



THE ROYAL BURGH OF
NEW GALLOWAY AND KELLS
**LOCAL PLACE
PLAN**
2026-2036

Presented by New Galloway
and Kells Community Council



COVER IMAGES (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT): New Galloway High Street, Polmaddy, Loch Ken, Mossdale

01	INTRODUCTION	1.1 What is this about?	02
		1.2 Our vision	02
02	ACTION PLAN	Theme A: Life in our community	06
		Theme B: Work, skills, enterprise and training	08
		Theme C: Connectivity: travel, transport, and broadband	09
		Theme D: Land use, climate change, environment, and resilience	10
		Theme E: Housing	11
03	WHAT IS OUR PLACE?	3.1 A brief history	13
		3.2 A place to live and work	15
		3.3 Community organisation	21
		3.4 Nature and Biodiversity	24
		3.5 Land use and designations	26
04	OUR COMMUNITY'S PRIORITIES	4.1 Things people value	30
		4.2 Things people want to see improved	33
05	COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN PREPARING THIS LPP		40

1: INTRODUCTION

1.1: WHAT IS THIS ABOUT?

Local Place Plans (LPPs) in Scotland are community-created plans that show what people want to happen in their local area, on topics such as land use, buildings, green spaces, or transport. Once finalised, it must be taken into consideration by our local authority Dumfries and Galloway Council when making planning decisions.

This LPP is presented by the Royal Burgh of New Galloway and Kells Community Council. It has been prepared by a steering group made up of community councillors, and supported by others in the community including Local Initiatives in New Galloway (LING).

It is based on extensive consultation with our community, through an initial questionnaire to collect ideas, two drop-in events, several stalls and meetings, and a final survey to prioritise all the ideas put forward. Because it is a planning document it includes a range of maps to show the locations of community assets, land use, and environmental quality.

We are grateful to everyone who filled in surveys, stopped to talk, came to drop-ins and meetings. We acknowledge with thanks financial support received from the Dumfries and Galloway Local Place Plan Grant Fund grant no. LPPG0027 which enabled us to contract support time and print materials. We thank the members of the steering group for their time and energy, and to other experts and individuals who made written contributions.

This LPP covers the area of the Royal Burgh of New Galloway and Kells Community Council (Figure 1). The Royal Burgh of New Galloway and Kells is part of the wider area of the Glenkens (Figure 2), which includes other community councils that have produced their own LPPs. Jointly we share identity and vision, which has been expressed through the Glenkens and District Community Action Plan.

About half the population of The Royal Burgh of New Galloway and Kells Community Council area lives in the small town of New Galloway (approximately 300 people). The rest are spread out across a large, rural area with two population clusters in Dundough and Mossdale, the latter of which has its own village hall.

1.2: OUR VISION

Our LPP is about our place (New Galloway, Mossdale, Dundough and the glens connected to them) while also situated with the wider Glenkens. Glenkens and District has a highly regarded **Community Action Plan**. Our LPP adopts the same vision so that we are all working in the same direction.

Our vision in this LPP is for The Royal Burgh of New Galloway and Kells, within the wider Glenkens, to become a connected, resilient, and carbon-neutral place, where people want to live, work, raise families and grow old.

Community Action Plan

Our LPP supports the four themes of the Community Action Plan:

- Connected community - including connected with place and nature - themes that came out strongly in the consultation
- Asset-rich community (noting that not all assets are property)
- Economically-flourishing community
- Carbon-neutral community

<https://www.glenkenstrust.org.uk/community-action-plan>

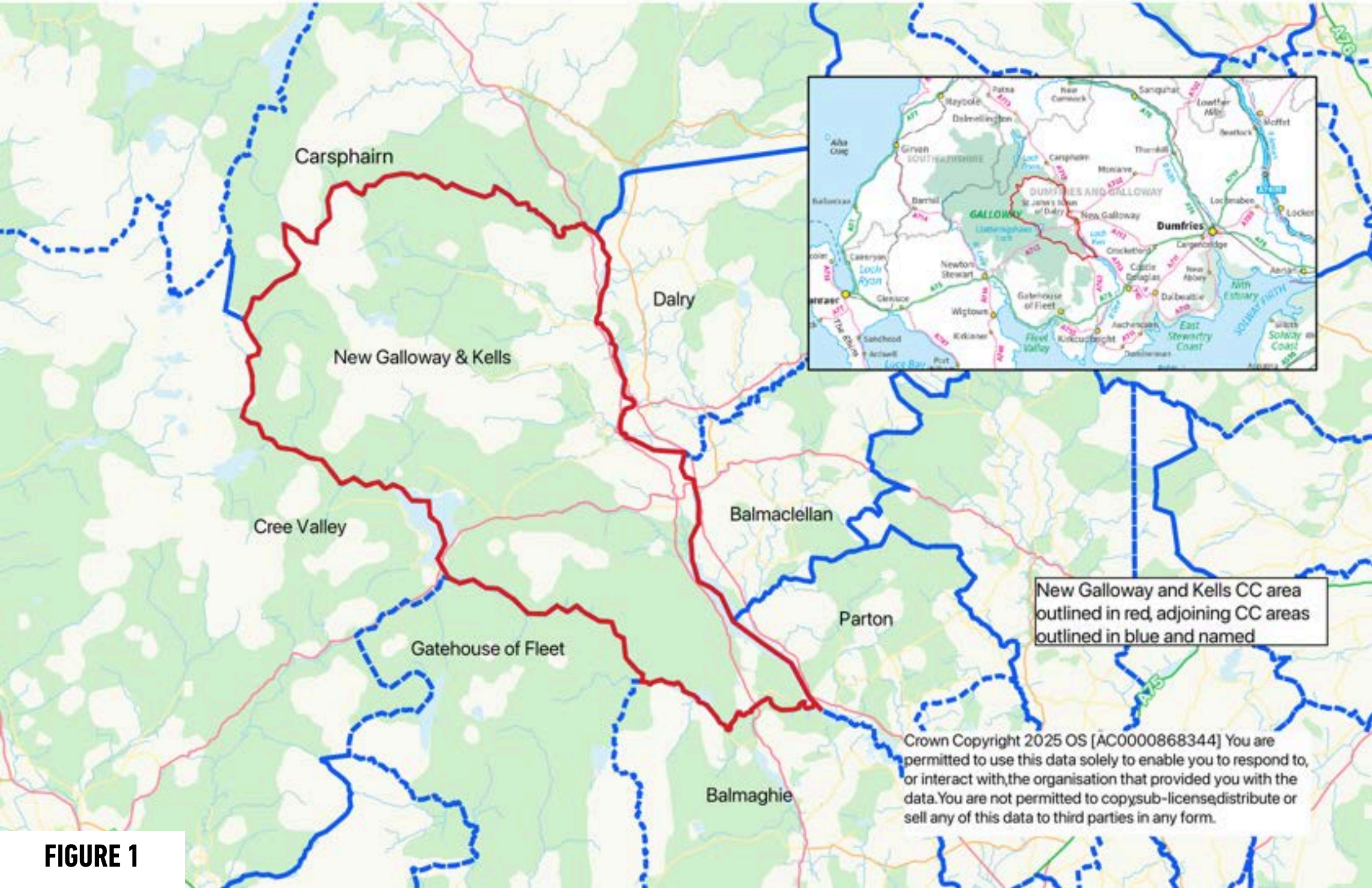
Land Use Vision

And the four aims of the Glenkens Community Arts Trust (GCAT) Land Use Vision:

- Enhance climate and environmental resilience
- Support biodiversity and thriving communities
- Promote re-population and local economic development
- Embed Community Wealth Building principles in land use decisions

<https://glenkens.scot/land-use>

New Galloway and Kells Community Council Area in context

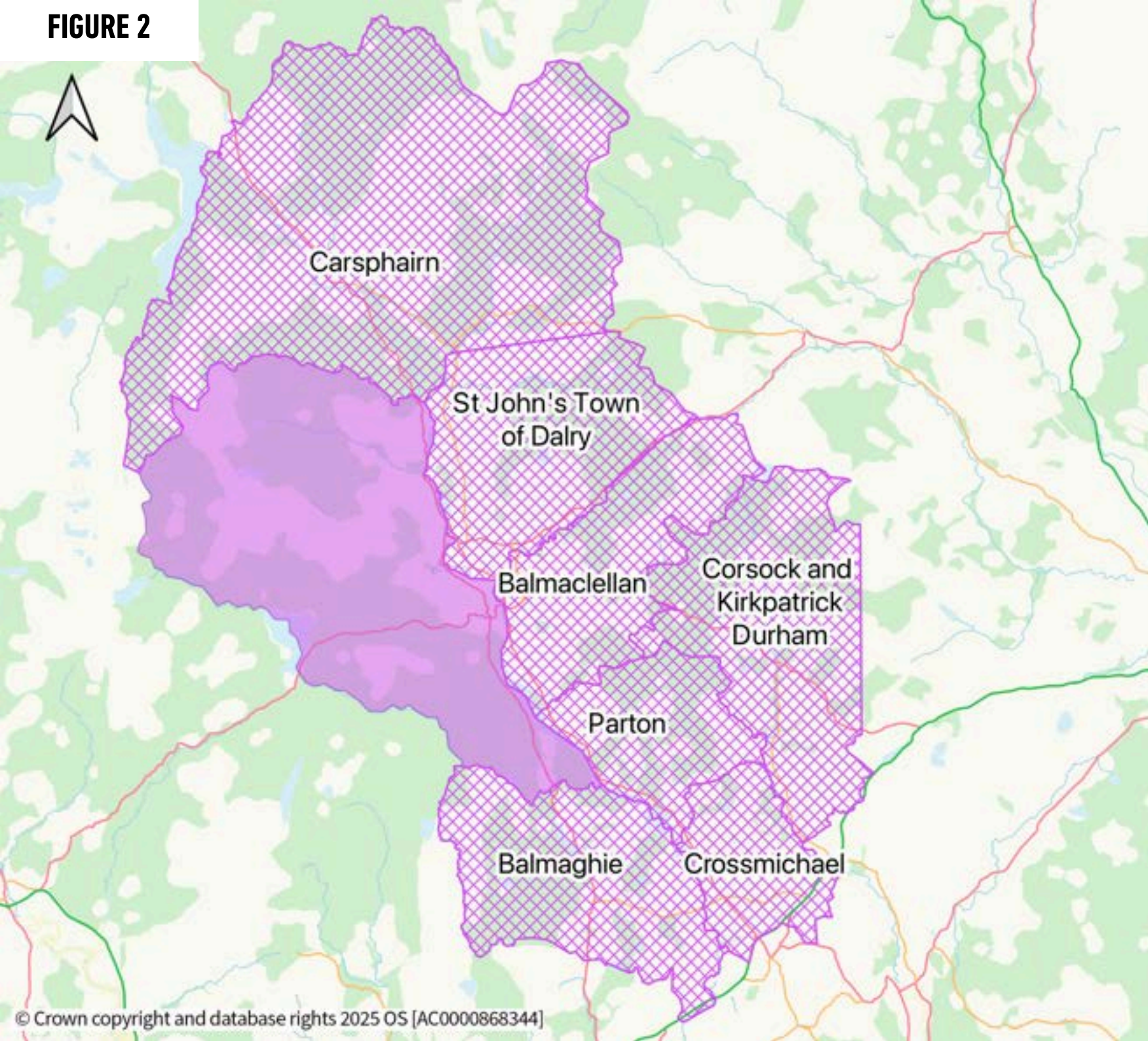


New Galloway and Kells CC area outlined in red, adjoining CC areas outlined in blue and named

Crown Copyright 2025 OS [AC0000868344] You are permitted to use this data solely to enable you to respond to, or interact with, the organisation that provided you with the data. You are not permitted to copy, sub-license, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.

FIGURE 1


FIGURE 2



The Royal Burgh of New Galloway and Kells within the Glenkens

-  The Royal Burgh of New Galloway and Kells Community Council Area
-  Other Glenkens Community Council Areas (named)

0 5 10 km



2: ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan is the core of our LPP. It sets out the priorities identified through community consultation. Some actions may relate to matters considered through the next Local Development Plan (LDP3), and these are indicated as potentially planning-relevant, while acknowledging that this is indicative only and that the Council will determine what is appropriate for inclusion in LDP3. Other priorities may be community-led projects that can be developed independently, subject to funding.

