

Balmaclellan Local Place Plan 2026-2036



A vision for development and land use within the settlement and wider Community Council area



Balmaclellan in context

Balmaclellan CC area outlined in red, adjoining CC areas outlined in blue and named, inset shows regional context

0 2.5 5 km



Section 1: Introduction

1.1 What is a Local Place Plan?	3
1.2 Where does the LPP fit with previous consultations	4

Section 2: Context

2.1 Landscape setting and demographic information	6
2.2 Settlement map, assets and facilities	11
2.3 Treasured places	12
2.4 Land use and landscape context	13

Section 3: Consultation outputs

3.1 Community engagement summary	16
3.2 Opportunities, challenges, missing or could be improved	21
3.3 Next Steps	22

Section 4: Action plan

4.1 Underlying Principles	23
4.2 Community Objectives	25
4.3 Action Plan	26
4.4 Proposals Maps	28

Section 5: Appendices

Appendix 1: Related reports and studies: summary	30
Appendix 2: Data tables	31
Acknowledgements	32

Abbreviations used in this document

- CAP:** Glenkens and District Community Action Plan
- CC:** Community Council
- DGC:** Dumfries & Galloway Council
- GCAT:** Glenkens Community and Arts Trust
- GCSN:** Glenkens Community Spaces Network
- GCT:** Glenkens Community Transport
- LUV:** Land Use Vision

All data presented in charts within the LPP can be seen as tables in Appendix 2

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1.1 What is a Local Place Plan?

The Planning Act (Scotland) and National Planning Framework 4 (2023) introduced Local Place Plans (LPPs) as a new tier of planning legislation aimed at giving a statutory voice to local communities to express aspirations for spatial development and land use.

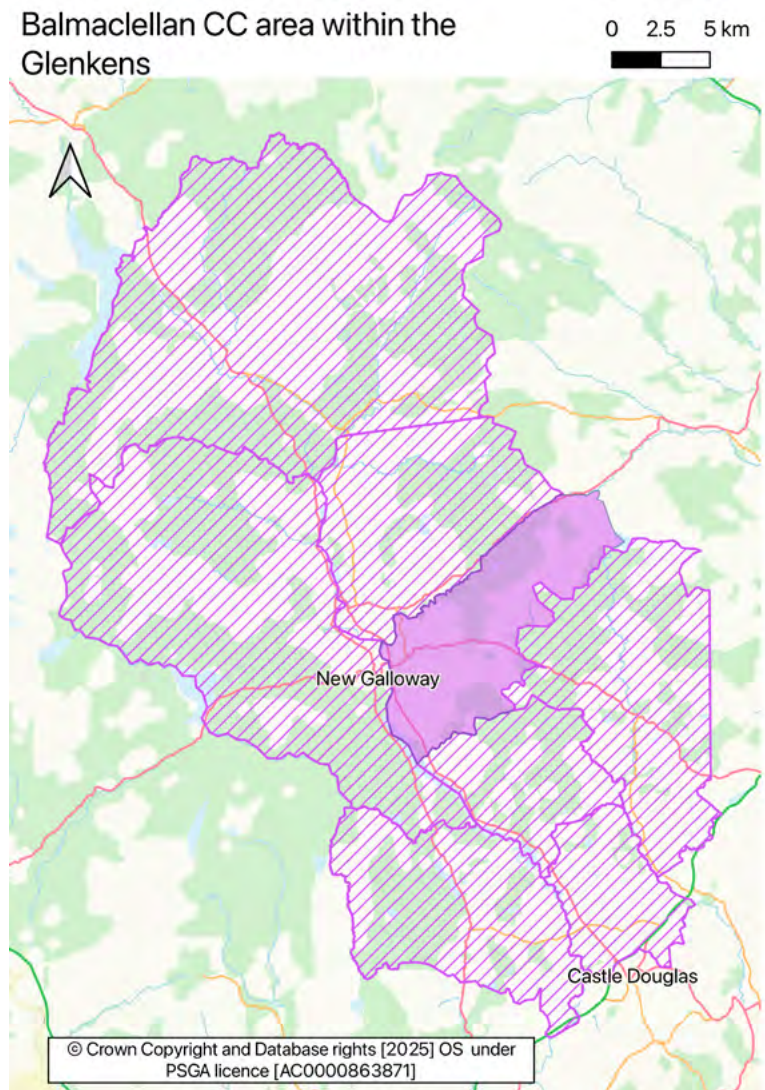
Balmaclellan is one of a cluster of villages in the region of Dumfries and Galloway known as the Glenkens. The Glenkens covers an area of roughly 900 km², with the majority of its approximately 4000 residents living in one of the village centres. Balmaclellan's Community Council area (highlighted in purple on the map to the right) had a population of 364 at the most recent census.

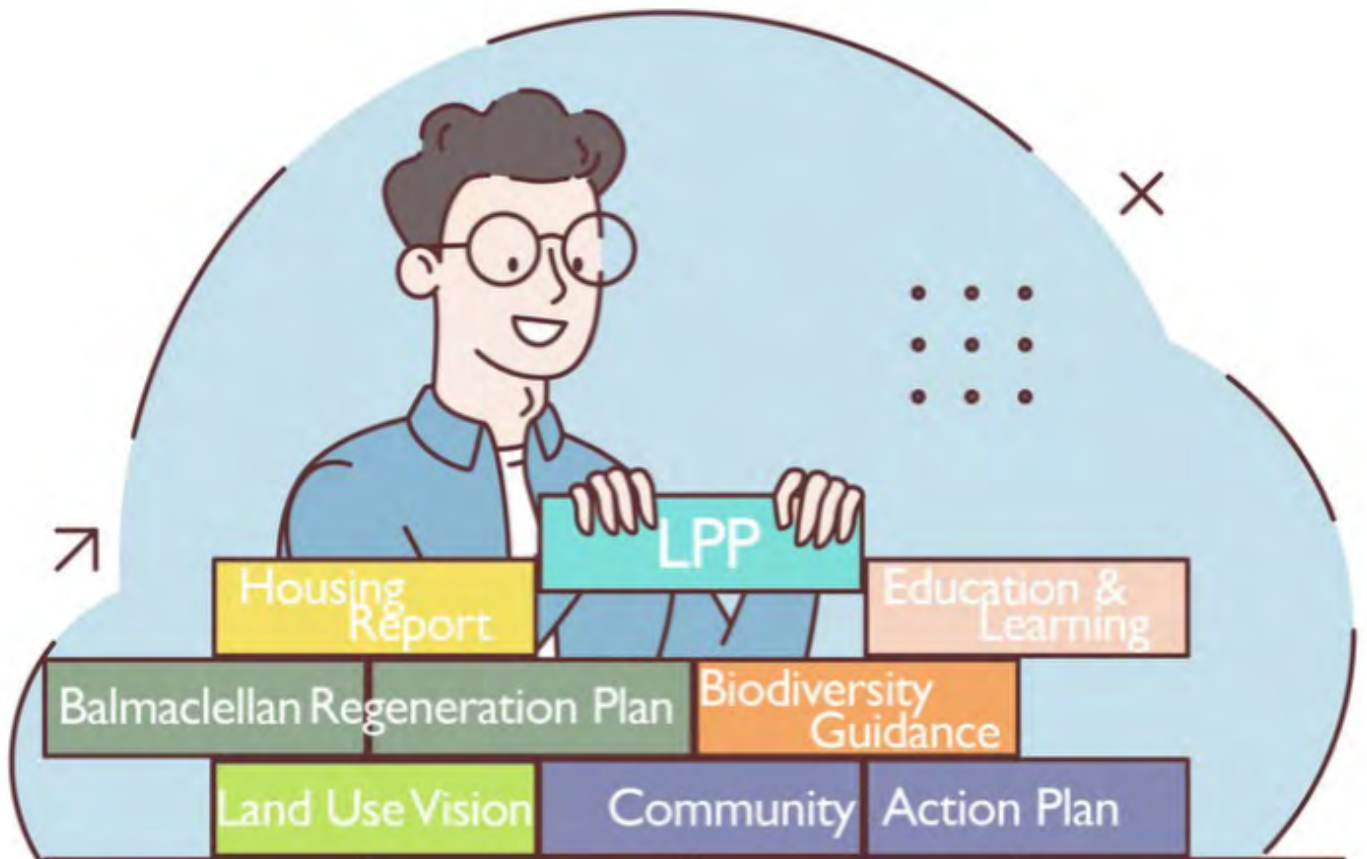
Consultation across the area in 2017/18 identified a strong desire for communities to work together in order to maximise limited resources. Building on the existing base of community engagement developed through consultation for the Glenkens and District Community Action Plan (2020) and other relevant local research and reports, and supplemented by further engagement with Balmaclellan residents, the Local Place Plan for Balmaclellan articulates community aspirations in order to indicate priorities for future development in the village and wider Community Council (CC) area, also referring to facilities and landscapes outwith the border of the CC area which are locally significant.

Part of the CC area, including around half of the village centre, is situated within the Galloway Hills Regional Scenic Area, recognised for its varied landscape character, with small pockets of broadleaf and conifer planting interspersed with moorland and agricultural land. Balmaclellan falls within the transition zone of the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Unesco Biosphere.

The Glenkens Land Use Vision, collectively developed by the communities of the Glenkens, articulates an aspiration to move to a position where land use activities in the Glenkens enhance local climate and environmental resilience, biodiversity and thriving communities, and support repopulation of the area.

This plan will outline the community's wishes for land use within the settlement and wider rural area, having regard to local and national plans and planning legislation. The production of this Local Place Plan has been supported by a UK Shared Prosperity Fund Local Place Plan Grant. It was prepared by Balmaclellan Community Council with support from the Glenkens Community and Arts Trust (GCAT) and the Glenkens Community Spaces Network (GCSN). Many thanks to the Balmaclellan Community Councillors, volunteers and all the residents who have contributed to this document either directly or by sharing their views with the LPP team.





1.2 How does the Local Place Plan fit with previous consultations?

This Local Place Plan builds on findings of a large body of community engagement carried out between 2018 and 2025, some specific to this project and some relating to other relevant issues as illustrated in the diagram above, with the Glenkens and District Community Action Plan (CAP) and Land Use Vision (LUV) being key to this process. Information on further relevant studies can be found in Appendix 1.

Glenkens & District Community Action Plan

“The Glenkens & district will be a connected, resilient and carbon neutral place where people will want to live, to work, to bring up their families and to grow old. It will be somewhere that other places in Scotland look to for inspiration.”

The Glenkens and District Trust (GDT) developed the CAP in order to establish the community’s main priorities for future development, aiming to build a resilient, coordinated and self-reliant community. The GDT built on research from 2018 to inform further consultation in 2019 and 2020, using a range of techniques to engage with as much of the community as possible. The outcome was the development of an action plan (incorporating lessons learnt in the Covid pandemic) to take forward the key aims of the community, developed with regard to the following underlying principles:

Partnership - collaboration between all sections of the community will be a key element in our projects.

Sustainability - projects we support will be outward-looking, flexible and unafraid to take on new challenges. They will provide continuing benefits to the community, and show awareness of the value of community self-reliance.

Inclusion - a diverse community will include and welcome people of all ages, abilities and ethnicity. We will welcome project proposals put forward by any members and groups.

Respect - for the special environment and rural landscape that has been placed in our trust.

The CAP is developed around four themes, and spatial proposals in this LPP will also refer to the relevant CAP theme. A brief summary is included below, the full articulation of these themes can be read in the [Glenkens and District Community Action Plan](#).

Theme 1: A Connected Community

- projects to support collaboration, communication and networking to reduce duplication and share successes, increasing local resilience and community involvement.

Theme 2: An Asset Rich Community

- projects to support the facilities currently in place and make better use of them, improve access to exercise and sport, raise awareness of assets and access to green space, and improve living spaces for residents of all ages.

Theme 3: An Economically Flourishing community

- projects linked with reducing barriers to access to employment, supporting training opportunities, developing a tourism strategy and planning for a more self-sustaining local economy.

Theme 4: A Carbon Neutral Community

- projects linked with reducing carbon emissions from transport, heating and from public buildings, increasing active and group travel, and community energy generation.

