

# Castle Douglas Local Place Plan

2026 – 2036



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## FOREWORD

Castle Douglas is a vibrant market town with a strong sense of community spirit. The town is surrounded by beautiful countryside with several visitor attractions nearby. Known as the Dumfries & Galloway Food Town since 2002, Castle Douglas offers a range of food, drink, and hospitality businesses, many of them small, independent or family run.

This plan was produced by Castle Douglas Community Council and the Local Place Plan Steering Group with early support from two members of the Castle Douglas Development Forum. The Plan sets out the aspirations of the community of Castle Douglas for the area, the vision and strategic objectives required to deliver those aspirations. An action plan is provided detailing the actions we wish to progress in the next ten years.

### **Castle Douglas Community and History**

Castle Douglas is in the Stewartry area of Dumfries and Galloway, about 18 miles west of Dumfries along the A75 trunk road and has a population of around 4,707.

The town was founded in 1792 by Sir William Douglas, who was a merchant in Virginia and a wealthy descendant of the Douglas family who made their money operating an import-export business in America.

Sir William built the town of Castle Douglas on the shores of Carlingwark Loch in Kirkcudbrightshire. The town's layout was based upon the grid plan pattern of streets as used in Edinburgh's New Town, built around the same time. Sir William Douglas also created several industries in Castle Douglas, including hand-woven cotton factories from which Cotton Street derives its name. \*

\*[https://www.liquisearch.com/castle\\_douglas/history](https://www.liquisearch.com/castle_douglas/history)

### **Challenges for Castle Douglas**

A key challenge for our town is retaining young people, who often leave for better-paying jobs elsewhere, as local employment—mainly in hospitality—tends to be low-paid. Like many Scottish towns, Castle Douglas needs to attract new businesses for jobs and investment. Castle Douglas is a market town with a vibrant town centre and it will be important moving forward to retain the existing shops and businesses in the town as well as attracting new ones.



*Lochside Park viewed from Threave Terrace*

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# INTRODUCTION

This document, the Castle Douglas Local Place Plan describes the community's vision for 2026-2036. The plan is based on community consultation carried out between February 2024 and February 2025.

This Local Place Plan (LPP) was produced in response to the Planning Scotland Act 2019, which provides the opportunity for a community-led, collaborative approach to creating great local places. The purpose of the plan is to identify community strengths, needs and areas for development and aspirations. The plan also sets out proposals for the development and use of land which align with those aspirations. Once completed and registered by the planning authority, local place plans are to be considered by the Planning Authority in the preparation of the relevant Local Development Plan.

During the consultation period a dedicated website published notice of consultation events as well as provided access to online surveys/questionnaires. Community consultation took several forms which included three community meetings, online surveys/questionnaires and responses to Place Standard Tool accessed through social media.

It is hoped that the production of this plan will guide and encourage further engagement with the community, ensuring that the needs and wants of the residents remain central to its development and that the plan will be instrumental in improving the quality of life in Castle Douglas over the next 10 years.

This place plan will be reviewed at 5 yearly intervals, by the Castle Douglas Community Council. However, it is recommended that the Community Council undertake an initial review and update within 6 months of acceptance of the LPP by the Dumfries & Galloway Council (D&G Council) to make plans for taking forward the ideas included in the Action Plan. The next formal review should be carried out by Castle Douglas Community Council in 2031.

## OUR PLACE

### 1. Physical Context/Environment

Dumfries & Galloway is Scotland's third largest local authority area. Castle Douglas is located within the Stewartry area of the region roughly mid-way between Stranraer in the west of the region and Gretna in the east.

The town is identified as a District Centre within the Stewartry Housing Market Area. It serves as a market town for the surrounding area and has a number of shops, services and other facilities, including tourist attractions. Agriculture is important for the town as well as the wider region with over 73% of the region's land area being dedicated to farming, characterising it as an agricultural landscape.

The town is bypassed by the A75 which creates a boundary to the north and west, with open countryside to the east and Carlingwark Loch to the south. In landscape terms, the loch is important to the setting of the town, providing an attractive gateway when approached from the south. This area is important for biodiversity as it is part of Threave and Carlingwark Loch Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).



Lochside Park

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The town itself lies within a Drumlin Pastures Landscape Character Type, and the immediate area is characterised by a series of small hills such as Erne, Dunmuir and Garden Hill which provide a visual enclosure and setting. In the wider area, the Galloway Hills Regional Scenic Area is located to the northwest of the town, and the Solway Coast Regional Scenic Area is to the south. Castle Douglas lies just within the eastern boundary of The Galloway & Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere.

Within the current Local Development Plan Castle Douglas is designated as a 'District Centre' and is home to lots of independent retailers as well as national retailers such as B&M, Wilkies and several supermarkets.

### 2. Population

The current estimated population of Castle Douglas is 4,707\*. The town has an aging population with 28%\* of the town's residents aged 65 or over as compared to 25%\* in Dumfries and Galloway and 18% in Scotland as a whole. In the town the average life expectancy for females is 80.6\* years and for males it is 77.8\* years. In Castle Douglas, the ratio male-female is 1:1.13\*, versus the regional ratio of 1:1.06\* and the Scotland ratio of 1:1.05\*.

In Castle Douglas, there are an estimated 2595 people in employment. 20% of these are employed in the health sector, 20% in retail and 12% in education. (Office of National Statistics Business Register and Employment Survey). 17%\* of people in Castle Douglas are in receipt of out of work benefits and child poverty levels are at 14%\* as compared to Scotland overall at 16%\*.

\* [Data Locality Profiles for Dumfries and Galloway LOIP collation.pdf](#)

### 3. Housing

There are currently about 2379 households in Castle Douglas with approximately 95% of those being occupied. The town features a mix of styles and ages of residential units within the housing stock. The older, original houses are generally located within the main grid system, or on the approaches to the town, with newer housing in developments on the outer areas.

Between 2018 and the end of 2022 nineteen new homes were built in the town. Of these, eight were affordable units built by Loreburn Housing Association Limited at Douglas Terrace/Trinity Lane and the remainder were private builds. In addition, the later living development complex comprising twenty-three fully accessible flats, on the site of the former Health Board offices on Queen Street was completed in November 2023. There are currently 238 registered private rental properties in the town.

According to the Stewartry Localised Data Profile the average house prices in 2021 were as follows: -

- Scotland £201,160
- Castle Douglas £187,424
- Dumfries and Galloway £167,225

At present, the total number of residential units allocated in LDP2 for the town is 754. Of these, 564 are allocated in the plan until 2029 and 190 of these, at Jenny's Loaning, are allocated long term beyond 2029.



*Later living development, Academy Street*

### 4. Education

There are two schools in the town, Castle Douglas Primary School on Jenny's Loaning and Castle Douglas High School on Dunmuir Road. The two-storey primary school was built in 2010 and includes a nursery facility for eighty 3–4-year-olds. The current school roll is 365. (Castle Douglas Primary School website). The High School is located on Dunmuir Road adjacent to the A75 by-pass and has a roll of around 550 pupils (Castle Douglas High School Handbook, 2023/24). Since 2024 Castle Douglas High School and Dalry High School have been run under the same management team.



*Primary School, Jenny's Loaning*

### 5. Transport

The only public transport in Castle Douglas is by service bus. The buses provide links to and from other towns and villages in the area. The former 'Town Service' that linked various areas of the town including the Health Centre no longer operates due to a re-organisation of the region's buses.

There are several local taxi firms operating in the area.

The nearest railway stations are Dumfries and Lockerbie. Dumfries is located approximately 18 miles from Castle Douglas and Lockerbie around 35 miles.

## 6. Health Care Services

Castle Douglas has two GP surgeries, both located in Castle Douglas Medical Centre on Garden Hill Road. These are Dr Oliver and Partners and Castle Douglas Medical Group. The Centre also houses Social Services consulting rooms and offices.

There are two chemists in town, one which operates out of the Castle Douglas Medical Centre building itself, and the other is based centrally on King Street.

Castle Douglas Cottage Hospital has 19 beds and is located on Academy Street. These beds are accessible by local GPs and consultants from Dumfries & Galloway Royal Infirmary. The hospital provides adult assessments, rehabilitation and palliative care.

Currently there is no NHS dental treatment available in Castle Douglas as Gardenhill Dental Clinic, an NHS dental practice, has no dentist in post at the time of writing. There is however, one private dental practice in the town.

Carlingwark Activity and Resource Centre offers activities and support services for individuals with learning disabilities, enabling them to stay active and maintain their independence.

The Golden Day Club, which is based at the Community Centre on Cotton Street, is a day centre for older people in Castle Douglas. The Club meets twice a week and provides social contact, friendship and support.

Castle Douglas has two residential care facilities - Carlingwark House & Bothwell House. Carlingwark House overlooks Carlingwark Loch and provides residential care and support for up to 30 older people and those living with dementia. Bothwell House on St Andrew Street provides supported accommodation for up to 13 residents.

## 7. Leisure/Community Facilities



*Castle Douglas Library and Art Gallery*

Within the town there are many community facilities including: -

- Community Centre and St John's Annexe
- Fullarton Theatre
- Town Hall
- Deans Memorial Hall
- Swimming Pool and Fitness Suite
- Library
- Art Gallery
- Lochside Park
- Market Hill Park
- Burghfield Park



*Market Hill Park*

The Crannog Campus was established in 2023 by the Castle Douglas Development Forum through a Community Asset Transfer of a former D&G Council outdoor centre and is located next to Carlingwark Loch.



*The Crannog in Lochside Park*

The CDDF have a phased delivery strategy planned for the campus, with an aim of serving as an inclusive centre focused on wellbeing, active travel and cultural engagement for Castle Douglas and the wider Dumfries & Galloway Region.

