Westhill Business Research

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Business & Community Evaluation

19 March 2015

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INTRODUCTION

Background and Research Objectives

The Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce (AGCC) Research Unit was commissioned in late 2014 to undertake a study to review the linkages between large employers and the local community in Westhill. Specifically the research objectives were to:

- gain a deep understanding of the current views of large employers in Westhill and their staff
- assess what potential there is for greater community and business interaction
- identify potential interventions in the Westhill area which would benefit businesses and community / business relationships
- Identify potential interventions which will make Westhill a better place to work and support businesses in retaining their staff.

Research Methods

To capture the perspectives of employers and the community in Westhill, multiple methods of primary research were utilised.

Business

Sixteen local employers were contacted to participate in face-to-face consultations, of which seven agreed to be involved. These one-to-one discussions were held with a member of the AGCC Research Unit team. Following these discussions, the employers agreed to distribute an online survey to their employees. In total, 500 employees completed the survey. For the final stage of data collection, a focus group was conducted with five local employees to gather deeper insight and test the results of the survey.

Community

It was deemed important to consider the perspective of the community to ensure a collaborative future. We initially conducted a focus group discussion with the Westhill & Elrick Community Council (W&ECC) and gathered information on their experience of Westhill and their expectations for Westhill's future. Following this, the Community Council distributed an online survey to local residents via their website. A total of 236 Westhill residents completed the community survey.

ABOUT WESTHILL

Westhill is a town approximately 7.5 miles west of Aberdeen and is officially within the Aberdeenshire local authority boundary. Westhill originated as a commuter town for people working in Aberdeen and the first houses were built there in 1968. At this stage it was an amalgamation of Western Kinmundy and Blackhills Farming areas.

In early 2015, Westhill has an average house price of £329,612, making it more expensive than other regional towns such as Portlethen (£259,401) and Inverurie (£224,332)[1]. The population of the town has grown from around 9,500 in 2001 to approximately 11,600 as of 2012.

There are three main industrial areas within the town: Westhill Industrial Estate, Arnhall Business Park and Westhill Business Park. The area is continuing to experience growth with newer developments such as the Silvertrees Business Park and Kingshill Business Park now being delivered.

The Subsea Industry

Westhill has grown into much more than a residential town and is now the 'global centre of excellence in subsea engineering'. Westhill is known in the energy industry as SURF City – representing the main components of the industry: Subsea, Umbilical, Risers and Flowlines. As a result of regional expertise, Westhill industrial estates experienced rapid expansion from 2007/08. As of 2012, more than 6,000 people are employed by Westhill-based subsea companies[2].

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[1] Rightmove, House Prices in Westhill, Aberdeenshire.
[2] Subsea UK, New Aberdeenshire HQ for Subsea UK at Heart of 'SURF City', 2012.
Picture Credit: Knight Property Group

EMPLOYERS

The consultations undertaken followed a semi-scripted discussion guide (see Appendix 1) based around the following key topics: the strengths of Westhill, current issues, future challenges, opportunities to improve the area, and how to encourage greater interaction between businesses and the local community.

The following main themes were identified throughout the consultations.

- Roads / infrastructure / parking
- Public transport
- Local facilities
- Long-term planning
- Digital connectivity (broadband & mobile)
- Long-term future as a business centre
- Small infrastructure (walkways / cycle-paths)
- Division between business & community

Two additional themes were also identified and, although not considered a prevalent issue for all business leaders these were included in the online 'employee' questionnaire. The first issue was childcare and as a results we asked employees if they had ever experienced challenges securing childcare in Westhill and, if so, what the cause of the issue was. The second identified issue was housing which, although not deemed an issue for all employers, this was raised as a point to query with local employees.

EMPLOYEES

Online Survey

The online survey was distributed to various local employers and was completed by 500 employees in the Westhill area. In this section we evaluate employees' overall view of Westhill, their use of and satisfaction with the local facilities, their transport experiences, the potential for local improvements and the level of interaction with the community.

General Overview

Before investigating the scope for improvements in Westhill, we wanted to understand current views of the area as a workplace. The chart below indicates the overall positive opinion held by Westhill employees.

Figure 1. Westhill rating
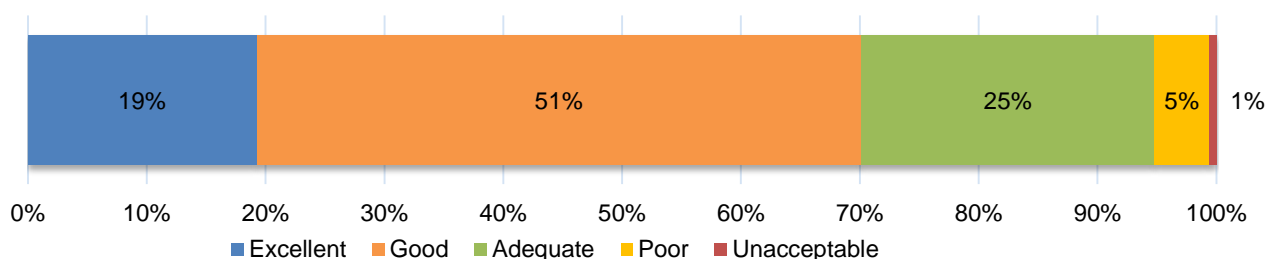
We also asked whether employees thought the town was mainly a 'residential' or 'business' area to which 61% of respondents reported Westhill as more of a 'business centre' than a 'residential area'. We found that just 13% of the survey respondents were residents and when analysing their responses the findings were quite different with only 18% considering Westhill to be primarily a business centre.

Figure 2. Three words to describe Westhill

The size of the words in images to the left give an indication of how frequently they were stated when survey participants were asked to 'describe Westhill in three words'.

The table below highlights the five most common themes identified when we analysed the data.

Table 1. Three words to describe Westhill

Theme	Count	%
Busy	90	22%
Growing / expanding	72	17%
Convenient / handy	69	17%
Congested / Traffic	40	10%
Friendly	37	9%

Table 2. Most liked aspect of working in Westhill

Theme	Count	%
Easy commute / distance from home	206	45%
Access to amenities	95	21%
Open space / green area / country-feel	59	13%
Avoids City Centre	37	8%
Nice area / location (general)	27	6%

Employees were also asked what they like most about working in Westhill, and 45% stated the '*easy commute / distance from home*'.

The top ten identified themes are highlighted in Appendix 2. It is of course notable that traffic / busyness and accessibility are all noted with both positive and negative connotations by survey respondents.

Use of Facilities & Services

Local amenities were identified as a positive aspect of working in Westhill, yet the survey revealed that very few facilities are regularly used by business employees.

Figure 3. Most frequently used facilities
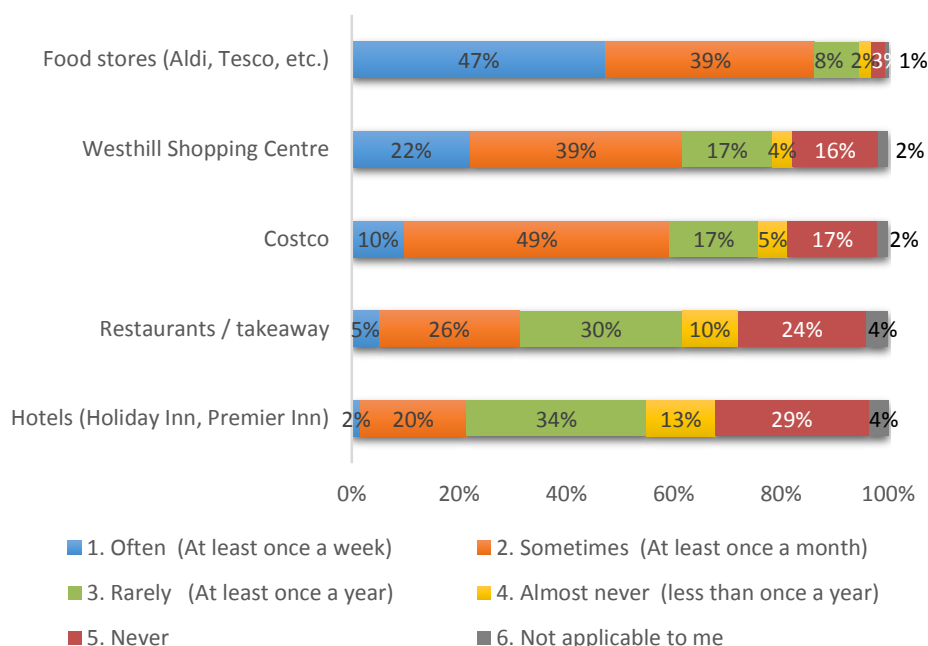
Food stores are the most utilised facility with 47% using them at least once a week.