THEME A: LIFE IN OUR COMMUNITY

LDP3 RELEVANT	PROPOSED ACTION	PRIORITY	DETAIL	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
	Manage speeding	HIGH	Install traffic calming measures, final design to be agreed with the Council. To include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 20 MPH speed limit on the main street. 2. Better signage for a sharp corner and road surfacing to reduce skidding on the A713 adjacent to the village entrance and corner. 3. Flashing speed limit indicator signs at all road entrances to New Galloway 	Community Council (CC); Dumfries and Galloway Council (D&GC) Roads Service; Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (formerly Sustrans)
YES	Improve pedestrian safety	HIGH	Create safe footpaths or pavements for pedestrian connectivity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Along A712 from New Galloway to junction with Old Edinburgh Road • Across or adjacent to Ken Bridge • Along High Street past Golf Course and potentially as far as Kenmure Castle • Improve pavement and crossing safety within New Galloway 	CC; D&GC Roads Service; Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (formerly Sustrans)
YES	Manage speeding at Dundough junction		Install traffic calming measures, final design to be agreed with the Council. E.g. traffic signage at Dundough to warn of people crossing the road and concealed entrance.	CC; D&GC Roads Service
PARTLY	Identify appropriate locations for small-scale parking to help businesses and residents	HIGH	Detailed consultation on options to resolve issues that affect road safety, high street businesses and quality of place	D&GC Roads and Infrastructure

THEME A: LIFE IN OUR COMMUNITY

LDP3 RELEVANT	PROPOSED ACTION	PRIORITY	DETAIL	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
YES	Improve road safety in Mossdale		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install traffic calming measures to deal with speeding issues and HGV traffic 	CC; D&G Roads Service
	Improve capacity to deal with health emergencies	HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create community first responder scheme Review location of ambulance bases to reduce wait times 	Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) first responder scheme; SAS Estates Department; Galloway community transport; D&G Health and Social Care Partnership (DGHSCP)
YES - When linked to new development	Manage public spaces better for biodiversity	HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stop early strimming of verges and park grassland by council Enhance diversity of grasslands by appropriate wildflower seeding Avoid the use of herbicides and insecticides in our public spaces 	CC; Greenspace and Grounds Maintenance team (for park); D&G Roads Service (for verges)
YES	Enhance park facilities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the accessibility in and around the park Upgrade play equipment Improve accessibility of play equipment Secure gateway Introduce more multi-use sport equipment Maintain multi-use nature of the space (i.e. Scottish Alternative Games, Picnic in the Park...) 	DGC; CC; Local Initiatives in New Galloway (LING); Primary School PTA

THEME B: WORK, SKILLS, ENTERPRISE & TRAINING

LDP3 RELEVANT	PROPOSED ACTION	PRIORITY	DETAIL	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
YES	Create a plan for education in the area over next 5-10 years, to enable families to make informed decisions about where to live	TOP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the CAP Steering Group's work with Dumfries and Galloway Council to enable families to make confident choices for their family's future education Support the plan for an Education Hub in the Glenkens to provide lifelong learning and retraining opportunities for residents of all ages (led by CAP Steering Group) 	GCAT CAP Steering Group; all Glenkens community councils; D&G Education and Learning Directorate, specifically through the Children, Young People and Lifelong Learning service; Scottish Government
	Support transition from education to rewarding employment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create programme of apprenticeships, early school interaction, more integration with retraining mature candidates 	CC; Drax; Natural Power; Forrest Estate
	Support local producers and retailers		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance support and publicity for the local food hub Gain High Street outlets for local food Support business training opportunities Encourage local farmers/producers to sell through local shops, Food Hub etc. 	GCAT; LING; Dumfries and Galloway Sustainable Food Partnership

THEME C: CONNECTIVITY: TRAVEL, TRANSPORT & BROADBAND

LDP3 RELEVANT	PROPOSED ACTION	PRIORITY	DETAIL	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
YES	Improve connectivity and safety of active travel between settlements	HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New cycle and active travel route between New Galloway and Dalry New cycle and active travel route between New Galloway and Balmaclellan 	GCAT; Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (formerly Sustrans); SWestrans
YES	Improve footpath access and connectivity	HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better understanding of who is responsible for maintaining core paths and other existing footpaths to ensure they are usable year round. Where appropriate negotiate with landowners to enable maintenance by community groups Improved public access to forest areas, addressing issues such as locked gates and clearfelling across paths. Providing easily accessible maps for visitors showing safe routes and how they link the areas attractions. 	LING; Scottish Forestry; D&G Parks and Outdoor Spaces Team CC; D&GC Roads Service; Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (formerly Sustrans)
	Improve broadband speeds in areas with speeds below UK average	HIGH		
INDIRECTLY, E.G. BY SAFEGUARDING ACTIVE TRAVEL ROUTES	Improve public transport	HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address the vicious circle of low use of services because they are scarce, irregular and unreliable. Task group to develop sustainable alternatives such as dial-a-car scheme and more regular buses to Ayrshire. 	CAP steering group; Galloway Community Transport; Transport Scotland; D&G Economy and Resources Directorate and Infrastructure and Environment teams; SWestrans; Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (formerly Sustrans)

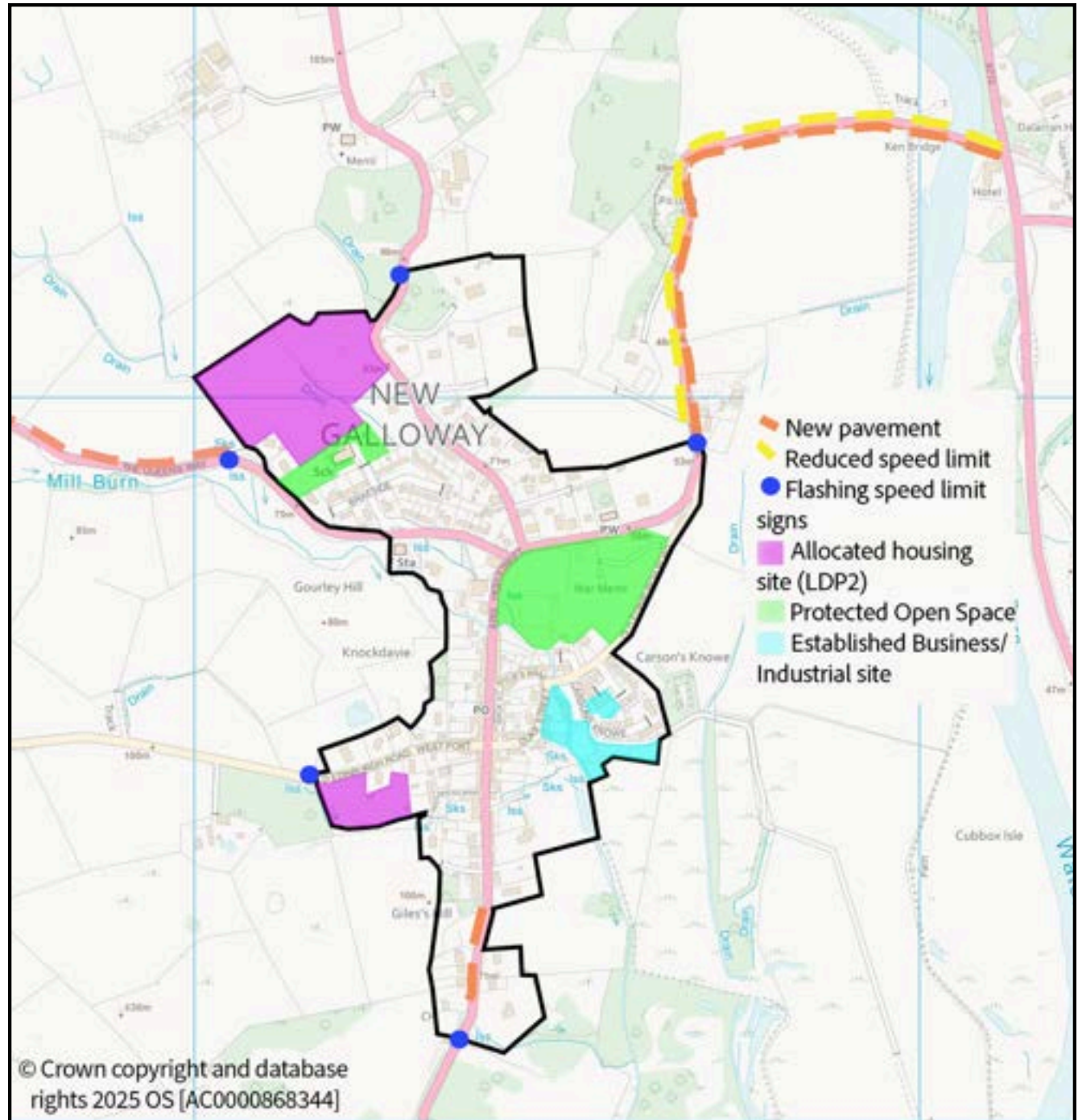
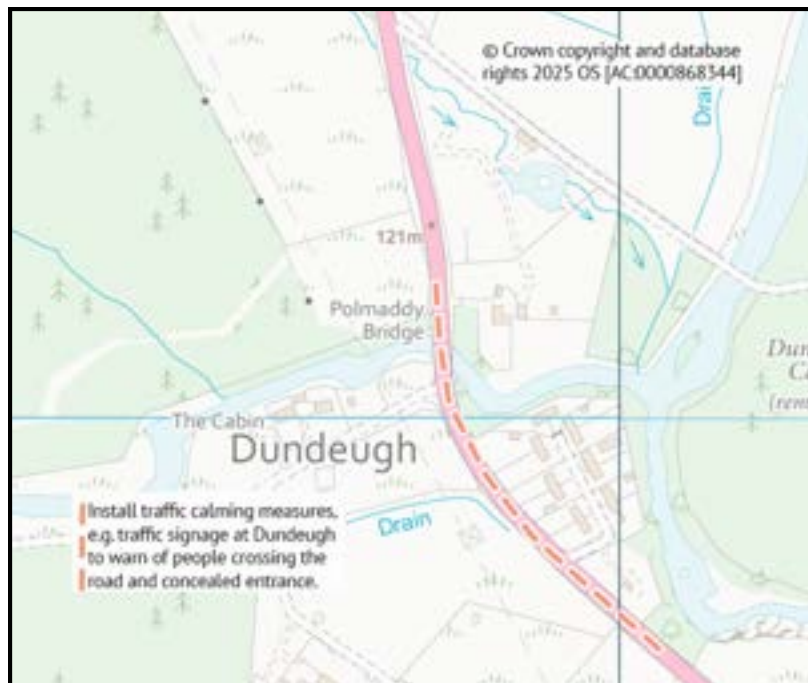
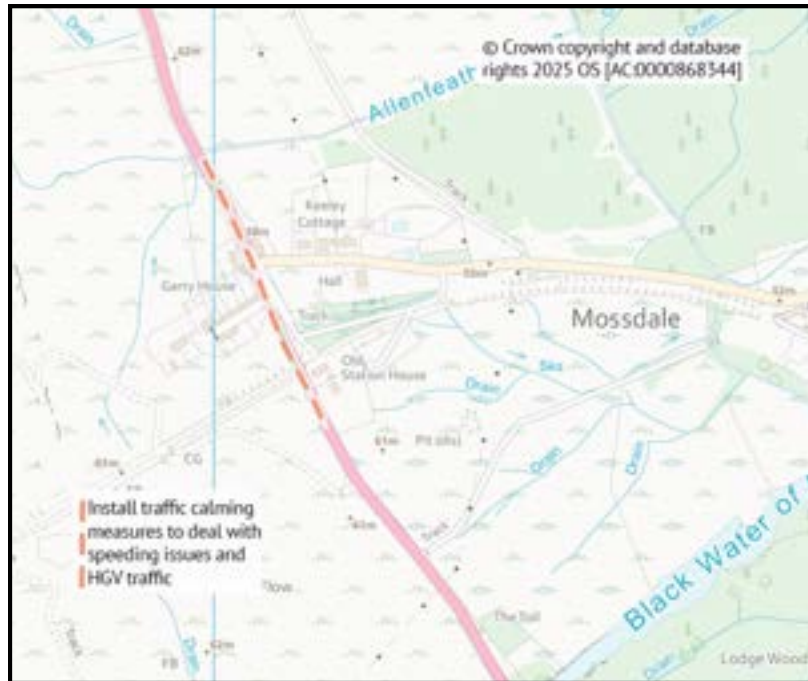
THEME D: LAND USE, CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENT, RESILIENCE

LDP3 RELEVANT	PROPOSED ACTION	PRIORITY	DETAIL	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
YES	Manage water quality	TOP	Replace New Galloway's existing combined sewer and septic tank, which is discharging effluent into the Water of Ken, with sustainable, fit-for-purpose waste water infrastructure	Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA); Scottish Water; Galloway Fisheries Trust; Loch Ken Trust; GSA Biosphere; D&G Council
YES	Ensure protection of important habitats (particularly unimproved open habitats, Figure 6) and 'favourite places (Figure 11)'		Avoid development and land use change that affects these habitats and places in particular	D&G Planning; Scottish Forestry
YES	Support shift to low-carbon community		Explore use of Community Funds (windfarm) to support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shift away from oil-based heating • Community-owned power generation • Electric vehicle charging • Conversion to air source heat pumps, solar panels batteries, hot water stores • Also potential to attract energy-intensive businesses like welding to area • Encourage local tradespeople to deliver these services 	Glenkens District Trust; Galloway Community Transport;
	Enhance community capacity to engage with nature restoration		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop list of sites suitable for nature restoration (through community-led or partnership projects) to be funding-ready • Participation in 'Nature Networks' 	D&GC; CAP Steering Group; Glenkens Land Use Forum; NatureScot; D&G Woodlands
	Promote more meaningful community involvement in land and landscape		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive repair of damage to community trust in consultation processes • Increased respect for conservation of nationally scarce grasslands and heath • Increased respect for community input • No locked gates impeding access to land • Better communication around impact of felling on signed / core paths, and faster reinstatement of path usage 	CC; Scottish Forestry; Scottish Government; landowners; LING

THEME E: HOUSING

LDP3 RELEVANT	PROPOSED ACTION	PRIORITY	DETAIL	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
YES	Provision of energy efficient homes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply D&G Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2025-2030 • Conduct energy audits of existing buildings to identify areas of improvement • Retrofitting measures, e.g. better insulation, heat pumps, etc. to enhance energy performance • Encourage developers to get sustainable building certification 	Local Housing Associations; Pamela Young Trust; D&G Housing and Homelessness Service (within Communities Directorate)
YES	Avoid building where flood risk is high (see Figure 8)	HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific commitment sought from D&G Council 	
INDIRECTLY	Bring estate homes back into use as affordable rented homes or live/work space	HIGH		SPEN; landowners; local housing association(s); Pamela Young Trust
YES	Develop housing options to enable older people to stay in the area		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for housing associations to create appropriate rental properties for older residents with a significant local connection, either through new build or converting existing properties • Use of allocated housing site (NGA.H1) identified in LDP2 to meet need for sheltered housing • Community input in design with sustainable housing standards to be applied 	Local housing association(s)

FIGURE 3: Maps showing the proposals derived from the Action Plan



3: WHAT IS OUR PLACE?

