

## Appendix 3: Glen Urquhart Community Survey Analysis

A community survey was conducted in May and June 2024 to gather information on what residents want for their local area over the next ten years. The aim was to raise awareness of the Local Place Plan, explain the need for community involvement, and engage people in mapping, recording, and prioritising their ideas. It was available to fill out online using a link / QR code or on paper copies, and issued via:

- Email to community subscriber list.
- Facebook – multiple posts were put up on GUCC's page, which were shared and liked by many organisations and individuals.
- Paper copies were available to pick up and drop off at several local locations.
- Posters with a QR code and link were posted across the area.
- Flyers were hand delivered by volunteers to many outlying areas.

171 surveys were completed, which represents a 9% response rate amongst the local population of 2,077 people and provides significant and detailed feedback.

Key points:

- The natural environment is highly valued by 95% of the community respondents, the woodlands, the walks and the lack of pollution.
- The safe environment for families to raise children and give them a good education was recognised by 77% of people.
- 75% of people felt they had good access to health care.
- Respondents were less positive about shopping facilities, recreation facilities, public transport and job opportunities.
- Minority groups and teenagers were defined as the least supported groups in the community. Comments indicated that young people who aren't sporty have very little activities to access.
- 79% of respondents wanted a more frequent bus service, including mornings and evening. More capacity is needed during peak holiday times, when visitors and locals use the service.
- 60% of respondents wanted to see improved road safety. There were many comments about improved pavements and cycle paths to separate walkers and cyclists from road traffic.
- The community would like to see less reliance on tourism for employment, suggesting studios, workshops and small industrial units could help diversify the local economy.
- Many comments suggested the local shops were not adequate for their needs (Scotmid too small), requesting more variety e.g. butchers, farm shop, beauty, etc.
- Access to Loch Ness was a recurring theme, requested both for locals and as a facility to improve the experience of visitors and boost the local economy.
- 64% of respondents believe the area needs more affordable housing.
- A local swimming pool and community gym were the most popular requests for improving leisure facilities. The old shop site was identified as a possible location.
- The natural heritage of the landscape is highly valued, with concern about new buildings, deer and neglect having a negative impact on it.

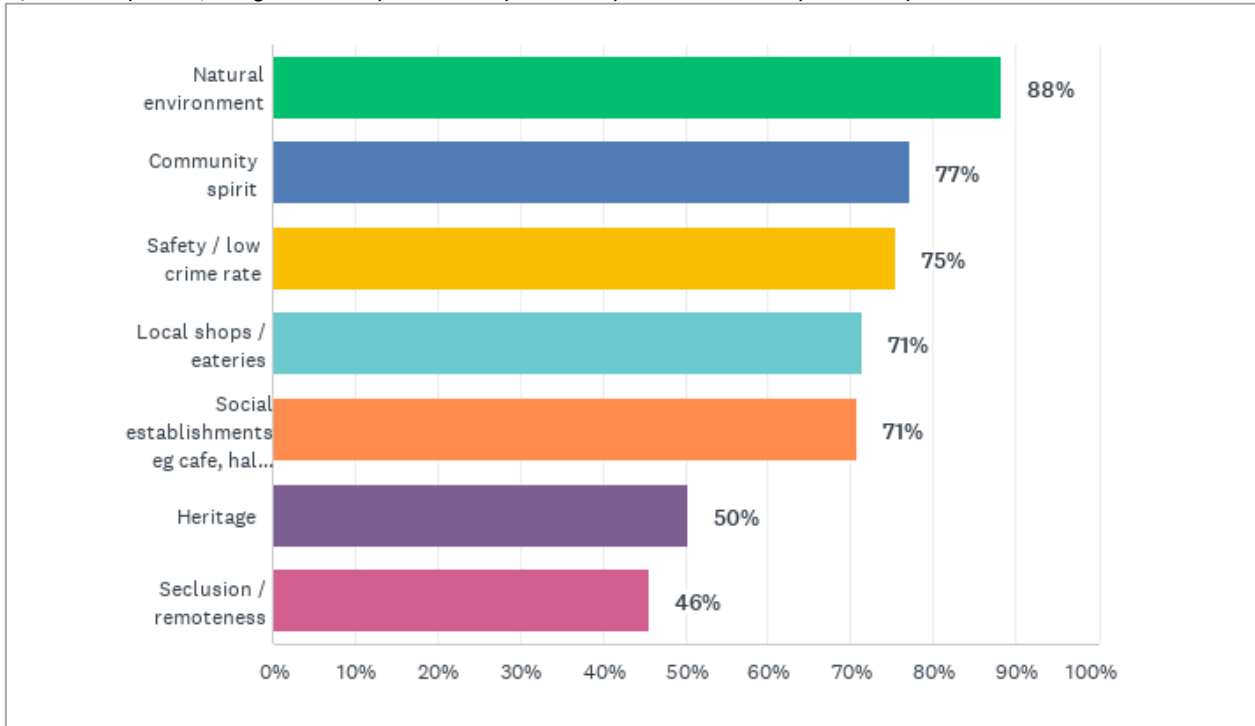
The survey was part of a series of engagement activities which included:

- Interviews with key stakeholders and informants
- A workshop with 26 people contributing their ideas to the local maps and prioritising actions on a chart of ease of delivery and impact.
- Drop-in session where community members from across the area contributed their ideas, prioritised ideas and marked any locals on detailed maps of the local area.
- Discussion with the local groups
- Activity with the primary school to record the children's ideas for the LPP.

### 1. Key aspects of Glen Urquhart to preserve and enhance

The natural environment was ranked as the most important aspect of Glen Urquhart. Community spirit and safety were the next most important, followed by local shops and social gathering spaces. Many people commented on their favourite parts of Glen Urquhart, particularly highlighting the landscape and the value of a safe environment where young people have the freedom to play outdoors.

Q1 What aspects of living in Glen Urquhart are important to you and should be preserved/protected/enhanced?



A selection of comments:

- *It is a good place to live. Strive to keep it that way.*
- *How there are lots of paths in the village which make it a nice easy place to get around. Also, there are lots of woodland areas close to the village like Craigmonie Woodland and Glen Urquhart Bay Woods.*
- *Craigmonie Woods because they have lots of bluebells and cool trees*
- *All the gift and treat shops. And I'm really glad about the low crime rate and the niceness of the people.*
- *The friendliness of everyone living here, everyone says hello, everyone would help if you were in need*
- *Being able to live and work in the area.*
- *Clean air and lack of noise and light pollution.*
- *Its long history and how that's shaped the place.*
- *The kids having freedom to play.*
- *Safety of my children. I love that they can go out to play/knock on their friends' doors. I know others look out for them as I do for other children, so I hugely value that sense of trust and safety within the community.*

## 2. Services and access

This question shows the divide between the positive and negative aspects of the area. The positives are the natural environment, the schools, health care and active travel routes. The aspects that people felt needed improvement were shopping, recreation, transport and job opportunities.

Q 2 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements. Glen Urquhart has:

| Does your community have:        | Agree | Neutral | Disagree |
|----------------------------------|-------|---------|----------|
| Access to green space and nature | 95%   | 2%      | 2%       |

|   |     |     |     |
|---|-----|-----|-----|
| Good schooling                              | 77% | 22% | 1%  |
| Accessible health care                      | 75% | 14% | 11% |
| Access to safe walking and cycling routes   | 69% | 8%  | 23% |
| Adequate shopping facilities                | 34% | 16% | 50% |
| Access to recreation and leisure facilities | 32% | 25% | 43% |
| Accessible and reliable public transport    | 18% | 23% | 58% |
| Good job opportunities                      | 16% | 49% | 35% |

### 3. Inclusivity

We asked how well the Glen Urquhart community caters to various groups. The responses were mixed, but it was clear that minority groups and teenagers are thought to be the least supported. Opinions on support for people with health needs and working individuals were the most divided.