Glenkens Land Use Vision

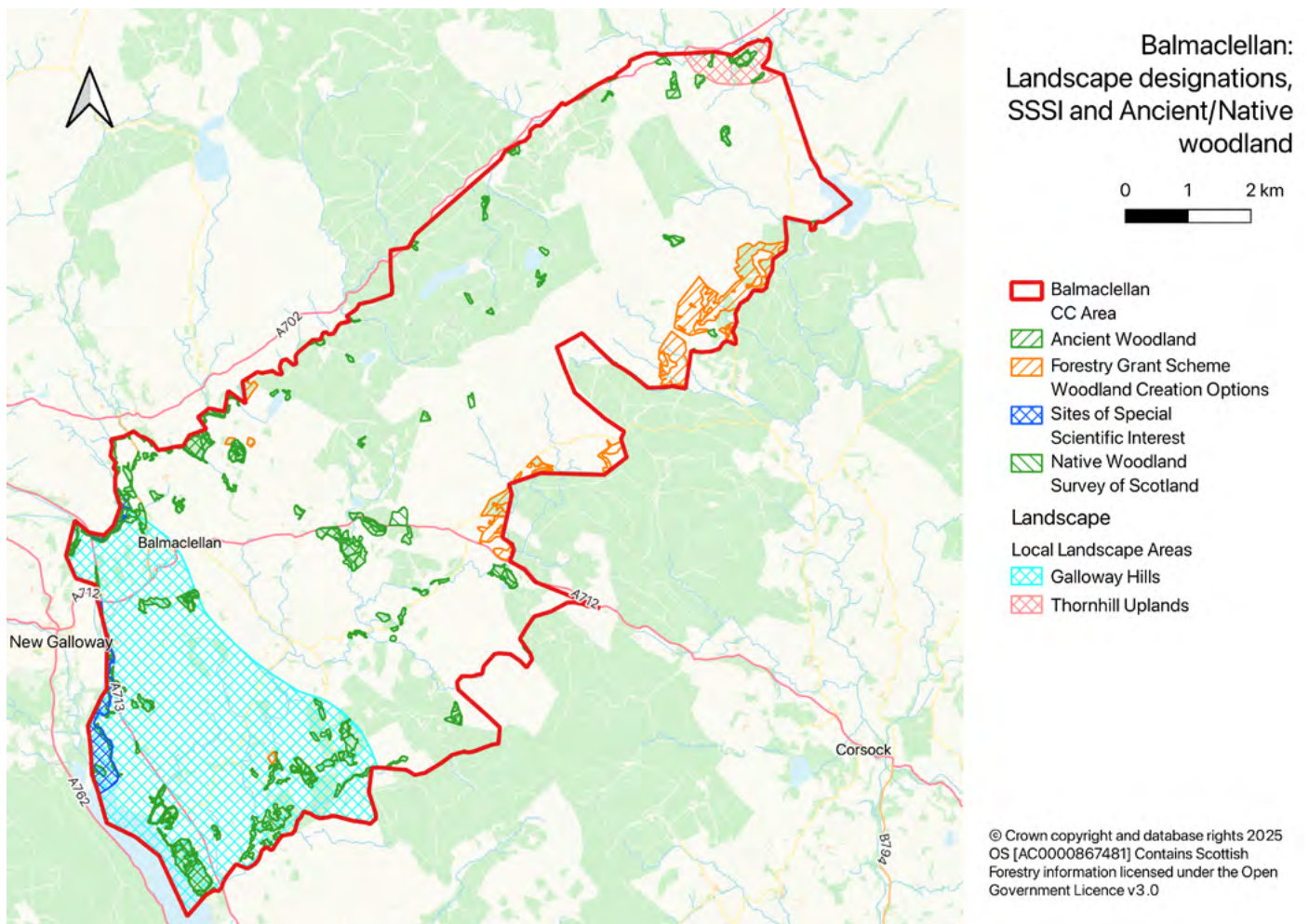
Building on work carried out as part of a pilot project to develop a Regional Land Use Partnership (RLUP) for the South of Scotland, a *Vision for Land Use in the Glenkens* was created following a series of online events facilitated by the Social Enterprise Academy in 2022, an in-person event in January 2023 and the release of a draft document for consultation in summer 2023. This was formally adopted as an Addendum to the Glenkens and District CAP in July 2023 after feedback from public reviews had been incorporated.

The Vision and associated recommendations are seen as a first step in rebalancing the power dynamics regarding land use in the Glenkens, with the aim of ensuring that all voices are heard, valued and respected, and a desire to see land use that adds value rather than extracting value, with Community Wealth Building principles embedded in new development. This will lead to more resilient, vibrant local communities and a circular local economy.

The Glenkens Community and Arts Trust (GCAT) leads on delivery of the CAP across the Glenkens. The organisation delivers some CAP projects directly but also supports other local organisations to deliver more, and works at a regional and national level to ensure that CAP priorities are being worked on at a systemic and policy level. Along with the CAP Steering Group and the Glenkens and District Trust, GCAT plays a key role in advocating for the Glenkens as a coordinated and cohesive community with very specific remote-rural challenges and opportunities.

The overarching vision for land use in the Glenkens is ‘that everyone who takes value from land returns value to it’.

NPF4 highlights biodiversity and the climate emergency as the highest priority issues in planning terms for Scotland; implementing the recommendations of the LUV could lead to local economic benefits as well as ensuring that biodiversity is protected and enhanced, and that land use developments are planned with climate resilience and reducing carbon at their heart, in line with CAP themes.



2.1 Context

2.1.1 Nature and Biodiversity - Faith Hillier, Glenkens and Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere

Balmaclellan is an important area for nature, with many unusual and significant natural habitats hosting equally rare wildlife species.

There are several areas of native ancient woodland in the area, indicating a high diversity of locally uncommon birds, invertebrates and plants. Atlantic Oakwoods are characterised by hosting many ferns and mosses, and in Balmaclellan, particularly important for rare lichens. Broadleaf woodland in the area is important habitat for Red squirrel and Pine marten and these mammals are also found in the commercial forestry in the area. Willow-alder Carr woodland occurs in damp areas around Balmaclellan including the Ken-Dee marshes. It is an important habitat nationally, particularly for locally rare species such as Willow tit.

The freshwater ponds and lochans in Balmaclellan are important habitats for aquatic invertebrates with populations of national importance including the Minutest diving beetle, a very rare beetle internationally, and the incredibly rare Ox-bow diving beetle. Wetlands such as Knowetop Lochs provide habitat for many unusual species such as the rare Variable damselfly and Large heath butterfly. Rare plants include the Purple Iris and Elongated sedge, at one of only five sites in Dumfries and Galloway. Amphibians and reptiles in these habitats include the Great crested newt, as well as Palmate newt and Adder.

Unimproved grasslands are one of the UK's rarest and most endangered habitats and one of the most important habitats in Balmaclellan. They include grassy heaths, acid grasslands and neutral grasslands. They support many of the unusual insects and plants recorded in the area. The Soldier beetle *Rhagonycha elongate* is rare in the UK and the only site in D&G is in Balmaclellan. Plant species include Whorled caraway, Globeflower and Spignel. Bird species include Curlew,

Lapwing, Snipe, Reed bunting, Stonechat, Grasshopper warbler and Common whitethroat. The rare Wood vetch is found in scrub and health areas.

In summer, Swifts, Barn swallows and House martins return to nest. Wintering wildfowl include Teal, Wigeon, Whooper swans, Pink footed geese and the declining Greenland white fronted geese, which find important grazing fields in the area. The area supports raptors such as Red kites, Kestrels, Buzzards and Sparrowhawks.

There is a variety of crepuscular and nocturnal wildlife with Otters, Brown hares, Hedgehogs, Badgers, bats such Soprano pipistrelles, moths such as the unusual Argent and Sable moth, and birds such as Nightjar, Barn owl and Tawny owl.

Invasive Non-native Species in the area include the Signal Crayfish, Grey Squirrel and American Skunk Cabbage.



2.1.2 A brief history of Balmaclellan - Joshua Wells

The village of Balmaclellan is rich in history. From Kentucky, tucked at the bottom of the village, to the Motte and Bailey standing proudly on a hill, the heritage of this humble place is impossible to miss. Each site tells a story, connecting the present village to its centuries-old past.

Balmaclellan is home to a Motte and Bailey, believed to have been built in the 12th century. Today, only the mound remains, part of the landscape and more often shared with grazing sheep than soldiers. Originally, a castle would have sat atop the man-made hill, with a courtyard below, protected by a wooden wall or keep, often surrounded by a moat. This site, like much of the village, quietly hints at a time of feudal rule, fortifications, and a world very different from today.

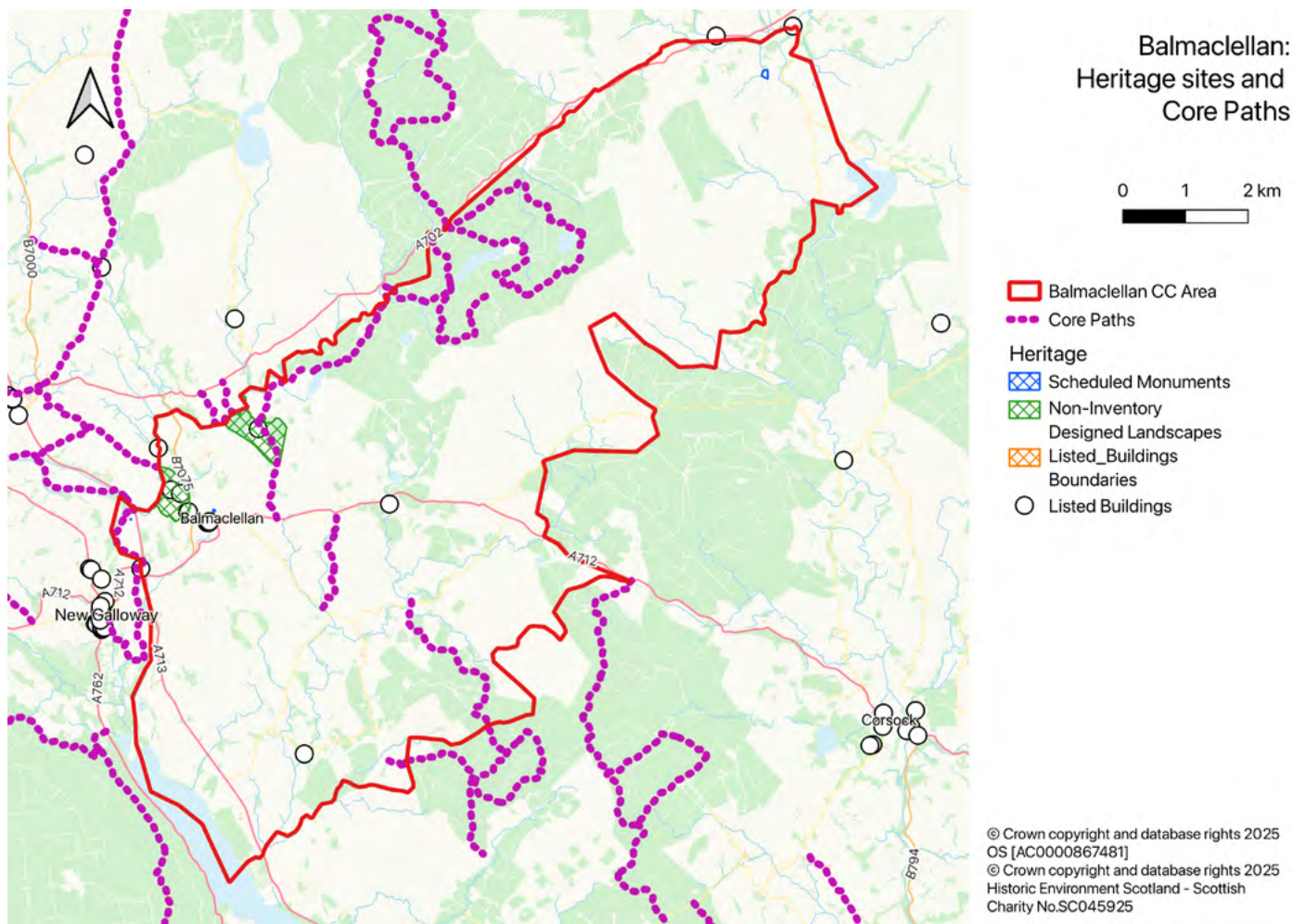


Near the church stands a statue of a man resting beside his horse. This is Robert Patterson, known as “The Old Mortality.” In the 1700s, Patterson travelled across Lowland Scotland, carving inscriptions on unmarked graves to ensure the names of the dead were remembered.

At the bottom of the village, hidden among the large trees, sits an unassuming wooden bench. Upon closer inspection, the word “Kentucky” is carved into the wood. Though seemingly minor, this site holds far more history than it first appears. The land once held a small whitewashed stone cottage with a thatched roof. Its simple black door and two windows gave it a modest, homely appearance.

One of Balmaclellan’s darkest stories is that of Elspeth McEwan. In 1698, she was accused of witchcraft, blamed for bewitching poultry and stealing milk with a hidden wooden pin. Imprisoned in the Kirkcudbright Tolbooth for two years, she likely endured damp, smelly, and pest-ridden conditions before confessing under duress. Her punishment was strangling and burning at the stake. Today, a rough, uncut stone sits at the back of Balmaclellan graveyard, sometimes linked to her grave, though it is not certain. It remains a haunting reminder of fear, superstition, and injustice in the village’s history.