3.1: A BRIEF HISTORY



New Galloway and the Glenkens were often at the heart of Scottish history. The wars of independence saw conflict between Bruces and Balliols; invading armies ravaged the area 13 times. It was a centre of Covenanter resistance in the 17th-century struggle for religious freedom. The Pentland Uprising started in nearby Dalry. In the 18th century the Gordons of Kenmure Castle were a rare outpost of Jacobite sympathy, with deadly consequences.

Originally the Roddings, New Galloway became a Royal Burgh in 1633. Economic growth was slower than

expected. The main activities of agriculture and cattle droving fostered a strong tradition of music and poetry. The 18th century brought hardship through the enclosure acts and population decline. Two of the Burgh's men nevertheless found international distinction: weaver's son Robert Heron (1764-1807) as a writer and Alexander Murray (1775-1813), a self-taught shepherd's son, as a world-renowned linguist.

Improved transport links like the Ken Bridge (1822) and 'New Galloway' station, at Mossdale (opened 1862),

boosted trade, employment and tourism. New hotels sprang up for visitors, a nine-hole golf course opened (1902) and shooting, fishing, cycling and sight-seeing excursions flourished. Dances filled the Town Hall and curling and skating were favourite winter pursuits.

In the early 20th century New Galloway was nearly self-sufficient with productive domestic gardens and a vibrant High Street. The railway closed in 1965. Today, one community-owned shop serves the town.

THE GLENKENS STORY

In 2025 The Glenkens Story, a volunteer-led programme based at the CatStrand, celebrated ten years of exploring our heritage through talks and field trips.

Topics ranged from the Lowland Clearances and Covenanters to war

memorials and the local horse breed, the Galloway Nag. Regular updates were provided on the Galloway Hoard of Viking-age treasure found near Loch Ken.

Exhibitions featured maps, musicians and

field names. Conferences were staged on pre-history, Gallovidian Scots, music-making and Galloway Gaelic - the first ever on the subject, leading to a book on the topic.

There is currently a thriving group working on New Galloway's history.



MIXED LAND USE NEAR LOCH KEN



CLATTERINGSHAWS LOCH



A FARM OUTSIDE NEW GALLOWAY



WATER OF KEN (KEN BRIDGE)

The area has seen enormous land use change in the 20th and 21st centuries. Post-World War II, the Forestry Commission acquired hill ground between New Galloway and the Black Water of Dee, with significant afforestation. The area became part of the Galloway Forest Park. A hydro scheme was introduced in the interwar period, drawing water from the Ken, Dee, and Doon rivers with a dam at Clatteringshaws Loch. The scheme was acquired by Drax Group in 2018.

Historic mapping projects like Glenkens Rectified Estate Mapping and Land-use Information Network (GREMLIN)¹ reveal dramatic shifts in Glenkens land use over 200 years. Woodland cover increased from 2% to 42% while agriculture and open moorland declined from 89% to 56%. Arable land expanded, but species-rich meadows and wetlands diminished. These changes reflect broader transitions from mixed farming to forestry and commercial land management.

OTHER SETTLEMENTS



Outside of New Galloway, rural settlements such as Mossdale and Dundough face further challenges. These dispersed, isolated communities often have no village shop, are more likely to be disconnected for longer when power cuts occur, and roads are often poorly maintained, narrow, and with no pedestrian footpaths.

Mossdale is home of the now-defunct New Galloway railway station. Dundough comprises two rows of wooden houses constructed to house Forestry Commission workers. It sits at the junction of the Polmaddy Burn and the Water of Deugh.



3.1 WHAT IS OUR PLACE?/A BRIEF HISTORY

¹ GREMLIN Home Page: <https://maps.nls.uk/projects/gremlin/>

HISTORIC SITES



KELLS PARISH CHURCH (above) was built in 1822 and is home to a Covenanter monument and Adam and Eve stones.



SAINT MARGARET OF SCOTLAND EPISCOPAL CHURCH (below) is an arts and crafts style church built in 1904.



KELLS SCHOOL (above) was a knitting factory, Masonic hall, youth club, and hairdresser before becoming derelict in the 1990s, then the CatStrand Arts Centre in 2007.



NEW GALLOWAY TOWN HALL (below), a civic centre for 300 years, is now a refurbished community hub managed by Local Initiatives in New Galloway (LING).



THE KEN BRIDGE, designed by John Rennie, was rebuilt in 1821 and is Category A listed.

GLENLEE POWER STATION (below) and **CLATTERINGSHAWS DAM** are listed buildings.



KENMURE CASTLE, (above) once the Gordon family seat, played a role in Covenanter and Jacobite history, briefly operated as a hotel, and is now a scheduled monument



WHAT IS OUR PLACE?

3.2: A PLACE TO LIVE AND WORK

POPULATION UNDER 16
New Galloway & Kells: 11%
Dumfries & Galloway: 15%
Scotland: 16%



POPULATION OVER 65
New Galloway & Kells: 35%
Dumfries & Galloway: 27%
Scotland: 20%



HIGHEST QUALIFICATION DEGREE OR ABOVE
New Galloway & Kells: 35.4%
Dumfries & Galloway: 26%
Scotland: 32.5%



ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE PEOPLE OVER 16
New Galloway & Kells: 50%
Dumfries & Galloway: 54%
Scotland: 57%



TOTAL POPULATION
New Galloway & Kells: 600*
Dumfries & Galloway: 145,895
Scotland: 5,436,600



AVERAGE HOUSE PRICE (2024)
New Galloway & Kells: £254,426
Dumfries & Galloway: £160,000
Scotland: £192,000



*estimated based on the number of registered electors in 2025 (521) and the relatively low proportion of children in our area

3.2.1: PEOPLE LIVING HERE

The Royal Burgh of New Galloway and Kells Community Council area has a population of around 600, of whom around two thirds live within New Galloway and the two smaller settlements at Mossdale and Dundeugh. The remainder live rurally.

In common with most rural areas, the proportion of children and young adults is lower than the Dumfries and Galloway and Scotland averages, and the proportion of older adults is higher.

Although scoring favourably on the Scottish Indices of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) in terms of housing, crime, and education and skills, research² has demonstrated that the low population density means that the SIMD process does not adequately demonstrate the challenges to rural life encountered by some residents. This is because data zones in rural areas are bigger than those in urban areas, while pockets of deprivation are smaller so are not always picked up.

Problems of public transport and distance to employment and services are very important features of rural deprivation, but are only one part of SIMD. For example SIMD data from 2016 found that 80% of people living on low incomes in Dumfries and Galloway live outside the areas in the 'most deprived' datasets, translating to 14% of the local population being classed as income deprived, and 11% of the working age

population being employment deprived.

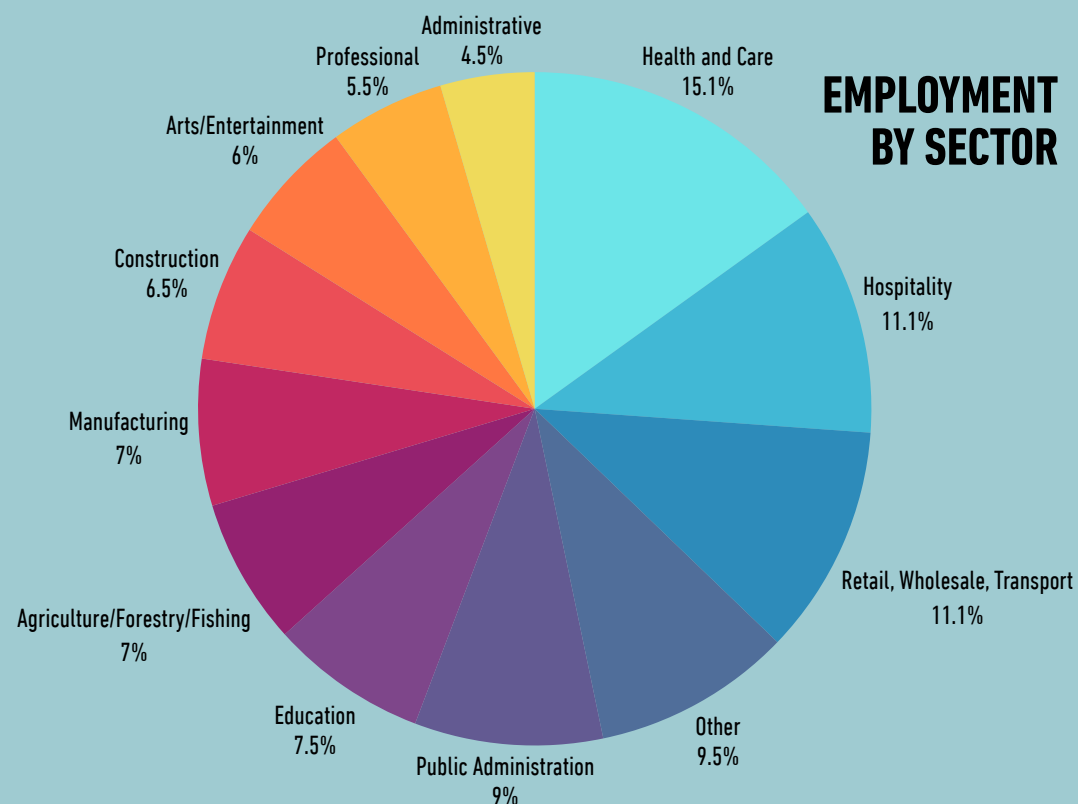
The mean house price in the area of the Glenkens in which The Royal Burgh of New Galloway and Kells is situated was £254,426 in 2024. This is higher than the local average in Dumfries and Galloway, and across Scotland, but lower than in England (£292,000), which may make the area attractive to people who wish to relocate to a rural area.

Two thirds of residents live in an owner-occupied house, with over 60% owning their home outright. 41% of residents in rented accommodation had a social landlord. 27% of respondents to a 2022 Glenkens-wide Housing Survey³ stated that their home did not meet their current needs. Overall, 51% of respondents knew someone who had had to leave their community because of an inability to find housing that they could afford.

According to a Housing Needs Survey published in 2022, demand for affordable housing in New Galloway far outstrips supply. With more than a hundred households on the waiting list and only two new tenancies created in the year before reporting, opportunities for local people to secure a home remain extremely limited.⁴

There is enthusiasm for supporting swifts nesting in new builds, and the Town Hall's recent refurbishment included a number of swift bricks.

3.2.2: EMPLOYMENT AND TRANSPORT



The percentage of the population that is economically active is lower than that across Dumfries and Galloway and Scotland, but this figure considers all people (excluding students) aged over 16, so might be expected in light of the proportion of the population above retirement age.

In the most recent census, 44% of residents worked mainly from or at home. Only 3% of people travelled to work by public transport, with 9% able to walk to work. A data visualisation from 2022 (Figure 4) demonstrates that where people travel to work, most commuter journeys are made out of the Glenkens.

3.2 WHAT IS OUR PLACE?/A PLACE TO LIVE AND WORK

² Dr Carol Hill and David Clelland, *Poverty and Deprivation in Dumfries and Galloway*, (Dumfries and Galloway Council: 2015). <https://eprints.gla.ac.uk/108111/1/108111.pdf> [accessed 14 January 2026]

³ South of Scotland Community Housing, 'Glenkens Housing Needs and Demands Survey', (Glenkens and District Trust: 2022). https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JSpJWtatTucTlknqrjYHJ5Qq398Q2_a/view [accessed 14 January 2026]

⁴ Ibid.

CASE STUDY



BACKGROUND: This case study shares the experience of a 25-year-old woman from New Galloway, illustrating broader rural challenges around transport, employment, education, and social mobility

FAMILY AND SOCIAL CONTEXT: She grew up in a low-income household where both parents receive disability benefits. Her brother requires ongoing care and her sister, with a young child, works part-time locally. While supportive, the family faces cumulative pressures from limited income and caring responsibilities.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRANSPORT CHALLENGES: After leaving school at 16, she relied on benefits due to a lack of employment opportunities. She now works part-time cleaning holiday cottages, but transport remains a major barrier:

- No early buses to Dumfries restricts access to training and job opportunities
- Return buses are driver-request only, limiting shift work
- Missed stops and delays make transport unreliable

She has turned down jobs due to these constraints.

FAMILY SUPPORT AS A TRANSPORT SUBSTITUTE: Her sister drives her to Castle Douglas for work - often early and late - while managing her own job and childcare. This informal support is vital but unsustainable.

BARRIERS TO SKILLS AND EDUCATION: No local further education opportunities exist. Courses in Dumfries and Castle Douglas are unreachable without transport. Driving lessons are costly due to rural travel charges, reinforcing a cycle of exclusion.

RESILIENCE AND DETERMINATION: Despite obstacles, she continues to seek work and build stability. Her story reflects the resilience of many rural residents facing systemic barriers.

CONCLUSION: Her experience underscores the need for investment in rural transport, local training, and affordable driving access to break cycles of poverty and support community sustainability.

The area has a range of local businesses, including larger employers in energy, food producers, local retailers, forestry, tourism and accommodation. Helping our young people engage with these sectors and find well-paid long-term work is an essential part of slowing and reversing the issue of rural depopulation. The Place Plan process identified the following challenges:

Tourism and hospitality remain important elements of the local economy, and recent closures of hotels, cafés and other visitor-facing businesses in New Galloway have highlighted both the fragility of the sector and the opportunities for renewal. A sustainable visitor economy is closely linked to the vitality of local services, food outlets and employment. The proposals set out here - including improvements to public space, active travel, heritage assets and community facilities - can create the conditions in which local businesses can thrive and new hospitality ventures can emerge.

