

Survey of Focus Group Respondents

The Council prepared a short questionnaire which asked focus group respondents were asked to complete at the end of the focus groups. The survey covered the range of issues raised during the focus group and the overall response is presented below (N.B. in most of the questions, respondents were asked to score their response from zero to ten, with zero representing the 'poor' end of the scale and ten representing the 'good' end. For ease of analysis, the scores have been grouped as follows: 0-3 'Poor', 4-6 'Neither poor nor good', 7-10 'good').

		Poor	Neither poor nor good	Good
Demography	The population of Renfrewshire is in decline – how well do you think this issue is being dealt with?	42.9%	57.1%	0%
	How well is Renfrewshire coping with its aging population?	38.7%	58.1%	3.2%
Health	How would you rate the availability of health facilities?	9.7%	48.4%	41.9%
Employment	How adequate are the job opportunities?	72.4%	27.6%	0%
	How well located are existing employers?	41.4%	55.2%	3.4%
Environment	How much improvement do you think there has been in air quality?	32.3%	45.2%	22.6%
	How do you rate the flood prevention/control measures in your area?	6.9%	58.6%	34.5%
	Is there enough public accessible open space?	22.6%	38.7%	38.7%
	How accessible is the open space?	10.0%	43.3%	46.7%
		No	Yes	

	Should there be any additional recycling facilities in your area?	37.5%	62.5%	
	Should waste disposal facilities be located in Renfrewshire?	21.9%	78.1%	
		Poor	Neither poor nor good	Good
Transport	How well does our public transport network function?	43.8%	37.5%	18.8%
	How well does the road network function?	40.6%	34.4%	25.0%
	How would you rate the provision in the transport network for pedestrians and cyclists?	51.6%	32.3%	16.1%
Housing	How would you rate the provision of private housing?	6.7%	43.3%	50.0%
	How would you rate the provision of public housing?	46.9%	37.5%	15.6%
	How would you rate the provision of special needs, amenity and sheltered housing?	25.9%	63.0%	11.1%
	How would you rate the provision of affordable housing?	35.7%	60.7%	3.6%
	How would you rate the range of house type/size?	3.7%	55.6%	40.7%
Retailing and Town Centres	How well do you think that our town centres are doing?	81.3%	18.7%	0%
		No	Yes	
	In the local area, is there adequate and easily accessible retail provision?	78.1%	21.9%	
	In Renfrewshire, is there adequate			

	and easily accessible retail provision?	53.1%	46.9%	
Community Facilities	Is the distribution of community facilities appropriate?	75.0%	25.0%	
	Would you like to see more community facilities in town centres?	6.3%	93.8%	
Renewable Energy	Would you like to see more renewable energy projects located in Renfrewshire?	15.6%	84.4%	