Three residents have been identified: Elizabeth McNea, James Welsh, and Sarah Rae, the most remembered. Elizabeth, a laundress, lived there much of the 19th century. James, a widowed stonebreaker, also called it home. Sarah Rae became notable through a poem written about her by local minister and poet Reverend George Murray, which remains one of his best-known works. The cottage burned down in 1916, but in 1996 the Templeton family restored the plot, adding a bench and a kissing gate. Today, only the bench remains, carved with the name “Kentucky,” preserving the memory of the cottage.



Balmaclellan CC area has three scheduled monuments, the oldest being Dalarran Holm, a prehistoric standing stone (photo p21). The other two scheduled monuments are earthworks: Balmaclellan Motte and Watch Knowe, Craigmuir Moor, a hillfort. Ironmacannie Mill is a Category A listed 18th Century Mill with some surviving machinery and millstones. The Ken

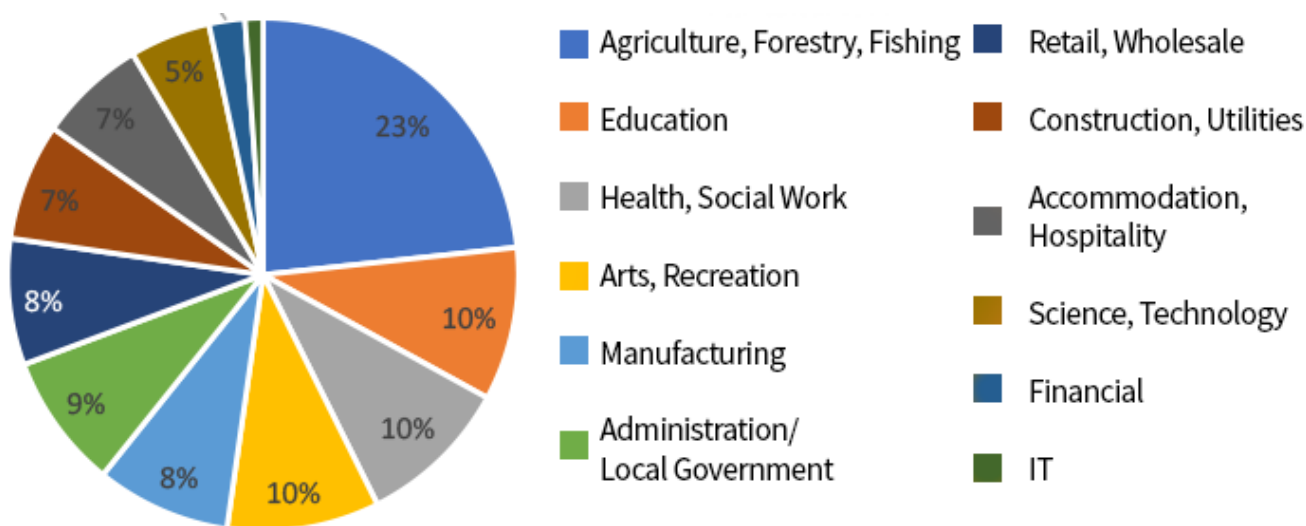
Bridge, designed by John Rennie and connecting Balmaclellan with New Galloway and Kells CC area, is also A-listed. Finally, Barscobe Castle, dating to 1648, is also A-listed, and its grounds are designated as Non-Inventory Designed Landscapes. Category B and C listed buildings in the CC area include three sites at Holm House (the location of the other area of Non-Inventory Designed Landscape in Balmaclellan), Balmaclellan Church and Churchyard, Glenview in Balmaclellan, and the Troquhain Sundial, which is the earliest known dated sundial in Scotland, dating to 1616.

2.1.3 Local economy and employment

While agriculture, forestry and fishing remains the largest employment sector in Balmaclellan, a significant proportion of working residents are also employed in the fields of education, health and social work, and the arts. South West Engineering and Fabrication is headquartered in Balmaclellan, and the headquarters of Natural Power Consultants is in neighbouring settlement Dalry. DRAX is another major local employer.

Tables containing the data for all pie charts can be found in Appendix 2

Employment sectors of Balmaclellan residents (2022 census)



Occupations of Balmaclellan residents (2022 census)

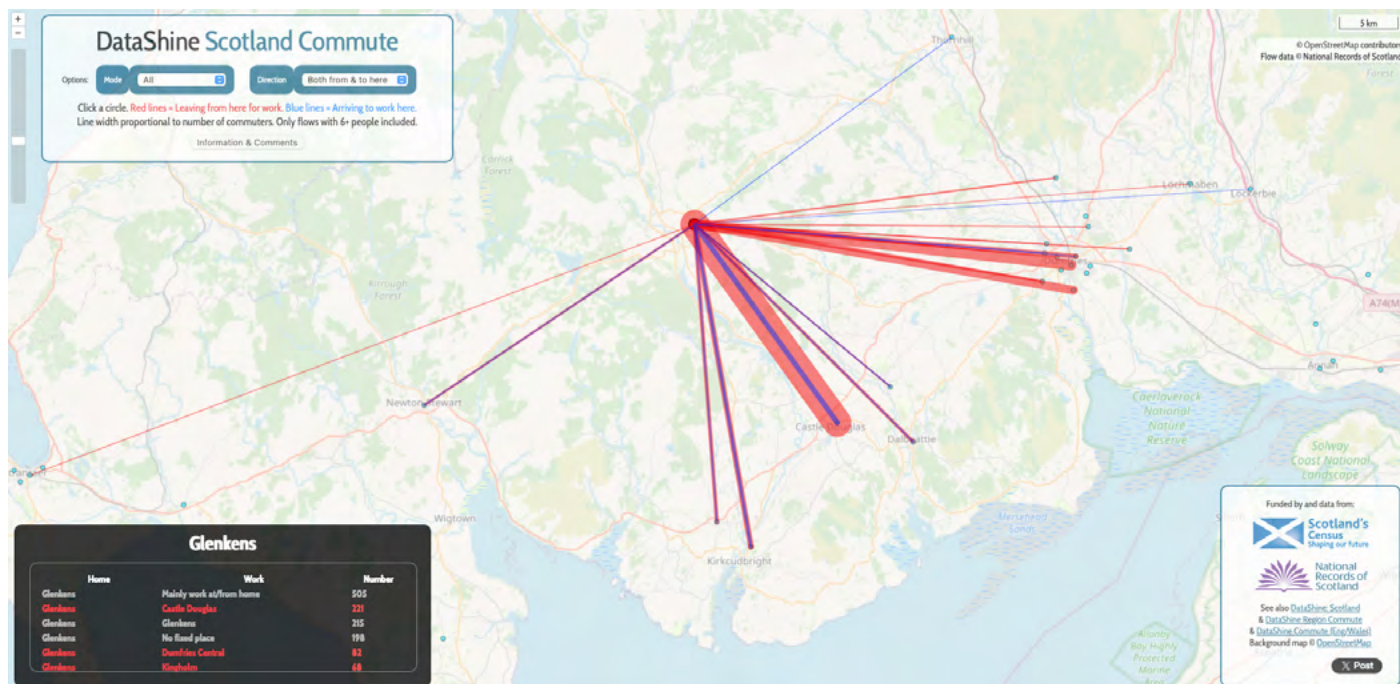
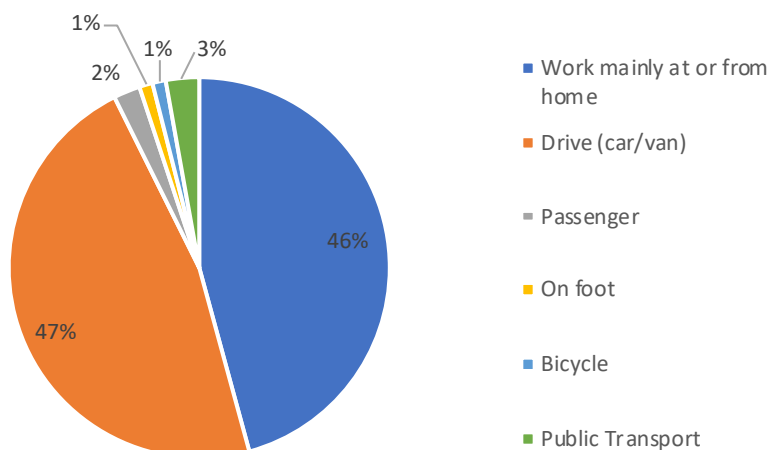


Over a quarter of the population of the DG7 postcode area is classified as income deprived, and 7.8% of people are classed as employment deprived, compared with 8.8% across Dumfries and Galloway. At Ward level, 12.3% of occupants have no qualifications, compared with an average of 15.2% across Dumfries and Galloway (SIMD, 2020).

Method of transport to work: Balmaclellan residents (2022 census)

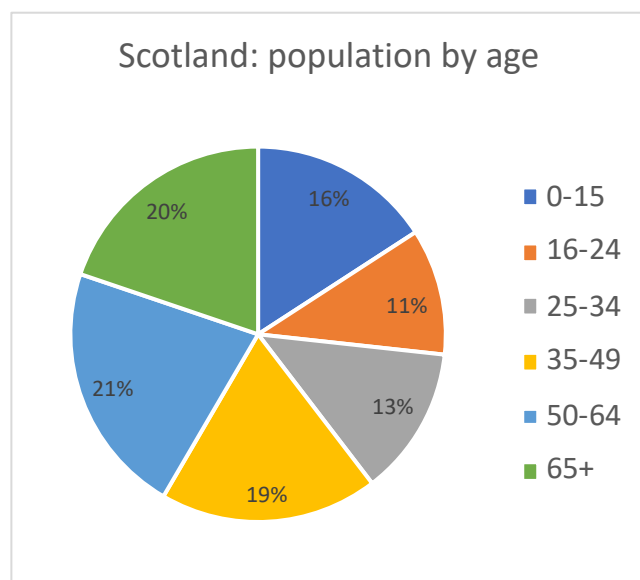
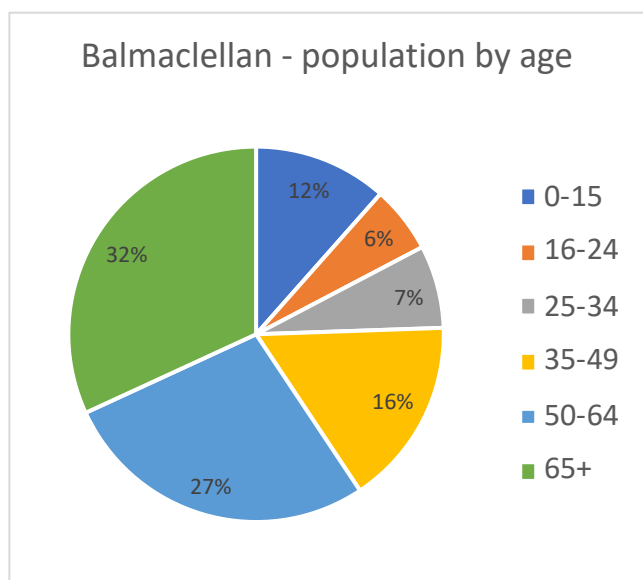
Almost half of Balmaclellan's residents work mainly at/from home (47%). Only 5% get to work by foot, bicycle or public transport.

As can be seen from the DataShine Scotland data visualisation below, the majority of commuter journeys in the Glenkens take place outward into larger settlements in the area.



2.1.4 Balmaclellan's population

Balmaclellan's CC area has a population of 364, with people aged under 50 under-represented in all age categories. General health is slightly better than Scotland as a whole, with 80% of residents reporting 'very good' or 'good' health, and only 5% reporting 'poor' or 'very poor'.