CENTRES OF EDUCATION

Primary: Kells is the only primary school in our Community Council area, with Dalry and Crossmichael providing alternatives within a 10 mile radius

Secondary: Dalry Secondary School - currently under threat of closure - is the only secondary school within a 10 mile radius, with Castle Douglas (15 miles) and Kirkcudbright Academy (19 miles) providing alternatives

RAILWAY STATIONS

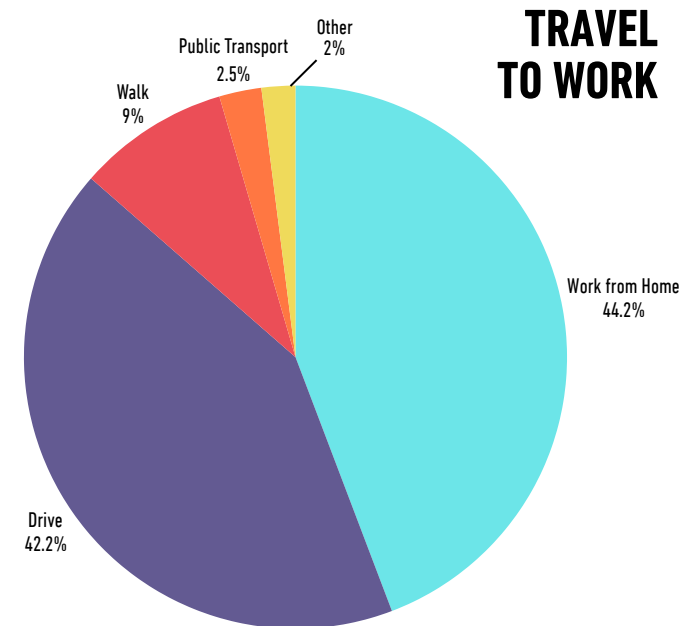
The closest railway stations are Dumfries (25 miles), Ayr (36 miles), Lockerbie (38 miles), and Stranraer (42 miles)

HOSPITALS

The closest hospitals are Dumfries (25 miles) and Stranraer (42 miles), with cottage hospitals in Castle Douglas (15 miles) and Kirkcudbright (19 miles)

DENTAL SERVICES

The closest dental services are in Castle Douglas (15 miles), Kirkcudbright (19 miles), and Dalbeattie (21 miles)



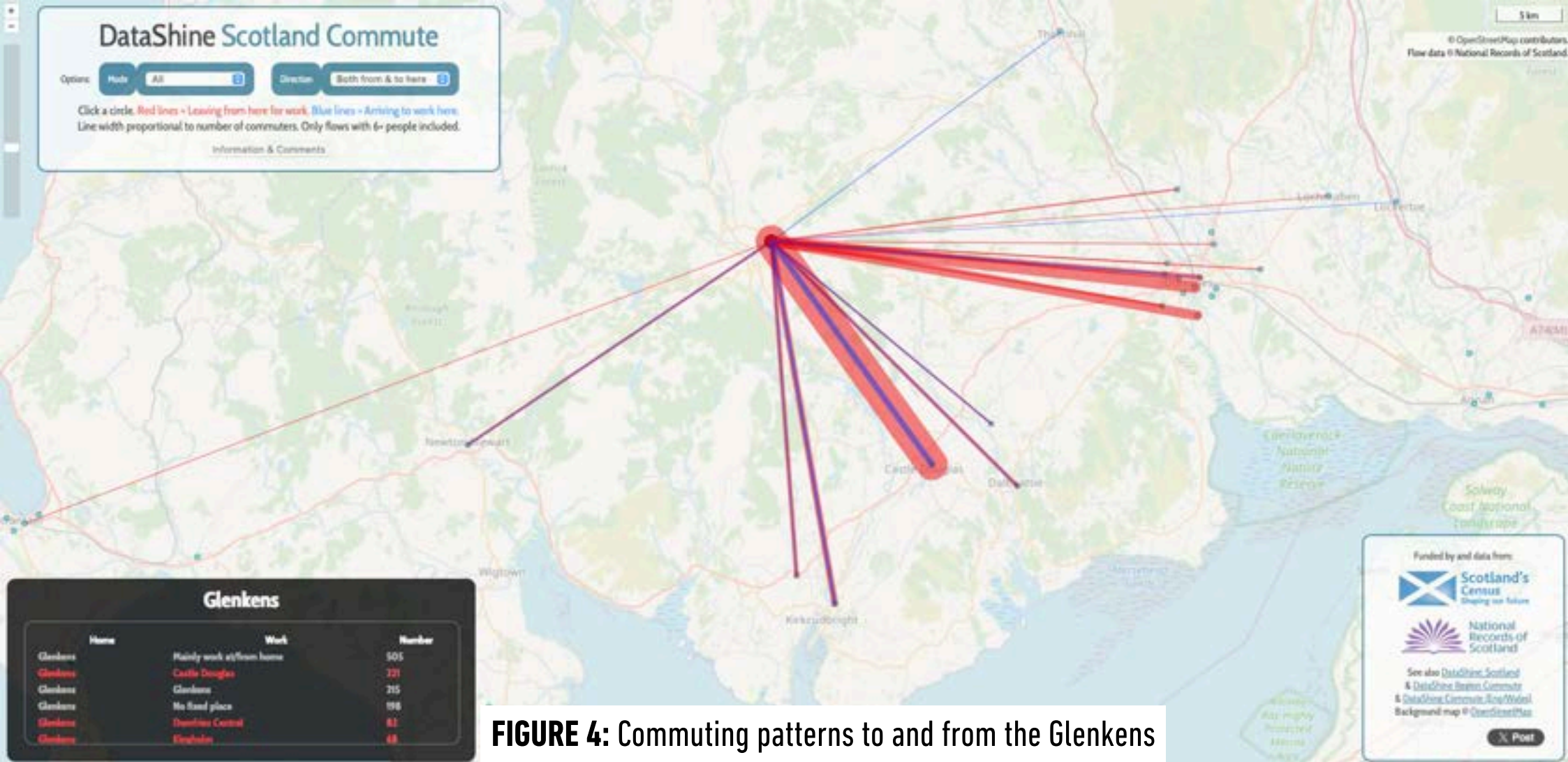


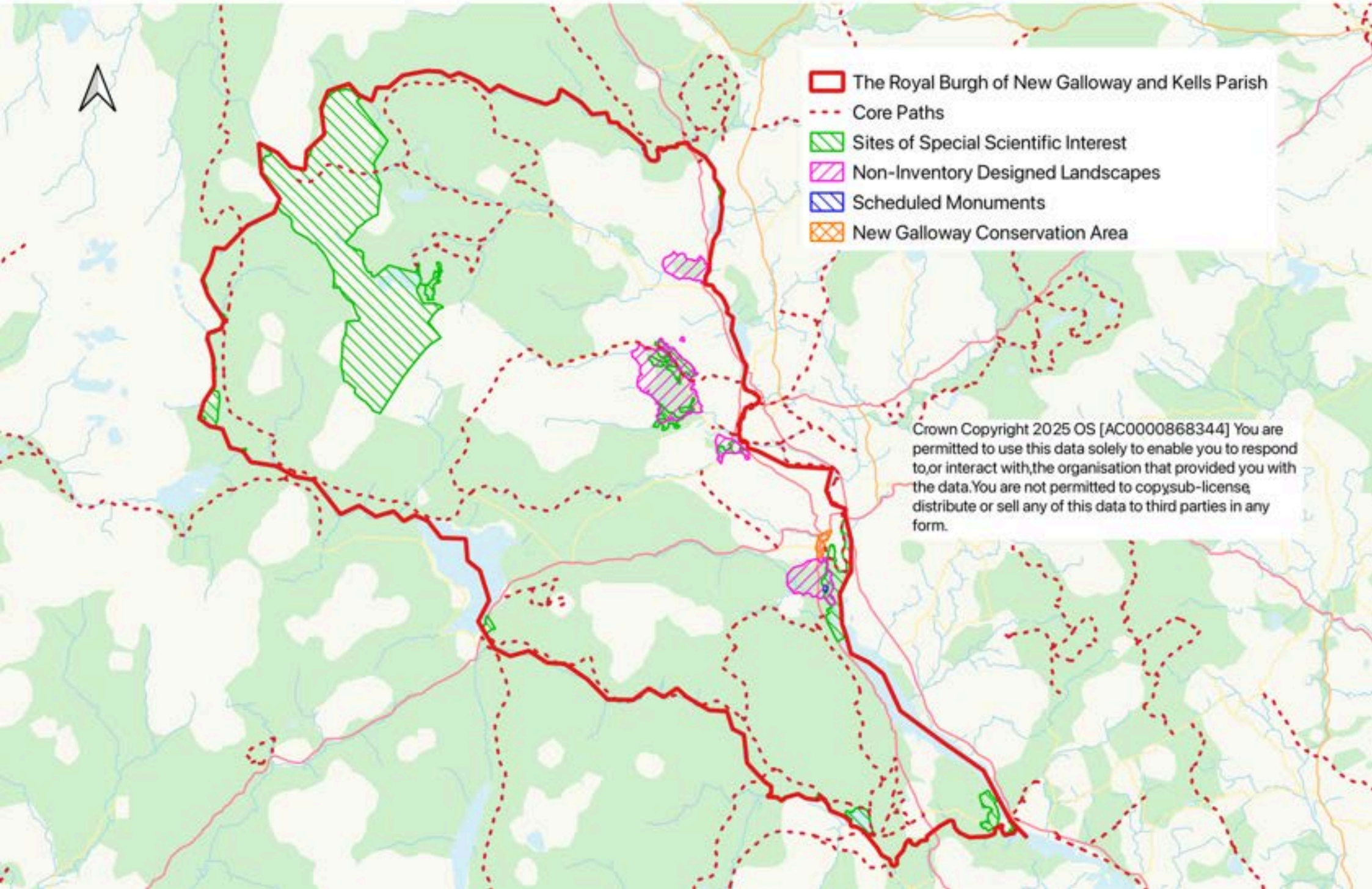
FIGURE 4: Commuting patterns to and from the Glenkens

Although we have many paths in our area, they do not connect with each other or with other settlements or public transport. Connectivity for active travel was identified as a high priority. Currently, cyclists to Dalry must use the busy A713 alongside HGVs and the famous timber lorries. Walkers to Balmaclellan must use the road, including crossing the Ken Bridge with poor visibility from oncoming vehicles

There is a large potential to improve the way in which communities are interlinked within the network of paths and tracks (see **Figures 5** and **12**). This will require work with the other communities within the Glenkens on issues around walking paths and cycle routes that will encourage the safe enjoyment of the area. Dalry and Balmaclellan have both also highlighted these issues in their LPPs.

FIGURE 5: Some planning and environmental designations within the New Galloway & Kells area

0 2.5 5 km



3.2.3: EDUCATION

KEY POINTS FROM GCAT EDUCATION REPORT

Five strategic focus areas to support rural education sustainability, including:

- Rethinking national strategies for rural schools
- Reforming funding models to better support small schools
- Developing a Post-16 Glenkens Education Hub to equip residents with local skills
- Advocating for regional and national funding to reduce reliance on volunteers
- Improving decision-making processes around school closures and mothballing

Emphasis on the **economic and social role of schools** in rural communities – not just as learning centres but as vital hubs for community cohesion and resilience.

A call to **political parties and Dumfries and Galloway Council** to turn supportive rhetoric into actionable policies and partnerships.

KELLS PRIMARY SCHOOL



Keeping education local is a high priority for The Royal Burgh of New Galloway and Kells. The top ten priority actions included keeping the high school in Dalry, keeping the primary school, supporting nursery provision in New Galloway, and supporting adult education.

Proposals to close Dalry High School are cause for widespread and profound concern, as this affects families' decisions to live in our community.

Kells Primary School is the only educational establishment within The Royal Burgh of New Galloway and Kells Community Council area, accepting pupils from P1 to P7. It is part of a cluster with Dalry Primary School in the neighbouring Community Council area of St John's Town of Dalry. Dalry Primary School also offers nursery provision for children between 3 and 5 years of age.

Dalry Primary shares a site with Dalry Secondary School (S1 to S4), which is clustered with Castle Douglas High School. Pupils from The Royal Burgh of New Galloway and Kells attend either one of these secondary schools, or travel further to Kirkcudbright Academy. Castle Douglas High School and Kirkcudbright Academy both offer education from S1 to S6.

In rural places like the Glenkens, schools play a vital role in bringing people together, keeping families in the area,

and offering learning for all ages. Attainment levels in many rural schools are among the highest in their regions. However, these schools are increasingly under threat of closure or mothballing, with decisions focused on short-term financial constraints rather than the long-term impact on communities.

We support the Glenkens-wide aim for a fit-for purpose educational hub, articulated in the June 2025 'Education and Learning in the Glenkens' report authored by GCAT, and summarised in the box on the left. It is a key input for our LPP. We want to work in partnership with Dumfries & Galloway Council to create a sustainable and stable statutory educational provision in the Glenkens, from Nursery to senior years, that will attract working-age families into the area and give our young people the best possible start in life.

With GCAT we are also exploring the idea of creating a Glenkens Education and Learning Hub – a space for learning through all stages of life, supporting young people, adults and local employers, and strengthening community life. The Hub would support learning that isn't totally exam based, the idea is to cover learning in its widest sense for all ages and demographics. And by doing this it would become an important community asset for the Glenkens.

3: WHAT IS OUR PLACE?