Q 3 To what extent do you feel your community caters for the following groups?

| Does your community cater for: | Yes | Partly | No  | Don't Know |
|--------------------------------|-----|--------|-----|------------|
| Young children                 | 20% | 45%    | 8%  | 27%        |
| People of retirement age       | 19% | 58%    | 12% | 12%        |
| Parents and toddlers           | 18% | 44%    | 7%  | 32%        |
| People with health needs       | 8%  | 50%    | 22% | 19%        |
| People of working age          | 8%  | 58%    | 23% | 11%        |
| Minority groups                | 5%  | 22%    | 27% | 46%        |
| Teenagers                      | 4%  | 28%    | 44% | 25%        |

#### A selection of comments:

- Sports for the young are catered for but not non-sporting activities.
- We need more for teenagers, young working people etc
- A very good village for the elderly
- A swimming pool in the village would be incredible!
- This village is a great place for all ages! The roads aren't that busy when it's the off season and even in season the drivers are usually careful.
- There is lots of things for young children to do but I don't think there is much for teenagers to do.
- At present there is on the whole something for everyone and with improved public transport most people could be catered for. My concern is the pressure that all the ongoing new housing is going to put on facilities that are only just managing.
- We are a community with an older demographic and there are a number of clubs and activities for them to engage with. Activities for younger age groups seem to be mostly sports related and better facilities are needed in this area.
- The old basketball net area/tennis court could be used again and made into a multi sport area.
- We need better cycling trails suitable for families, we need our local pub back open, and we need the local gym in the Craigmonie centre to be open again.
- Loch access ( both Ness and Meiklie) is extremely poor.

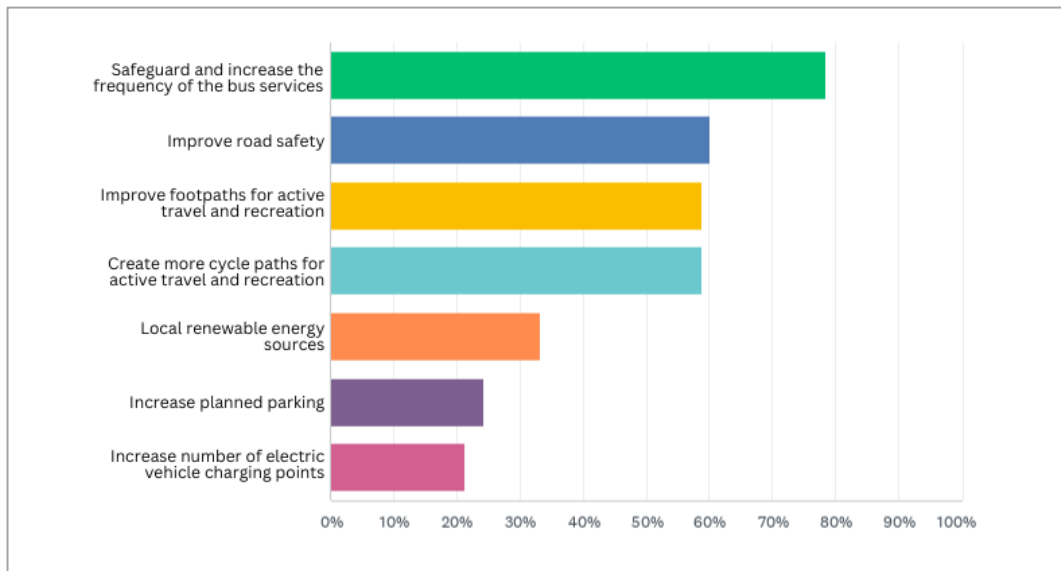
### 4. Transport and infrastructure

Increasing the frequency of the public buses was the top request from the community and something that was referenced many times in the comments. Respondents requested more buses throughout the day, to include mornings and evening, and more capacity on the buses as they are often full in the summer with

visitors leaving no room for locals. Road safety was also a concern and there is a desire for more paths and cycle trails.

There were negative comments about large scale renewable energy schemes, but there was some appetite for small scale local schemes to supply local needs.

Q4. Transport and infrastructure. What areas, do you think the community should focus on?