Overall, the only amenities used at least once a month (by more than 55% of employees) are shops, with local hotels and food outlets showing moderate use at 22% and 31%, respectively.

The least used facilities were community buildings and sports facilities, as shown in Figure 4. The Peter Nicol Squash & Fitness Centre is one of the least used facilities in Westhill, which might be expected due to the fact that the majority of large companies in Westhill have access to private gym facilities.

Figure 4. Least frequently used facilities
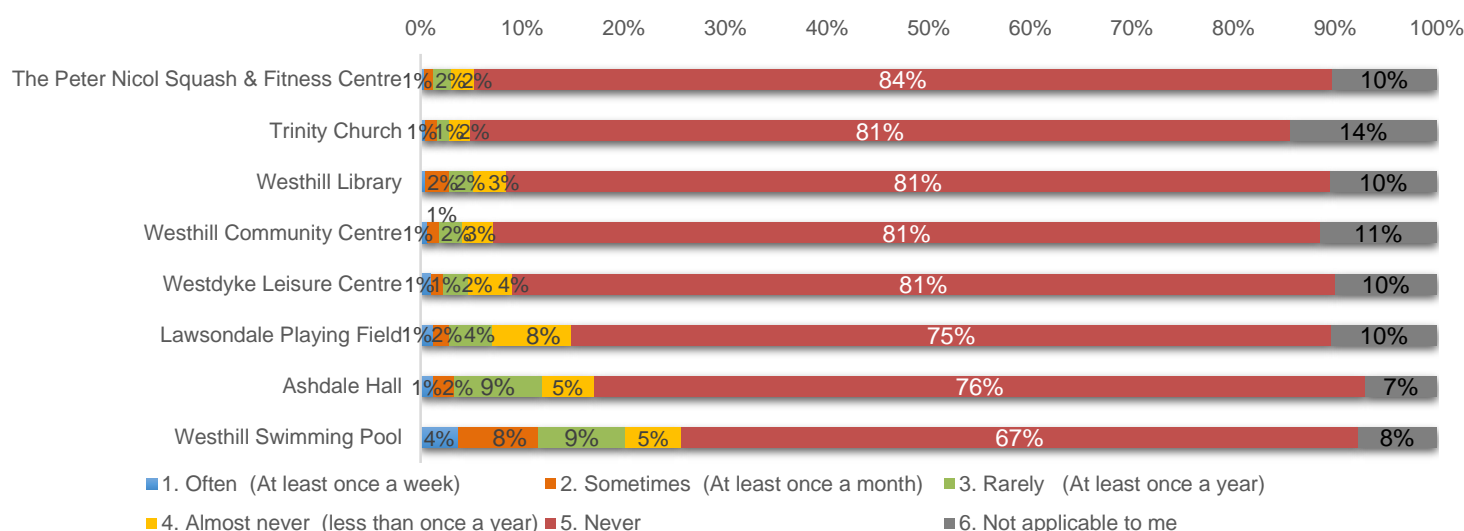
Childcare facilities in Westhill are not a required resource for 77% of people, and 14% use facilities elsewhere. Please refer to Appendix 3 for a comprehensive data on facility usage.
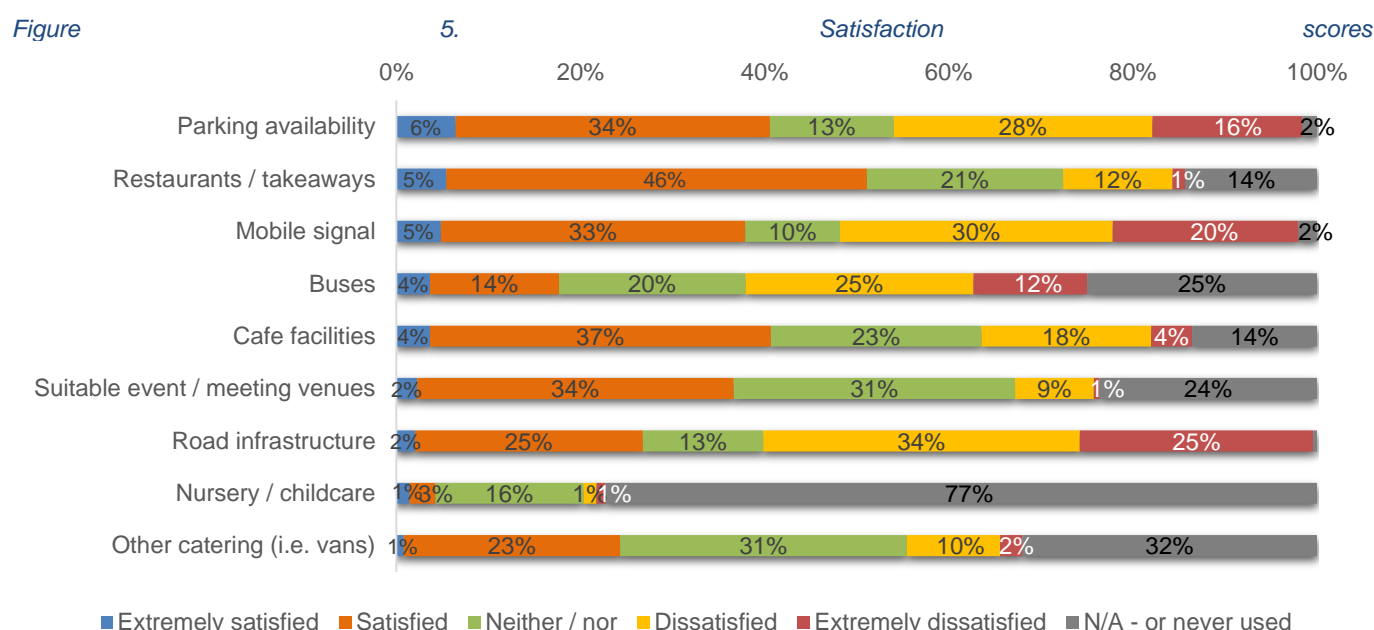
Satisfaction with Westhill facilities

The chart below displays the satisfaction scores for facilities and services. The data shows that a considerable proportion of people have either had no experience of various facilities within Westhill, or have no strong feelings about them either way.

	Extremely satisfied	Satisfied	Neither / nor	Dissatisfied	Extremely dissatisfied	N/A - or never used
Parking availability	6%	34%	13%	28%	16%	2%
Restaurants / takeaways	5%	46%	21%	12%	1%	14%
Mobile signal	5%	33%	10%	30%	20%	2%
Buses	4%	14%	20%	25%	12%	25%
Cafe facilities	4%	37%	23%	18%	4%	14%
Suitable event / meeting venues	2%	34%	31%	9%	1%	24%
Road infrastructure	2%	25%	13%	34%	25%	
Nursery / childcare	1%	3%	16%	1%	1%	77%
Other catering (i.e. vans)	1%	23%	31%	10%	2%	32%

To provide an alternative a view of the data, the chart below depicts the '*net balance*' of satisfaction scores i.e. ([extremely satisfied + satisfied] – [extremely dissatisfied + dissatisfied]) for Westhill employees.