3.3: COMMUNITY ORGANISATION

New Galloway and Kells benefits from an active network of community organisations, ranging from long-established volunteer groups to newer thematic initiatives. The New Galloway & Kells Community Council is small but committed, managing to provide five elected members from our small population and find the energy to produce this Local Place Plan. Several organisations hold community-owned assets – including the New Galloway Community Shop (owned by New Galloway Community Enterprises), New Galloway Town Hall (owned by LING) and the CatStrand (owned by GCAT) – which anchor activity and provide vital spaces for social, cultural and economic participation. Mossdale’s Village Hall adds to the geographic reach of community-led action, and has recently applied to become a SCIO.



Emerging collaborative networks are strengthening coordination across these organisations and creating new ways of working together on shared priorities. Importantly, New Galloway is embedded within the wider Glenkens community ecosystem through its relationship with GCAT and the Glenkens Community Action Plan, which connects the area to regional-scale initiatives. The Glenkens and District Community Action Plan Steering Group has the remit to ensure delivery of the Action Plan and has a particular focus on 'Education and Learning' and 'Land Use'. These wider frameworks provide essential context and capacity for taking forward the projects and proposals set out in this Local Place Plan, ensuring that local ambitions are aligned with – and supported by – broader strategic efforts across the Glenkens.

Some local organisations are featured here.

Local Initiatives in New Galloway (LING) was established to manage New Galloway’s Town Hall, operating the building from 2012 before taking full ownership from Dumfries and Galloway Council in 2022. Following an extensive refurbishment, the Hall is now a key community asset and LING, having become a Scottish charity in 2017, continued with its stated remit to promote rural regeneration for the benefit of the local community.

LING addresses rural isolation, with a focus on health and wellbeing, food insecurity and community capacity-building. The Town Hall also serves as New Galloway’s designated resilience centre in case of power outages and flooding.

LING coordinates a weekly programme focussing on social connection and inclusion, with activities ranging from a Community Café and tai chi to a Community Larder (below) and a local history group. Beyond the Town Hall, LING supports community-led outdoor initiatives – such as a Community Garden – which promote food growing, active travel, and maintaining shared local infrastructure.





The Glenkens Community and Arts Trust, created in 2001, is a key anchor organisation in the area and leads on the implementation of the Glenkens Community Action Plan. As well as hosting Touring and Youth Arts programmes and a creative placemaking process (Cultural Glenkens), the following community projects fall under the GCAT umbrella: the Glenkens Gazette, a newsletter with 6 editions per year; Galloway Community Transport, which has a fleet of diesel and electric minibuses and one electric car; the Glenkens Community Spaces Network, which brings together volunteers running community buildings and outdoor places for mutual support and networking; the Glenkens Youth Group; the Glenkens Men's Shed; the CatStrand Café (above); and Our Glenkens, a project to showcase the appeal of living and working in the area.


New Galloway Golf Club was founded in 1902 and serves the Glenkens area. The club, situated in New Galloway, features a nine-hole golf course situated amongst woodland and moorland and offering views of Loch Ken and the surrounding Galloway hills.

The course is maintained by volunteers and is noted for its natural greens and fairways. The turf is noted for its quality, benefitting from an abundance of bents and fescue-type grasses. The Club welcomes visitors while providing a recreational facility contributing to the health, wellbeing, and leisure of local residents.



Mossdale Village Hall operates as a volunteer-run space for Mossdale, Hensol, Slogarie and neighbouring communities, and is developing a 5-year plan to increase its facilities for the local and wider community in coming years. In light of the isolated nature of the settlement, the village hall is a key resilience resource. The committee is considering options to assure the future of the hall to benefit the community, including actively exploring commercial ventures which could provide financial and practical support to Mossdale residents.

It is vital that Mossdale Village Hall is available to act as a resilience centre, and is named in the New Galloway and Kells resilience plan.



The Loch Ken Trust is a SCIO founded in order 'to promote the natural, cultural, and recreational assets of the Loch Ken area (above), for both the benefit of the public and to support sustainable local communities'.

As well as employing community rangers, promoting water safety and responsible access to the countryside, the charity has been active in supporting communities to develop and coordinate resilience preparedness.



New Galloway Community Enterprises (NGCE) is a community-driven organisation based in New Galloway, established to support local economic and social development. NGCE is owned by more than 260 community shareholders and operates as a community benefit company, trading for the benefit of residents and the wider area.

The organisation manages a range of facilities and services that contribute to the vitality of the town, including a licensed community shop, two self-catering holiday cottages, and a community laundry. The Community Shop provides everyday essentials, local produce, and other goods, supporting local suppliers and tradespeople while serving as a central hub for residents. The self-catering cottages offer accommodation for visitors, contributing to the local economy and promoting tourism in the area.

NGCE is overseen by a Volunteer Management Board and day-to-day operations are delivered by a dedicated staff team. Through its activities, NGCE supports employment opportunities, encourages local enterprise, and strengthens community cohesion in New Galloway.

The Glenkens and District Trust, a SCIO established in 2018, work with Foundation Scotland to oversee the allocation of community benefit funding from the Glenkens and District Community Fund. Their goal is to ensure funding provides long-term benefits to Glenkens communities through good stewardship and partnership working.



Image taken from Glenkens & District Trust homepage: <https://www.glenkenstrust.org.uk/>

LEISLER'S BAT:
ERIC MEDARD via
Woodland Trust

WHORLED
CARAWAY:
GEOFF TOONE

GREAT CRESTED
NEWT: CHRIS
DRESH via
Nature.Scot

LARGE HEATH BUTTERFLY:
RYAN HODNETT via Wikimedia
Commons

ADDER: MARY & ANGUS
HOGG via geograph.org

EURASIAN
NIGHTJAR: IMRAN
SHAH via Wikimedia
Commons

EURASIAN NIGHTJAR: IMRAN
SHAH via Wikimedia Commons

HARVEST MOUSE:
CHARLIE
MARSHALL via
Wikimedia
Commons

RED SQUIRREL:
RHODODENDRITES
via Wikimedia
Commons

The Royal Burgh of New Galloway and Kells Community Council area contains habitats which support a range of locally, nationally and internationally rare or important species, meaning that the management and conservation of certain habitats can make a real contribution to the Scottish Government's aim stated in NPF4 to 'protect biodiversity reverse biodiversity loss, deliver positive effects from development and strengthen nature networks'.

Around 3200 species have been recorded by the South West Scotland Environmental Information Centre (SWSEIC) in our area, and while some - examples below - are significant, the changing climate and changes in land use could create additional stresses on a much wider range of species.

This could be mitigated through an approach to land use change which gives weight to preventing biodiversity loss. We believe that land use change must be considered against the risk of degradation or eradication of natural habitats.

WETLAND

Wet woodland is home to locally and nationally important **willow tit** breeding populations. The **Greenland White-Fronted goose** overwinters in improved grassland and wetland

habitats, meaning these sites are of local and national importance to the species.

Great Crested Newts - a European protected species - breed in wetland and pond habitats, where the endangered **Ox-bow Diving Beetle** can also be found. Dumfries and Galloway is a site of global importance for this beetle.

Galloway is a nationally important location for the **Spignel**, which thrives in wetland and wet grasslands. Kenmuir Holms is one of the very few sites in Scotland where **Elongated Sedge** can be found.

The nationally rare **River Skater**, which in Scotland is only found in Galloway and South Ayrshire, can be found in stony streams in the area. And important populations of the endangered **Large Heath Butterfly** can be found in some of the remaining bog habitats.

BROAD-
BORDERED
WHITE
UNDERWING:
ROY
LEVERTON

ELONGATED
SEDDGE:
HUGUES
TINGUY via
Wikimedia
Commons

MONTANE

One of the last authentic wild populations of **Downy Willow** in the South of Scotland can be found in the area, and the nationally rare and declining **Broad Bordered White Underwing** can only be found in montane habitat. This may potentially be lost in coming decades as a result of the changing climate.

LONG-STANDING NATIVE WOODLAND

This is a rare habitat globally, with local species such as **Tree Lungwort** and other lichens and mosses sadly in decline. The Glenkens has one of the best remaining populations of **Red Squirrels** in the region, inhabiting woodland habitats.

And **Leisler's Bat**, previously thought to be confined to Galloway, and still of national importance despite having been found elsewhere, inhabits woodland environments, particularly broadleaved.

UNIMPROVED GRASSLAND

The rare and declining **Black and Violet Oil Beetles**, the rare and elusive **Harvest Mouse** and **Whorled Caraway** are among the species that can be found in unimproved grassland sites, a habitat that is decreasing in

extent owing to changes in farming practices and commercial afforestation in the area.

OPEN HABITATS

The IUCN amber-listed **Nightjar** inhabits open habitats, including heathland, woodland clearings and felled conifer woodland; up to 80% of Scotland's population is found in Galloway.

The **Whinchat** also thrives in open upland areas. Preserving acid grassland and heath habitats are important for a range of other bird, invertebrate and plant species. These habitats are also locally and nationally important to the **Adder**.

The open heath and grasslands of upper Kells parish are important for both existing **Golden Eagles** and for prospecting birds from the South of Scotland Golden Eagle reintroduction project.

In particular our remaining unimproved grasslands and heath are precious for biodiversity as documented by the Scottish Biodiversity Action Plan (**Figure 6**). The many community consultation responses wanting a limit to conifer afforestation are best aligned with a presumption against planting on these important habitats, especially but not only neutral grasslands.

3: WHAT IS OUR PLACE?

3.4: NATURE & BIODIVERSITY

TREE LUNGWORT: H. ZELL
via Wikimedia Commons

WILLOW TIT: FRANCIS C.
FRANKLIN via Wikimedia
Commons

GREENLAND WHITE-
FRONTED GOOSE: JOHN B
via Wikimedia Commons

GOLDEN EAGLE: CAROLINE LEGG via
Wikimedia Commons

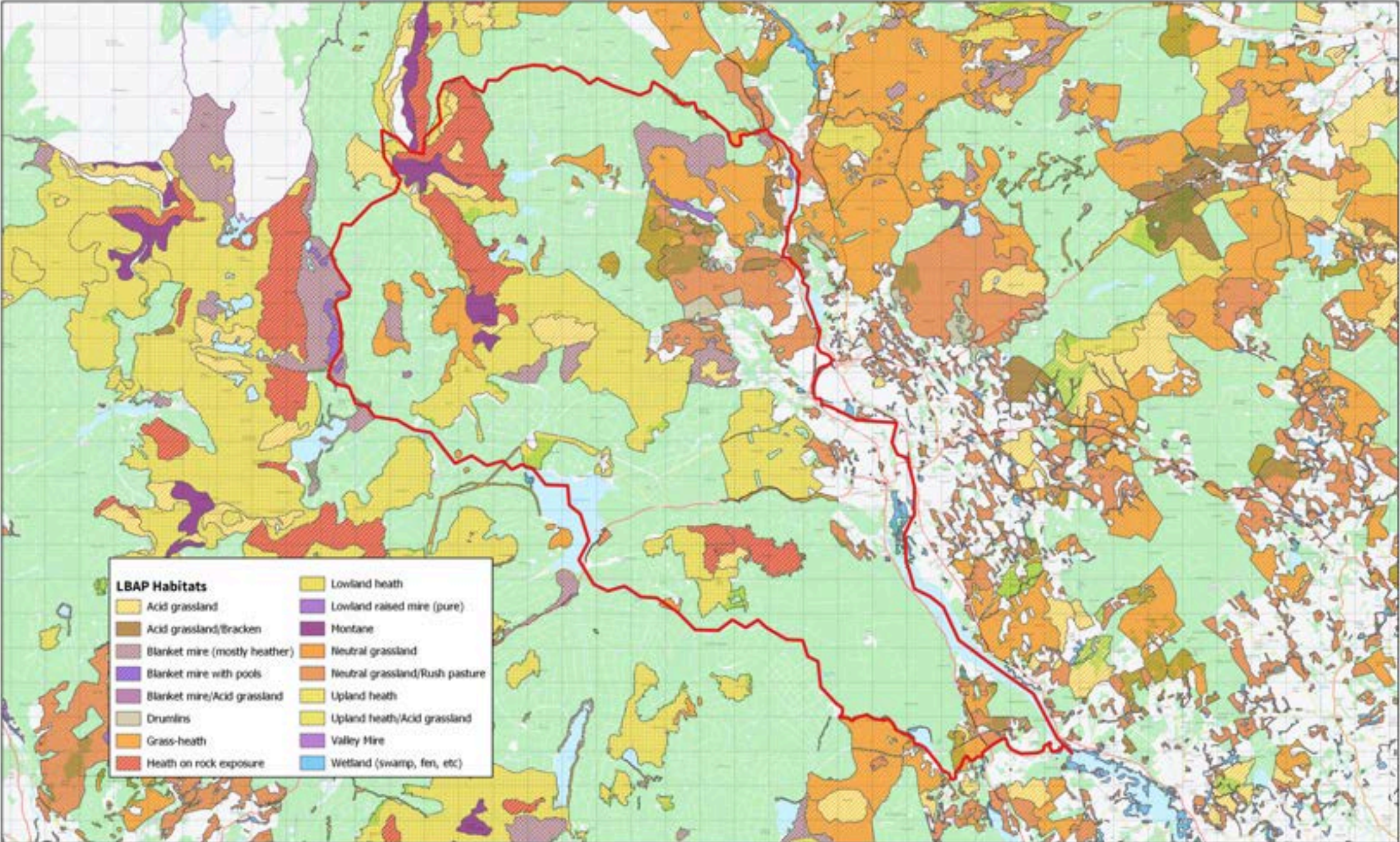
SPIGNEL: JANET
GRAHAM via
Wikimedia commons

DOWNY WILLOW:
AGNIESZKA
KWIECIEŃ via
Wikimedia
Commons

VIOLET OIL
BEETLE: SIGA
via Wikimedia
Commons

SCOTTISH
WHINCHAT:
CAROLINE
LEGG via
Wikimedia
Commons

FIGURE 6: Map of Unimproved Open Habitats



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2025.
Habitat Data ©Dumfries and Galloway Biodiversity Partnership 1998

3: WHAT IS OUR PLACE?