2.2 Settlement Map, Assets and Facilities

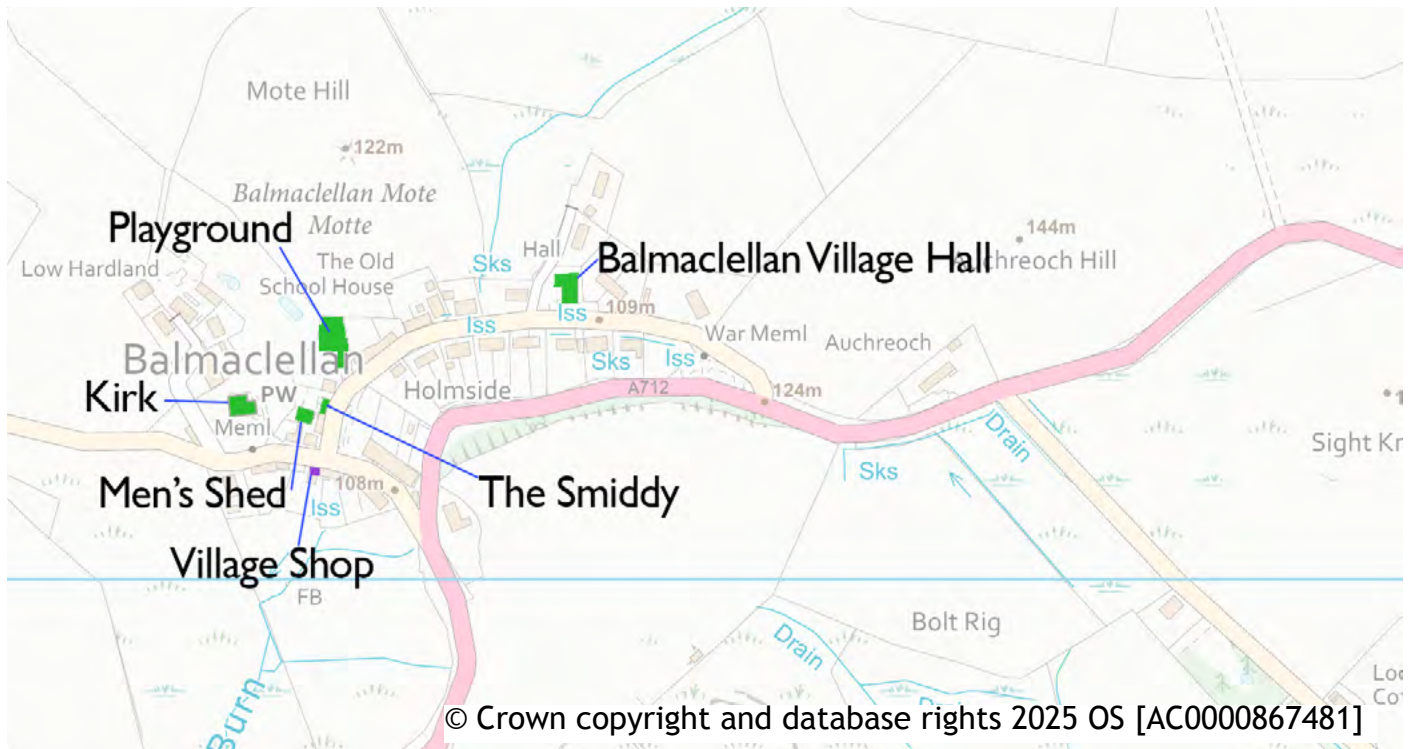
Balmaclellan Village Shop



Playground



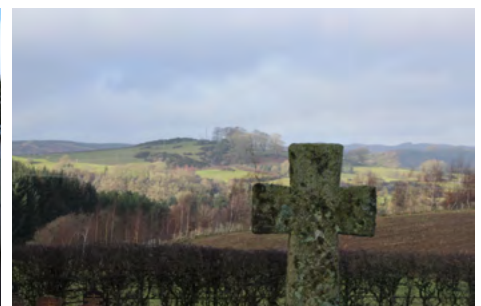
Balmaclellan Village Hall



Balmaclellan Church



The Smiddy



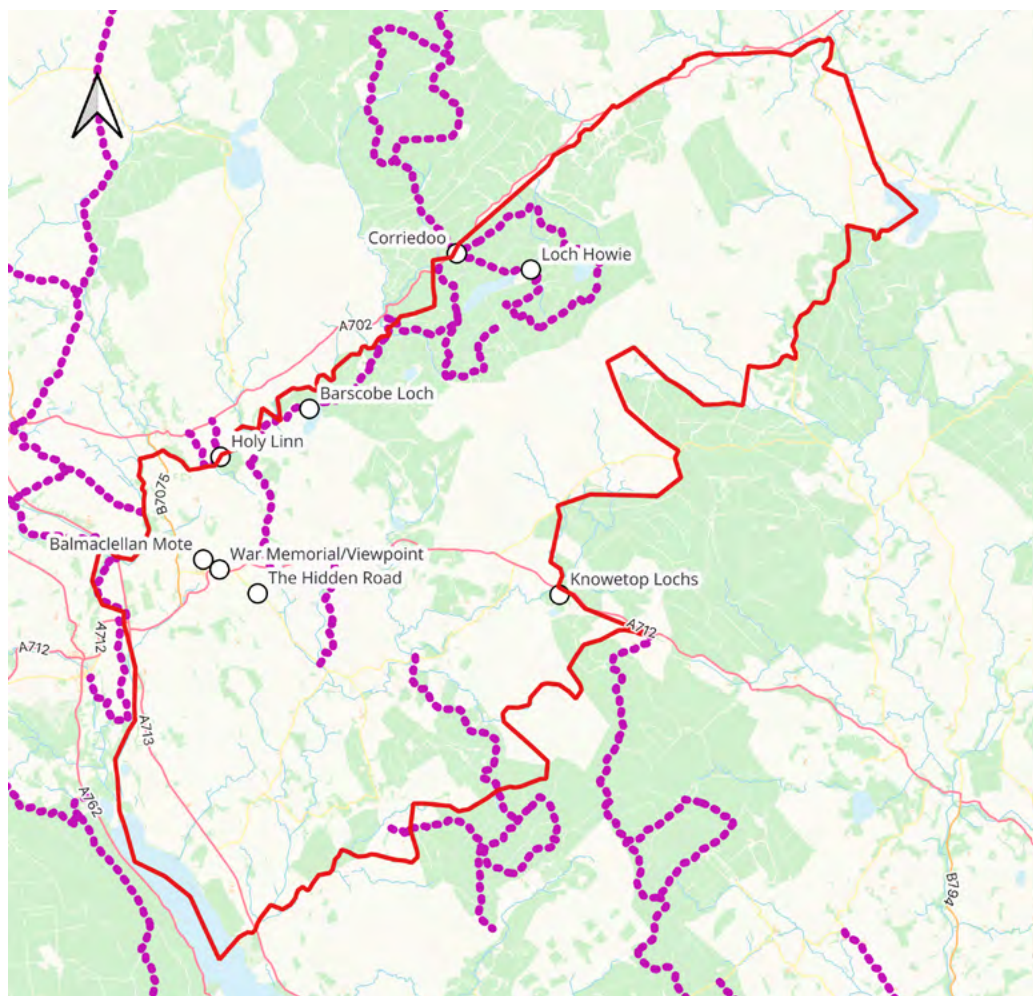
Balmaclellan Graveyard

Balmaclellan has a compact village centre, the main facilities in the village being the village shop, village hall, children's playground, the Smiddy, the Men's Shed, and the Kirk, which the Church of Scotland has identified for closure and will be sold.

Balmaclellan residents were asked how important the facilities in the village were. Of 21 responses, 20 rated the village shop as 'very important' or 'important', and 15 rating the Village Hall as 'very important' or 'important'. In the second questionnaire, 100% of respondents stated that it was 'important' or 'very important' to retain the current facilities and services within the village and in neighbouring settlements.

Some facilities outside the CC area, like the GP surgery in New Galloway, were also highlighted as important - of the 20 responses to this, 18 rated it as 'very important' or 'important', with responses for the CatStrand and Dalry Primary School also indicating that a majority of respondents think it is vital to retain these facilities.

2.3 Treasured places

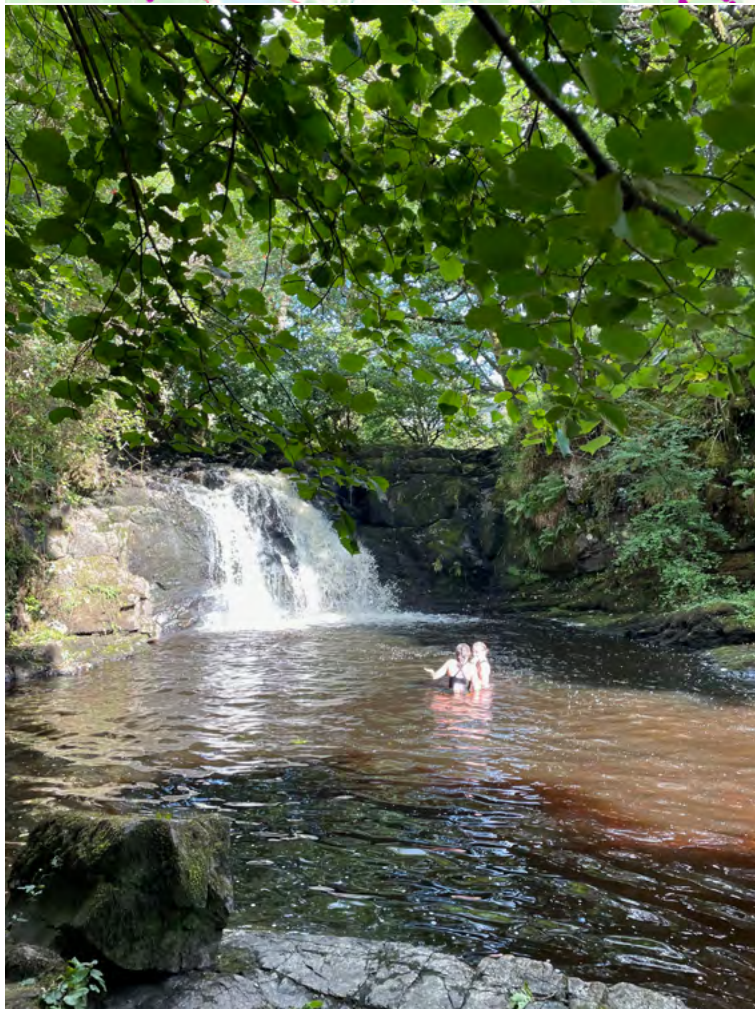


Balmaclellan: Treasured Places

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- ▭ Balmaclellan Community Council Area
- Treasured Places
- ⋯ Core Paths

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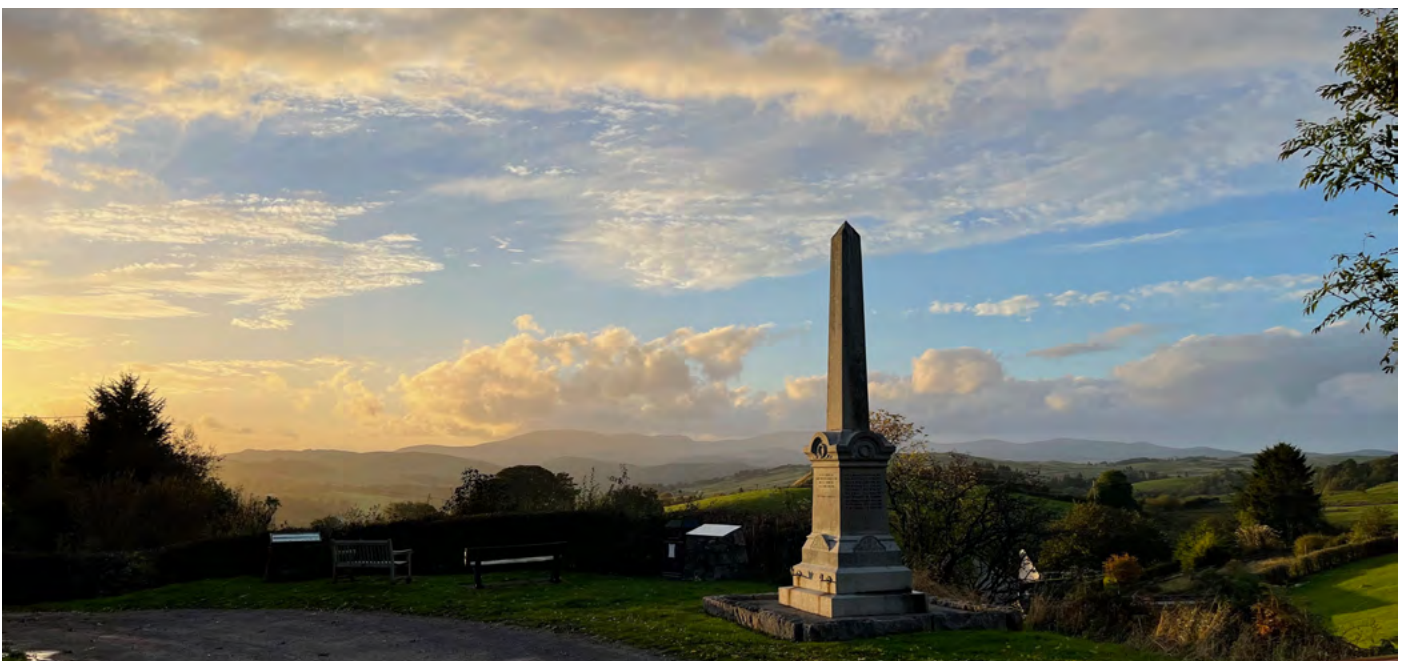