#### A selection of comments:

- *It very much helps having City Link, otherwise only having 17 local stage coach quite limiting.*
- *Increase the frequency of more local buses number 17. Also, evenings and early morning.*
- *More buses running, as in summer time there is not many spaces.*
- *A82 - hazard for cyclists on the main road. Create cycle path to Inverness.*
- *As a result of the traffic the pavements along the A82 do not always feel safe and there is a need for dedicated cycle paths/routes.*
- *Reduce speeding through the village and side roads*
- *I live off the a831 and a safe route to school is a major concern for my family. We feel the bridge on the a82 is extremely dangerous.*
- *Make the bridge over the Enrick safer for pedestrians and cyclists (could walkways be built on the far side of the current parapets?).*
- *Road safety is a key issue especially at two points along the A82 - the footpath to Urquhart Castle and the area immediately adjacent to the "TIC" carpark where folk treat the road as a pedestrian precinct.*
- *I walk my children to school from Enrick crescent, for the majority of the way there is no pavement on a one track road, we usually cut through the woods to avoid that but I often feel there is a need for a path through the village hall garden to the pavement and traffic lights to miss out walking on the sharp corner where vehicles can come around at speed. I have noticed groups of tourists walking on that corner many times and see it as an accident waiting to happen. If there was a path through the hall gardens a bench and some community flower pots, done by different community groups etc would be lovely too.*
- *I think there should be more forest walks*
- *Make the Cover a bit more of a protected area because it is very nice there.*
- *The re instatement of the bridge that washed away in 1950's at west end garage linking Milton to Drum would be a great asset to the community as a walking and cycling way, linking the village and the surrounding area with a direct route for children to school and adults to amenities alike without having to risk crossing the drum bridge.*
- *Invest in a new playpark next to the Shinty pitch it could be a lot better.*

- *We need truly local renewable energy not the large scale stuff that feeds into the grid.*
- *Plenty of renewable energy sources under development already.*
- *This area is getting flooded with wind farms, endangering wildlife which should be protected.*
- *Better recycling & rubbish/litter collection/deposit facilities. Particularly during visitor season.*

## 5. Local economy

We asked the question “What local job opportunities are there? How can we provide more job opportunities locally? e.g. work units, studio/workshop space”.

There were 110 responses to this question. Common requests were for:

- Studios, workshops, craft studios for start-ups, artists etc.
- Space for businesses that want to expand. E.g. small industrial units.
- Accommodation for seasonal staff
- Affordable housing to rent/buy.
- Apprenticeships with local firms.

It was felt that the village mainly relied on tourism and that a wider range of employment would be useful to provide jobs all year round.

Local businesses mentioned included:

Cobbs, hospitality and tourism, and also hydro, fisheries and forestry, carers, cleaners, teachers etc

## 6. Shops and services

We asked the question “What would encourage you to make more use of your local shops and services?”.

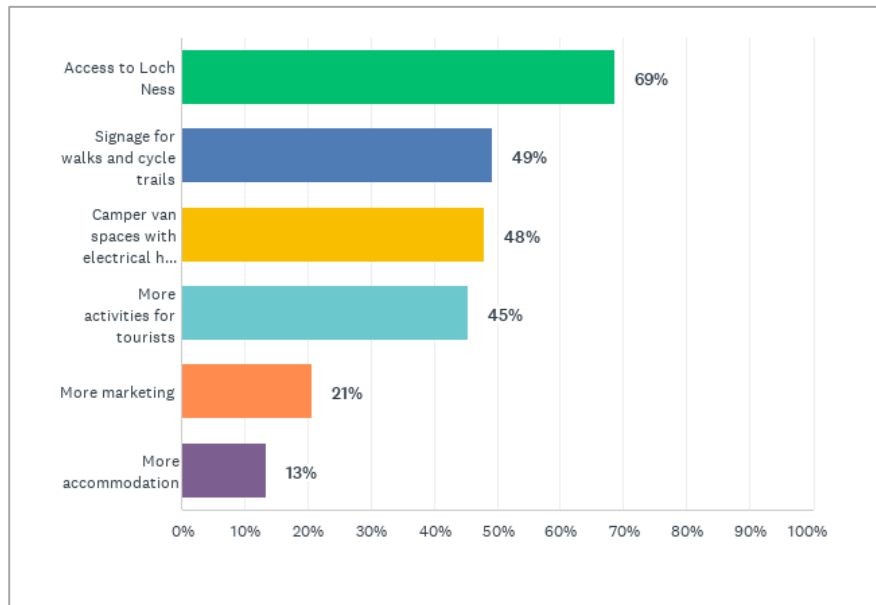
There were 140 responses to this question. Common suggestions were:

- More variety of local shops is needed and the Scotmid is too small for the community needs and was thought to be expensive.
- Shops suggested including beauty, butchers, baker, outdoor gear, hardware, farm shop
- Several people reference Beaully is an example of a village with better shopping and business facilities.
- More local produce e.g. venison, fruit, vegetables
- Cheaper prices.