3.5: LAND USE AND DESIGNATIONS

Ours is a very rural area, with land used for hill farming, forestry, wind farms and hydroelectric power generation (see **Figures 8 and 11**). The very high proportion of conifer plantation in our area contributes to its character, but there is a scarcity of semi-natural woodland.

Those remaining are therefore particularly important. Semi-natural woodland valued by our community include the marsh woodlands at the head of Loch Ken, the woods adjacent to New Galloway Golf Course, and the oakwoods of Glen Garroch. New afforestation for private profit continues and sometimes imposes unwelcome landscape change and loss of recreational access. These issues are discussed further in section **4.2.5** below. In particular the relative scarcity and high biodiversity value of open habitats in our area needs protection.

The consultation identified a wish to contribute to nature restoration in our area, without yet having a clear sense of suitable sites for doing that. The relevant actions in our Action Plan are therefore to both protect the most important areas (taking the value of our open habitats and scarce native woodland into account when responding to proposals for land use change, such as woodland creation schemes), and to identify land for conservation, habitat creation, and nature restoration - particular by working with others across the Glenkens.

Our community council area also includes significant areas of habitat that is designated under international protection.

The **Loch Ken and River Dee marshes** are an internationally-designated **Ramsar (wetland) site**, and the **Rhinns of Kells** are part of the **Merrick Kells Special Area of Conservation (SAC)**, which are also **Sites of Special Scientific Interest**. The Galloway Forest is an (internationally) Important Bird Area (for Black Grouse, Short-eared Owl and Peregrine Falcon, all species that need a mix of habitats).

The parish falls within the **Galloway Hills Regional Scenic Area**, highlighting the area's exceptional visual character, including upland moorlands, forested slopes, and glacial valleys. It aims to protect the landscape from inappropriate development

while encouraging positive management.

Our area is also part of **Galloway and Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere** which promotes sustainable development, conservation, and community engagement. It supports biodiversity and climate resilience across the region.

Galloway International Dark Sky Park (see **Figure 10**) is one of the first in the world to earn the Dark Sky designation. It is an area committed to protecting dark skies by controlling light pollution.

And although the rivers and lochs of our area add much to the beauty of the landscape, in fact the environmental condition of several is poor (**Figure 14**), because of invasive species and acidification.