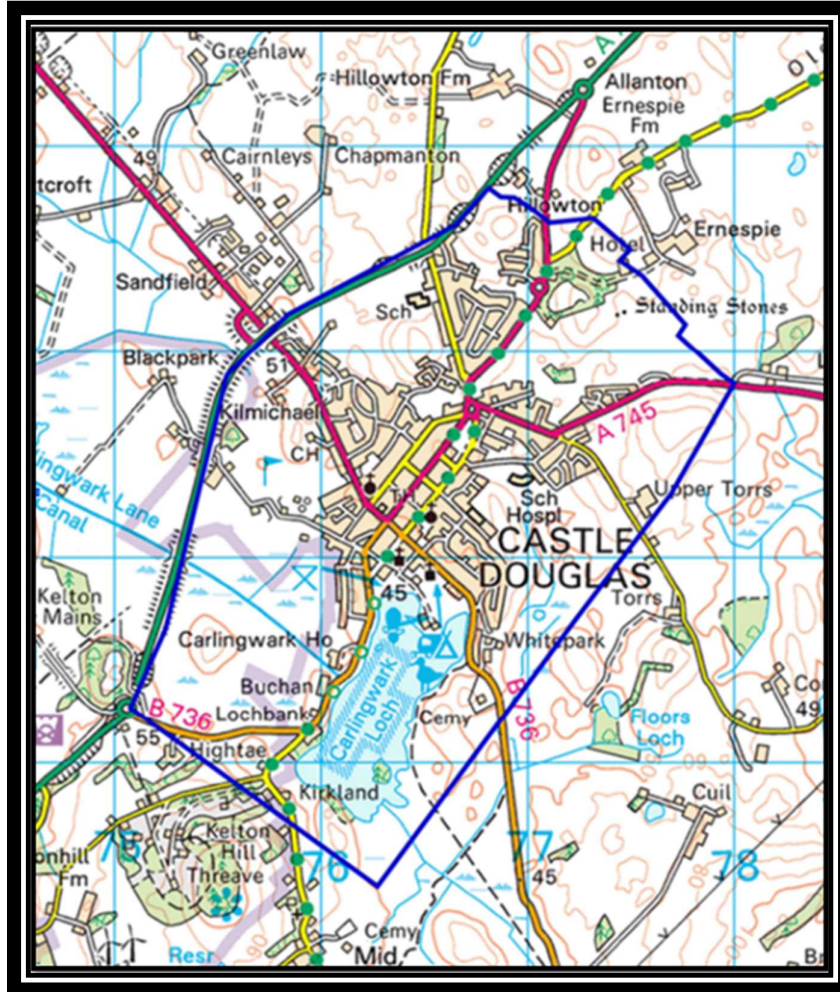
The Active Travel Hub or Multi Modal Hub is a Scottish Government national fully funded initiative outlined in the National Transport Strategy 2, to encourage integrated and sustainable travel using multiple modes of transport. There will be some 17 of these Hubs throughout Scotland.

There is a hub proposed for Castle Douglas which will be situated on the Market Hill and will provide secure, covered cycle storage, ebike charging, cleaning facilities and a seating area.

Work is scheduled to start in November 2025 and be completed by the end of March 2026.

## COMMUNITY MAP

Local Place Plan boundary area map, based on the Castle Douglas Community Council Boundaries.



**Fig 1: Castle Douglas Place Plan area enclosed in purple: Copyright: Parish Online**

The above map shows the boundary of the Castle Douglas Community Council area. This area was chosen as the boundary was clearly defined and did not overlap with other nearby Community Council areas.

# ASSETS, OPPORTUNITIES, NEEDS & CHALLENGES

## Community Engagement

The steering group used various forms of communication to notify local residents and businesses of the consultation sessions.

Flyers were hand delivered to many local households and to 61 local businesses.

Adverts were placed in the local newspaper, The Galloway News, and posters were placed on public notice boards. Social media was also used to engage with the local community and, later in the process to promote the online Place Standard Tool.

Engagement Type	No of responses
1. Community residents	56
2. Business community	26
3. Community online	88
4. Young people online	7
5. Groups online	1
6. Targeted emails	4

Details of the initial consultations are detailed below :-

### 1. Meeting for community residents

The first meeting for residents was held in the Town Hall on 19th March 2024 and the second in the Community Centre on 4th June 2024. These meetings attracted 29 and 26 attendees respectively.

During the meetings, participants completed questionnaires, provided ratings of amenities in Castle Douglas and added feedback/comments to maps of the area.

Posters and other information were provided to help participants generate thoughts and ideas.

The information collected from these meetings were largely based on the following SWOT analysis.

SWOT analysis: - Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats.

**1. What are the strengths of Castle Douglas?**

**2. What are the weak areas for the town?**

**3. What are the opportunities?**

**4. What threatens the prosperity of Castle Douglas?**

**5. What are your main thoughts?**



Community Centre, Cotton Street

### 2. Meeting for business community

One meeting was held exclusively for local businesses on 29th March 2024 in the Community Centre. Twenty-six local businesses were represented at this meeting.

Feedback was largely based on the SWOT analysis above.

Businesses who were unable to attend could, as above, complete the flyer and return to a drop-off point within the town.

### **3. Community online**

Online questionnaires were available for those who were unable or chose not to attend the in-person community meetings. These were advertised online, via social media and on our website.

As before, the form of the questionnaires was largely based on the SWOT analysis.

### **4. Young people online**

Specific questionnaires were created which were available online. Seven responses were received.

### **5. Groups online**

A survey for local groups such as sports clubs and social groups was also available online to which only one response was received.

### **6. Targeted emails**

A total of sixteen key community groups /organisations in the town and clubs were emailed directly. These included religious organisations/churches, sports clubs and one-off event groups. Successful feedback was received from three, a decline for input from one and the rest did not respond.

### **Moving Forward with the Consultation Process**

*Overall, the steering group were happy with how the meetings went, although turnout was lower than hoped and very few of the flyers which were hand delivered were returned completed. However, once the responses were studied it was apparent that the data collected whilst very useful, was quite difficult to analyse and it was decided to launch another form of consultation, this time using the Place Standard Tool. This was carried out early in 2025.*

### **7. Place Standard Tool**

This is a form of consultation which was developed collaboratively by NHS Health Scotland, Scottish Government and Architecture and Design Scotland with the aim of improving the quality of places across Scotland. The tool consists of 14 questions that help communities identify what works well and what needs improving. The tool was launched in 2015 and since then has been widely used in enhancing the quality of places across Scotland.

In January 2025, The Castle Douglas Place Standard tool was launched online and was promoted heavily on social media. 863 people opened the survey and 299 completed it. The process allows local people to express their views on physical and social aspects of their town, in this case – Castle Douglas.

Residents were invited to answer the standard questions on the tool online, which then used their answers to rank the categories that can be seen. The lower the score in any category, the less satisfied the community was in their responses. We chose the five lowest ranking categories to highlight in this Place Plan (see page 12).



*Community Meeting*

## **Conclusion**

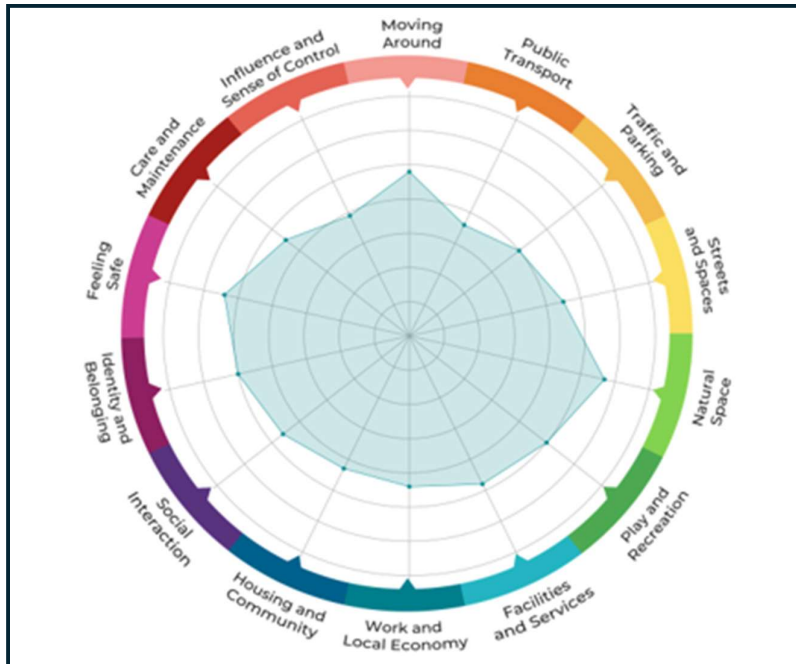
The Steering Group were delighted with the engagement at the in-person meetings although attendance was relatively low. The level of response to the Place Standard Tool was better with almost 300 completed responses.

In an ideal world, more people would have interacted with the consultation process, but there were 481 responses in total, which is over 10% of the town's population.

With any on-going community consultation for the Castle Douglas place plan, a strong focus should be placed on advertising engagement sessions well in advance, both online and via more traditional methods. As with any consultation process, the more people who engage, the more accurate and reflective the results will be.

# Results of Community Engagement

## 1. Summary of Results from Place Standard Tool Consultation



**Fig 2: Summary of Results from Place Standard Online Consultation**

Each category is scored on a scale of 1 to 7 with a score of 7 indicating that the theme is well-functioning and effective. The lower the score in any particular category, the less satisfied the community was in their responses.

The top two scoring categories for Castle Douglas, based on the feedback from local residents, were ‘Natural Space’ at 5.7 and ‘Feeling Safe’, close behind at 5.4.

We chose the five lowest ranking categories to highlight in this Place Plan which was consistent with the responses of the consultation process as a whole. These are highlighted green in the table below.