Figure 6. Net balance of satisfaction scores

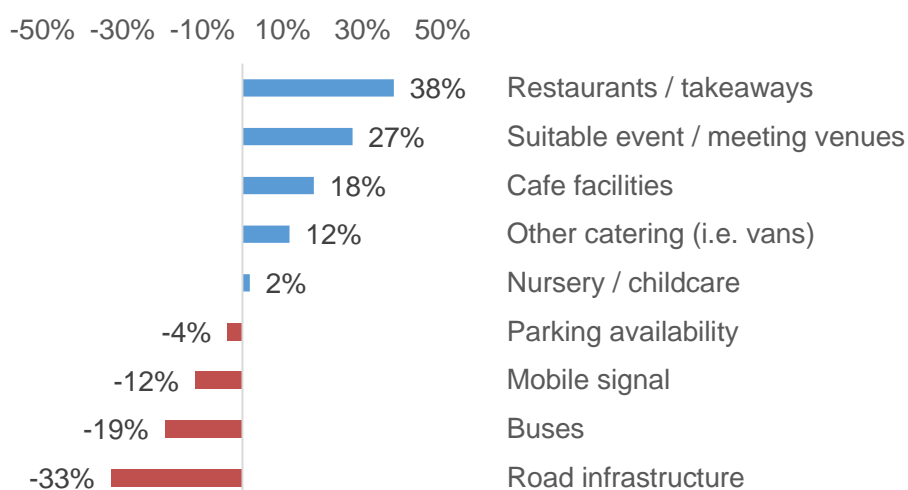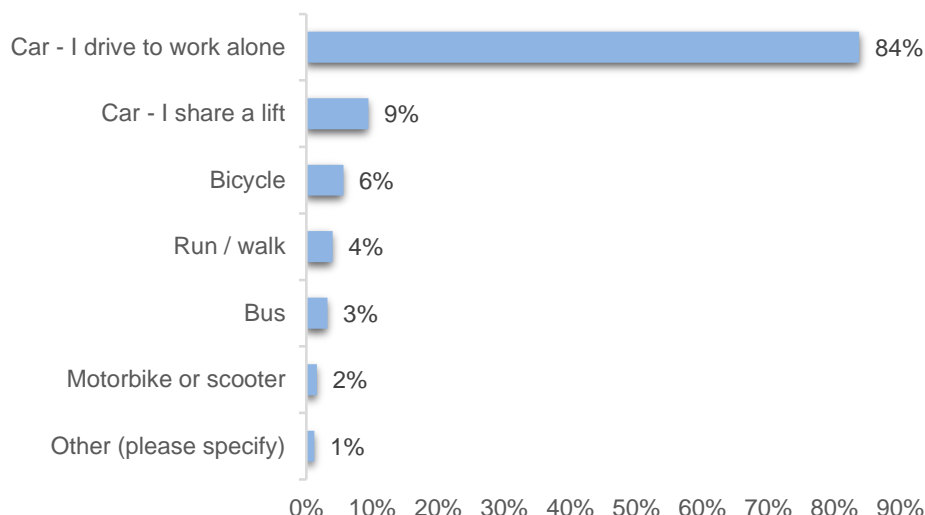|	Net balance
Restaurants / takeaways	38%
Suitable event / meeting venues	27%
Cafe facilities	18%
Other catering (i.e. vans)	12%
Nursery / childcare	2%
Parking availability	-4%
Mobile signal	-12%
Buses	-19%
Road infrastructure	-33%

Figure 6 shows that Westhill business employees are broadly satisfied with the recreational facilities on offer but are less satisfied with travel facilities / services as well as their mobile phone signals.

Transport

As previously noted, 45% of respondents mentioned that the best thing about working in Westhill was the easy/short commute to work. The chart below shows how Westhill employees travel to work.

Figure 7. Commute to work

We also wanted to understand why employees didn't use the bus to get to work and asked an open-ended question. The responses were grouped into common themes and are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Reasons given for not commuting by bus

Theme	%
I don't live near a direct bus route	55.7%
Lack of flexibility / Bus times not convenient for my schedule	20.6%
Need car at work	6.8%
Child responsibilities	6.8%
Impractical - Distance / Time	6.0%
Expensive	5.1%
I live within walking distance / I cycle	4.5%
I have a car	1.3%
I use the bus sometimes	1.3%

> Overall, 90% of people use a car to get to work.
>
> Of the respondents who also reside in Westhill surprisingly 79% still take their car to work.

> When asked about the potential impact of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR) 50% of employees think it will have a positive impact and only 5% think it will have a negative impact.

> Only 20% think the road infrastructure is suitable for the requirements of the area.

Improvements

Although 45% of employees stated the easy commute as the aspect they liked most about working in Westhill – 51% mentioned traffic and road infrastructure as the one thing they would like to change about working in Westhill. The table below highlights the top 5 factors employees would like to change. There appears to be a view that some type of 'Business Improvement District' would be a way to achieve improvements (Figure 8).

Table 4. Top desired changes to Westhill

Theme	%
Traffic / road infrastructure	51%
Parking	17%
Nothing	7%
Cycling / walking connectivity	7%
Bus transport	7%

Figure 8. Support for a Business Improvement District (BID)

■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't know

As well as understanding where improvements are desired it is important to take a view on the priority levels of potential improvements. The importance of each key theme is shown below in two charts.

Figure 9. Priority of desired improvements

■ Extremely important ■ Important ■ Neither/nor ■ Unimportant ■ Extremely unimportant ■ N/A
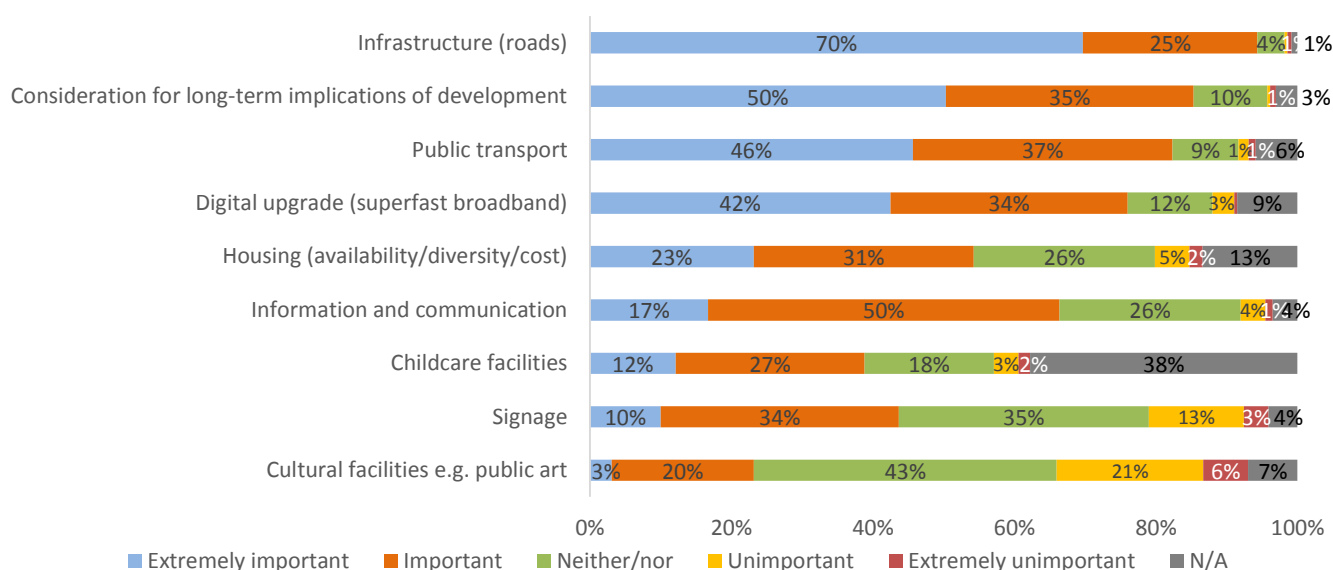
The information shown in Figure 10 represents the net balance ([extremely important + important] – [unimportant + extremely unimportant]) of employee priorities for Westhill improvements.