FIGURE 7: Map of hydroelectric power generation

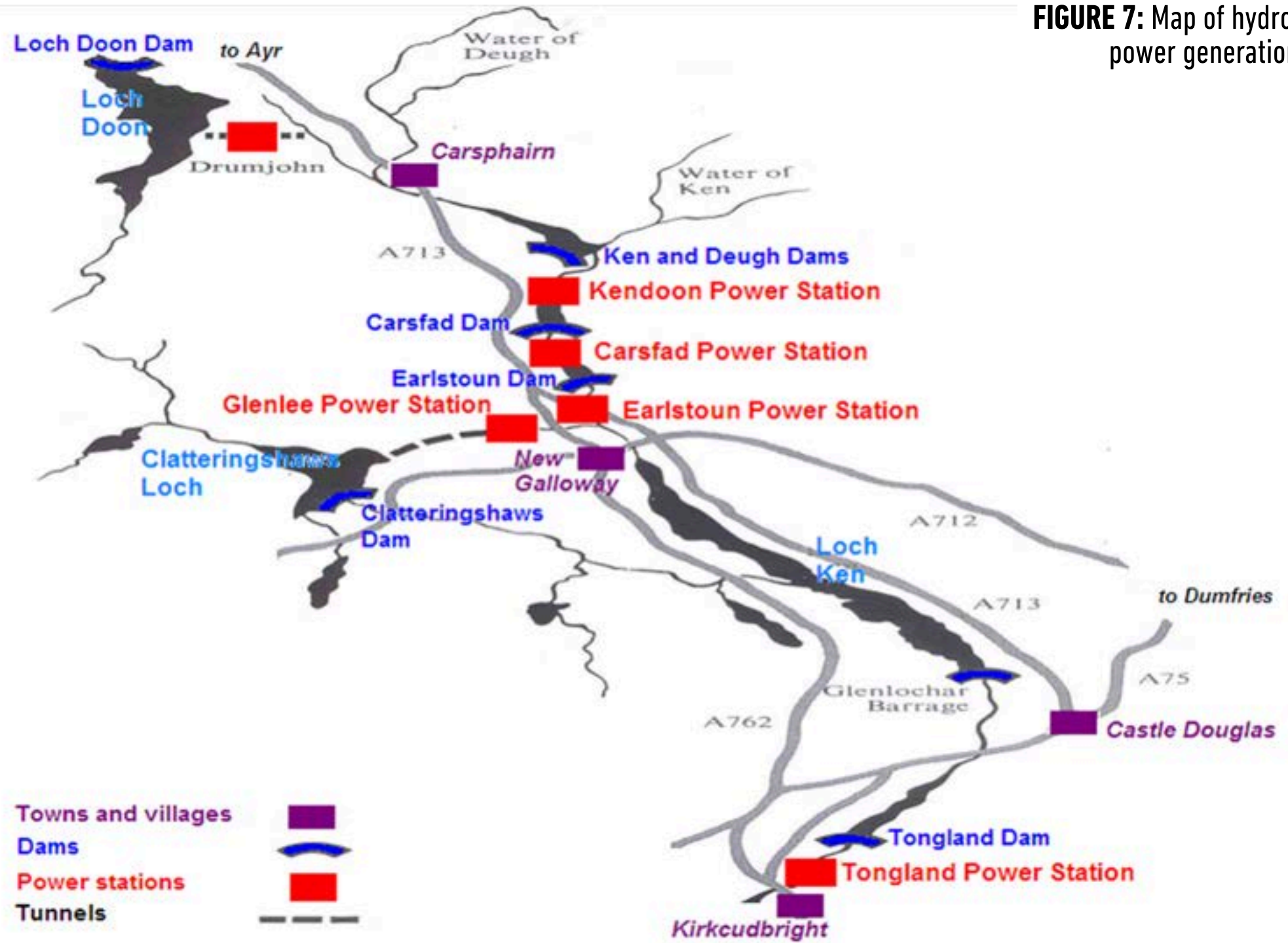


FIGURE 8: SEPA FLOOD RISK MAP

0 2.5 5 km

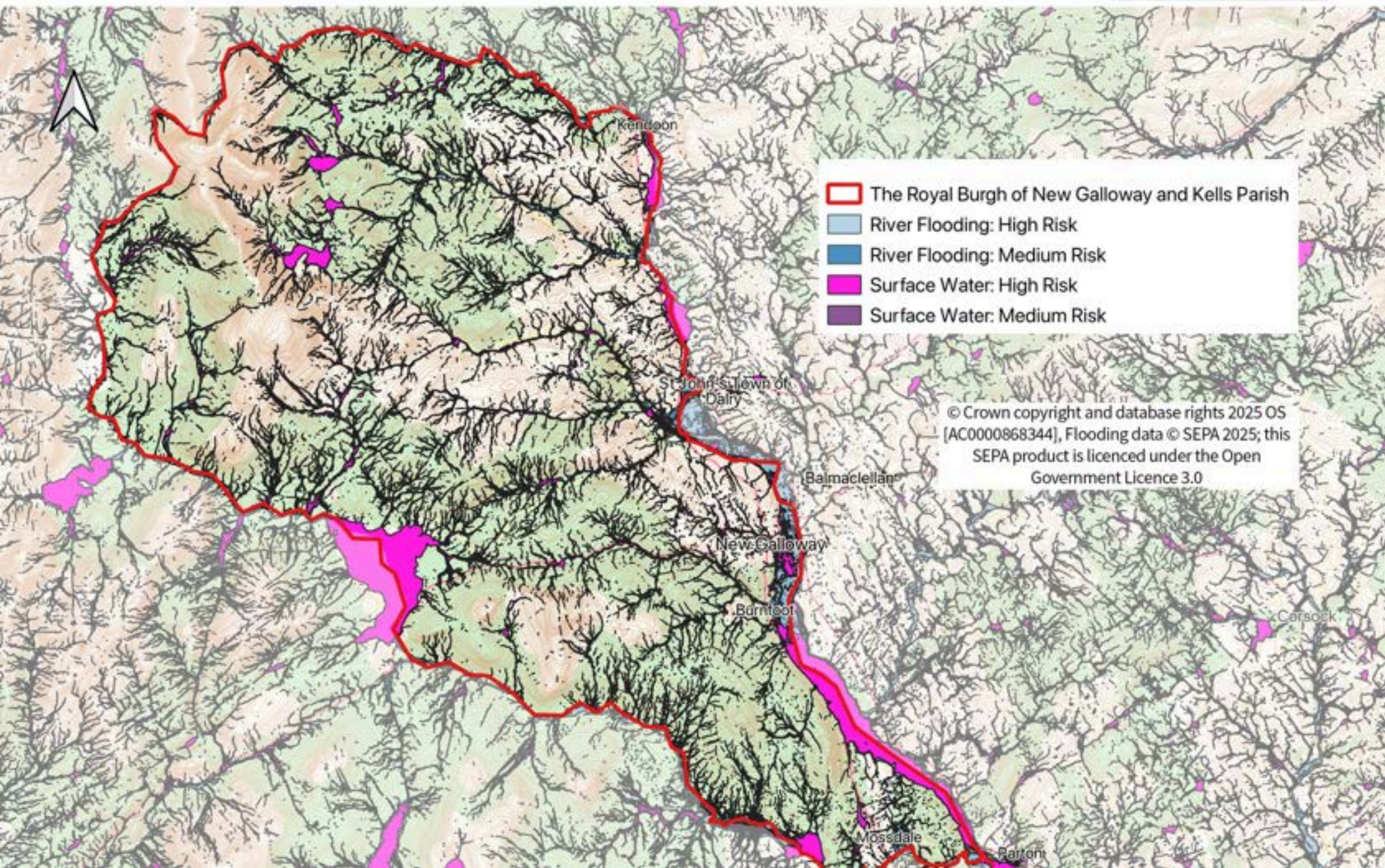


FIGURE 9: Forestry and woodland

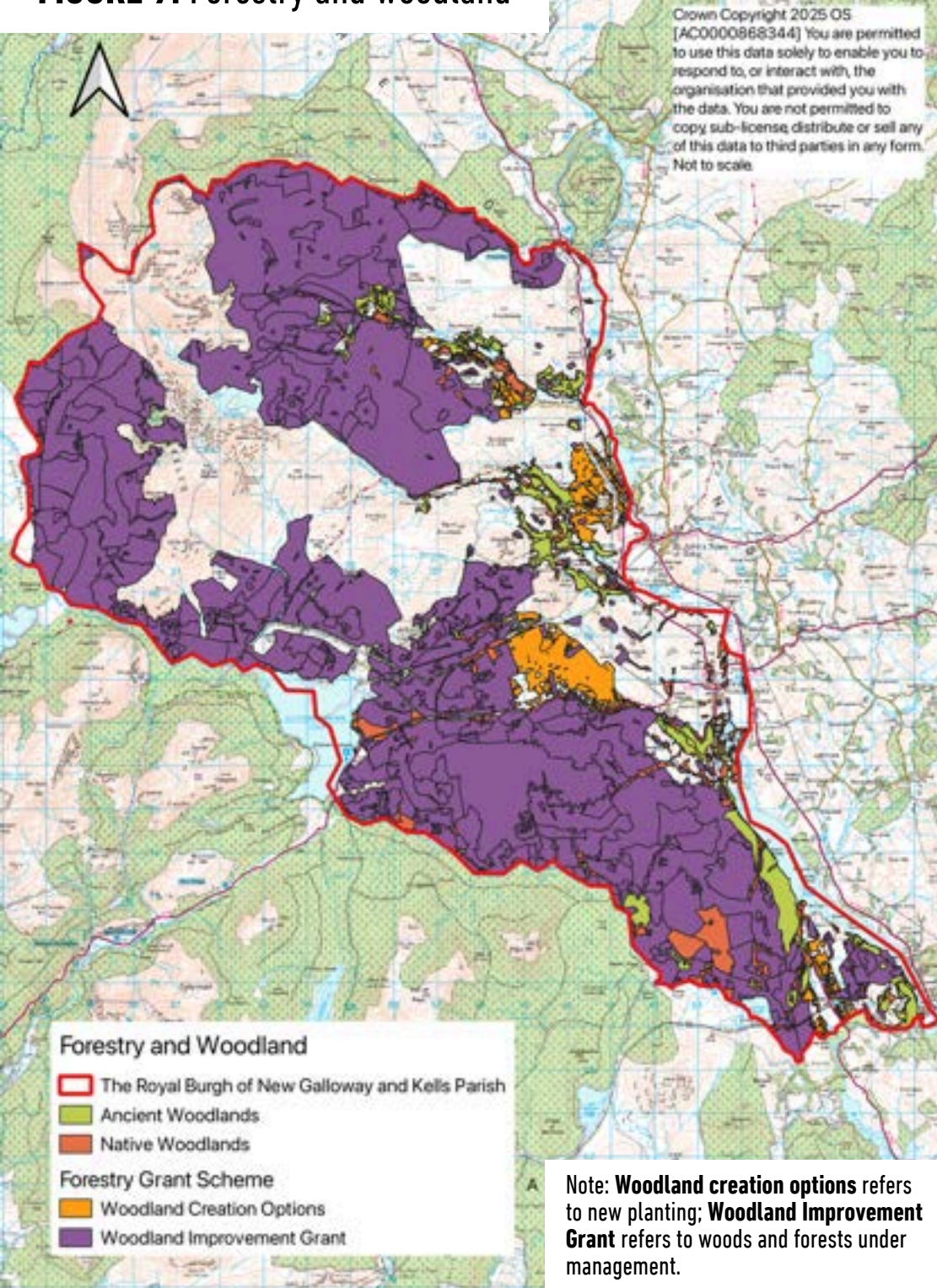
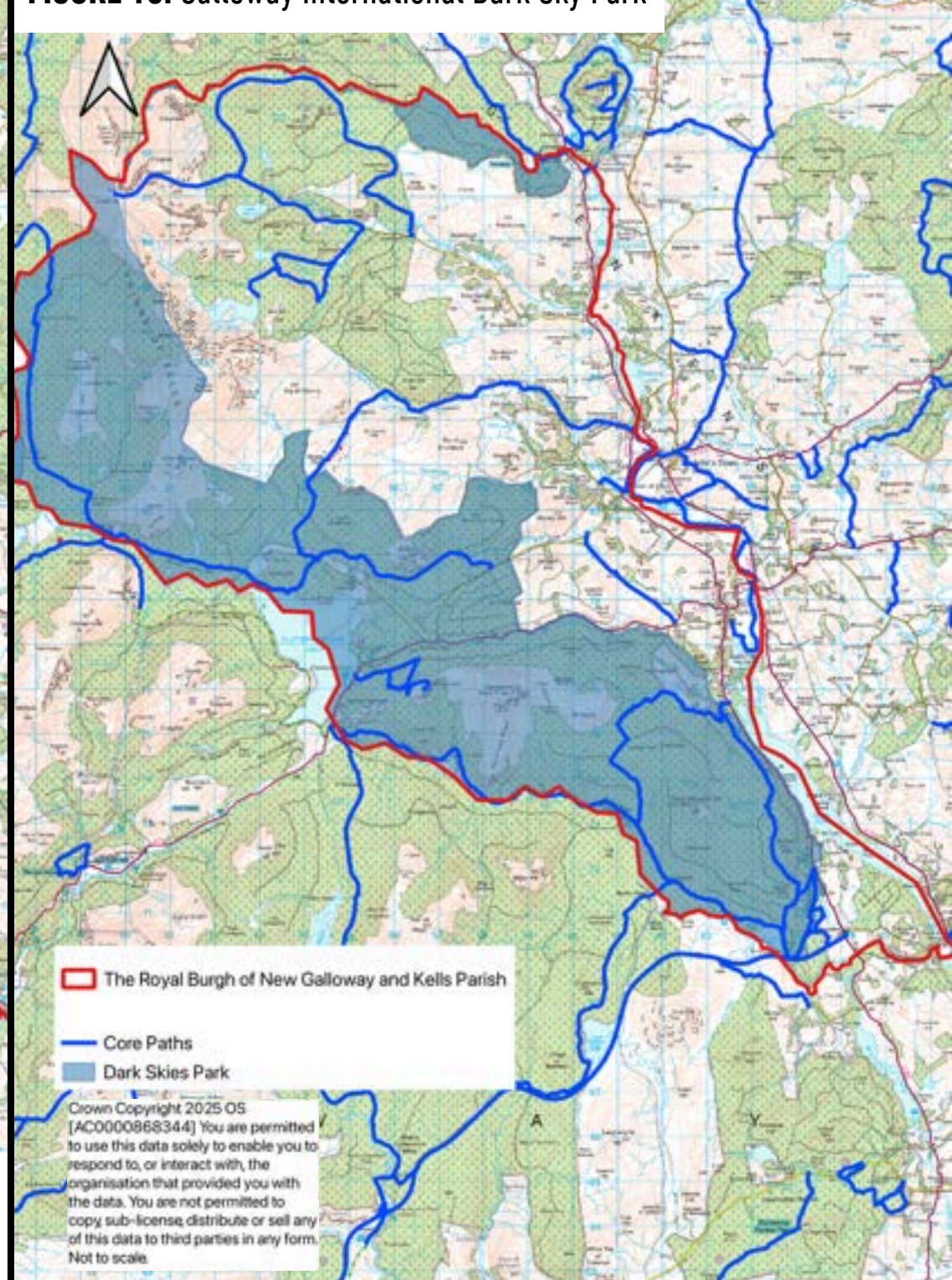


FIGURE 10: Galloway International Dark Sky Park



4: OUR COMMUNITY'S PRIORITIES

4.1: THINGS PEOPLE VALUE ABOUT OUR PLACE

“HAVING A CAFÉ, SHOP, POST OFFICE, TWO WELL-RUN COMMUNITY SPACES (CATSTRAND AND THE TOWN HALL)

“THE COMMUNITY PROJECTS, LIVE EVENTS AND YOUTH ARTS PROVISION IS EXEMPLARY BUT CAN'T BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED”

“LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH NATURAL CAPITAL, ENERGY AND FORESTRY TO CREATE LONG-TERM SUSTAINABLE JOBS TO BOOST THE LOCAL ECONOMY”

“NEW GALLOWAY COMMUNITY SHOP AND THE NEW COMMUNITY LARDER ARE GOOD RESOURCES FOR BASIC ITEMS, AND IT'S GOOD TO HAVE ITEMS FROM LOCAL FARMS

“I RARELY LOCK THE FRONT DOOR AND HAVE NEVER FELT UNSAFE IN THIS AREA. THE COMMUNITY IS VERY TIGHT-KNIT.”

“GP PRACTICE IN OUR VILLAGE OF NEW GALLOWAY IS AMAZING. IT DOES A GREAT JOB AND YOU CAN GET DOCTORS APPOINTMENTS RELATIVELY EASILY.”

“I FEEL SAFE WALKING IN NATURE HERE

“A VERY ATTRACTIVE PLACE TO LIVE WITH BEAUTIFUL VIEWS IN ALL DIRECTIONS

“A VILLAGE THE SIZE OF NEW GALLOWAY HAS NO RIGHT TO EXPECT AN ARTS PROGRAMME LIKE FOUND AT CATSTRAND. IT'S A SMALL MIRACLE THAT IT EXISTS. IT HAS MADE A BIG DIFFERENCE TO THE AREA AND MUST NOT BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED. THERE IS A HUGE AMOUNT OF LOCAL CULTURAL AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY WHICH IS OFTEN RUN BY VOLUNTEERS AND IS ALSO IMPORTANT.”

“I LIVE HERE. MY CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN HAVE GROWN UP HERE. MANY OF MY FRIENDS ARE HERE. I KNOW THIS LAND VERY WELL AND I INHABIT IT IN MANY WAYS.”

COMMENTS TAKEN FROM INITIAL SURVEY DATA

Top priorities identified in the two rounds of consultation included the following:

CONNECTIVITY:

Restricted public transport, whilst unsurprising in a remote rural location, hinders residents from changing habits from a car-centred life, and can be a significant barrier to accessing healthcare, employment or education in non-drivers.

Cycling and walking on the roads outside the settlement, which are mainly National Speed Limit and have no pavements, was highlighted as one of the greatest dangers faced by residents. Many called for more footpaths and pavements, reduced speed limits in key locations and in the settlement, and other infrastructure to reduce speeding.

HOUSING:

Positive comments on this topic focused on perceived affordability of market homes, with distinct and attractive regional architecture, and a wide variety of homes in the village. However, many comments related to concerns over houses which were not fully occupied, including second homes, empty homes (including those at Glenlee) and those rented out (many respondents referred to Airbnb). A lack of suitable homes for young people was highlighted, particularly affordable rented. Sheltered housing was also highlighted as important. Additionally, homes are generally not energy efficient and are difficult to retrofit.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS:

A majority of respondents expressed concern about threatened school closures in the area, and a perception that the effect of the potential closure of Dalry Secondary would have on the number of families choosing to stay in or move to the area. The proposal for a long-term plan for education, which would allow residents to be confident about the future of their child's school, was seen to be a positive.

Respondents also suggested that opportunities for adults to study in the area would strengthen the skills base in the community, supporting young and older residents of working age to retrain, upskill or develop relevant competencies for working in local industries.

SEWAGE OUTFLOWS:

The aspiration to create a better solution to sewage treatment in New Galloway was a high priority for almost all the residents who responded to the second questionnaire. Currently, sewage overflow can frequently be seen pouring into the Mill Burn, which flows through the Ken-Dee Marshes before discharging into Loch Ken, an important location for wild swimming, water sports, and fishing.

LAND USE AND ACCESS TO NATURE:

Concerns over biodiversity and lack of agency over land use were expressed, alongside a minority of comments that were positive about the way that land is managed at present. References were made to the importance of community wealth building and the need to move away from a purely extractive model of land use. Respondents also talked about the importance of local food production for resilience and for the benefit of the local community. Monoculture forestry was seen as a threat to soil health.

Many residents expressed concerns with accessing countryside, illegal restrictions to the right to roam when deer fencing is installed on forestry plantations, problems safely accessing rural sites because of the difficulties of walking or cycling safely, and the fact that linking up networks of paths for pedestrians and cyclists could benefit the community by increasing the number of tourists visiting and staying in the CC area.

FAVOURITE PLACES

BASED ON INPUTS TO DROP-IN SESSIONS



GARROCH WALLED GARDEN



CLATTERINGSHAWS LOCH



WATERSIDE HILL

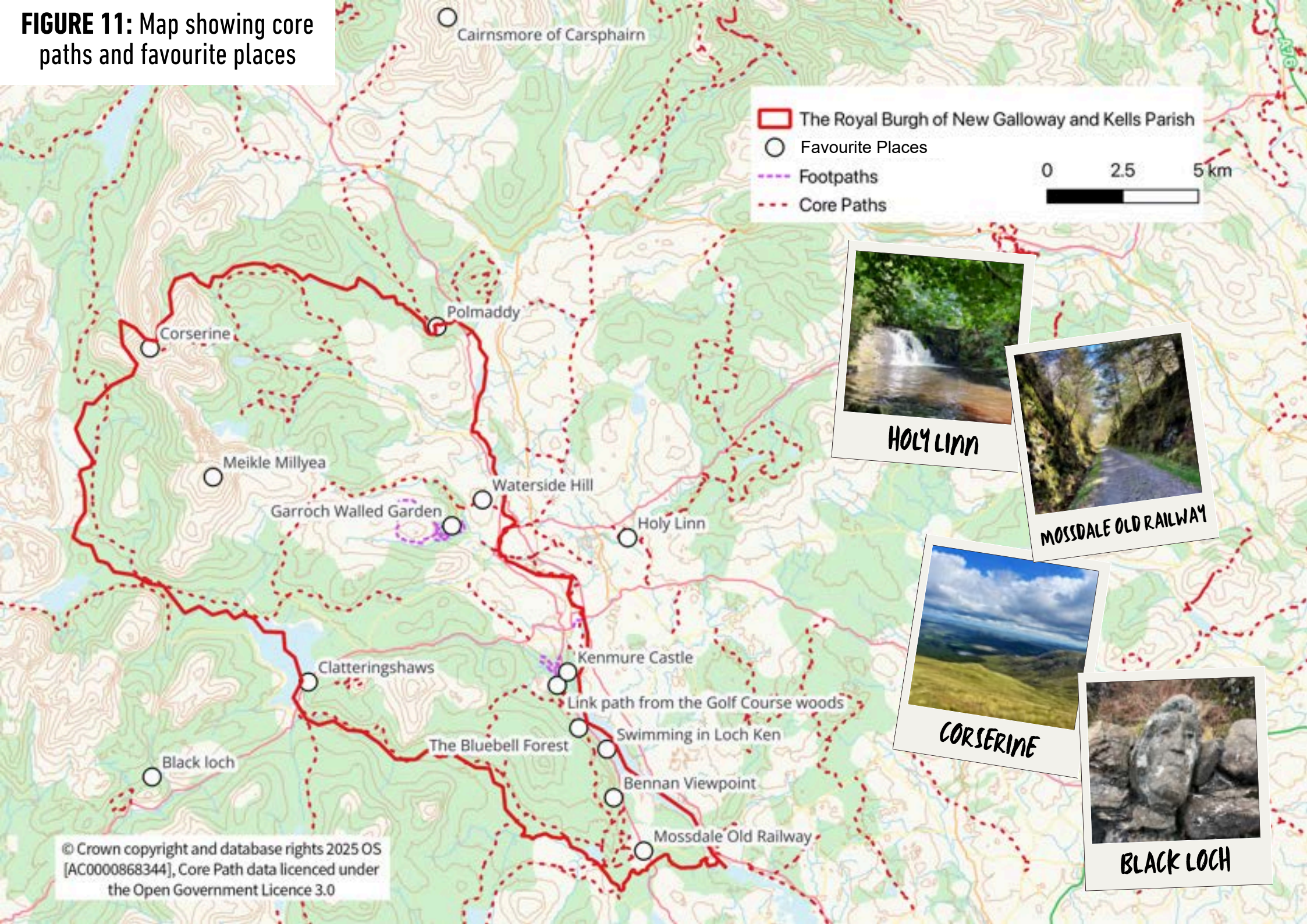


POLMADDY



BACKGROUND IMAGE: MEIKLE MILLYEA

FIGURE 11: Map showing core paths and favourite places



4.2: THINGS PEOPLE WANT TO SEE IMPROVED

4.2.1: TRAFFIC CALMING AND PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY

Speeding and traffic safety have been raised by a large number of people during the community engagement process. Dalry and New Galloway helping to connect the towns and making the plans for Glenkens education, housing and transport system more interlinked when bus services are minimal.