Ranking	Area	Score
1	Natural Space	5.7
2	Feeling Safe	5.4
3	Play and Recreation	5.0
4	Identity and Belonging	5.0
5	Moving Around	4.8
6	Facilities and Services	4.8
7	Social Interaction	4.6
8	Care and Maintenance	4.5
9	Streets and Spaces	4.5
10	Work and Local Economy	4.4
11	Housing and Community	4.3
12	Traffic and Parking	4.0
13	Influence & Sense of Control	3.9
14	Public Transport	3.6

**Fig 3: Ranking of Place Standard factors out of possible score of 7**

From the feedback received from the Place Standard engagement the lowest scores from a maximum of five were received in the following Areas: -

- |                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Public Transport               | 3.6 |
| 2. Influence and Sense of Control | 3.9 |
| 3. Traffic and Parking            | 4.0 |
| 4. Housing and Community          | 4.3 |
| 5. Work and Local Economy         | 4.4 |

### **2.&3. Summary of Results from Community Online and Community Residents**

When collating some of the earlier feedback from the community, we combined the online responses with the responses from our previous meetings, email communications and leaflet drops.

The feedback from these groups which generally took the form of the SWOT analysis indicated that there is overwhelming community support for the vibrant centre (in particular, King Street) which is full of a great variety of independent shops. There is also a huge sense of pride in the community spirit and friendliness of the residents.

Concerns were raised regarding parking and also the poor state of the roads and pavements. The introduction of parking charges and the potential implementation of a system of cycle lanes were considered the main threat to the town moving forward amongst this group. *(See tabled results in Appendix 4)*

The steering group also took into consideration the feedback from the online Place Standard Tool. This showed that public transport is considered vital for local residents, and suggestions for improvement included the provision of new bus stops, better maintenance of existing ones and improvements in the real-time travel information available. Parking was also cited as a major concern, along with the poor state of the roads and pavements as above.

### **4. Summary of Results from Business community**

The business community feedback via the SWOT analysis, cited the two greatest strengths of the town as being the great wealth of shops and businesses and the availability of ample free parking enabling easy access to local businesses.

The main weaknesses identified by local businesses were empty shops and properties in the town centre, which is generally seen because of absentee landlords.

The main opportunities identified were the possibility to attract more visitors to the town and the potential of upgrading Lochside Park and Carlingwark Loch, to enhance their appearance and to provide additional facilities.

Congestion and the potential introduction of parking charges were seen as potential threats.



*Swimming Pool, Market Street*

Matters raised in the 'Main Thoughts' section included the need for the business community to work together to improve the town and community spirit, and to keep Castle Douglas a great place to live and work. *(See tabled results in Appendix 4)*. Other feedback from this group also supported the improvement of public transport in line with the responses from the community residents (above).

There was also support shown for additional public toilet facilities in the town, and further investment in Castle Douglas swimming pool.

### **5. Summary of Results from Young People Online**

The parks/outdoor areas/walks and the fact that Castle Douglas is a safe place to grow up were considered to be the town's main strengths by this particular group.

Lack of things to do socially was the main weakness and key opportunities identified were the potential to improve the existing leisure facilities, provide more activities as well as providing more training and employment opportunities for young people.

### **6. Groups Online**

One of the Scout organisations were the only group to respond online. There was support for the parks and green spaces as well as the community support enjoyed by the group. An outdoor covered space for use when it rains would be potentially very useful for the group moving forward.



*Deans Memorial Hall, Blackpark Road*

### **7. Targeted Emails**

Responses were received from the following: -

- Soap Box Derby
- Stewartry Rugby Club
- The Fullarton Theatre
- Better Lives Partnership

The responses indicated that funding for organisations was an ongoing general problem, and public transport was used by some attendees.

## Analysis of Feedback

**Based on all the feedback gathered, five key areas have been identified as the focus for the Castle Douglas Local Place Plan. These are as follows: -**

### **1) Public Transport**

*\*The reader should note that the community feedback was given prior to D&G Council restructuring local bus schedules and the Town Bus service being cancelled by Stagecoach. All as a result of a failure by Stagecoach to reach an agreement on the contract with D&G Council.*

Good public transport is deemed to be affordable, reliable and well connected. It can reduce people's reliance on cars and encourage them to get around in ways that are better for the environment and for their personal health. Given the rural nature of Dumfries and Galloway, and the geographical location of Castle Douglas, effective public transport is essential.

Public transport was the lowest scored category in the results from the Place Standard Tool consultation exercise indicating relatively low satisfaction. Improving the town's existing public transport is considered very important to the local community.

Young people, the elderly and those on low incomes or households with no vehicle often depend on public transport to get around.

### **2) Influence & Sense of Control**

People feeling like they have a voice in the decision-making process can help build stronger communities and better places. Having a sense of control can help people feel more positive about their lives.

Unfortunately, conflict between various groups within the town has led to friction and negative feelings. This unrest has resulted in a general reluctance among some

individuals, as well as groups and organisations, to actively participate in community matters.

Furthermore, a small percentage of residents have raised concerns regarding the effectiveness of communication from the D&G Council, particularly about how proposed actions are relayed to local people.

Notable examples raised include the proposed Active Travel Plans for the town centre which occurred without any consultation with the Community Council or other relevant bodies.

Similarly, the plans to alter parking bays on King Street were implemented without prior consultation, with notifications limited to signs placed on lampposts. This particular action was a real source of frustration for shopkeepers and traders on King Street.



*Town Clock, King Street*

Another recent example is the removal of the Primary School crossing patrol at the top of Queen Street, a crossing that forms part of the pedestrian route to the primary school. The absence of advance communication regarding this change caused considerable concern among parents and students. Their worries were subsequently raised at a D&G Council led road safety event in the Town

Hall, which was attended by representatives of the Community Council.

### **3) Traffic and Parking**

As mentioned in the previous section, there have been recent proposals to significantly alter the road layout within the town which were generally not favoured by the town's people. In addition, many residents and businesses felt that a lack of parking and no regulation in terms of parking attendants were a significant problem.



*King Street*

*@ Keith Kirk*

It is insufficient to concentrate solely on cars when considering travel options. Active travel, which includes walking and cycling, is fundamentally linked to health and wellbeing. Therefore, it is crucial that these modes of transport are at least valued and actively encouraged in our communities. Adopting and promoting walking and cycling supports healthier lifestyles, which remains a significant concern for all of us.

Traffic wardens are being re-introduced by DGC as part of deregulation of parking enforcement.

### **4) Housing & Community**

Good places have a mix of housing in attractive, safe and connected communities for different types of families and people. Where we live and call home affects our health and wellbeing. The research carried out indicated that additional housing was needed in the town with more affordable

housing, both for rent and to buy, more bungalows, later living accommodation and three-bedroom houses were all mentioned.

### **5) Work & Local Economy**

A strong local economy with a mix of businesses can help to make places feel active and attractive – most people enjoy spending time in lively places. Access to good quality jobs, volunteering and training can help us to stay active and healthy, provide social connections, a sense of identity and satisfaction, and an income where paid.

Establishing and maintaining robust relationships with key organisations such as Visit Scotland, South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE), and the Scottish Government is essential for promoting inward investment and facilitating the relocation of jobs from urban centres to rural communities, including Castle Douglas and the surrounding areas. These strategic partnerships have the potential to deliver significant benefits to residents by encouraging economic growth and creating new employment opportunities.

It falls within the remit of the Community Council, Castle Douglas Development Forum (CDDF), and other similar community-focused bodies to champion and manage this engagement. By taking a proactive approach, these groups can ensure that Castle Douglas is well-positioned to attract investment and benefit from national and regional initiatives.

To maximise the effectiveness of these efforts, it is recommended that local organisations coordinate closely and hold regular meetings. These gatherings should focus on identifying priorities, sharing information, and agreeing on the most effective strategies to drive progress and secure positive outcomes for the area.

# COMMUNITY/LOCAL PLACE PLAN OBJECTIVES

## 1. Public Transport

The only public transport in Castle Douglas is by service bus. The buses provide links to and from other towns. Several local taxi firms operate in the area.

The Southwest of Scotland Regional Transport Partnership (SWestrans) is established under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 and is required to provide a statutory Regional Transport Strategy (RTS). An estimated 148,290 people resided in the SWestrans area in 2020 according to Scottish Government Statistics. This equates to 2.7% of the total population of Scotland which was 5,466,000 in 2020.

The population density of the region is low at just twenty-three people per square kilometre compared to the national average of sixty-nine people per square kilometre. Dumfries is the major centre of population accounting for nearly 30% of the total population of Dumfries and Galloway as of 2021. This low population density has implications for the provision of effective and efficient transport which is provided by service buses.

Three areas of concern were identified as a result of our consultation in relation to public transport in and around the town. These were: -

- a. Better connectivity is needed between bus timetables and ferries/trains/other buses.
- b. Improved bus links between small villages and towns.
- c. Bus stops need to feel safer for users. Many are in remote spots, are not overlooked and are poorly lit or not at all.

## Possible Solutions

*Better Connectivity and links with other settlements* - At the outset, improving public transport links should be discussed with the appropriate Council departments to identify timetabling and route alterations to improve the service.



*Existing bus stop at top of King Street*

*Making bus stops feel safer* - There are a number of bus stops within the town. Initially it would be appropriate to identify those stops which raise concerns and are perceived by some users to be less safe. The next stage may be to have a discussion with the police to identify potential changes which would improve the waiting experience for passengers. The implementation of any improvements may involve one or more Council departments e.g. Roads, Street Lighting etc.

## 2. Influence & Sense of Control

Overall, effective communication is a key factor in creating a supportive environment for residents, ensuring they feel valued and understood. Building on and improving existing communication between stakeholders and the Castle Douglas community could help achieve this. This could be either direct communication or that via community groups such as the Castle Douglas Community Council.

Possible solutions include: -

- Improved communication from D&G Council to the community groups and general community.
- Encourage principal officers of D&G Council to give regular updates of any forthcoming plans for the local area to the Community Council
- Current community groups working together with helpful regular liaison.
- Businesses creating their own representative group e.g. Chamber of Commerce or Trade Association.
- Involving the wider community in decisions and consulting the community – offline as well as online by all contributors.
- Create a dedicated calendar of the regular Town events monitored by a single body i.e. possibly the Community Council?
- Encourage young people from all areas to tell the Community Council of their needs/wants in the Town facilities.
- Persuade absentee landlords/property owners to keep their buildings in a good state of repair and/or encourage them to place them up for sale to others for either commercial or residential purposes if they do not. Investigate the possibility of compulsory purchase if a town centre building becomes derelict or more significantly, a danger.
- Find ways for local groups and associations to utilise our town brands of Market Town and Food Town to help achieve funding for community projects and enhancing the town.