Figure 10. Net balance of improvement priorities

The data indicates that employees are keen to see improvements especially in roads and public transport. However, it is interesting that the second largest priority was given to the creation / consideration of a longer-term development plan.
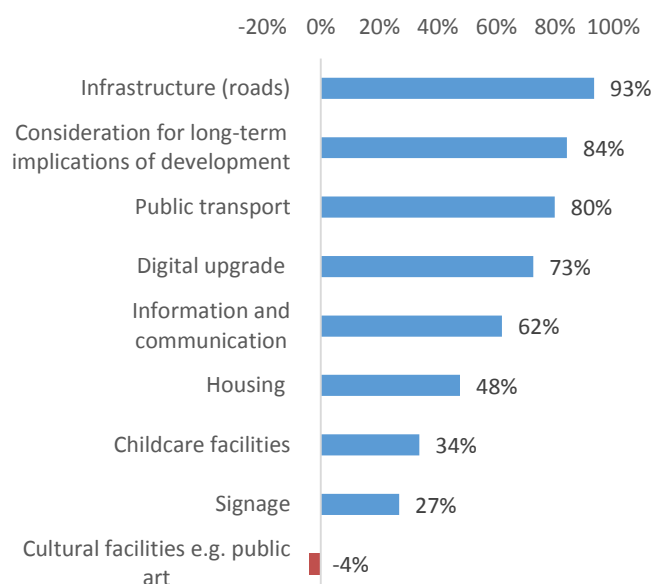
It is also of note that 48% of respondents stated an interest in housing which could indicate that a proportion of employees may be eager to relocate to Westhill.

In general it is clear that the views of employees are not entirely different from the views of their employers.

Figure 11 demonstrates that nearly half of all employees believe that there is room for expansion in the industrial areas of Westhill, with around 71% indicating that the south side of Arnhall Business Park would be most suited for future expansion.

Figure 11. Potential business expansion

■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't know
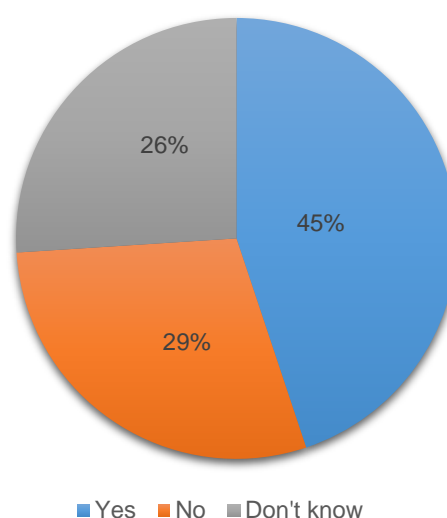
Figure 12 suggests that there are gaps and weaknesses in the provision of travel facilities and services in the Westhill area with relatively low satisfaction levels across all potential answers.
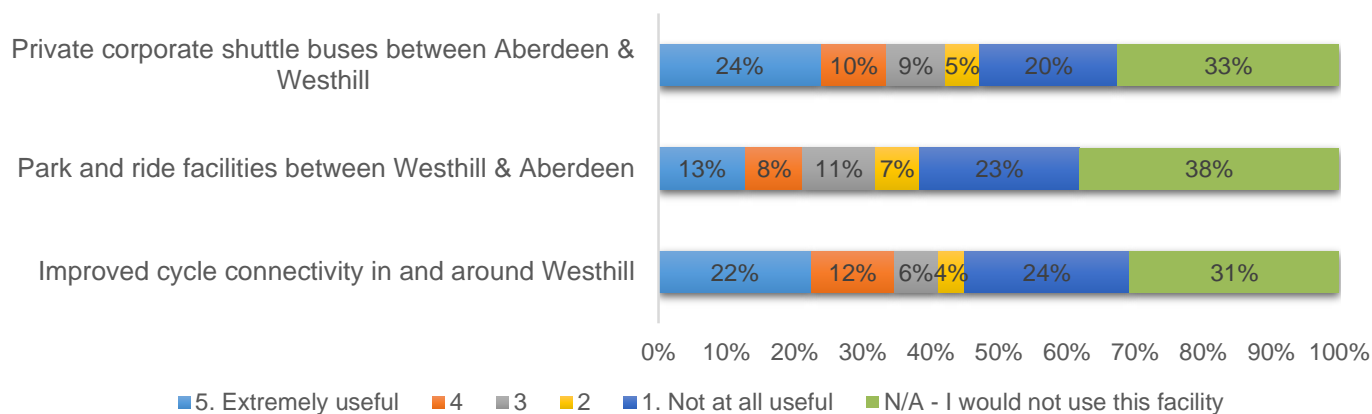
	5. Extremely useful	4	3	2	1. Not at all useful	N/A - I would not use this facility
Private corporate shuttle buses between Aberdeen & Westhill	24%	10%	9%	5%	20%	33%
Park and ride facilities between Westhill & Aberdeen	13%	8%	11%	7%	23%	38%
Improved cycle connectivity in and around Westhill	22%	12%	6%	4%	24%	31%

Community Interaction

The majority of employees believe that businesses have a responsibility to give something back to the community, as shown in Figure 13.

Suggestions provided by employees regarding what type of support should be provided, and to which areas, were analysed and grouped into the following main categories listed in Table 5.

Yes 69% No 8% Don't know 23%
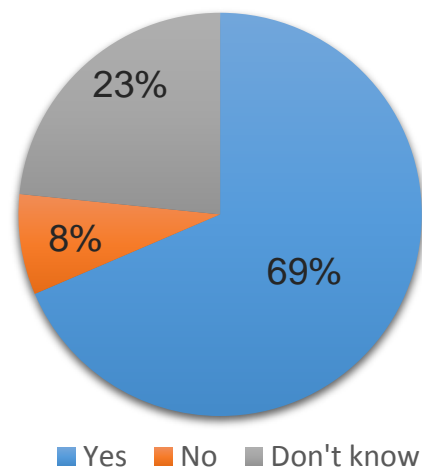
Table 5. Community support

Theme	Count	%
Charity	83	35%
Schools	56	24%
Local groups / facilities	43	18%
Local activities / events	39	17%
Roads / infrastructure	36	15%
Employment opportunities / career development	27	12%

The majority of employees felt that supporting local charities would be a suitable way for businesses to give back to the community.

Employees mentioned both financial contributions and volunteering time as suitable means of providing support. For a comprehensive list of suggested community support, categorised into themes, please refer to Appendix 4.

Potential Interventions

We wanted to gauge employee interest in possible new activities and clubs which could help increase community and businesses interaction. The level of interest highlighted in Figure 14 suggests there is a demand for more non-work related activities in Westhill for employees to utilise.