## 7. Tourist facilities

Access to Loch Ness was the seen as the most important facility to provide for tourists, followed by signage for walking and cycle paths.

Q7. *How can we support our local economy through the provision of tourist facilities?*



There were many comments about improving the access to Loch Ness. Several people mentioned the need for a “slow tourism” model, where there are more facilities/activities for tourists, so they stay longer, spend more money and can access the area on foot/bike.

There were mixed reactions to the campervan question. Some people pointed out that there were already facilities at local campsites, but others felt more facilities were needed and irresponsible parking and waste disposal needed to be addressed.

#### A selection of comments:

- *Tourists seem happy with the Hub etc. This is probably on the right track.*
- *Better access to the Cover and crossing Coiltie River*
- *There should be more things on in the evenings for visitors.*
- *Tourist want to get down to the Loch from the village.*
- *Access to the water is key. It would open a larger amount of activities and tourism opportunities.*
- *The footpath to the castle needs to be improved at the Strone end. It is uneven, narrow and very close to the road.*
- *Signage should be greatly improved! There are many nice walking routes but the more casual visitors may not even know they are there.*
- *A well integrated planning approach should see the development of suitable amenities and infrastructure that could develop a slow-tourism model, retaining tourists in the area for a longer period of time, promoting more active-travel tourism, and use of public transport.*
- *Safe Loch Ness 360 road cycle circuit has huge potential to repay the investment and would benefit locals for recreation & active commuting*
- *Borlum Farm Campsite is big enough & never full - close proximity to the village & Urquhart Castle needs more publicity*
- *We don't need more accommodation. It will become an AirBnB village, not a village for people to live and work.*
- *I think the village is too busy. Please do not encourage most tourism. I think the village is at capacity during summer months.*

## 8. Housing

We asked a general question about housing, which will be followed up with a more detailed housing questionnaire later in the year.

- 64% of respondents thought the area needed more affordable housing.
- 30% requested 2-bed accommodation
- 30% requested no more housing

## 9. Leisure and recreation facilities

We asked the question, “How can we improve leisure and recreation facilities?”. 128 people left comments which we have shown in a word cloud below.



A local swimming pool and community gym were the most popular requests, ideally as part of a leisure centre available for locals and tourists. There were also several comments about tennis courts and golf facilities.

### A selection of comments:

- Funding for the hall to be allocated. Fuller activities to happen at the community high school.
- Long term investment in an Arboretum and gardens. Short term classic garden could be planted. A cafe. A plant shop. A playground. Parking.
- 9 hole golf course. Nice public garden or park area.
- A swimming pool. Allotments. Community garden.
- A swimming pool and a better park for the kids. A skatepark or pump track for all ages and teens.
- Tennis courts pickle ball courts
- Fixing the mini astro which is by the shinty pitch and also the mini golf course
- Cycle paths for safe cycling.
- Pickleball, Tennis, five a side MUGA court needed like in Dornoch

## 10. Heritage

We asked the question “What heritage do you value? How can we protect and enhance our local heritage and conservation area?”. There were 102 responses. Some mentioned the need for signage and more information; this should be rectified when the heritage notice boards and website are finished. The landscape and its heritage were also highly valued, with concern about new buildings, deer and neglect having a negative impact on it.