### 3. Traffic & Parking

The subject of traffic and parking is a regular topic of discussion in the community and has featured heavily in community campaigns in recent years (see Assets, Opportunities, Needs & Challenges section for more detail).

There is a core belief that free parking on King Street is essential for our local businesses to continue to thrive in this challenging economic climate, and we received many comments during our consultation process supporting this view, alongside the community petition against parking charges, which received 3628 signatures locally. Therefore, **free parking** is something that this Local Place Plan would recommend be retained at all costs.

Another key recommendation based on community feedback would be that no parking is removed from the town centre and, in fact, that **more parking is created centrally**. Castle Douglas has an ageing population who is more reliant on their vehicles, especially as public transport between local villages and the Town is poor. Additionally, we would recommend some form of **designated parking areas for staff** working in centrally located businesses, and residents of King Street, to make more space available on the street for possible shopping customers.



*Market Hill car park*

Other community recommendations, based on our public consultations, include: -

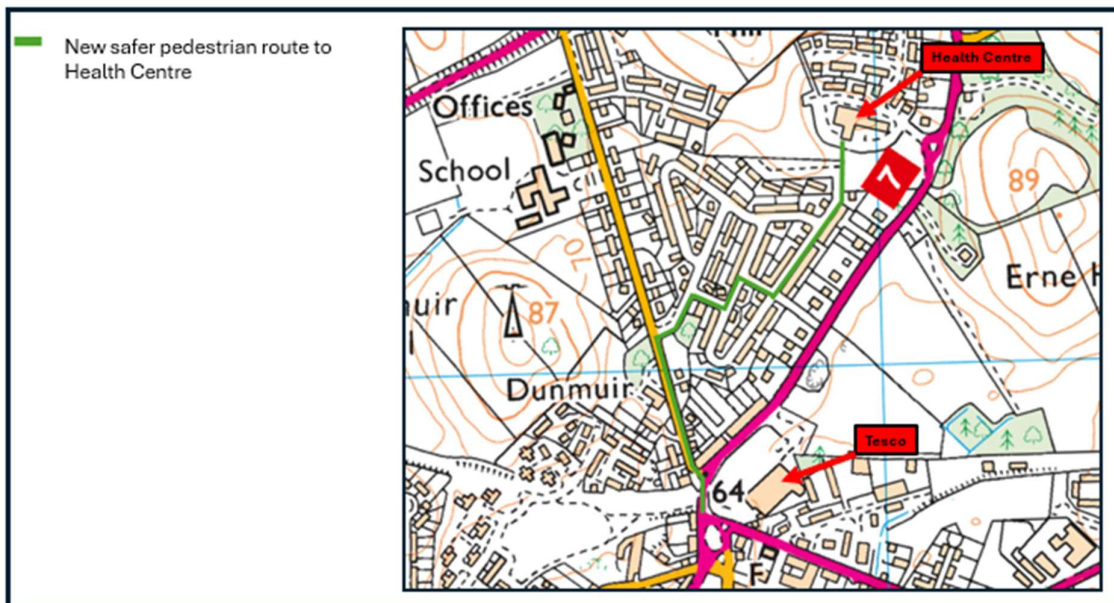
- Introduction of a 20mph speed limit on all Town Centre roads as previously promised by D&G Council and has been implemented in other D&G Towns.
- Stricter enforcement of the 30mph speed limit on the five main roads i.e. Ernespie Road, Dunmuir Road,

Oakwell Road, Carlingwark Road and Abercromby Road.

- Prevent HGV traffic at peak times using the Town Centre three roads i.e. King Street, Queen Street and Cotton Street.
- Increase in disabled parking bays in the Town centre area.
- New pedestrian light-controlled crossing located close to the Town Clock on King Street.
- New pedestrian crossing on King Street opposite the Library and Market Hill car park.
- New pedestrian crossing on Ernespie Road by the Tesco carpark entrance.
- New pedestrian crossing on Oakwell Road close to Aldi carpark entrance.
- Introduce better signage and clear directional lines on the roundabout

at the top of King Street.

- Signpost a pedestrian route from the Tesco onto the footpath of Dunmuir Road to the junction of St Georges and Robb Place using a new pedestrian crossing. Then take the footpaths to the rear entrance of the Health Centre. This would be a safer and more user-friendly way than that of the current route via Ernespie Road.



Map: New safer route to Health Centre

## 4. Housing & Community

LDP2 has allocated housing land for a total of 754 units over nine sites allocated until 2029. The four larger sites, each for a total number of units of between 130 and 190 require masterplans to be submitted as part of the planning applications for these sites. Since its adoption in September 2019, none of the allocated housing sites included in the plan have been developed. Existing allocated housing sites are as follows:-

- North of Garden Hill (15 units)
- West of Garden Hill (30 units)
- East of Ernespie Road (130 units)
- Cotton Street (16 units)
- West of Torrs Road (133 units)
- South of Jenny’s Loaning (190 units)
- South of Ernespie Lodge (25 units)
- South of Kilmichael Abercromby Rd (35 units)
- The Stables (180 units)

The most recent housing developments in the town include the later living development of 23 fully accessible flats on the site of the former Health Board offices at 67 Queen Street, completed November 2023 and 8 semi-detached affordable houses at rear of Douglas Gardens, completed December 2018. Both sites were developed by Loreburn Housing Association Ltd. Both sites were included as allocated sites in LDP1 along with another site for five units at Abercromby Place which has been developed but with one dwelling house.

The community responses indicated that there is a desire for more affordable homes and more speculative development in the town. New residential developments in Castle Douglas should provide a variety of housing types to cater for the various stages of life and differing needs. The consultation process identified that the community felt there was a particular need to provide three-bedroom residential units as well as more later living accommodation.

The smaller sites included in LDP1 are the ones that have been favoured leaving several larger sites of more than 100 units being carried forward into LDP2.

### **Possible Solutions**

**4a.** Bring forward smaller sites of up to ten residential units for consideration for inclusion in the next Local Development Plan (LDP3). It is noted that it is the smaller sites that have been developed from LDP 1. Smaller sites are more likely to have a less onerous ‘planning journey’ with fewer information requests and will likely be more attractive to small/local building firms for development or self-builds/co-operatives.

#### **Potential sites could include:-**

- **Former stables and yard at bottom of Cotton Street**
- **Brownfield site on south side of Church Street**
- **Brownfield site on south side of Carlingwark Street**

**4b.** The planning authority are asked to investigate the feasibility of a Masterplan Consent Area (formerly Simplified Planning Zone). This would be a smaller site and would potentially :-

- offer an opportunity in the town for people who want to build their own home, whilst streamlining the planning process to make self-build an easier option
- encourage first-time builders by providing robust framework and guidance whilst allowing flexibility and a degree of design freedom. This could help to retain families within the town and encourage new development which is people-led and in doing so create a resilient community.

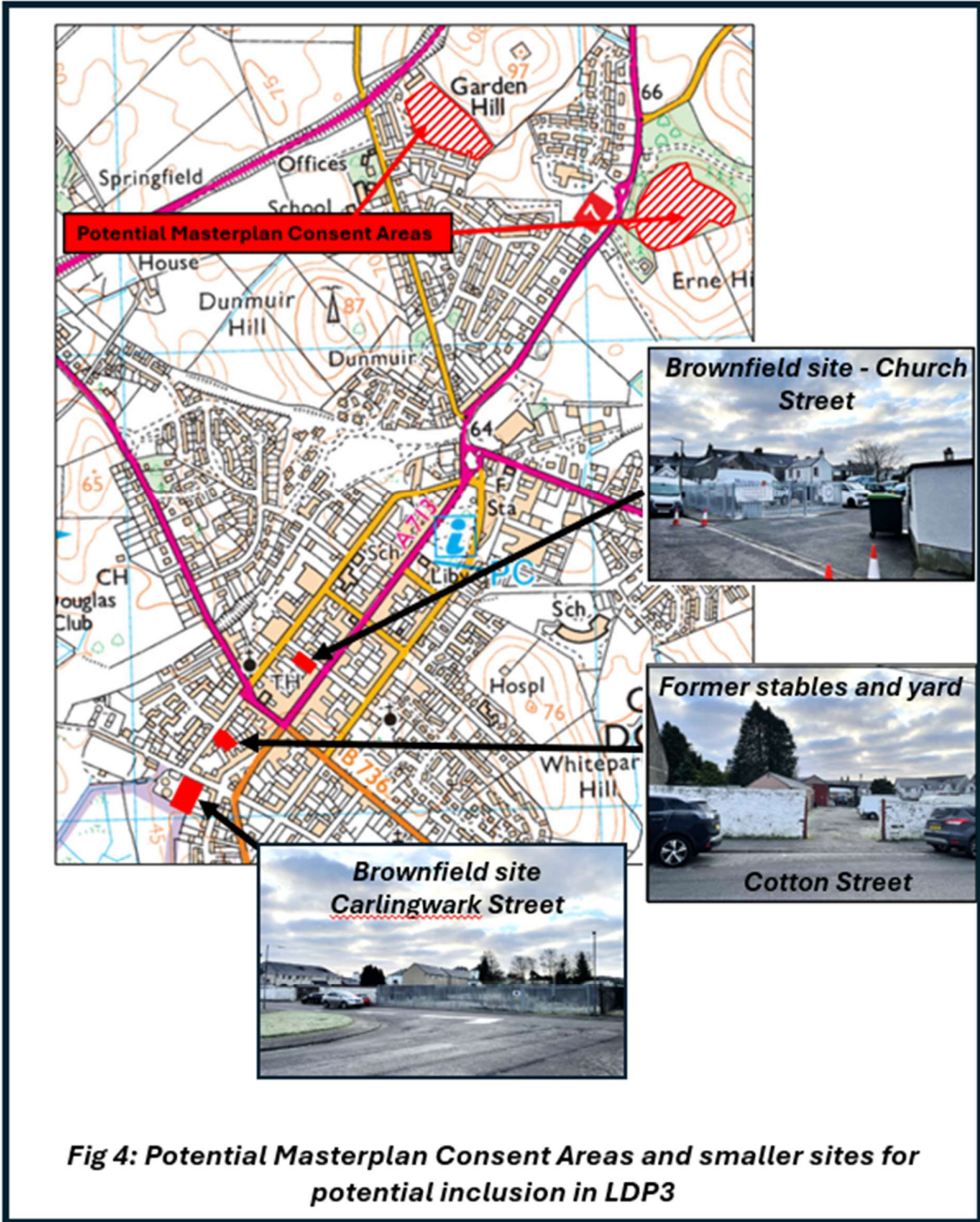
The smallest allocated site, Land North of Garden Hill Drive for 15 units is a suitable size for a Masterplan Consent Area or consideration could be given to a part of one of the other allocated sites e.g. Land to south of Ernespie Lodge currently allocated for 25 units.