Figure 14. Interest in new activities
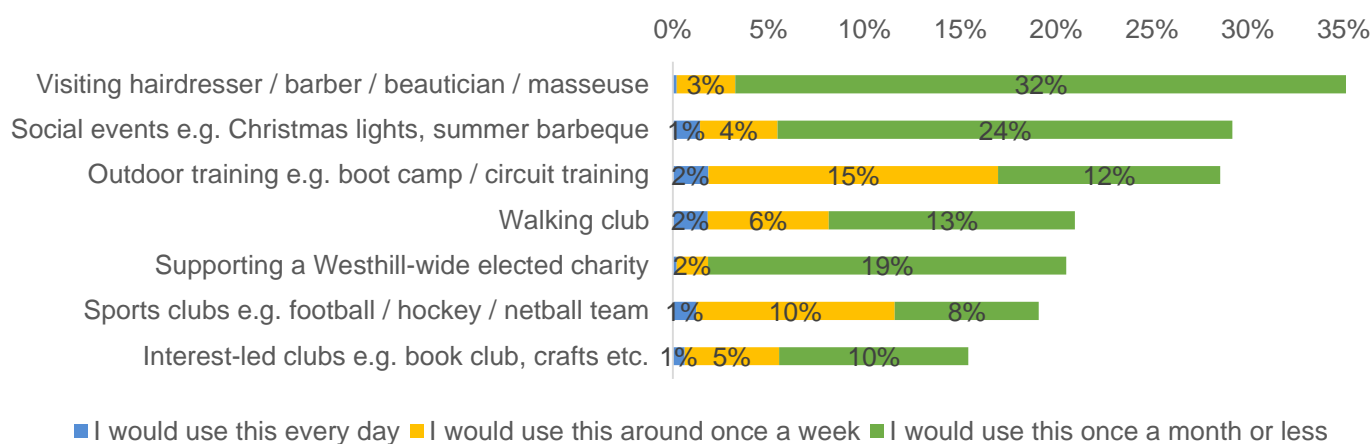
The highest level of interest is for visiting personal care services, although this service would be used on a less frequent basis than, for example, outdoor exercise activities which would be utilised most frequently as the survey responses suggest this activity would be used every week by 17% of employees.

Focus Group

Five local business employees volunteered to participate in a small focus group to discuss their experience of Westhill in more detail. Below are some quotes from the focus group.

> "The local facilities are not well known – businesses don't know about them i.e. the swimming pool – they need to be advertised better to us. There's a lack of communication of information – it's about what businesses can do for each other."

> "Parking is perceived as a problem – but only because people are visibly parked on the street. Probably because we don't have to pay for parking in Westhill. If there was double yellow lines that could solve the problem."

> "Public transport would have to be really good to encourage people to use it. Growth would be more likely for cycling than bus use."

> "The local parks aren't really for business people – we don't have time to use it because it's too far away. It would be good to have a park closer to us."

> "It would be good to have a business-catered facility (for food at lunchtime) for people to get out of the office, because we have to deal with school kids (in shops). But it would need to be closer to the business park (takes too long to go to Tesco and there's too much traffic)."

> "The work bus is often full – but I think they're trying to expand it."

> "If there's going to be more developments in the future, we need improvements to the infrastructure – it's already lagging behind. New housing introduces 2-3 cars per house – yet developers say it won't affect the roads."

RESIDENTS

General Overview

Westhill received much higher satisfaction scores as a residential area than as a workplace. These scores could reflect a strong bond from long-term residents as 61% of community respondents have lived in the area for more than 10 years.

Figure 15. Westhill as a place to live

| 36% | 56% | 7% |

■ 1. Excellent ■ 2. Good ■ 3. Average ■ 4. Poor ■ 5. Very poor

Figure 16. Business centre or Residential area?

16%

84%

■ Business centre ■ Residential area

As expected, the majority of the community sample believe Westhill is more of a residential area than a business centre. As revealed in the discussion with the W&ECC, this is likely due to the fact that Westhill originated as a residential area and employers have moved there over time.

It should also be noted that over 60% of the community believe that the growing business presence in Westhill over the past 5 years has had a positive impact on the town.

Figure 17. Three words to describe Westhill

Figure 17 represents the most frequently used terms that residents use when describing Westhill, and Table 6 highlights the most common overall themes identified.

Table 6. Three words to describe Westhill

Theme	Count	%
Friendly	88	43%
Safe	55	27%
Community	41	20%
Clean	26	13%
Quiet	22	11%

Business Interaction

Figure 18. Business / community engagement

Engage well
Do not engage well
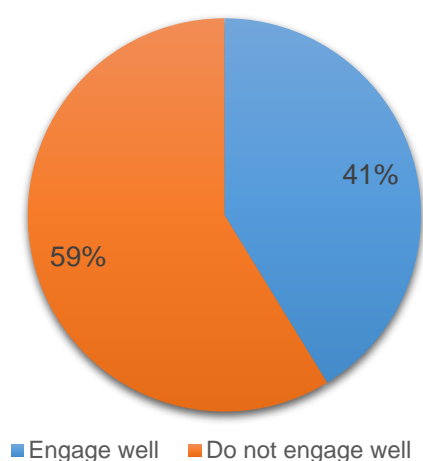
Although more than half of the community respondents believe that there is little engagement between businesses and the local community, the W&ECC highlighted that they are eager to increase their interaction with employers. However, hitherto there has been no suitable forum which existed.

There was a view that the WBN could be a way to create a closer dynamic. The group noted it would welcome an attendee from the WBN to their meetings.

Figure 19. Should businesses give back to the community?
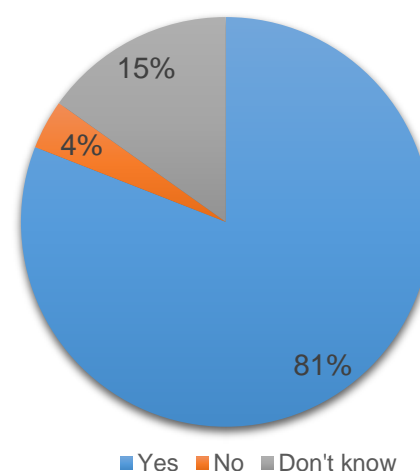
The vast majority of community respondents believe that businesses should give back to the local community. It was noted by the W&ECC that Westhill community facility usage is low and therefore the local area doesn't appear to benefit from the high population of employees when they are in the area.

Yes
No
Don't know

Facilities

Satisfaction with the local facilities is much higher from a community perspective, particularly for transport facilities / services.

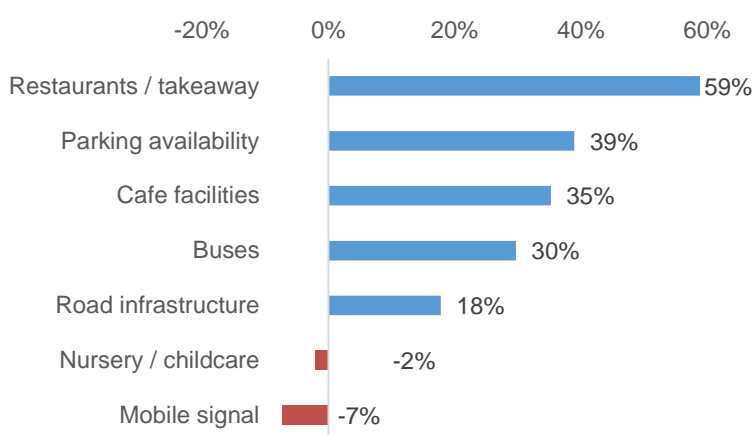*Figure 20. Net balance of satisfaction*

Figure 21 shows the net balance ([extremely satisfied + satisfied] – [dissatisfied + extremely dissatisfied]) of satisfaction levels of local facilities / services.

The community appears to be more satisfied with the amenities on offer to them. In comparison to employees, the majority of local facilities are utilised much more frequently by residents (see Appendix 5).

COMMON THEMES

Although the main focus of this research was to examine the potential to improve Westhill as a business location, it was important to understand the issues facing the community and how these two views interact and overlap. In so doing, we can identify the collective needs of the entire area and also pinpoint where the needs of certain groups aren't being fulfilled.