2.4 Land use in Balmaclellan Community Council area: Landscape Context

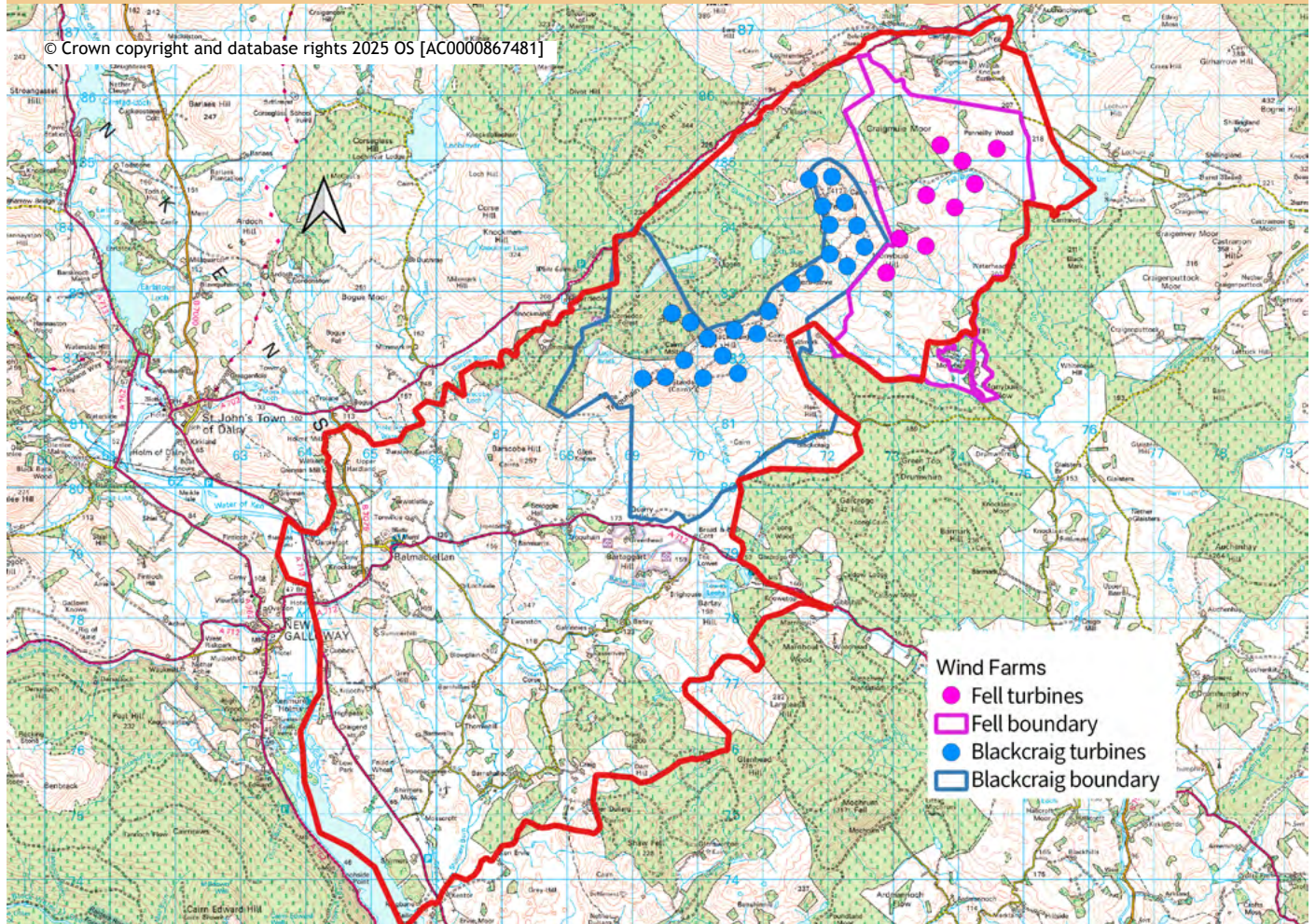


Dumfries and Galloway's 2018 Local Development Plan (2) defines 10 Regional Scenic Areas (RSAs), two of which are relevant to Balmaclellan's LPP, protected via policy NE2 of LDP2 as areas of special scenic interest which form the most cherished landscapes in the county. The area of Balmaclellan adjoining New Galloway and Kells CC area and covering the area between there and the settlement of Balmaclellan falls within the Galloway Hills RSA, the largest of the ten, which encompasses the granite and greywacke uplands of central Galloway and the surrounding foothills and valleys which define the edges of this area, which altogether represents 12 distinct landscape character units.

The Thornhill Uplands RSA intersects the northern border of the CC area, characterised by the hills of the Southern Uplands, deep glacial valleys, grassland, heathland, and scattered farms and hamlets. Designation as a RSA means that the siting and design of any developments within a RSA should respect the landscape character and scenic interest for which the area has been designated, and should not take place unless there is a specific need for development in that location which could not be located in a less sensitive area.



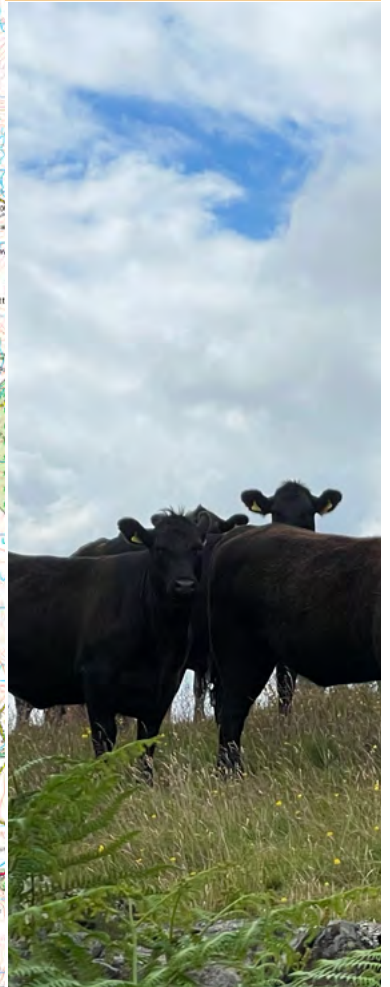
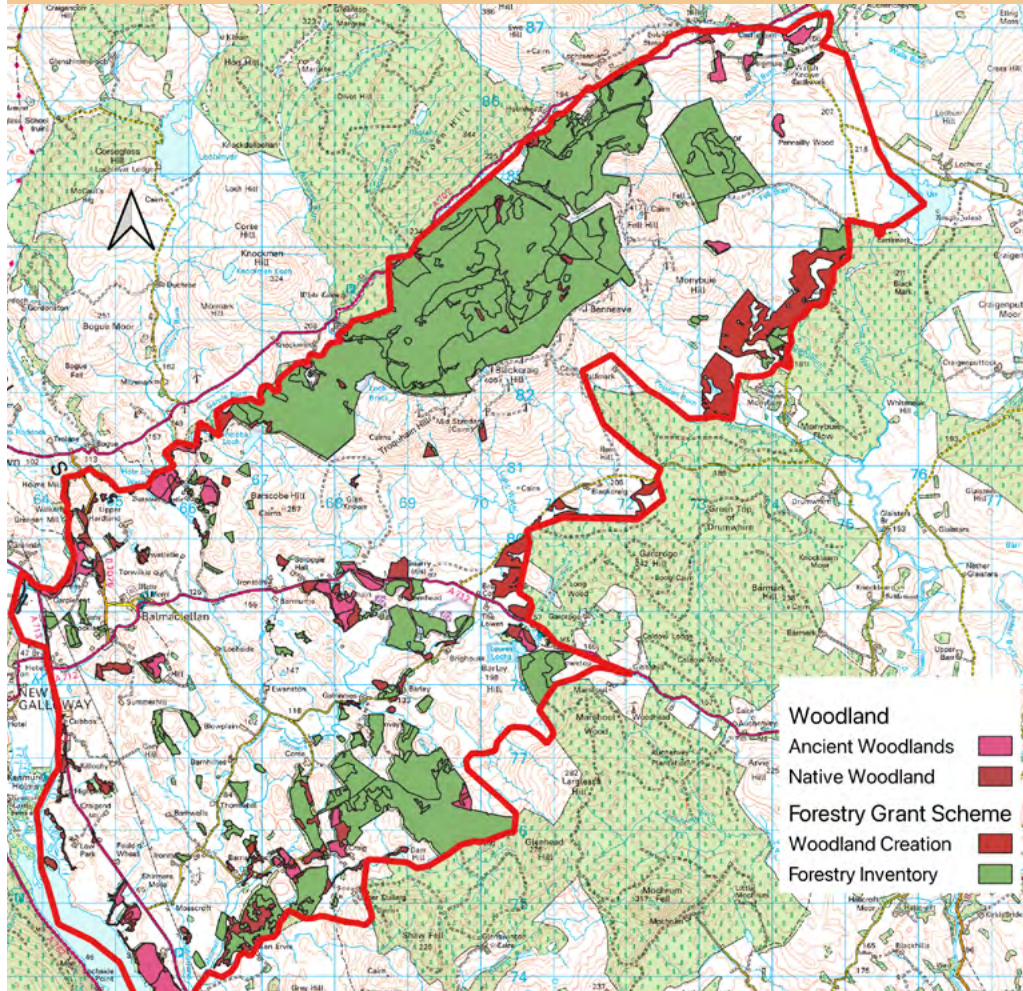
Energy generation



At time of writing, Blackcraig and Fell wind farms were the only consented or built wind energy sites in Balmaclellan CC area, although further developments in neighbouring Dalry and Glencairn CC areas have been consented, and the Knarie wind farm, which would be sited in Corsock and Kirkpatrick Durham CC area would be sited very close to the border of Balmaclellan CC area in forest south of Loch Urr.



Farming and Forestry



Changes in land use have seen increasing amounts of farmland lost to afforestation in recent years, radically altering the landscape. The map above shows the extent of ancient (pink) and native (brown) woodland compared with the commercial forestry inventory (green) which is mainly sitka spruce plantation, and woodland creation areas (red) where grant funding is available for new plantations. This loss of open habitats puts pressure on a range of species which previously inhabited unimproved grassland areas and other open upland habitats. Dumfries and Galloway's 2014 Forestry and Woodland Strategy highlights the need for restructuring historic plantations to current standards, introducing open areas, more broadleaf planting, and using buffers to reduce the visual impact of commercial plantations.

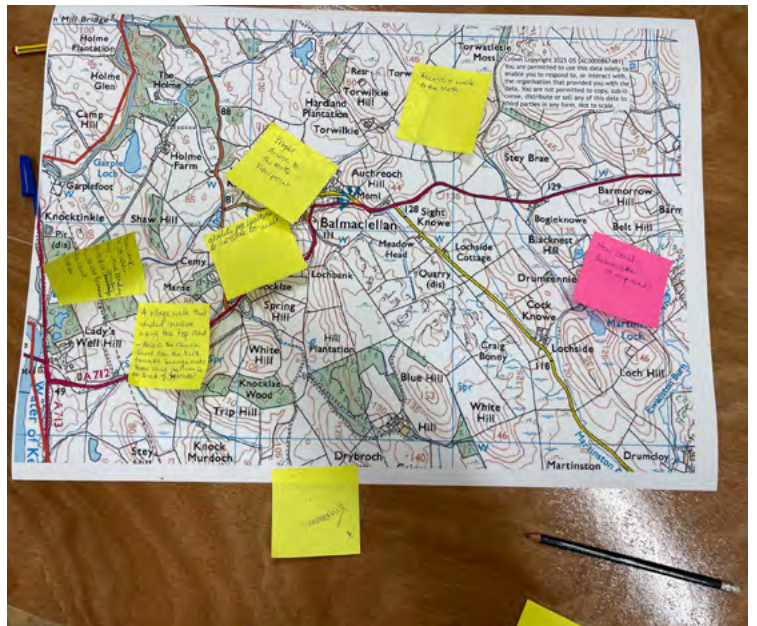




3.1 Community Engagement for the Local Place Plan

Balmacellan’s residents were offered a number of opportunities and methods by which to feed their views in to the Local Place Plan. An initial information gathering questionnaire was circulated, asking for residents to prioritise issues which had previously been identified by the Community Council. Residents were also invited to complete the Place Standard questionnaire, which is a more open activity inviting comments about how well the place works for its residents. Paper forms were available from the Village Hall and Village Shop, and the questionnaire and Place Standard Tool was also available to access online.

A drop-in event was held at Balmacellan Village Hall on 19th February at which residents were invited to complete the questionnaire and the Place Standard tool, and comment on spatial questions. The Pamela Young Trust also shared a display on plans for affordable homes on the former petrol station site in Balmacellan for community feedback. All Balmacellan residents received flyers posted through their doors, inviting them to attend and containing information on how to express their views if they were unable to attend the drop-in session.