**4c.** Encourage links with Housing Associations/Low-Cost Housing providers to gain a greater understanding of the criteria for site selection and hopefully improve the chances of allocated housing sites within the settlement being developed. Increased dialogue would provide an understanding of how the housing type is selected for a particular location and any

input which may be possible from the community.



*Part of the Douglas Gardens Development*



## 5. Work & Local Economy

Community feedback from the Place Standard Tool indicates that Castle Douglas residents believe 'Work & The Local Economy' needs improvement.

Despite many volunteering and part-time job opportunities, there is a lack of diverse, well-paid careers for young people. This is addressed in more detail in the Action Plan.

Dumfries and Galloway boasts one of Scotland's highest entrepreneur rates, which should be encouraged and supported.

King Street has a variety of small, local businesses that attract tourists and visitors from other parts of the region. The Bank of Scotland has recently announced their King Street branch will close in January 2026. This will cause hardship to the business community and the elderly and disabled residents who use it. Alternative banking facilities are available, but some will find it difficult to make the changes. This closure will leave only one bank in the town and potentially within the Stewartry: The Royal Bank of Scotland.

Based on community feedback, this LPP suggests the following measures to improve employment and the local economy in Castle Douglas: -

- The establishment of a bulletin-style newsletter, supplemented by an online platform, dedicated to job and volunteering opportunities within the area. Community involvement could be facilitated in various ways, such as students from the IT Centre and/or High School assisting with the creation of the newsletter, and local businesses exploring new methods for generating future employment and training opportunities. The newsletter could also promote work experience opportunities for High School students.

- A concentrated effort to enhance the 'Food Town' branding of Castle Douglas is recommended. This initiative may include strategies to attract food-oriented businesses to the Town centre and industrial estates, support for existing businesses to extend their operating hours, and the establishment of a 'Hospitality Training Hub'. Such a hub would offer practical training for individuals aspiring to join the hospitality industry and serve as a valuable resource for the broader region.
- Forming a formal association for local businesses can ensure their representation in community decisions. This group may foster relationships and generate new business ideas, benefiting the local economy and job seekers.
- Find ways for local businesses to piggy-back on our town identities of 'Food Town' and 'Market Town', to help achieve future success and drive forward with possible initiatives.
- Form a group to discuss solutions for re-purposing derelict or unoccupied buildings in the Town centre.

## 6. Additional Subjects Worthy of Note

Besides the five key themes, several subjects' merit attention in this plan based on recent community feedback and activities. They are as follows:

### 1. Active Travel Plans and proposed changes to the roundabout at the top of King Street

Active travel proposals (*See Appendix 1*)

In 2023, D&G Council, via SWestrans funding, commissioned Stantec feasibility study for Active Travel Proposals in Castle Douglas. Part of Stantec's proposals included installing a segregated cycle lane on the roundabout at the top of town, relocation of the war memorial, removal of trees on the roundabout, a one-way system on sections of King Street and Queen Street and a cycle lane down King Street.

Community members launched their own 'Castle Douglas Mobility Survey' due to dissatisfaction with Stantec's initial research. They felt local voices were not heard. The survey included an online link and an in-person session at the Community Centre to gather input from as many locals as possible.

A total of 1357 residents participated in the 'Castle Douglas Mobility Survey'. Subsequently, community members convened with local councillors, representatives from the Roads Department of D&G Council, and Stantec to discuss the findings.

Key outcomes of the survey included:

- only 7.4% of the 1314 respondents thought that making King Street one-way was a good idea.
- only 2.5% of the 1352 respondents agreed that the trees on the roundabout should be cut down.
- only 3.1% of the 1352 respondents agreed that the war memorial should be removed or relocated.
- only 4.1% of the 1349 respondents thought that the existing cycle lane on the roundabout is inadequate.

**6a.** There was notable local feedback regarding the need for better signage approaching the roundabout and repainting its lines, resulting in the social media hashtag #signsandlines.



*The Roundabout*

### **The Roundabout**

#### Opposition to Active Travel Plans

After the initial meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2023, Stantec then produced a second draft of their Active Travel Proposals for Castle Douglas. This included removing the roundabout entirely and replacing it with a 4-way junction.

The community then created a petition against these proposed changes, which did not appear to take into consideration the feedback from the meeting in September 2023.

**6b.** 3653 people signed the petition against the newly proposed changes, and this was delivered to Dumfries & Galloway Council.

As a result of this, the Local Place Plan Steering Group feel it is important to highlight within this document, the strength of feeling against the proposed Active Travel Plans for Castle Douglas. Whilst there is support for plans such as a path between Crossmichael and Castle Douglas, and another between Dalbeattie and Castle Douglas, there is no significant support for any of the proposals suggested by Stantec, such as a cycle lane down King Street or a one-way system.

**Protecting our Roundabout**

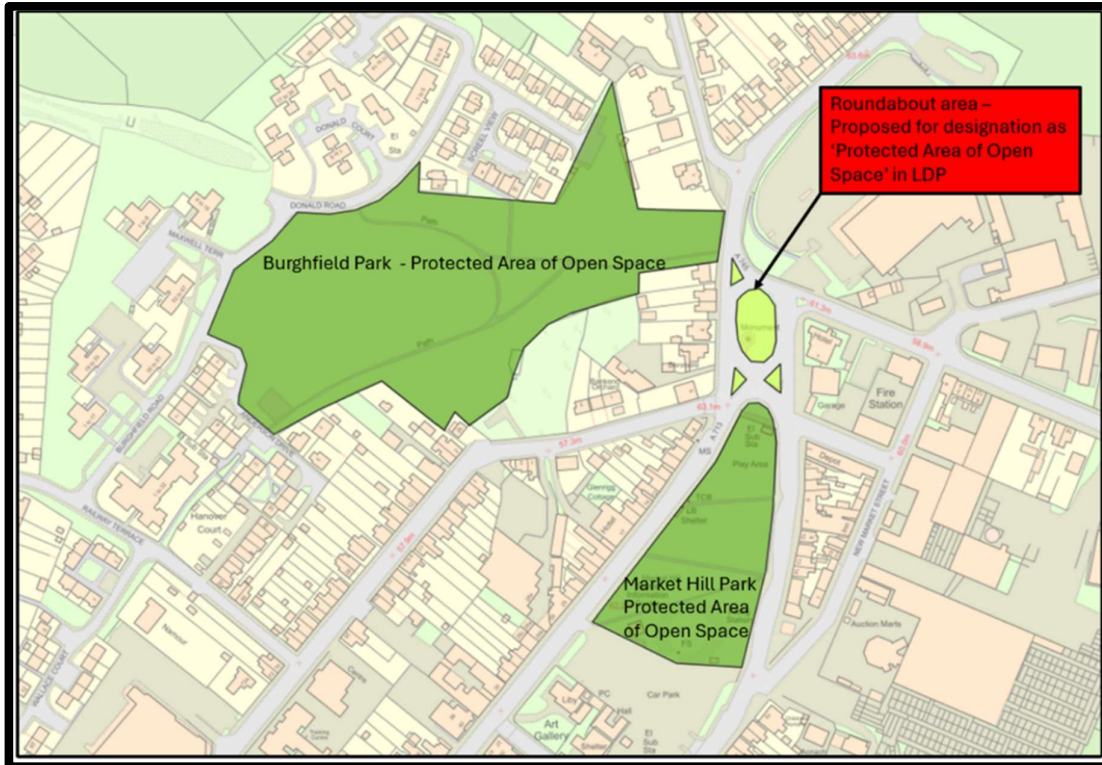
The 'Castle Douglas Mobility Survey' in 2023 showed strong community support to keep the roundabout as is.

Currently, Market Hill and Burghfield are designated as 'Protected Areas of Open Space' in LDP2. The roundabout serves as a

landscaped gateway to the town and includes the war memorial.

**6c.** Designating the roundabout as a 'Protected Area of Open Space' would connect Burghfield and Market Hill under this status.

To safeguard the roundabout similarly, it should also receive this designation.



*Fig 5: The roundabout in relation to existing areas designated as 'Protected Open Space'*

**Parking charges**

(See Appendix 1)

Residents of Castle Douglas strongly oppose parking charges, as they would negatively impact local businesses.

The town hopes that, given the strong community feeling on this subject, D&G Council will honour their pledge to not introduce parking charges and that Castle Douglas will remain a parking charge-free town.