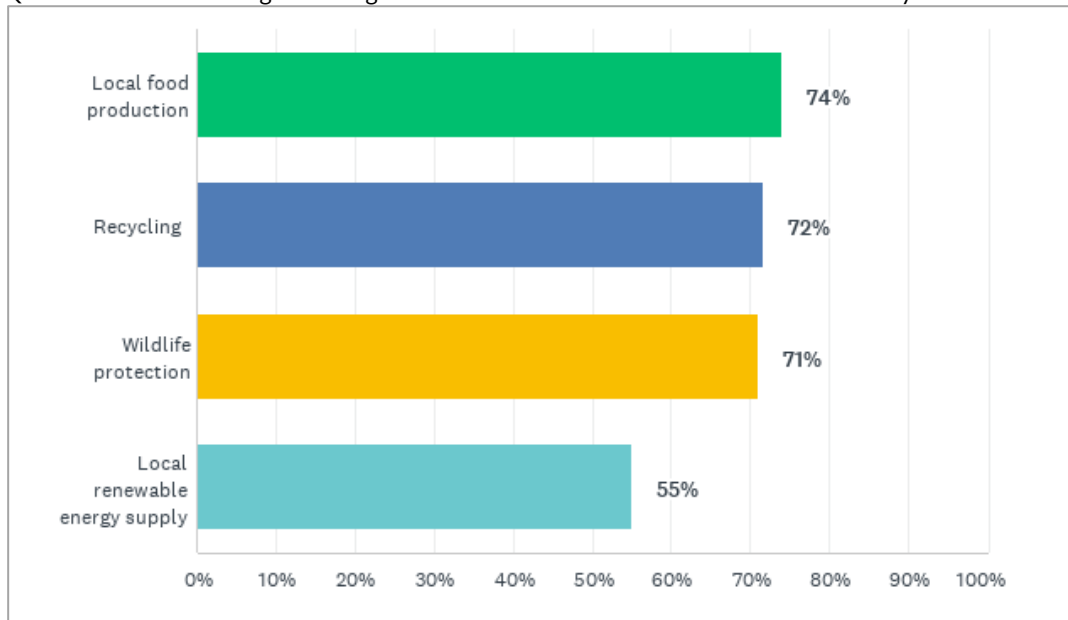
### A selection of comments:

- *The history of the Glen to be presenting in some way.*
- *Loch Ness needs to be valued and protected.*
- *Protect our green spaces with no building, provide seating and bins*
- *Highland games, shinty.*
- *There is so much hidden history in the area, and so much archaeology is routinely found in Drum and the surrounding area. Creating a history trail or something similar would be a nice addition*
- *Our attachment to the land. We're losing that every time another house is built on croft land and hard won fields disappear through neglect to bracken and gorse. This land was won/ created over many thousands of years yet disappears when planning permission is granted for a "new build".*
- *I value Glen Urquhart castle.*
- *We need to control the deer population so that trees can grow more. I also think we should try to keep old crofts liveable.*
- *A lot of our heritage is hidden. We could look to enhance information about it through media and direct people to it. There are locations where work could be done to understand the heritage better such as in Blairbeg woods. Also lots of iron and Bronze Age burial sites unearthed here but we have no comprehensive narrative.*
- *The natural environment. The plan should support restoration of the natural environment.*
- *History of our glorious castles and the legendary story of Loch Ness Monster that keeps the people coming over to explore the possibilities from around the world.*
- *Corrimony Cairn is amazing as is Corrimony waterfall. Probably not enough is made of it*

## 11. Climate challenges and environmental issues

Local food production, recycling and wildlife protection were the most voted for issues to address locally.

Q11. What climate change challenges and environmental issues can we address locally?



## 12. Local Place Plan comments

We asked people for additional comments they'd like to make, that they hadn't covered elsewhere in the survey. 67 people left comments. The comments were dominated with negative comments about the new larger scale housing developments, with the general feeling that the locals have been ignored. People were

also disappointed that local energy projects don't result in cheaper energy for locals. There were several positive ideas around community growing and allotments.

**A selection of comments:**

- *The Drum Bridge is too narrow, should make a pedestrian bridge at the side. Need more space for pedestrians, especially with more people moving into the new housing .*
- *People should only be allowed to own one AirBnB, so that villagers can still live here. I'm not against AirBnB's in moderation.*
- *Local food production - provide space for allotments for local residents and other community growing space to grow fruits and vegetables.*
- *Should we not develop a "local identity" such that folk are proud of where we live ? That way, each day, no matter how slightly, we'll nurture/ improve/ enhance the area.*
- *Establishment of a community garden for growing fresh produce*
- *Local renewable energy should benefit the community, i.e. lower bills and local projects. Not just Wind, but contributions from battery storage and pumped hydro!*
- *Need to stop the deforestation of Glen Urquhart, and turning us into a wind factory.*
- *Renewables in this area have been exploited benefitting the few. Ideally any renewable development should have been community owned/part owned.*
- *The plan should be based solely around climate mitigation and nature restoration.*

### **13. Local people**

Volunteers - 38 people left their details and offered volunteer help with local projects.

Age – there was a good spread across age groups, however the 18-25 age bracket was under-represented.

Sex – 52% female, 42% male respondents

Location – there was good coverage across the area, with the most responses (47%) coming from Drumnadrochit.

Competition – 116 entered the prize draw for £100 of Scotmid Coop vouchers.