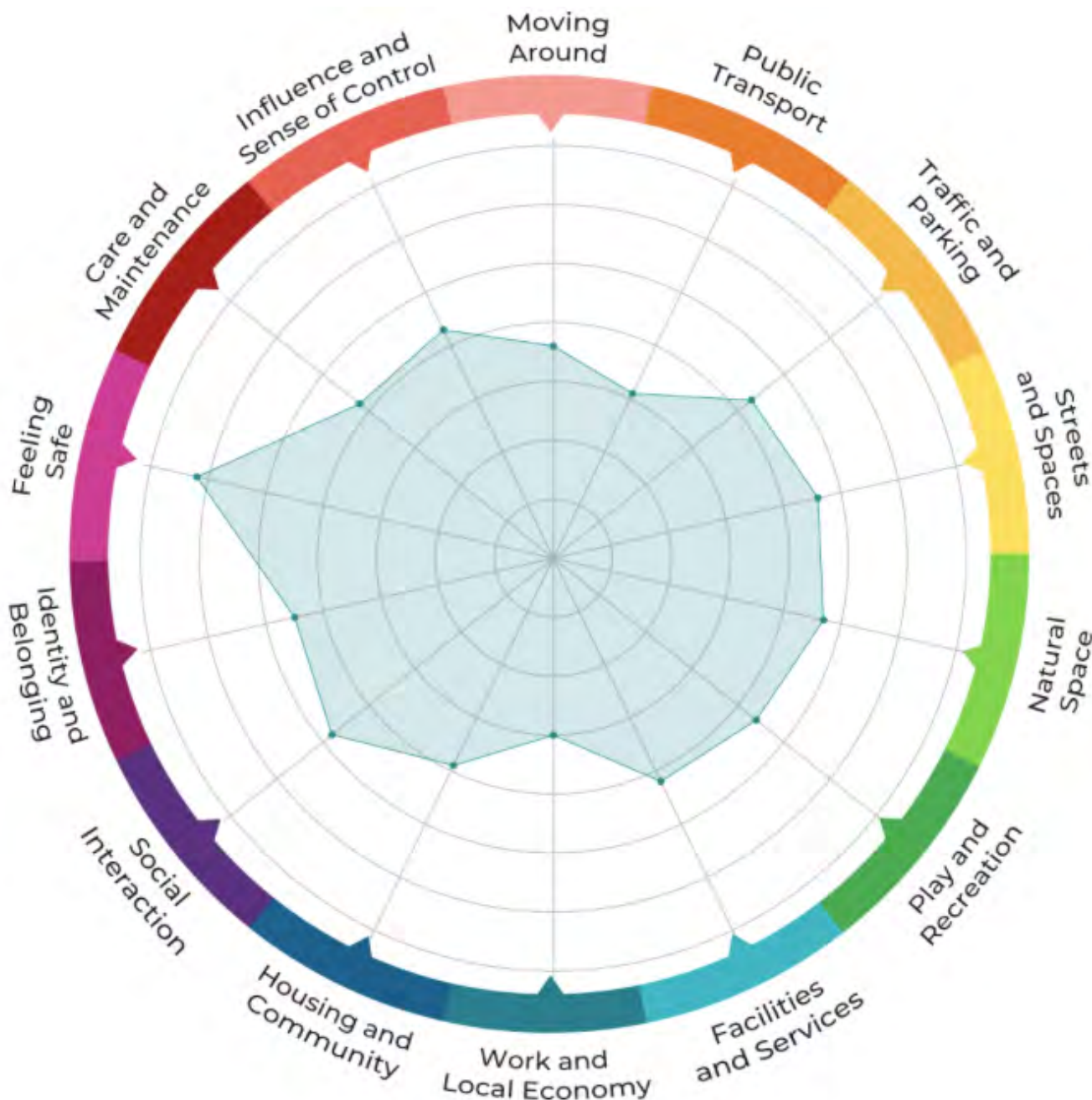


The responses to all feedback were analysed and results fed back to residents, with a second questionnaire created in order to offer the opportunity to prioritise initiatives coming out of the consultation and for any who had not yet fed into the process to give their views. This gave the Community Council sufficient data to create an Action Plan for the Local Place Plan.

At all stages of the consultation, updates were posted on the Glenkens Hub and related social media, and posters were put up in village centres such as the Village Shop and Village Hall.

Balmaclellan Overall Place Standard Score

To complete the Place Standard Tool, residents were asked to think about their experience of living in Balmaclellan CC area and give each of the areas in the graph below a score of 1 to 7, where 1 means 'needs a great deal of improvement' and 7 means 'no improvement needed'. All of the responses were then combined to give a mean score, which is what the graph below represents. Most areas receive a score higher than the midpoint (3.5), with **Work and the Local Economy** (3) and **Public Transport** (3.2) being the only areas which score below this.



Most other areas averaged out at approximately one point above the midpoint. In common with other Glenkens settlements developing Local Place Plans, **Feeling Safe** (6.2) was the highest scoring area. **Social Interaction** received a score of 4.8. However, all other Glenkens settlements saw residents score **Natural Space** more highly. Despite being a small settlement surrounded by countryside, access to nature seems to be a particular issue for Balmaclellan residents. A number of people expressed difficulties with exercising the Right to Roam, and the compact nature of the settlement, with all access routes to the village being roads where the National Speed Limit is in force, means that residents can be forced to drive out of the village for recreational walks or to exercise dogs. This highlights the need for better access to countryside both for recreational purposes and also for active travel routes connecting settlements which are safe for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly those with children in pushchairs or on bicycles, and for those with limited mobility or in need of a mobility aid.

Housing: Much of Balmaclellan's housing stock is comprised of old, stone cottages which are difficult to insulate or to heat affordably. In addition, there is no mains gas in the area, meaning that residents must use oil, LPG, solid fuel or electricity to heat their homes, all of which can work out significantly more expensive than mains gas. A lack of suitable housing for young people and families, especially affordable homes for purchase or rent, was highlighted. Responses to the Pamela Young Trust's plans to develop a brownfield site in the village to build new homes were positive, and respondents were also united in calling for the derelict Old Bakehouse site to be rectified.

Roads, pavements and parking: Most respondents commented that parking was not a problem, although some highlighted the issue of pavement parking which was identified as a problem for pedestrians within the village. Although some referred to quiet traffic within and outside the village, the proximity of the 60-mph A712 to the village centre was felt to be problematic. Pavements within the village were identified as challenging to residents using rollators, wheelchairs, and pushchairs, and a number of comments highlighted the lack of safe pedestrian and cycle routes out of the village, undermining the aspiration of increasing active travel.

Travel around the area by car was seen as a positive, and respondents acknowledged the value of the bus service, but the limited schedule and lack of weekend and evening service makes it impossible for many people to commute by public transport. Issues with pavements and road surfaces affect drivers, cyclists and pedestrians. The lack of safe walking or active travel routes outside the village centre mean that most residents are dependent on car journeys to access services and facilities in other settlements.

Feeling safe: Most comments on the subject of safety were positive, with negative comments relating to safety on the roads.

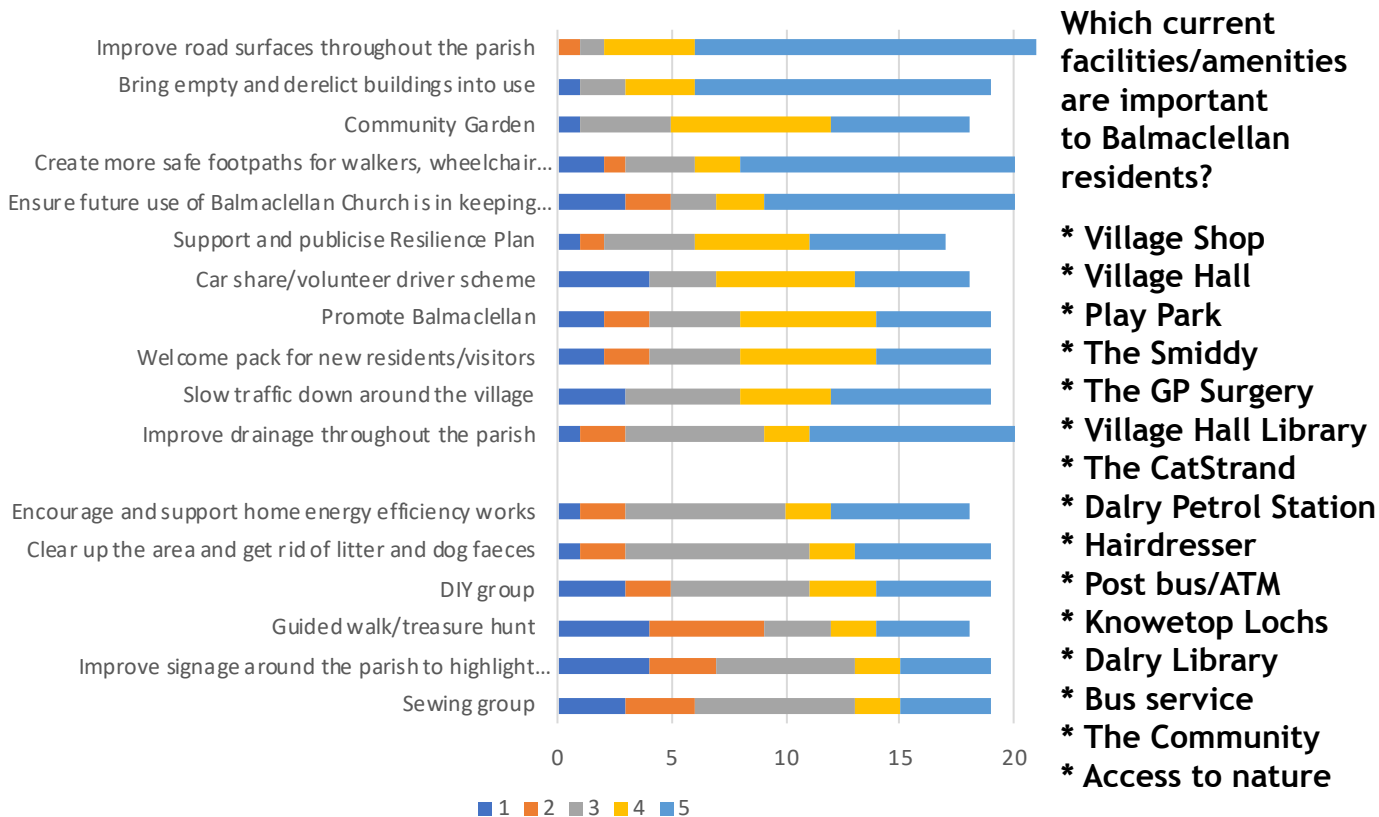
Recreational access to green space: Many were positive about the play park and the fact that Balmaclellan is surrounded by beautiful scenery. Access to nature, including difficulties exercising the right to roam, problems for residents with mobility issues and / or pushchairs, and a lack of walking routes accessible directly from the village, were all areas highlighted as problematic for residents. Respondents working full time also expressed a desire for more activities in the evenings and weekends.

The Old Bakehouse, a derelict building in the village centre, was mentioned by a number of respondents who felt that it had a detrimental effect on the village centre. The building has been in a derelict state for many years.



Glenkens-wide working: a number of responses highlighted the positives of working together with other Glenkens settlements to maximise local capacity and benefits. In addition, many residents referred to facilities outwith the Balmaclellan CC area which are vital to local residents, including the GP surgery in New Galloway, schools in Dalry and New Galloway, and community groups and venues in surrounding villages.

A questionnaire based on previous consultation with Balmaclellan residents, titled ‘Priorities for Balmaclellan’, was circulated, with the results represented in the chart below. Those above the gap indicate projects where over 50% of residents indicated that these projects were either ‘very important’ or ‘important’





3.1 Biodiversity and climate resilience

The third Climate Risk Assessment for Scotland (taken from CCRA3) identifies flooding as the greatest risk to Scotland from climate change, but there are also other risks relevant to rural communities like Balmaclellan. Changes to weather patterns mean that there is a likelihood that weather will be significantly wetter or drier for longer periods than was previously the case, with lack of rain leading to potential issues with private water supplies and raising the risk of wild fires. High winds in areas where trees are planted close to energy and communications transmissions networks can also increase the risk of power or telecoms outages.

Respondents called for more planting locally to support biodiversity, and for opportunities for community growing and improved access to the countryside. This could include utilising small patches of land for wildlife corridors and pollinator habitats.

Issues with drainage are important to the local community, with only 12% of responses to the 'Priorities for Balmaclellan' saying that this issue was 'unimportant' or 'not very important'. Using the NatureScot Nature Networks tool could be useful in identifying measures which could help, and working with local organisations could also help to find synergies between biodiversity and climate measures. For example, There could be opportunities for land-based solutions to the issue of flooding which could potentially improve the capacity of the land to absorb water alongside increasing wildlife habitats and with carbon sequestration benefits - such as re-wetting peatlands and similar projects.

Just as land use changed in order for the Galloway Hydro Scheme to benefit from water held upstream for energy generation use, land use change could aid adaptation by reducing the rate at which water travels from the uplands to the sea. Restoring wetlands and creating ponds to hold water upstream to mitigate flooding also benefits agriculture and biodiversity by providing new habitats and reducing the effects of drought. Riparian planting can reduce river temperatures by 2-4°C, whilst also providing benefits in reducing the effects of run-off, providing woody debris which can also slow down flows and increase water storage, and also reduces the amount of rainfall reaching the ground, with up to 12% of rainfall evaporating back into the atmosphere from deciduous trees, even in the winter.