## ASSET DEVELOPMENT MAP

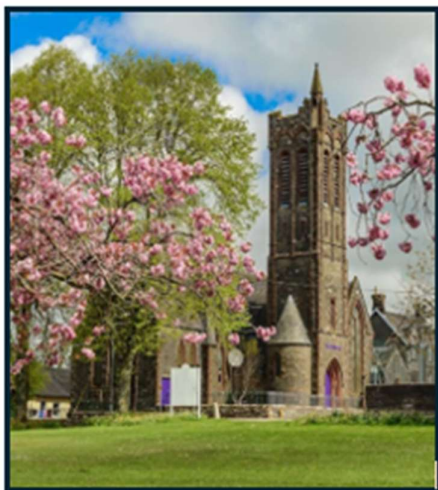
In addition to the listed buildings, there are several buildings/structures in the town which are valued by the residents, which was indicated in the research carried out. The buildings were selected either by virtue of design or cultural/social heritage or current/historic use and should be protected or developed/refurbished. These include but are not limited to:-

### Buildings/Structures to be Protected

- Library and Art Gallery
- War Memorial
- Town Hall
- Community Centre and St John's Annexe
- Swimming Pool
- Town Clock
- Carlingwark House
- Fullarton Theatre
- Carlingwark Parish Church
- Telephone Exchange
- Mart building

### Buildings to be developed/refurbished

- Merrick Hotel
- Rendezvous Restaurant
- Douglas Arms Hotel
- Little's Butcher
- Isle House (Crannog)



Fullarton Theatre

© Keith Kirk



Douglas Arms Hotel, King Street

In addition to the above there is an area formerly used for horses/stables on Cotton Street which could be brought forward in the local plan as a smaller site for housing.



St John's Annexe, Cotton Street

At the time of writing there is a 'Kickstarter' fund appeal for refurbishment and change of use of the street facing shop (Little's) to bakery/café.

At the outset two registers of the buildings/structures identified above should be compiled identifying owners/landlords and any designations, e.g. any listings by Historic Environment Scotland. Owners/landlords should then be contacted, to inform them that their property is valued by the community. Further discussions would then be necessary on how to take forward each building, or not, based on the particular circumstances.

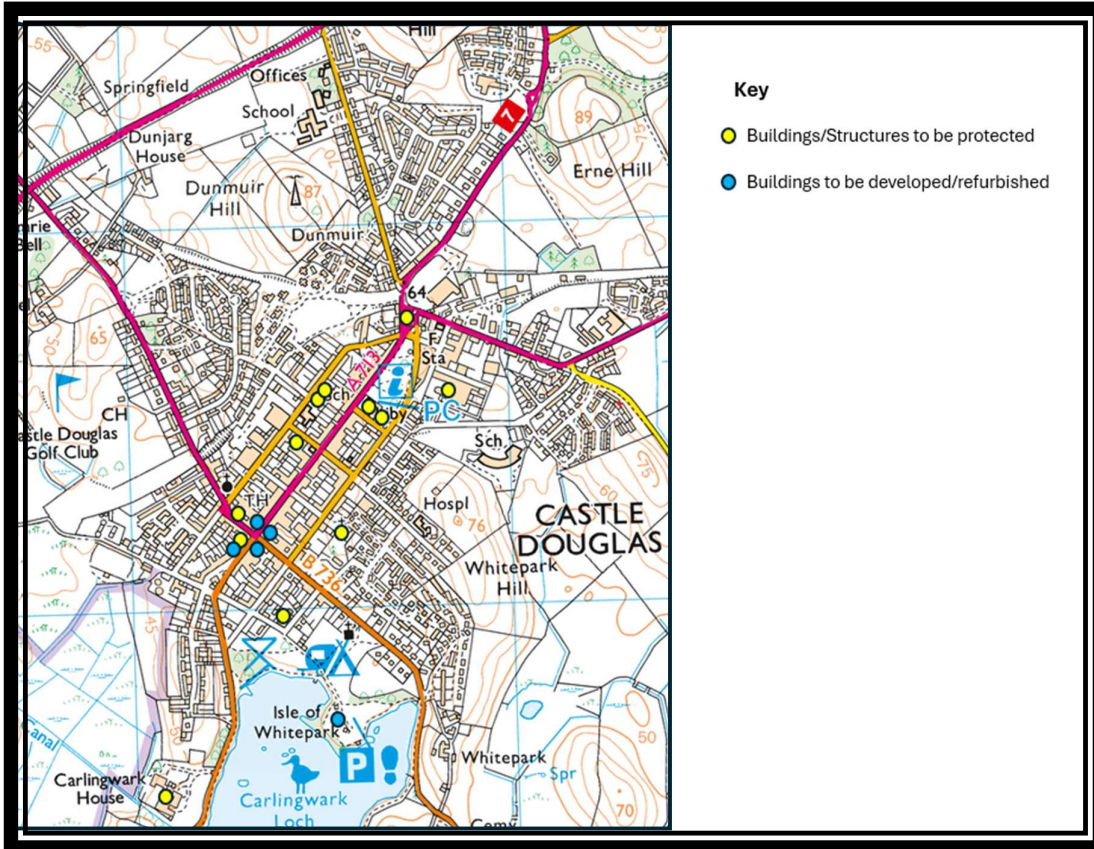


Fig 6: Asset development map showing important buildings/structures and sites.

## ACTION PLAN

Ref No	Proposed Action	Potential Partners	Priority H/M/L	Status
1a	Better connectivity between bus timetables, ferries/trains/other buses/college & school start times.	CDCC SWestrans DGC	H	To be commenced. Routes/times to be identified. Initial meeting with stakeholders to be arranged.
1b	Improved bus links between small villages & towns.	CDCC SWestrans DGC	M	To be commenced. Settlements/times to be identified. Initial meeting with stakeholders to be arranged.
1c	Bus stops to feel safer for users especially in the hours of darkness.	CDCC SWestrans DGC	H	List to be compiled. To include Market Hill, Carlingwark St, Ernespie Rd. Meet with DGC Roads.
2a	Improve and build upon existing lines of communication DGC ↔ CDCC ↔ Castle Douglas community.	DGC CDCC	H	Arrange regular meetings with the ward officer and any other departmental leads as necessary.
2b	Encourage community groups to work together to create positive outcomes to fully benefit the Town.	CDCC CDDF & local groups	H	Arrange regular meetings with Chairpersons and members of <b>all groups</b> .
2c	Encourage young people to communicate their ideas to improve youth facilities in the town.	Schools Youth Groups CDCC	H	Start a programme of school visits to explain the functions of local democracy in action.
3a	Create more parking facilities within the town centre, with particular focus on parking for shop staff.	DGC SWestrans	M	Identify areas of land that could be potentially used for parking.
3b	Work with local authorities to introduce 20mph speed limit in town centre and to enforce 30mph speed limit on main roads exiting the town.	DGC Swestrans Police Scotland	M	Closely liaise with DGC for a programme 20mph installation. Ask police to make more speed checks on all main town roads.

Ref No	Proposed Action	Potential Partners	Priority H/M/L	Status
3c	Installation of new pedestrian crossings at key areas. Potential Partners identified during community consultations.	DGC Swestrans CDCC	M	Arrange regular meetings for updates on installation progress.
3d	Create and promote a new, safer route for pedestrians to the Garden Hill Medical Centre.	DGC SWestrans	M	Map of proposed route included in place plan.
4a	Bring forward small sites for consideration as allocated housing sites in the LCD.	CDCC DGC	H	Potential sites identified in Fig 4. Liaise with LDP 3 team as necessary.
4b	Introduce a Masterplan Consent Area for Castle Douglas for self-build/co-operative housing.	CDCC DGC	M	Potential sites identified in Fig 4. Liaise with LDP 3 team as necessary.
4c	Improve links with Housing Associations to promote & encourage development of allocated housing sites within the town	LHA DGHP Wheatley Homes DGC Housing	M	Still to be commenced. Identify & contact relevant Housing Associations, arrange initial meeting.
5a	Enhance the 'Food Town' branding of Castle Douglas. Promote an annual Food Festival.	Businesses CDDF CDCC.	H	Arrange an initial public meeting of all interested parties.
5b	Form a local Business Association.	Businesses	M/L	Arrange an initial public meeting of all interested parties.
5c	Form a group to discuss solutions for re-purposing derelict or unoccupied buildings in the Town centre.	CDCC Businesses Landlords	M/L	Arrange an initial public meeting of all interested parties.
5d	Seek more opportunities for new "startups" on the Industrial sites and other areas.	DGC Businesses	H/M	Action to be agreed.
6a	Install better signage on the approach to Castle Douglas roundabout.	DGC CDCC	M/L	Action to be agreed.

Ref No	Proposed Action	Potential Partners	Priority H/M/L	Status
6b	Ensure that Castle Douglas remains free from any parking charges	DGC CDCC	H	Liaise closely with elected councillors & departmental leads as necessary.
6c	The Castle Douglas roundabout at the top of town, next to the Market Hill should become a Designated 'Protected Open Space'.	DGC CDCC	M/L	Area has been identified on plan included in place plan. Liaise with LDP team as necessary.
7a	Community asset protection and development/refurbishment for buildings/structures identified on lists compiled on page 26	Owners Landlords CDDF	M/L	Compile 2No registers. Identify and contact owners/landlords. Further discussions by CC on how to proceed.

Code = H 12 – 24 months. M within 24-36 months. L more than 36 months.

