

# Findochty Community Priorities Survey

## What you told us

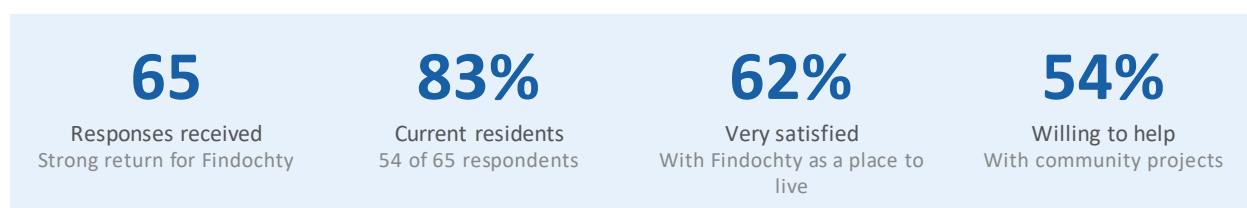
April 2026 | Findochty Community Council

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### Thank you

In early 2026, Findochty Community Council ran a survey asking residents and regular visitors to tell us what matters most to them about village life. We asked about what works well, what needs attention, and what you think the community's priorities should be over the coming years.

This report summarises what you told us. We have tried to be honest about the full range of views - not just the ones that are easiest to act on.



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## What works well

We asked you to choose up to three things that work well in Findochty right now. The results were clear:

- Coastal and outdoor environment - chosen by 44 of 65 respondents (68%)
- Sense of community - chosen by 42 respondents (65%)
- Community facilities - chosen by 26 respondents (40%)
- Events and activities - chosen by 21 respondents (32%)
- Local volunteering - chosen by 16 respondents (25%)

These are the things that make Findochty special - and they came through strongly in open text responses too. Many of you said you want these things protected, not changed.

*It's a beautiful village with lovely, friendly people who look after each other.*

## How satisfied are you with Findochty?

We asked how satisfied you are with Findochty as a place to live. The response was overwhelmingly positive:

- Very satisfied: 40 respondents (62%)
- Fairly satisfied: 19 respondents (29%)
- Neutral: 5 respondents (8%)
- Very dissatisfied: 1 respondent (2%)

Nobody selected 'fairly dissatisfied'. This is an exceptionally positive result and reflects a community that genuinely loves where it lives - even when there are things it wants to see improved.

## Your priorities

We asked you to rate nine priority areas for importance, and then to choose your single top priority. Here is how the results look when we combine all ratings into a weighted score (where High priority = 3 points, Important = 2, Low priority = 1, Not needed = 0, out of a maximum of 195):

Priority area	Weighted score	Top votes
Paths and outdoor spaces	145 / 195	11
Activities for children and young people	138 / 195	10
Local events and festivals	137 / 195	9
Coastal and harbour projects	131 / 195	14
Heritage and local history	131 / 195	5
Activities for older residents	123 / 195	4
Community space improvements	115 / 195	6
Community transport	115 / 195	1
Environmental and climate resilience	102 / 195	5

The 'Top votes' column shows how many respondents chose that area as their single most important priority. The harbour and coastal area won this vote with 14 respondents - but when all ratings are combined, paths and outdoor spaces comes out on top because it received very few 'low priority' or 'not needed' responses.

In short: nearly everyone agrees paths and outdoor spaces matter. The harbour divides opinion more - strongly supported by many, but rated lower by others.

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## Issues you raised

We asked about gaps in services and what would make the biggest difference to living in Findochty. Here is what came up most often in your responses.

### Dog waste and litter

This was the most frequently raised issue across all open-text questions - mentioned more than any other single concern. Many of you called for more bins, better signage, and enforcement. Dog owners also noted frustration at being blamed as a group for the actions of a few irresponsible owners.

*The rising amount of dog waste being left on the ground is getting out of hand. Prosecution of these individuals is a priority.*

### Roads, paths and pavements

Specific concerns included road surfaces around the harbour and caravan park, path erosion and overgrowth, weeding of pavements, and winter gritting. Several respondents noted uncertainty about who is responsible - Moray Council, Seafeld Estate, or the Community Council.