3.2 Opportunities, challenges, what's missing, and what could be improved?

While all comments can be seen in Appendix 3, these were refined for this section, highlighting opportunities and challenges.

3.2.1: Moving around; Public Transport; Traffic and Parking; Streets and Spaces

What residents want:

- Improve roads and pavements within Balmaclellan to support people using wheelchairs/rollators or pushchairs
- Create safe walking and cycling routes around the village and between Glenkens villages
- On-demand public transport in order to support access to work and education by public transport
- Improve drainage
- Improved road maintenance

90% of respondents supported improving road surfaces throughout the CC area

65% of respondents supported the introduction of a car share or volunteer driver scheme

58% of respondents supported slowing traffic down around the village

55% of respondents supported improving drainage

Suggestions

- Set up a lift sharing scheme in the village coordinated by Whatsapp
- Create pedestrian and cycle pathway along the A712 to New Galloway
- Reduce A712 speed limit in close proximity to village to 30mph
- Create a low-cost/free community bike hire scheme
- Improve public transport services, introduce service to Newton Stewart
- Create more paths for pedestrians and dog walkers
- More interpretation boards in and around the village, improve signage and create a village walk
- Improve biodiversity by creating wildflower patches and planting trees
- 20mph limit through village

3.2.2: Natural Space; Play and Recreation

Recognition that Balmaclellan is surrounded by beautiful scenery but access to nature is difficult for many reasons.

- 72% of respondents supported the creation of a community garden
- 70% of respondents supported the creation of more safe paths for walkers, wheelchair users and cyclists

What residents want:

- More footpaths and accessible walking routes
- Recreational activities for residents outside working hours



Suggestions

- Designated footpaths and accompanying map
- Access to the Motte
- Better path maintenance
- Plant wildflowers and native trees
- Create a community garden/community orchard
- Support the development of Dalry MUGA
- Create space for sports activities (football, tennis)

3.2.3: Facilities and services; Work and the local economy; Care and Maintenance

- Lack of suitable roles and distance of travel to major employers is seen as a challenge
- Perception that young people will not stay in the area because of lack of affordable rented homes or attractive careers
- Threats to local education provision challenge

Suggestions

- Retain and improve current facilities
- Coordinate community effort, work together with other Glenkens communities to maximise community benefit
- Improve communications within the village and the wider CC area
- Have a community tool library.
- Make more of the history e.g. with a noticeboard in village, preserving village pump, having a safe walking route with views.
- Continue to be part of and feed into wider Glenkens identity, as we need to work together to survive!
- Campaign for restrictions on second homes.
- More affordable housing to rent / buy.
- Encourage small plots of land for sale or rent at affordable prices.
- More opportunities evenings and weekends; advertising the local Facebook or what's app groups so new people know about them and feel welcome to join.
- There could be a better way of communicating within the village in an emergency.
- Some sort of welcome pack for new residents would be beneficial.

3.3: Next steps

Moving forward with the Place Plan actions will require collective participation from residents, elected representatives and professionals in the Balmaclellan area.

Collaboration is key, involving not just the Community Council, but also various local groups, regional organisations, community volunteers, farmers, land managers, businesses, and stakeholders such as wind farms and forest owners operating within the area.

This inclusive approach ensures a comprehensive and diverse input towards achieving our shared goals.



4.1 Balmaclellan Local Place Plan Underlying Principles

If positive change in and around Balmaclellan and the wider Glenkens is to be achieved effectively (i.e. in a timely manner and well-supported) then all parties need to work together in a constructive manner and respect each other's priorities. We as a community look forward to working constructively with the public and private organisations whose work impacts on our home and on our Community Action Plan goal that The Glenkens will be a connected, resilient and carbon neutral place, where people will want to live, work and visit, to bring up their families, and to grow old. These principles are closely aligned with NPF4 policies and those in the LOIP.

We need a tailored approach to change that ensures that all changes enhance environmental integrity and cultivate inclusive and resilient communities specific to Balmaclellan's needs.

In pursuit of those effective discussions, we set out our expectations as follows:

Nothing about us without us.

- All proposals to remove or materially change key community infrastructure as identified in this Local Place Plan will undergo thorough consideration with respect to community impacts which are direct, indirect and/or cumulative.
 - This includes the regional charitable support services that support individuals within Balmaclellan, such as the Better Lives Partnership, The Usual Place, DGVoice, DGLGBTQ+ and many others. We need them to be able to continue to offer the technical support that we can't on a village-wide scale.
- Credible, resourced and timely action plans will be put in place to mitigate any negative community impact identified.
- Both the impact assessment and the mitigation plans will be done in full consultation with the community.
- The views of the community will be taken fully into account as a respected and strategic partner in any such proposals. The latest best practise engagement guidelines from relevant bodies should be followed as a minimum but we encourage decision makers to exceed them.

Community Wealth Building

- All proposed developments will be reviewed against this Local Place Plan and the Glenkens & district Community Action Plan. Opportunities for community wealth building aligned with those Plans will be woven into the development plans.
 - We look forward to working constructively with developers to find imaginative ways in which proposed developments can add real value to our community.
- The views of the community will be taken fully into account as a respected and strategic partner in any such developments.

Everyone who takes values from our land returns value to it.

- Any approach to tree planting, development, extraction, national infrastructure and land use change will undergo rigorous assessment, considering the cumulative impacts on local biodiversity, species diversity, landscape resilience, amenity and long-term timber transport implications.
- Any such initiatives will yield equal or more significant long-term, year-round employment opportunities than previous land uses, aligning with our commitment to a Just Transition towards a green economy.
- Developers work closely with Balmaclellan and the wider Glenkens to create widely shared economic benefits through local enterprises associated with the developments.
- Inclusivity is paramount; therefore, all land use change proposals will undergo community

impact and benefit assessments, embracing a community wealth-building and well-being approach.

- Our community will have the opportunity to actively participate in designing such projects, granting them a degree of agency in decision-making processes.

Climate Crisis

- All new building developments in Balmaclellan CC area will be future-ready and energy efficient; incorporating the very latest best practice in low carbon building processes, renewable technologies, insulation, biodiversity net gain and supporting a circular local economy.
- All proposed developments will have undergone robust environmental impact assessments, followed up to date planning procedures, and aligned with the CAP and the LPP.
- All developments will actively improve our community's ability to adapt to and mitigate the local impacts of climate change through natural landscape solutions.
- Specifically, all developments will be planned and delivered in a way that protects our community's ability to adapt to, mitigate and be resilient to the effects of changing weather patterns, changing precipitation, flood risk, water quality and availability, soil and peat degradation and other long term climatic considerations including parasites and diseases.

Environmental assurance / Biodiversity crisis

- Our regional strategies such as the Woodland Strategy prioritise biodiversity alongside productivity, promoting diverse age and stand structures.
- Given the ecological significance of our peatlands, we expressly discourage tree planting on peatland and any activities that may disrupt its hydrology. We also discourage restocking on deep peat where peatland restoration is viable.
- We advocate for the minimal use of pesticides, herbicides and fertilisers, prioritising alternative methods wherever possible.
- We encourage Riparian planting along waterways, complemented by extensive buffer zones along non-riparian planted areas and infrastructure, to safeguard water quality and biodiversity.
- All developments will be sensitive to our natural surroundings in Balmaclellan, by clearly demonstrating embedded plans for biodiversity net gain which supports climate impact resilience across our surrounding landscapes and retains the integrity of our ecosystems.
- We encourage all landowners and managers to pay heed to the **Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement** and associated protocols.
- Invasive non-native species (INNS) and climate change are two of the biggest threats to biodiversity in Scotland. Land use should ensure best practice in minimising the risk of INNS contamination of surrounding habitats, for example the spread of Sitka Spruce seedlings from forestry plantations to surrounding non-forested habitats.



Community Objectives and Action Plan

The Community Council identified a range of Community Objectives emerging from the consultation, and have used these objectives to develop an Action Plan.

Where a group or organisation has been identified to lead on a project, this information has been included.

Some projects have been included but do not have an identified lead organisation, and for these it is hoped that an appropriate lead organisation will be identified during the decade-long plan period.

Projects are grouped into 8 thematic areas.



4.2 Community Objectives

- **Coordinate community effort - work together with other Glenkens communities to maximise community benefit**
- **Create necessary new housing, by refurbishing derelict buildings, bringing unused housing stock into occupation, and building new homes for which there is an assessed need.**
- **Improve drainage and road maintenance across the CC area.**
- **Open up new safe routes for walking and cycling within Balmaclellan and the wider Community Council area, including access to the Motte.**
- **Improve active travel connectivity between Glenkens communities, particularly Balmaclellan, New Galloway and Dalry.**
- **Increase biodiversity and create spaces for community growing and nature.**
- **Increase access to sporting, recreation and social activities for residents of all ages and life-stages.**
- **Encourage and enable local businesses to help develop a thriving economy, and better employee and career development in the CC area and wider Glenkens**
- **Stronger links between businesses active locally and the community**
- **Improve public transport and lift sharing initiatives**

4.3 Action Plan

1. Balmaclellan will be a well-drained village with well-maintained road surfaces and pavements.

1.1	Carry out a study to investigate best way to deal with drainage issues	BCC to investigate
1.2	Advocate for improved pavements for people using wheel-chairs, mobility aids and pushchairs, and for pedestrians and dog walkers	BCC
1.3	Advocate for a long-term vision in drainage and road maintenance reducing the need for frequent pothole repair	BCC / DGC
1.4	Create wetland holding ponds to reduce flooding downstream	Feasibility study

2. Better availability and quality of housing in Balmaclellan

2.1	Creation of affordable housing to rent or buy (eg. Pamela Young Trust)	PYT/other bodies
2.2	LDP3 policies written to facilitate development of small rural plots of land at appropriate design and scale, for agricultural, biodiversity or live-work space, or small clusters of rural homes	DGC
2.3	Investigate routes to bring empty housing back into occupation	DGC
2.4	Support for residents to retrofit homes for energy efficiency	

3. Safer roads and better active transport routes

3.1	20mph speed limit in village	DGC
3.2	Create pedestrian and cycle pathway to New Galloway and Dalry	Feasibility Study
3.3	Reduced speed limits in close proximity to village	DGC



4. More footpaths and recreational walking routes		
4.1	Improve access to The Motte	DGC
4.2	Create network of recreational walking/cycling routes, using forestry tracks	Feasibility Study
4.3	More designated footpaths, accompanying map, better path maintenance	BCC/DGC/volunteers?

5. Creative solutions to shared/public transport.		
5.1	Low-cost community bike hire	Work with GCT
5.2	Creative solutions to public transport deficit - on demand service?	Feasibility Study
5.3	Set up a lift-sharing scheme communicating by Whatsapp or similar	BCC/Balmaclellan Community
5.4	Public transport to Newton Stewart, Dalmellington, Ayr	DGC