Facilities / services

Figure 22 below demonstrates how satisfied employees and residents are with local facilities. The items in the A2 section of the grid are facilities which both the community and businesses are satisfied with, whereas section A3 shows which facilities are rated negatively by both the community and businesses. Section A1 identifies issues that employees are dissatisfied with but the community are satisfied with, and vice versa in A4.

Figure 21. Satisfaction with facilities
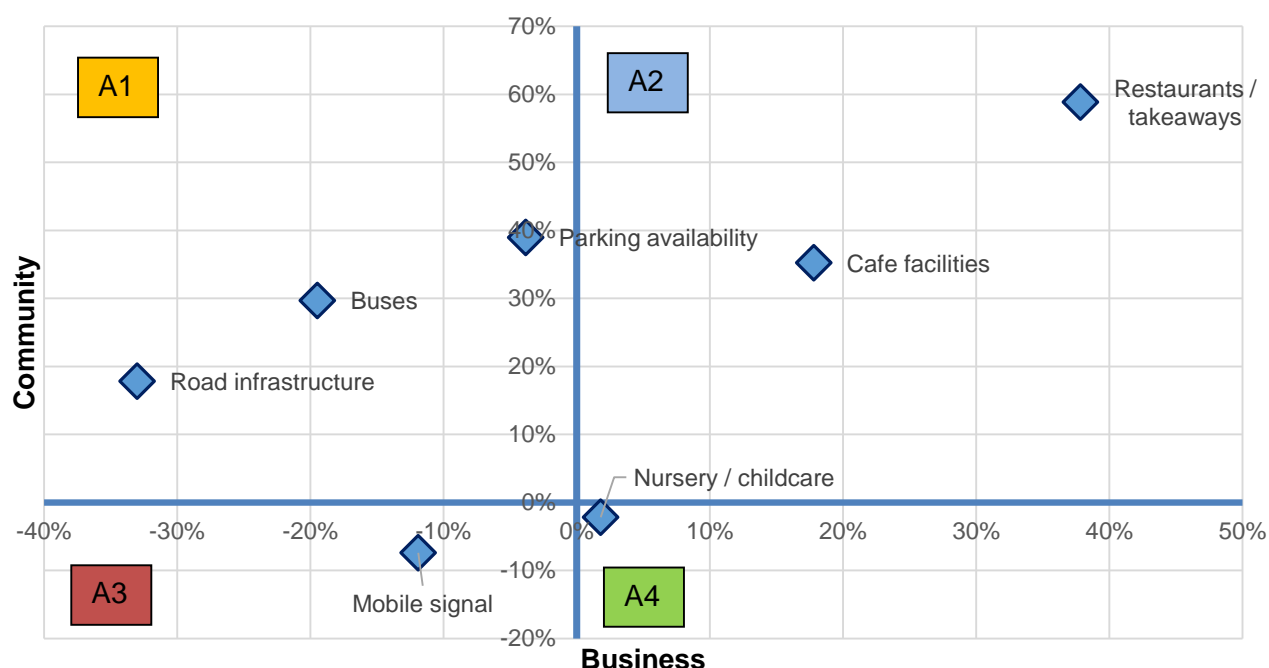
From the information depicted in Figure 22, we can see that the community are satisfied with the roads, parking and bus transport in Westhill yet these are significant issues for employees. The graph identifies mobile signal as the only issue which appears to rate negatively in satisfaction scores for both employees and the community. Catering facilities were rated most positively by both parties, suggesting that improvements are not urgent in that domain.

Improvements

There is much less variation in attitudes towards the importance of improvements to the area. With the exception of cultural facilities, all items were considered as having room for improvement. Items featuring in the top right quarter are those which are deemed, by both businesses and the community, to be most urgently requiring improvement.

Figure 22. Priority of improvements
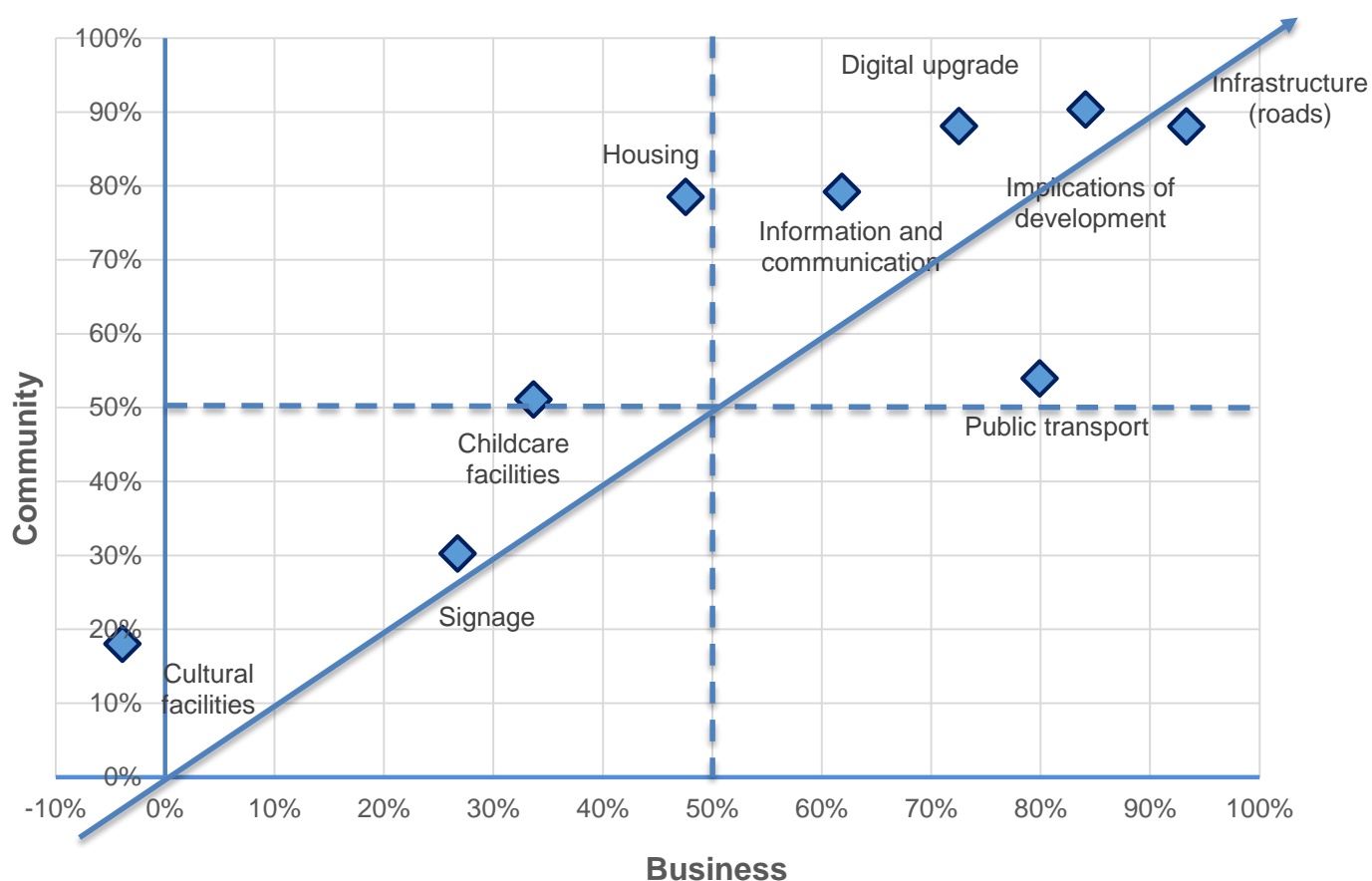
Summarising all of the data collected, we have summarised the issues raised during the research below.