*Paths are a problem - and sometimes it is not knowing who to contact.*

### Speeding and traffic safety

A number of respondents called for a 20mph speed limit, particularly on the school crossing route. Views were divided - some prefer traffic calming measures over speed limits. Parking around the harbour was also raised.

### Children and young people

A strong theme, particularly from families with children. Requests included a youth club for the 8-18 age range, a play area near the harbour or Sannie Craig, a pump track for bikes and skateboards, and support for under-3 childcare provision.

*Under-3 childcare - parents can't work, or have to take children all the way to Elgin.*

### **Sannie Craig and motorhome access**

A small number of respondents raised the question of overnight motorhome stays at Sannie Craig, with those who mentioned it generally in favour of welcoming visitors back as has historically been the case. The Community Council is aware of this issue and will address it separately, taking into account the land ownership position and relevant legislation.

### **Harbour facilities**

Respondents with knowledge of the harbour noted outdated toilets, no shower facilities for visiting boats, harbour dredging needs, and the potential to repurpose the wooden building at Broad Hythe. Better car parking around the harbour was also mentioned.

### **Community events and a summer gala**

The loss of Gala Week was specifically mentioned by several respondents. Calls ranged from a single summer fete to a week-long celebration. This was seen as important for community cohesion and for attracting visitors.

*A whole weekend gala would bring the community together and put Findochty on the map.*

### **Derelict and abandoned properties**

Unsafe buildings with falling slates, scrap cars, and unsightly derelict properties were raised by several respondents. These are largely matters for Moray Council's enforcement powers, but the Community Council can raise them formally.

### **Bus services and transport**

A reliable, regular bus service was mentioned by several respondents as important for accessing appointments and avoiding being stranded in Buckie or Elgin.

*A reliable bus service so people don't miss appointments or get stranded in Buckie or Elgin.*

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## **Getting involved**

We asked whether you would be interested in helping with community projects. The response was encouraging:

- 20 respondents said they would volunteer their time
- 14 said they could offer skills or experience
- 11 said they would help with consultation or events
- 18 respondents gave consent to be contacted about volunteering opportunities

Skills and interests offered included project management and planning, events organisation, building and labouring, horticulture and gardening, marketing and PR, admin support, and community development experience.

The Community Council will be in touch with those who gave consent. If you would like to get involved and did not fill in the survey, please contact us through the website or Facebook page.

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## What can Findochty Community Council actually do?

This survey raised a wide range of issues - some of which FCC can act on directly, and some of which are outside our powers. We want to be upfront about the difference, so that you know where to direct your energy and what to realistically expect from us.

Findochty Community Council is a voluntary, elected body. We are not a local authority and we do not have the powers or budget of Moray Council. We have no paid staff, no enforcement powers, and no ability to hold assets, employ people, take on leases, or borrow money.

### What we can do

#### Represent your views

Our primary role is to be the voice of the community. We gather residents' views - through surveys, public meetings, and direct contact - and represent them to Moray Council, Scottish Government, and other bodies. When enough residents raise the same concern, we have a stronger case to make on your behalf.

#### Respond to planning applications and consultations

We are a statutory consultee on planning applications and certain Moray Council decisions. This means those bodies must notify us and consider our response - though they are not obliged to act on it.

#### Apply for funding

We can apply for grants to support community projects, and we can support other local organisations in doing the same. The harbour toilet refurbishment is a recent example of what this can achieve.

#### Raise issues formally with Moray Council

We can write to Moray Council, attend meetings, and escalate concerns on behalf of residents. We cannot compel Moray Council to act, but a well-evidenced formal representation - especially one backed by survey data - carries real weight.

#### Support and coordinate community activity

We can help connect volunteers, support local events, and work alongside other village organisations such as the Harbour Advisory Group and Findochty Water Sports Club.

## **Communicate and inform**

We keep residents informed about decisions, developments, and opportunities that affect the village through our website, Facebook page, and public meetings.

## **What we cannot do**

### **Instruct Moray Council**

Roads, pavements, grass cutting, gritting, street lighting, and planning enforcement are all Moray Council responsibilities. We can lobby strongly, but we cannot direct. If you have an urgent issue with any of these services, contact Moray Council directly - we are happy to advise on how.