## CONCLUSION

The preparation of the place plan involved identifying the main challenges facing the town which were:-

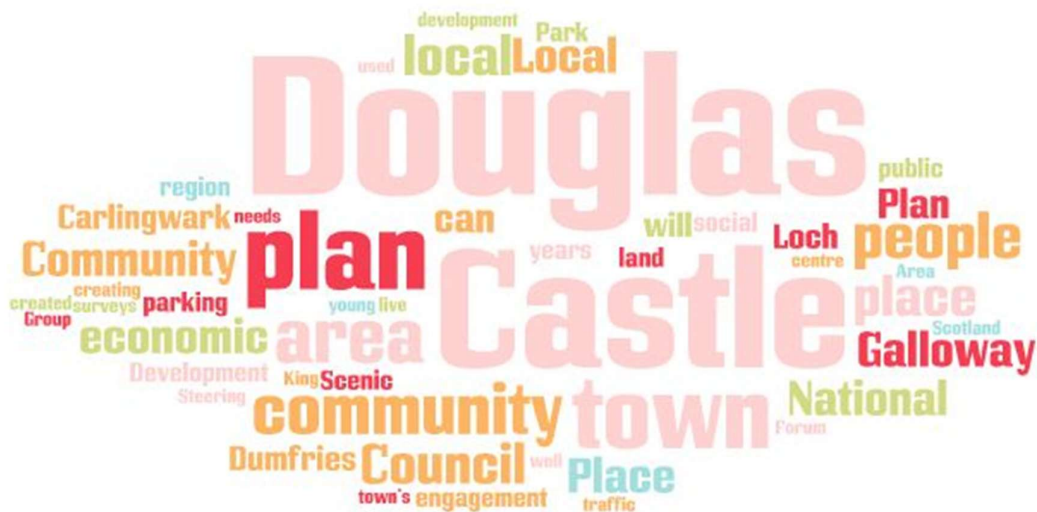
- *The difficulty in retaining young people in the town*
- *Attracting new businesses, investment and job creation with the area*
- *Maintaining the vibrancy of the town centre*

The Action Plan has detailed measures which will help to address these challenges for the town moving forward.

It is important to emphasise that this Place Plan marks the beginning of a longer-term journey. The intention is for this document to serve as the foundation for guiding Castle Douglas forward in a positive direction over the next five to ten years. The publication of the Plan is not an endpoint, but the commencement of ongoing development and improvement.

This Plan should be viewed as an initial framework, setting out aspirations and priorities for the community. By establishing a clear direction and identifying key themes, the document provides a basis upon which future actions can be built. As circumstances evolve and new opportunities arise, the Plan is intended to remain flexible and responsive to the needs and ambitions of Castle Douglas.

Ongoing engagement and collaboration will be essential. The community is encouraged to take ownership, contribute their ideas, and participate actively in the progression of the Plan. Through collective effort and continued consultation, the aspirations outlined here can be translated into meaningful outcomes, ensuring that Castle Douglas continues to thrive and develop for years to come.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Castle Douglas Community Council acknowledges the contributions of all those involved in preparing this document and wish to extend thanks to the following: -

- The residents and businesses of Castle Douglas who attended the public meetings and completed the questionnaires, both in-person and online.
- Keith Kirk, our local photographer for providing some of the imagery used in this Plan.
- Small Print for their assistance in preparing and printing this document.
- Staff of D&G Council for their valuable input.
- Community Centre and Town Hall for room/resources use.
- The three residents who formed the Steering Group. Judith Turnbull, Tammie Kirk and Colin Eade.



© Keith Kirk

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1

### Information relating to parking charges and Active Travel Plans

#### Parking in the Town Centre

In 2024 a local businesswoman, Tammie Kirk, launched a petition to gauge the community's views on a council plan to introduce parking fees in the town.

Details of the campaign that resulted are here:

**3628** people signed the Castle Douglas petition against DPE powers being transferred and any parking charges ever being introduced, ***under any circumstances***. This was made up of 1001 signatures online on a change.org petition and 2627 signatures on paper petitions that were available in almost all local businesses in town.

On December 5th, 2024, there was a Communities Committee Meeting in Dumfries where Active Travel and DPE/parking charges were all discussed. At this meeting, the committee members unanimously agreed to take parking charges on all main roads and council owned car parks completely off the table. This was a fantastic victory for Castle Douglas and other local towns who had also produced petitions against parking charges.

On February 6th, 2024, at another Communities Committee Meeting, it was decided that the transfer of DPE powers to Dumfries & Galloway Council would go ahead but reiterated that no parking charges would be introduced because of this.

In 2023, Dumfries & Galloway Council were updating their Regional Parking Strategy and, as part of that, were considering applying to take over Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) powers from Police Scotland.

The Castle Douglas Community launched a petition against this change for multiple reasons, including that nearly 40% of regions who had already transferred DPE powers were running at a financial loss and that no financial feasibility study or financial predictions had been completed for the project.

Additionally, Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 provides that the scheme would have to be self-funding and that any deficit accrued by a local authority as a result of the operation of DPE must be made good out of the local authority's general fund, and therefore transferral of DPE powers would most likely result in the introduction of parking charges in the region, as had happened in most other regions who had transferred DPE powers.

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On December 5th, 2024, there was a Communities Committee Meeting in Dumfries where Active Travel and DPE/parking charges were all discussed. At this meeting, the committee members unanimously agreed to take parking charges on all main roads and council owned car parks completely off the table. This was a fantastic victory for Castle Douglas and other local towns who had also produced petitions against parking charges.

On February 6th, 2024, at another Communities Committee Meeting, it was decided that the transfer of DPE powers to Dumfries & Galloway Council would go ahead but reiterated that no parking charges would be introduced because of this.

The community of Castle Douglas feel very strongly that parking charges should never be introduced to the town, to protect our local businesses and residents.

Within the town centre there is a large car park at Market Hill at the top of King Street where the parking is free of charge and not ticketed or time limited. Along King Street and Queen Street on-street parking is allowed subject to local restrictions. On King Street however these restrictions are sometimes ignored by motorists which can sometimes cause congestion on the street. Some local people would like to see the re-introduction of Traffic Warden services, which may help to alleviate the perceived problem.

Not all businesses agree with this proposition though, and are concerned that any restrictions to parking in King Street could have a negative impact on sales. Shop owners have, however, expressed difficulty with finding parking spaces for their staff in the town centre. Many agree that if alternative parking was provided for staff nearby, then this would create more 'legal' on-street parking opportunities for their clientele.

The main street has only one pedestrian-controlled crossing point, at the top of King Street. It would be very beneficial to have a second similar crossing lower down the street to enable pedestrians/shoppers to safely cross.

## APPENDIX 2

### **Statistical information from the community-initiated survey in response to the Dumfries & Galloway Council, via SWestrans funding, commissioned Stantec feasibility study 2023/24**

There were 1357 responses, including 198 from business owners. 12% of the respondents to the Community Survey considered themselves to have a disability and nearly 24% had young children or were pregnant at the time. On September 22nd, 2023, a local group of individuals who were involved with the survey were invited to a meeting attended by representatives from D&G Council, SWestrans and our town councillors.

The following findings were presented to the Council from the Community Survey results.

1. Only 7.4% of the 1314 who answered the question thought that it was a good idea to make King Street one-way.
2. Only 2.5% of the 1352 who answered the question agreed that the trees on the roundabout should be chopped down.
3. Only 3.1% of the 1352 who answered the question agreed that the war memorial should be removed/relocated.
4. Only 4.1% of the 1349 who answered the question thought that the existing cycle lane on the roundabout is not adequate.

Stantec then created another draft of the Active Travel Plan for the roundabout, suggesting removing it completely and replacing it with a 4-way junction managed by traffic lights. They also still proposed chopping down the current trees and adding 6 new sets of traffic lights to the area of the existing roundabout, which the community believes will increase congestion, pollution and danger for locals and tourists.

The town created a petition against these proposed changes, which received **3653** signatures - comprising 1278 online (change.org) and 2375 on paper copies held at most local businesses.

The local campaigns against the Active Travel Plans and DPE/parking charges gained a lot of media interest, with coverage on ITV News, Greatest Hits Radio, BBC Radio Scotland, The Daily Record and the Galloway News.

## APPENDIX 3

Our History Compiled by Pupils at Castle Douglas High School with their history teacher Ms Connelly in 2024

The town of Castle Douglas has a remarkably interesting history which dates back thousands of years. It involves sacrifices, land feuds and slavery. History students at Castle Douglas High School have been keen to research this. After discussing their knowledge with family members from the town it was clear that some Castle Douglas residents knew extraordinarily little about the 'real' history. The pupils decided to rectify this and compiled this summary.

Let us start with the ancient times and a focus on 'Causeway end'. A small settlement emerged on the banks of Carlingwark Loch during the Ancient times. Archaeological findings suggest the loch was home to crannogs. A wonderful testament to this can be found in The National Museum in Edinburgh. An iron age cauldron was discovered which contained a hoard of chainmail and coins. This is known as the Carlingwark Cauldron. This area was also a local sacrifice site for Ancient Druids.

Here the story of this town comes into realization. For over 70 years the town's people have celebrated Dougie Day, with a chartered ceremony, a parade and various community events.

Who was 'Dougie'?

Sir William Douglas has been described by various historians as a 'Galloway Merchant'. He was born in 1745 and records state he was a 'merchant' in Virginia. Outside the Douglas Arms hotel, where Sir William Douglas resided for some time in the 1790s, trade with the colonies was important. Two figures can be seen alongside a trading ship on the crest. The exact details of his trade are unknown, yet this was the C18th, and the lucrative slave trade was at its height. In Virginia slaves grew and harvested tobacco and cotton which was shipped to various corners of the Empire...including Castle Douglas. Often, slave merchants would only be described as 'merchants' in contemporary documents. Yet, the late local historian Alastair Livingston noticed an interesting tobacco leaf on documentation and old maps of Castle Douglas. Was this a reference to how William Douglas gathered his great fortune?

Castle Douglas received its status as a 'Burgh' in 1792

We know that William Douglas's family was prevalent in the slave trade. His relative, Sir Samuel Douglas of Jamaica had a plantation called Windsor Castle situated in the parish of St. Mary, Jamaica. His will indicates he owned 350 slaves, to which he bequeathed his favourite slave, Frances, her freedom and 3 slaves of her own. He also bequeathed Sir William Douglas some of his fortune including, a 'gold seal that has my coat of arms engraved upon it and motto Fortitude and I also give to him my picture and also my gold diamond jewel for the breast having my coat of arms set with diamonds on it.' Samuel Douglas's Will

Having returned from the 'Americas' with a handsome profit, Sir William Douglas bought land from Lord Gordon for £18000 to make a 'Cotton' town. Despite a failing cotton mill and a cotton industry which did not flourish, Cotton Street remains. The blueprint for this new town, which engulfed the village of Carlingwark, was mirrored on the street plan of Edinburgh with 3 prominent parallel main streets: King Street, Queen Street and Cotton Street. Douglas tried to establish a bank called The Galloway Bank on King Street which lasted only a year before financial collapse. Later, Castle Douglas would become a market town with a thriving economy.