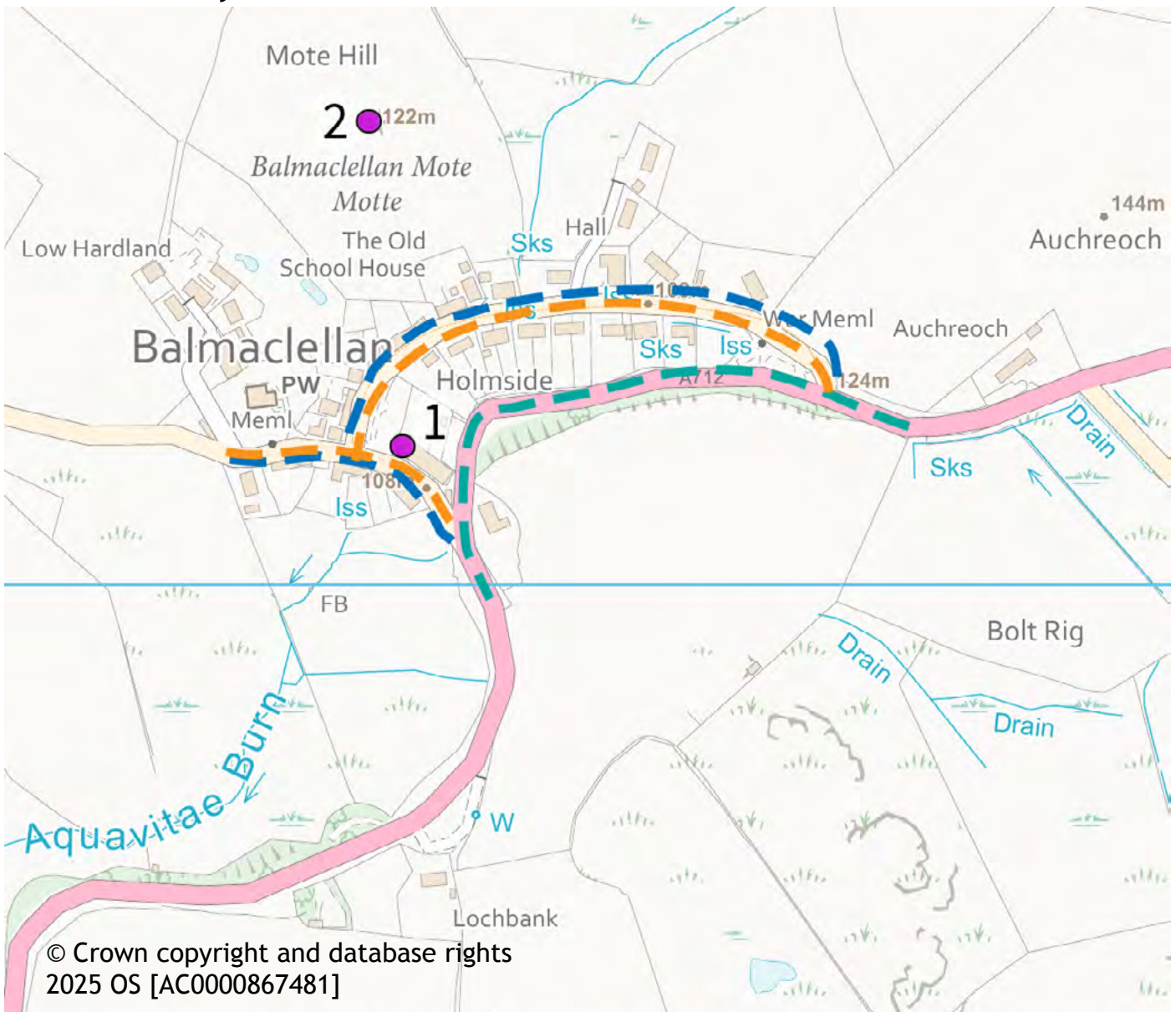
6. Improve biodiversity and access to nature		
6.1	Advice for people with gardens and windowboxes to increase biodiversity	
6.2	Wildflower and native tree/shrub planting on appropriate sites	
6.3	Creation of a community garden/orchard	BCC/Balmaclellan Community
6.4	Create wetland sites with native woodland and pathways for public access for biodiversity, recreation and flood management	

7. More opportunities to socialise, learn, keep fit		
7.1	Create /support existing sport/recreation facilities (Balmaclellan and Glenkens)	DCPT, DGC
7.2	Cultural events and/or learning programme at Village Hall/Smiddy/Men's Shed	GCAT/Balmaclellan Village Hall?
7.3	Set up village Whatsapp and/or Facebook Group	BCC/Balmaclellan Community
7.4	More recreational opportunities evenings and weekends	Balmaclellan Village Hall?
7.5	Support plans for opportunities for lifelong learning in the wider Glenkens and within Balmaclellan	GCAT, GDT CAP Steering Group

8. Improve and celebrate Balmaclellan		
8.1	Restore the currently derelict Old Bakehouse site	
8.2	Improve signage and interpretation in village	
8.3	Create village welcome pack	
8.4	Continue to develop the Kentucky site as a place of historic significance and community open space	Balmaclellan Community Trust

4.4 Action Plan: Maps

The Proposals Map (1) below shows actions relating to specific locations within the settlement of Balmaclellan, Proposals Map (2) shows potential Active Travel routes to Dalry and New Galloway.



— 20 mph speed limit

— Pavement Improvements

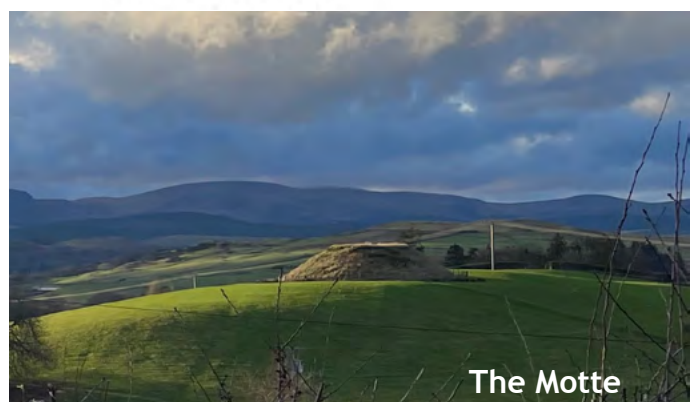
— Reduced Speed Limit

● 1. Restore the derelict Old Bakehouse building

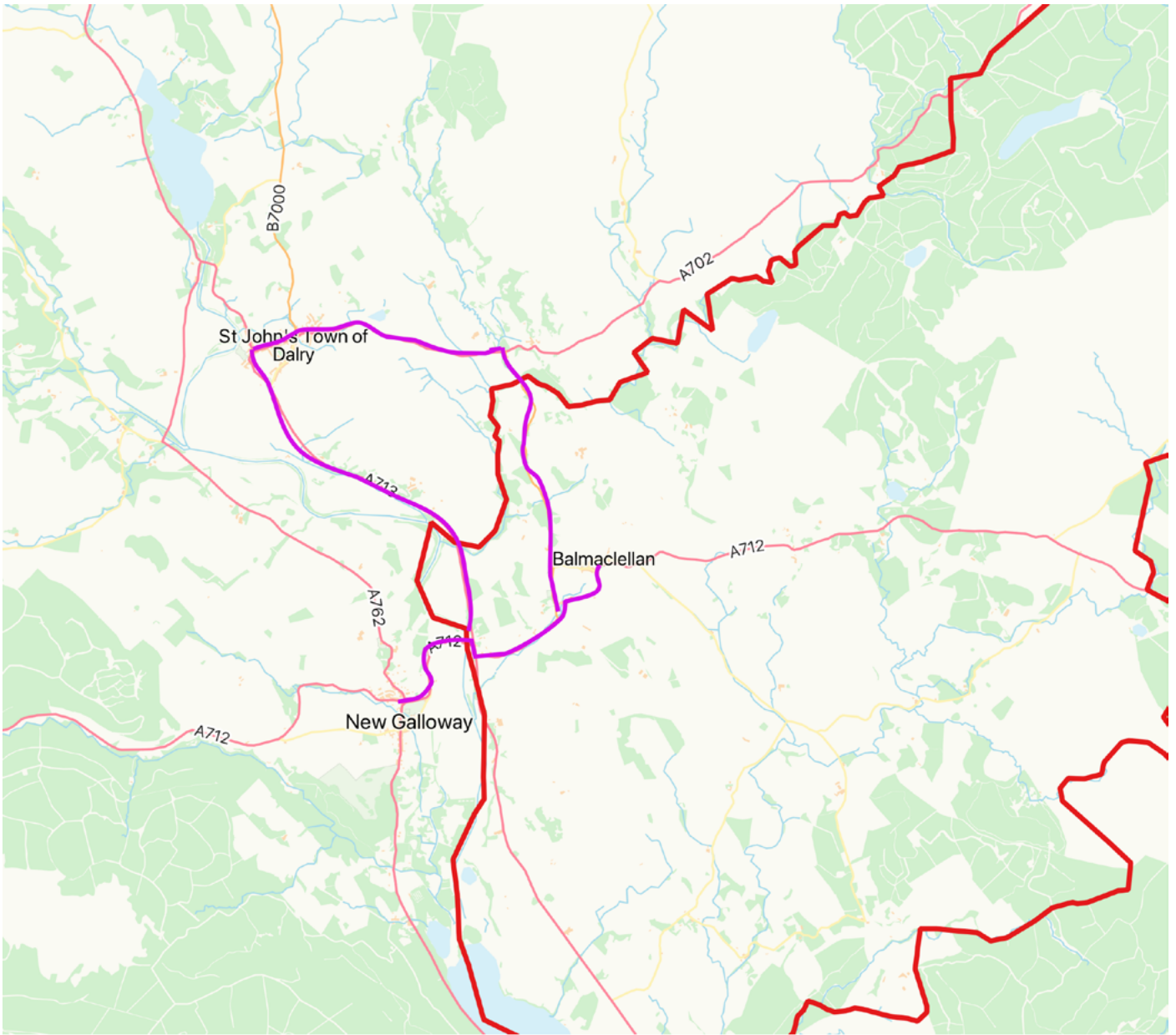
● 2. Improve access to The Motte



The Old Bakehouse



The Motte



Balmaclellan Proposals Map 2



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 Active travel route



5.1 Appendix 1: other relevant reports and studies

Housing Needs Survey (2021)

This survey was carried out by South of Scotland Community Housing, commissioned by GDT. Balmaclellan had 18 responses (13% of the total survey responses) representing 7% of the population of the CC area. Key findings for Balmaclellan included:

- Of those who expressed that their current home did not meet their needs, the most common reason (58% of responses) was that the home was too expensive to heat
- At the point of the survey, there were 155 applicants on the Homes4D&G waiting list for one of 39 properties, but only 8 new tenancies in the previous 12 months
- Respondents were keen to improve the energy efficiency of their homes, with triple glazing and high levels of insulation being equal in terms of responses
- Almost two thirds of respondents currently work from home and require home workspace, with just under 60% of respondents feeling that offering workspace within/alongside or in proximity to affordable housing would be beneficial to the community
- Comments highlighted issues with changing demographics, with fewer families and more retired people, and the challenge of local needs being accommodated for market homes when often people from outside the area were more economically advantaged

Full report: [Glenkens Housing Needs Report](#)

Resilience Plan (2023-2024)

Climate change means that extreme weather events are becoming more frequent and these can lead to issues such as flooding, wind damage, fires and power outages. Balmaclellan CC worked with the Loch Ken Trust on a project funded by the National Centre for Resilience in Dumfries to develop a resilience plan for the village, collating the details of volunteers and developing a list of useful resources and volunteer skills that can be called upon in case of an emergency, with a workshop and a drop-in evening held in order to pull together the relevant information and give residents an update on plans, and on how they can get involved and volunteer their time, skills, space or resources. Balmaclellan CC now also has an agreement to share resources with Dalry and New Galloway CCs in situations where resilience work is needed.

Secondary School Survey (2023)

This survey received 130 responses, of which 104 were from respondents who live in Dalry Secondary School catchment area, 60 indicated that they had pre-school or school age children, and 12 secondary age pupils also responded. Respondents were strongly in favour of a single school through from Nursery to S4 under one Head Teacher, rather than separate Nursery-P7 and S1-S4 schools. See the full results here: [Secondary School Survey](#)

Childcare Feasibility Study (2021)

This feasibility study was carried out by SKS Scotland on behalf of the GDT. Insufficient childcare provision in such a dispersed rural area can severely limit parents' ability to work, whilst recognising that in small communities like those of the Glenkens, populations of children in need of childcare are likely to fluctuate from year to year, making it much more difficult to plan for a sustainable service. Read the full study here: [Childcare Feasibility Study](#)

Balmaclellan Regeneration Plan (2017)

This Plan was commissioned by Balmaclellan Community Council to ensure that those living in the Balmaclellan CC Area had the opportunity to comment on decisions made regarding redevelopment of the former Petrol Station, Old Store and former Smiddy. It was carried out by Stewartry Council of Voluntary Service. [Balmaclellan Regeneration Plan](#)

5.2 Appendix 2: Data tables

Occupations of Balmaclellan residents (2022 census)

Skilled trades	27%
Associate professional	16%
Elementary occupations	14%
Professional	12%
Administration	8%
Culture, media, sport	7%
Managers	7%
Caring, leisure, travel	4%
Sales and customer service	3%
Process, Plant	2%

Employment sectors of Balmaclellan residents (2022 census)

Agriculture, forestry, fishing	23%
Education	10%
Health / social work	10%
Arts / recreation	10%
Manufacturing	8%
Administration/local government	9%
Retail, wholesale	8%
Construction, utilities	7%
Accommodation, hospitality	2%
Science, technology	1%

Balmaclellan residents' method of travel to work (2022 census)

Work mainly at or from home	46%
Drive (car/van)	47%
Passenger	2%
On foot	1%
Bicycle	1%
Public Transport	3%

Questionnaire: Priorities for Balmaclellan

These questions were based on previous consultation with residents, and have been arranged in descending order of mean score. 11 of the 17 projects gained a minimum of 55% scores of 4 or 5, indicating broad community support.

Sewing group	32%
Improve signage around the parish to highlight heritage and nature	32%
Guided walk/treasure hunt	33%
DIY group	42%
Clear up the area and get rid of litter and dog faeces	42%
Encourage and support home energy efficiency works	44%
Improve drainage throughout the parish	55%
Slow traffic down around the village	58%
Welcome pack for new residents/visitors	58%
Promote Balmaclellan	58%
Car share/volunteer driver scheme	61%
Support and publicise Resilience Plan	65%
Ensure future use of Balmaclellan Church is in keeping with community aspirations	65%
Create more safe footpaths for walkers, wheelchair users and people with children	70%
Community Garden	72%
Bring empty and derelict buildings into use	84%
Improve road surfaces throughout the parish	90%



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