### **Enforce anything**

Dog fouling, speeding, parking, derelict buildings, and abandoned vehicles are enforcement matters. These sit with Moray Council's environmental health, dog warden, and roads teams, or with Police Scotland. We can raise these issues formally and support residents in doing so, but we have no enforcement powers of our own.

### **Override a landowner**

A significant amount of land in and around Findochty is owned by Seafield Estate or other private landowners. What happens on that land is ultimately their decision. We can engage with landowners on behalf of the community, but we cannot compel them to act.

### **Deliver major infrastructure**

Projects like harbour improvements, road resurfacing, or new play facilities require significant funding and are typically delivered by Moray Council or other bodies. Our role is to make the case for investment and support funding applications - not to deliver these ourselves.

### **Fix everything**

Some issues raised in this survey - housing affordability, second homes, childcare provision, and energy supply - are matters of national policy that go well beyond what any community council can influence directly. We can note these concerns and pass them to the appropriate bodies, but we would be misleading you if we suggested we could resolve them.

## **Larger projects - when a community development trust is the answer**

Some of the ambitions that came through in this survey - significant harbour improvements, major coastal infrastructure, or acquiring land for community use - are too large or complex for a community council to take on directly. For projects of this scale, a separate community development organisation is usually the right vehicle.

### **Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO)**

A SCIO is a charity registered with OSCR (the Scottish charity regulator). It has its own legal identity, can hold assets and enter contracts, and is eligible for a wide range of charitable funding. It is run by a board of trustees and must operate for charitable purposes - broadly, community benefit. A SCIO is well suited to projects focused on heritage, environment, community facilities, or social benefit.

## **Development Trust**

A Development Trust is a community-led organisation - often also a SCIO - specifically set up to take on larger development projects, generate income, and reinvest it in the community. Development Trusts Association Scotland (DTAS) supports their formation and can provide advice and templates. They are the vehicle used by many successful community projects across Scotland, including community buyouts, harbour developments, and community energy schemes.

### **How this would work alongside FCC**

FCC cannot become a development trust, but it can help initiate one and work alongside it. In practice this would mean FCC identifying a project and gauging community support, helping to recruit founding members and a board, formally endorsing the new organisation, and continuing to represent its interests to Moray Council and other bodies. The two organisations would be distinct but complementary - FCC as the community's democratic voice, the trust as the delivery vehicle.

### **The honest pros and cons**

A properly constituted trust can access funding streams that FCC cannot - including HIE (Highlands and Islands Enterprise), the National Lottery Community Fund, and LEADER rural development funding. It can hold a lease or own property, employ a development officer, and give major projects a credible, accountable legal structure that funders require.

On the other hand, setting one up takes time - typically six to twelve months from initial idea to operational organisation. It requires a committed group of volunteers willing to act as trustees, and brings governance responsibilities including annual accounts, OSCR reporting, and board meetings. It works best when there is already clear community support for a specific project, not just a general aspiration.

If the harbour and coastal area emerges as the community's priority - as this survey suggests it might - then exploring whether a development trust is the right vehicle would be a logical next step. FCC would not be handing the project over; it would be helping to give it the best possible chance of actually happening.

### **How to get the most from your community council**

Tell us what matters to you - that is exactly what this survey was for. Come to our public meetings, which are open to all. If you have a specific concern about a Moray Council service, we can help you direct it to the right team. And if you want to get involved in a community project, we would love to hear from you.

**We are volunteers, we have limited resources, and we work best when the community works with us.**

## What happens next

The Community Council will now consider this survey carefully and use it to shape our priorities for the coming years. We will:

- Share these findings at our next public meeting
- Use the evidence to support applications for funding and grants
- Formally raise roads, paths, and dog waste issues with Moray Council, using the survey as evidence
- Explore options for harbour and coastal improvements
- Contact residents who offered to volunteer

We will publish an update on what we have done with your feedback later in 2026.

**Thank you again to everyone who took the time to respond. Your views shape what we do.**

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### Contact Findochty Community Council

Website: [findochty-cc.org](http://findochty-cc.org)

Facebook: [Findochty Community Council](#)