Sir William Douglas, determined to leave a strong legacy, erected a large mansion house, which we now call Gelston Castle. He only lived in the castle for 2 years after its completion, before he died in 1809.

Castle Douglas has grown during the C19th and C20th and town's people enjoy seeing old photographs and maps showing how the town used to look. The street grid formation and some of the buildings are still evident today showing that the real history of Castle Douglas will always raise interest.



Sir William Douglas

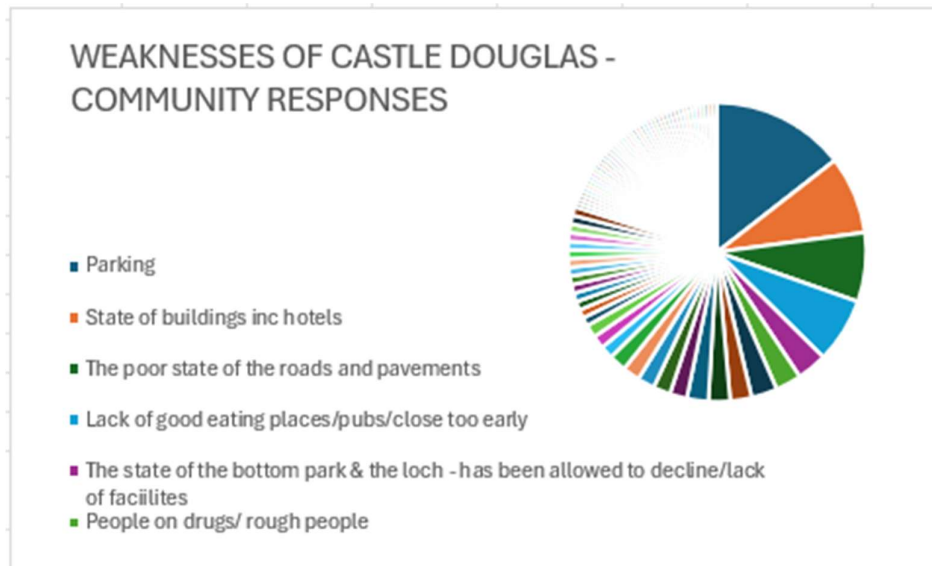
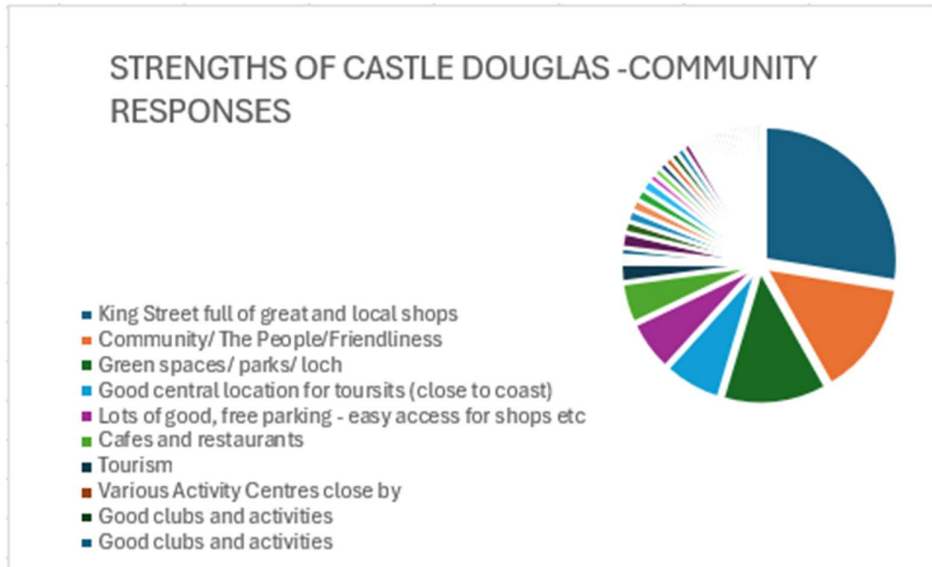


Carlingwark Bank Note

## APPENDIX 4

### SUMMARY OF SWOT ANALYSIS

#### Community Responses



## OPPORTUNITIES FOR CASTLE DOUGLAS - COMMUNITY RESPONSES



- Upgrade the caravan park/ bottom park - more facilities there such as a café/kiosk. Crannog Centre looks shabby. Bring putting/boats back
- Develop the 'Food Town'
- Encourage more hospitality businesses with better opening hours and more independent businesses to the town
- Jobs
- Tourism
- Local groups need to work together, not against each other/ Community spirit

## THREATS FOR CASTLE DOUGLAS - COMMUNITY RESPONSES



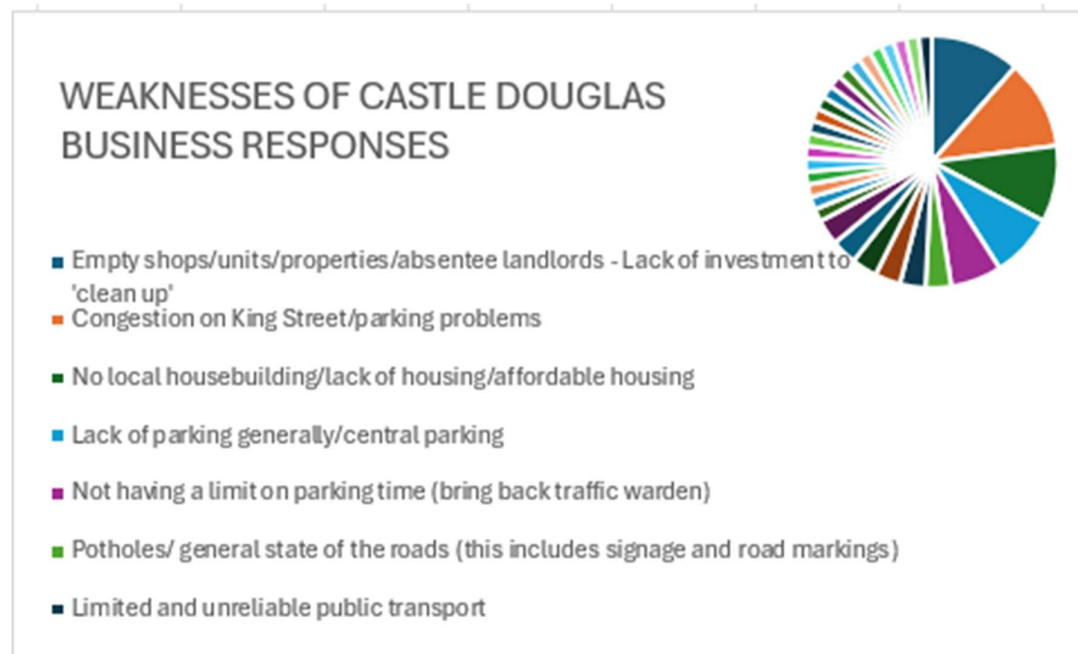
- Parking Charges being introduced
- Plans for cycle lanes in town/too much focus on cyclists - it's not needed (Sustrans/Swestrans etc)
- Groups/CDDF Either not involving local businesses in decision making/alienating local groups/people not wanting to get involved because of the fighting they cause or taking business away from the town centre by moving things to the bottom park (ie. produce
- Plans for roundabout (Sustrans/Swestrans etc)
- Too many empty shops (high business & water rates)

## MAIN THOUGHTS FOR CASTLE DOUGLAS - COMMUNITY RESPONSES

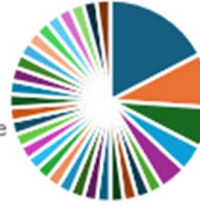


- There is nothing to do/it's a dump
- King St needs the support of everyone - council, SSDA and SoSE as well as private investment to keep it sustainable
- It is a good town
- Great town with lots of opportunities
- We need more parking centrally/sort out parking
- Proper group for the town/improved engagement

## Business Responses



## OPPORTUNITIES FOR CASTLE DOUGLAS BUSINESS RESPONSES



- Attract more visitors to the town/spend more £/head/promote the town
- Upgrade Lochside Park - more facilities e.g café/kiosk. Crannog Centre looks shabby. Bring putting/boats back. Make more of green spaces
- Repair potholes/Designated parking for unloading, deliveries etc./Removal of inappropriate yellow lines
- promoting local heritage e.g museum with learning opportunities
- Possibility of bigger local group to act in best interests of town rather than lots of smaller groups

## THREATS FOR CASTLE DOUGLAS BUSINESS RESPONSES



- Parking Charges/lack of parking/parking facilities/restrictions
- Anything mentioning Sustrans or changes to the roundabout/traffic flow on King Street/Plans for roundabout etc.
- Online shopping/e-commerce and big businesses coming in B & M, Aldis etc
- An ageing population/too many retirees
- Lack of young workers/staff/trained staff. Lack of staff for hospitality roles/generally
- Lack of holiday accommodation/good clean hotels

## MAIN THOUGHTS FOR CASTLE DOUGLAS BUSINESS RESPONSES



- Try to work together better to improve the town and community spirit to keep CD a great place to live.
- Keep the roundabout
- CD is a good place, no changes required
- Unrestricted/free parking is a massive element of local businesses having any chance of surviving
- Castle Douglas is well placed as a shopping location

## **APPENDIX 5**

### **Sources of information**

#### **Table of Figures:**

##### **Dumfries and Galloway Data Sheet, 2023-2028.**

<https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/media/27212/Council-Plan-Data-Reference-Sheet/pdf/Council-Plan-Data-Reference-Sheet.pdf>

##### **City Population 2021**

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##### **Scottish Places Info 2022.**

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##### **Castle Douglas High School 2023.**

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##### **Castle Douglas Primary Handbook 2021.**

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##### **Scotland house price increase.**

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