Table 7. Summary of issues

Business issues	Community issues	Mutual issues	Satisfaction
• Commute to work	• Childcare • Housing	• Communication • Digital connectivity • Consideration for long-term implications of development • Infrastructure	• Catering

ACTION PLAN

It is clear that the outlook for Westhill is a positive one but there are identified gaps and room for improvement. We have therefore set out the suggested improvements below as a result of the research findings.

Information and Communication

Reference	IAC1
Intervention title	Communicate information between business & community
Rationale	Employees commented that they were unaware of the full range of facilities Westhill had to offer and thought this information could be advertised better to them. The community also noted a lack of communication, particularly in terms of new buildings and developments which are constructed without consulting the community.
Description	Both demographics could benefit from a platform to share regularly updated information (i.e. online forum, email updates).
Owner	Westhill Business Network / Westhill & Elrick Community Council
Timescale	Immediate
Cost	Low (revenue)

Reference	IAC2
Intervention title	Westhill networking sessions
Rationale	The Westhill & Elrick Community Council highlighted that they were eager to interact more with businesses but didn't have a viable method of speaking to a mass audience without individually approaching each one. The research identified that there is minimal contact between community members and businesses and also a lack of integration between employees from different companies. This would be an opportunity for the community to reach out to businesses but also allow employees to expand their business contacts and build valuable professional relationships.
Description	There could be an opportunity here to hold open networking events. This could be a service facilitated by the Chamber.
Owner	Westhill Business Network / Westhill & Elrick Community Council / AGCC
Timescale	Immediate
Cost	Negligible

Reference	IAC3
Intervention title	Extended business network
Rationale	To ensure that inclusion in business – community interactions and future interventions is not limited to those involved in the Westhill Business Network, it would be beneficial to expand its reach. This would also help to ensure smaller businesses are not excluded and this would also provide key contact data for the WBN which could facilitate any further business research in the future.
Description	A directory of all businesses in Westhill with a designated contact from each to receive all relevant communications. Potential for inclusion of small employers / a representative.
Owner	Westhill Business Network
Timescale	Immediate
Cost	Low

Reference	IAC4
Intervention title	Local information updates
Rationale	It was identified that various business employees were dissatisfied with new infrastructure and road changes such as speed level adjustments. Many were unaware that these changes were taking place and were therefore unable to submit an objection against proposals. It would therefore benefit business employees to have a method of receiving these updates so that they would not have to constantly seek out this information.
Description	Updates of planning permission proposals and road changes
Owner	Westhill Business Network
Timescale	Ongoing
Cost	Low

Reference	IAC5
Intervention title	Promotion of WBN
Rationale	Individuals noted an initial uncertainty about what the purpose of the WBN was and what actions it could deliver. It is important that the Westhill Business Network communicate what they can facilitate and provide contact details to allow people to get in touch.
Description	Communicate the purpose of the WBN and provide a point of contact such as a WBN-specific email address
Owner	Westhill Business Network
Timescale	Immediate
Cost	Low

Community support

Reference	CS1
Intervention title	Volunteering in the community
Rationale	The vast majority of employees (69%) felt it was important that businesses gave something back to the community. The types of support they identified were charities, schools, local groups, facilities and local activities/events. Volunteering can encourage greater community interaction and allow businesses to assert their philanthropic commitment to the area by being actively involved.
Description	With support from the community council, an online form could be created detailing various projects in the area which require volunteers.
Owner	Westhill & Elrick Community Council / Businesses
Timescale	Short-term
Cost	Low

Reference	CS2
Intervention title	Business mentoring
Rationale	The research highlighted that the community feel that business growth has had a positive impact on Westhill and it is therefore important to encourage further business growth and entrepreneurial activity in the area.
Description	The Westhill Business Network could offer their collective knowledge and expertise to budding entrepreneurs in Westhill via business mentoring sessions.
Owner	Westhill Business Network
Timescale	Short-term
Cost	Low

Reference	CS3
Intervention title	Informing students about career opportunities in Westhill
Rationale	One of the key themes identified by employees regarding the type of support that businesses should provide to the community was offering career development opportunities, especially for Academy pupils. This could be offer an excellent opportunity for students to learn more about the industry and encourage them to follow a career within the sector in Westhill.
Description	Collaborating with Westhill Academy to create even more opportunities for pupils engage with employers.
Owner	Businesses / Westhill Academy
Timescale	Medium-term
Cost	Low

Reference	CS4
Intervention title	Connecting with the Community Council
Rationale	Throughout the research process communication with the community was primarily facilitated by AGCC staff. To ensure a strong bond is maintained between business and community leaders, it could benefit the relationship between the two groups if a member of the Community Council was invited to WBN meetings and conversely a member of the WBN is invited to attend Community Council meetings.
Description	Meeting invitations between WBN and W&ECC
Owner	Westhill Business Network / Westhill & Elrick Community Council
Timescale	Short-term
Cost	Low

Business Representation

Reference	BR1
Intervention title	One voice for Westhill businesses
Rationale	One finding which emerged from the research process was that large employers primarily have the same concerns. The survey discovered that businesses were unsatisfied with bus transport, road infrastructure and mobile signal. It is important that the requirements of the local workforce are addressed to ensure job retention in the area and also to attract more people to work in Westhill. Additionally, these improvements will help to make it an appealing site for investors and encourage business growth.
Description	In order to avoid duplicate efforts to improve the current situation, one unified voice is required to lobby for the needs of business employees
Owner	Westhill Business Network
Timescale	Ongoing
Cost	Low

Reference	BR2
Intervention title	Ensuring business satisfaction is improving
Rationale	The research has provided a good benchmark of the current opinions of businesses in Westhill, but it is important that this information is updated in the future – not only to ensure the goals identified continue to be relevant and appropriate, but also to capture change following any updates and improvements made to the area. To do this, it will be beneficial to conduct the research again in around two years to ensure the effects of the actions executed by the Westhill Business Network are filtering down to employees.
Description	Repeat research process to measure change
Owner	Westhill Business Network / AGCC
Timescale	Medium-term
Cost	Medium

Marketing, Promotion & Development

Reference	MPD1
Intervention title	Encouraging investors and developers
Rationale	In order to make Westhill more appealing and prominent as an investment opportunity, it would be worthwhile producing a document highlighting the current offering in Westhill. This would increase visibility of Westhill and the business opportunities available.
Description	Creating promotional materials highlighting the current offering in Westhill.
Owner	Westhill Business Network / AGCC
Timescale	Short-term
Cost	Medium

Reference	MPD2
Intervention title	Business Improvement District
Rationale	60% of employees were in support of the creation of a BID for the Westhill area. The creation of a BID will provide a source of funding for the ideas generated by the Westhill Business Network and will allow the opinions of the local businesses in the area to be heard and translated into substantial physical improvements. Essentially, the BID would be a fully inclusive version of the WBN. Typical projects addressed by a BID would be regeneration projects to improve the conditions and attractiveness of the area, marketing to target and attract new businesses or investors and improving visitor experience by providing tourist information and improving signage in the area. The BID could be operated by a non-profit organisation, governed by a board of property owners, businesses and government officials.
Description	The creation of a BID in Westhill.
Owner	Businesses / Aberdeenshire Council
Timescale	Long-term
Cost	High

Reference	MPD3
Intervention title	'Masterplanning'
Rationale	There appears to be an appetite for development from both businesses and residents. However, this development must be well planned and delivered in a manner suited to a growing town which serves both a strong business and residential community. To facilitate appropriate, well managed and consensus led growth it appears that a town plan / master plan is required. **This plan should address the concerns of both residents and businesses that Westhill does not have a 'heart'.** Such a plan will help provide a directional document which means future development will not come as a surprise to the community.
Description	Development of a masterplan
Owner	Aberdeenshire Council
Timescale	Medium Term
Cost	Medium (revenue)

Reference	MPD4
Intervention title	Creating an identity
Rationale	There is a clear view that Westhill is both a residential and business town. As such it is important that the branding of the town reflects this. Any branding of Westhill needs to help the town present its true identify. As such it is recommended that the branding of Westhill is reviewed.
Description	Branding exercise
Owner	All partners
Timescale	Short-term
Cost	Low

Encouraging Facility Usage

Reference	EFU1
Intervention title	Increasing employee use of local facilities
Rationale	The research indicated that most people do not make regular use of Westhill's facilities. As noted previously, this could be partly due to a lack of awareness which could be resolved by promoting facilities better. Alternatively, if this is not the cause, another way to encourage use of local shops and food outlets could be to create and sell voucher books to Westhill employees which would offer discounts to use local facilities.
Description	Maximising local impacts
Owner	Westhill Business Network
Timescale	Long-term
Cost	Medium

Reference	EFU2
Intervention title	Increasing employee social activity within Westhill
Rationale	The research highlighted that many people consider Westhill as a business centre and only make use of the area for work. Beyond ensuring job satisfaction, it is important that employees feel some level of social inclusion and maintain a high quality of life. By increasing social activity in the area, Westhill will cease to be considered as merely a workplace location or a business centre.
Description	Activities which received the highest levels of interest in the survey were: a visiting hairdresser/beautician, social events i.e. summer BBQ, outdoor exercise clubs and a walking club.
Owner	Businesses
Timescale	Short-term
Cost	Low

Appendix 1: Consultation Discussion Guide

Westhill Business Research
Consultation Discussion Guide

Proposed dates: W/C 17th November for 3 weeks
Facilitated by: AGCC

Preface: The consultations will follow a semi-scripted structure and will last approximately 30 minutes. The general content of the consultations is detailed below, and additional prompt questions have been included to facilitate the structure of the discussion. The consultations will be conducted in a face-to-face meeting, alternatively if this is not possible, over the telephone. The aim is to conduct 10-15 consultations with a mixture of business and community representatives.

Content of Consultation Interviews:

1) Introduction
    a) Brief introduction
    b) Objectives and purpose of research
    c) Request to circulate survey around staff

2) What works well in the area
    a) Current offering
    b) Facilities / Activities

3) Challenges
    a) Issues and problems
    b) Future threats
    c) Development constraints

4) Opportunities
    a) Possible improvements
    b) What would make Westhill a better place to be
    c) New / additional facilities
    d) More interaction between community & businesses

Facilitating questions:

- What do you like about (working in) Westhill?
    - What do you like about your business premises?
    - Why did your company decide to locate in Westhill?
- How long has your business been in Westhill for?
    - Do you see the business staying in Westhill for the foreseeable future?
- What is the one thing you would like to change about (working in) Westhill?
- What do you like about Westhill?
- What is the one thing you would like to change about Westhill?
- What benefits do you have that people in Aberdeen City Centre perhaps don't have?
- Do you make use of any local facilities?
- What are the best facilities available to you?
- Are there any facilities you would like to see in Westhill?
- Do you think there is a suitable level of interaction between businesses and the community?
- Which of the following do you think would have the biggest impact on transforming Westhill into a better place to be?
    - Signage
    - Childcare facilities
    - Transport (active, public, roads)
    - Information and communication
    - Role of area - a 'strategic development corridor'
    - Infrastructure
    - Housing (availability, cost)
    - Long-term planning / development
    - Digital upgrade and take-up

Appendix 2: Most liked aspect of working in Westhill

Response	Count	%
Easy commute / distance from home	206	45%
Access to amenities	95	21%
Open space / green area / Country feel	59	13%
Avoids Aberdeen City Centre	37	8%
Nice area / location (generic)	27	6%
Office building	20	4%
Nothing / Negative comments	20	4%
Better than alternatives	18	4%
The job / company / industry	17	4%
Proximity / connectivity to other locations	10	2%

Appendix 3: Employees – facility use

How often do you make use of the following facilities in Westhill?

	1. Often (At least once a week)	2. Sometimes (At least once a month)	3. Rarely (At least once a year)	4. Almost never (less than once a year)	5. Never	6. Not applicable to me
Arnhall Moss Local Nature Reserve / Carnie Woods / Denman Park	5%	10%	12%	7%	61%	5%
Ashdale Hall	1%	2%	9%	5%	76%	7%
Costco	10%	49%	17%	5%	17%	2%
Food stores (Aldi, Tesco, etc.)	47%	39%	8%	2%	3%	1%
Hotels (Holiday Inn, Premier Inn)	2%	20%	34%	13%	29%	4%
Lawsondale Playing Field	1%	2%	4%	8%	75%	10%
Nursery / Childcare	3%		1%	1%	64%	31%
Restaurants / takeaway	5%	26%	30%	10%	24%	4%
School	3%	1%	1%		57%	38%
Skene Health Centre	1%	5%	9%	2%	62%	21%
The Peter Nicol Squash & Fitness Centre	1%	2%	2%		84%	10%
Trinity Church	1%	1%	1%		81%	14%
Westdyke Leisure Centre	1%	1%	2%	4%	81%	10%
Westhill Community Centre	1%	1%	2%	3%	81%	11%
Westhill Library	2%	2%	3%		81%	10%
Westhill Shopping Centre	22%	39%	17%	4%	16%	2%
Westhill Swimming Pool	4%	8%	9%	5%	67%	8%

Appendix 4: Giving back to the community

Response	Count	%
Charity	83	35%
Schools	56	24%
Support local groups / facilities	43	18%
Support activities / events	39	17%
Roads / infrastructure	36	15%
Employment opportunities / Career development	27	12%
Financial contribution (generic)	18	8%
Engagement / collaboration / communication	15	6%
Support sports	12	5%
Local area upkeep / maintenance (volunteering)	11	5%
Environmental / green initiatives (financial)	10	4%
Already give back	9	4%
Support other Westhill businesses	7	3%
Offer facilities / time	7	3%

Appendix 5: Residents – Facility use

How often do you make use of the following facilities in Westhill

Horizontal stacked bar chart showing facility use frequency:

Facility	1. Often	2. Sometimes	3. Rarely	4. Almost never	5. Never	6. Not applicable
Arnhall Moss Local Nature Reserve / Carnie Woods / Denman Park	24%	30%	29%	9%	8%	
Ashdale Hall	9%	20%	46%	17%	6%	1%
Bus transport	20%	37%	21%	9%	12%	
Costco	30%	57%	7%	1%	4%	
Food stores (Aldi, Tesco)	93%			6%	1%	
Hotels (Holiday Inn, Premier Inn)	8%	52%	28%	5%	7%	1%
Lawsondale Playing Field	6%	7%	18%	16%	44%	10%
Nursery / childcare	25%	2%	2%	3%	30%	37%
Restaurants / takeaway	23%	63%	10%	3%	1%	
School	52%	4%	1%	2%	10%	32%
Skene Health Centre	8%	46%	40%	3%	1%	1%
The Peter Nicol Squash & Fitness Centre	1%	2%	8%	6%	71%	11%
Trinity Church	12%	10%	13%	15%	39%	11%
Westdyke Leisure Centre	29%	9%	10%	10%	37%	5%
Westhill Community Centre	24%	11%	15%	14%	31%	4%
Westhill Library	10%	28%	18%	12%	30%	3%
Westhill Shopping Centre	83%	16%			1%	
Westhill Swimming Pool	34%	18%	21%	7%	17%	2%

Legend:
- 1. Often (At least once a week)
- 2. Sometimes (At least once a month)
- 3. Rarely (At least once a year)
- 4. Almost never (less than once a year)
- 5. Never
- 6. Not applicable to me