It is clear that the perception of residents is that the current 30 MPH speed limit in New Galloway is being broken regularly. Furthermore there are concerns about the placement of the 30 MPH boundary, and the safety of heavy good vehicles particularly timber transport, on the A712.

This issue is linked to the safety of our pavements. In New Galloway many pavements are raised making it difficult for people with prams, wheel chairs or walking aids to cross the road.

There are steps up to houses along the length of the pavements, which are not wide enough in these places to allow prams and wheelchairs access around the obstacles. There are no safe crossing points. People have to cross between cars parked on the road, which cut visibility for wheelchairs and children.

Pavements stop at the edge of the town and do not continue to the Ken Bridge or the Golf club. Both are links to walks and are regularly used by the residents who are exposed to traffic when using the routes. Cyclists also raised this as part of the potential for a safe cycle track between.

At Dundegh there is an issue with the speed of traffic on the A713 as it passes the entrance to the village and the bus stop. The corner involved has been an accident black spot in the past and will remain a serious safety issue to the residence until some form of traffic warning and calming measures are installed.

Similarly, in Mossdale, the main road through the settlement sees speeding drivers, and should the Kendoon to Tongland transmission line go ahead, this road will see a huge increase in HGV movements over the construction phase of the project.

Related to this, a number of people raised the issue of car parking. Overall this did not score as a high priority, but it is important to a significant group, and this is related to businesses including shops and cafes which have closed because potential customers lacked parking options.

Better parking to help the Cat Strand, events like the Alternative Games and allow users of the park top access it without walking from the bottom of town along difficult streets.

Traffic calming is an example of a community need that meets several components of the Glenkens CAP vision. It is also supported by several policies in our National Planning Framework NPF4:

POLICY	TITLE	CONNECTION TO SPEED CONTROL
POLICY 13	SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT	Traffic calming encourages social activity by making the roads safer. It also encourages active travel (walking and cycling)
POLICY 14	DESIGN, QUALITY AND PLACE	Speed control helps to make a place that feels safe and attractive
POLICY 2	CLIMATE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION	Reducing car speeds encourages more active travel and helps to reduce emissions and improve air quality

4.2: THINGS PEOPLE WANT TO SEE IMPROVED

4.2.2: PAVEMENT AND FOOTPATH CONNECTIVITY

Apart from pavement safety in the town, three pressure points stand out:

1 Lack of pavement over the Ken Bridge: new footpaths were created from New Galloway to the Ken Bridge, but connectivity is then threatened by the very dangerous walk across the bridge – oncoming drivers cannot see over the bridge, and so pedestrians are forced to walk in the road without being visible to drivers.

2 Lack of pavement along the A712 from New Galloway town west: residents enjoy the 'triangular' walk along the High Street, up the Old Edinburgh Road and down the A712 (or vice versa), but are forced to walk on the main road. This is particularly dangerous because of the speed and frequency of timber lorries driving towards the village.

3 Lack of pavement south from the High Street towards and past the Golf Course: again, a very popular walk where connectivity is threatened by the need to walk in the road. Although in theory a 'minor' road, at times it is busy. Pavement or footpaths are needed at the very least to the start of the woodland walks beyond the Golf Course.

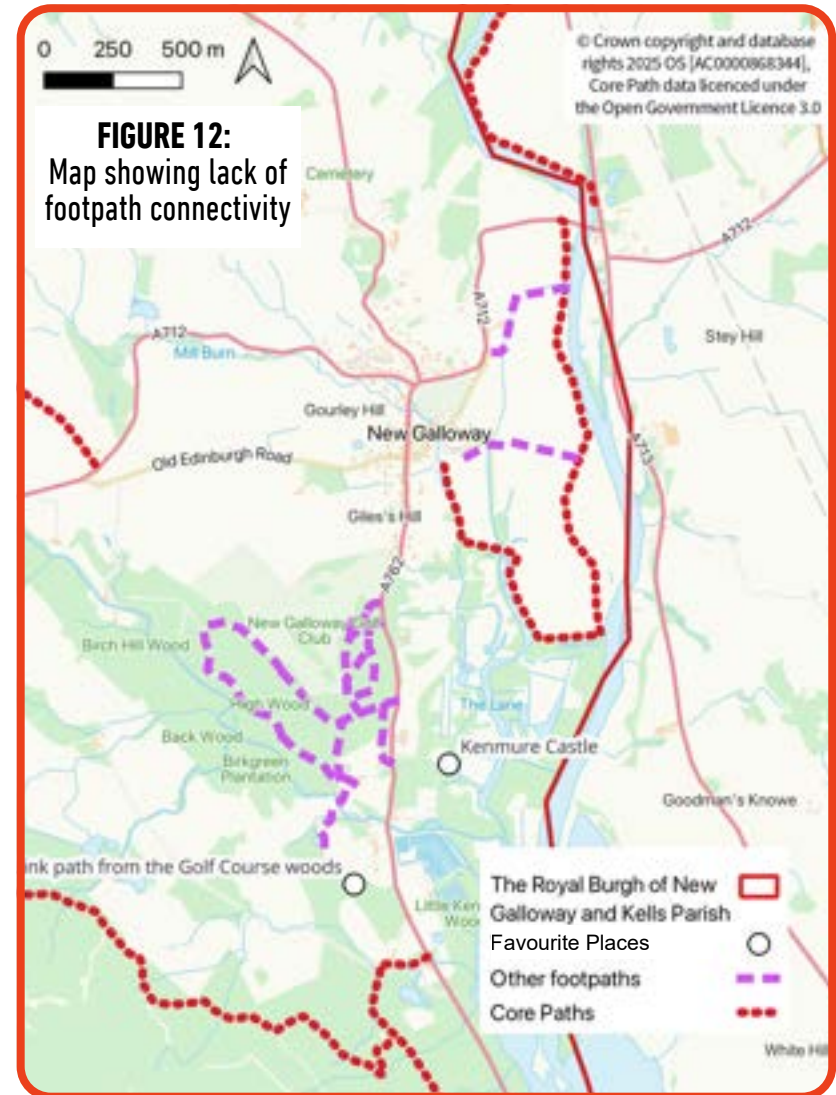
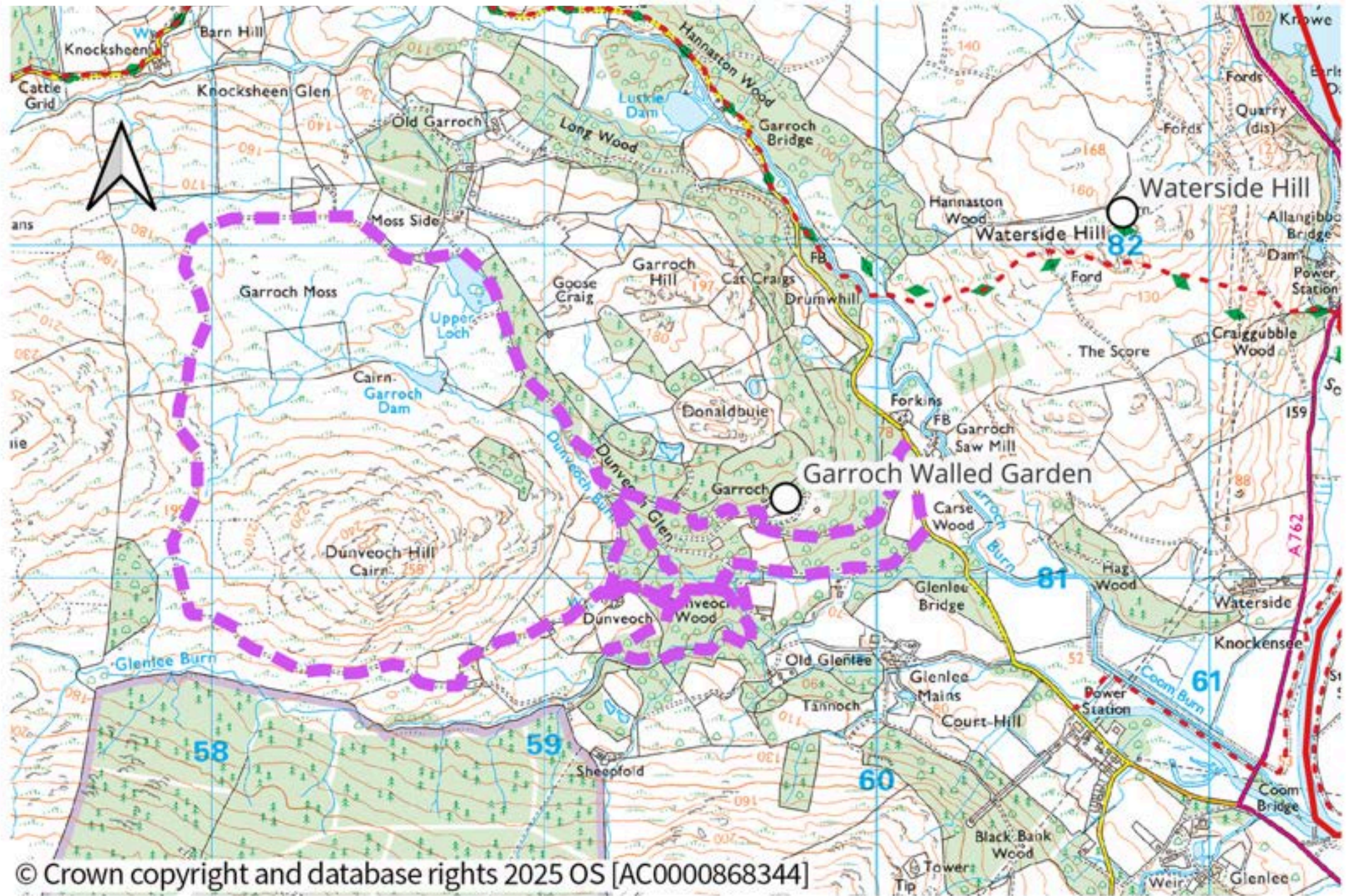


FIGURE 13: Footpaths from Garroch Walled Garden (maintained by LING in agreement with the landowner)

0 250 500 m



4.2: THINGS PEOPLE WANT TO SEE IMPROVED

4.2.4: CONFIDENCE IN DEMOCRATIC PLANNING PROCESS

The community consultation revealed a number of areas where confidence in 'being heard' is low

- 1 Adherence to planning process – a number of building projects have gone ahead without planning permission, and have obtained that permission retrospectively without clear cognisance of the impact on neighbours (shade, intrusion on privacy etc).
- 2 Building on the flood plain – there is a widespread view that houses have already been inappropriately built in areas subject to flooding, with wider implications for the village and for sewage management.
- 3 Integrity of forestry processes – new planting and felling – impact on local communities is overlooked or dismissed. The new planting at Mossdale is a conspicuous example of a scheme where loss of amenity combines with loss of nationally important habitat, and where public decisions appear to have favoured private benefit rather than community or ecological benefit. Local residents had to draw official attention to premature planting conflicting with wildlife sites. Recent clear-felling west of New Galloway Golf Course has removed access to signed footpaths, and months later these much-loved paths remain inaccessible.

- 4 Response of national government to community engagement on land use planning. The routing of the high voltage overhead transmission Kendoon-Tongland line has left an impact on community trust in engagement and wider land use planning processes (approved by Scottish Government, despite local opposition and a public inquiry recommending refusal).

The Kendoon-Tongland transmission line, if approved, will have a major effect on the village of Mossdale, with hundreds of lorry movements on a narrow rural road. At a minimum, traffic calming measures will help to ensure that HGVs slow down for the village.

The public bodies involved in these issues vary, from D&G Council to Scottish Forestry to Scottish Government. This LPP does not take a view on the cause or outcome of each issue. However the community response to consultation shows that low confidence in these public engagement processes undermines both the purpose of the process and the possibility of a sustainable outcome. The proposed action is therefore to bring this lack of trust to the attention of the relevant bodies and invite trust-building process.

ISSUE	% OF PEOPLE RATING THIS 'IMPORTANT' OR 'VERY IMPORTANT'
AVOID BUILDING ON FLOOD PLAIN	92
PROTECTION FROM BUILDING AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS THAT GO AHEAD WITHOUT PROPER CONSULTATION	83
COMMUNITY INPUTS TO PLANNING DECISIONS ON VALUED LANDSCAPES (E.G. KENDOON TO TONGLAND TRANSMISSION LINE) NEED TO BE RESPECTED	82

4.2: THINGS PEOPLE WANT TO SEE IMPROVED

4.2.5: SOME PROBLEMS IN OUR ENVIRONMENT

Located about a mile upstream of Loch Ken, New Galloway's sewage works consists of a septic tank discharging into the Ken, and a combined sewer overflow discharging into Mill Burn, a tributary. Capacity of the public wastewater infrastructure, servicing New Galloway's households connected to mains drainage, is a factor limiting much needed housing development in the Burgh.

The rudimentary treatment of human waste at the sewage works does not remove nutrients

(phosphates, nitrates), pathogens, and many other pollutants (persistent pharmaceuticals, 'forever chemicals', microplastics...). The effluent thus potentially impacts the health of both ecosystems and people.

Local residents have long been aware of deficiencies in their waste water infrastructure (see **Figure 14**), reporting disappearance of Brown Trout from Mill Burn 20 years ago following overflow of sewage from the combined sewer.

Through spring and summer 2025, residents reported several incidents to Scottish Water: discharge of foul smelling effluent from the Burgh's septic tank into the bank of the Water of Ken resulting in growth of sewage fungus in the riverbed; dry weather discharge from the combined sewer; and leakage of sewage from drains on High Street, New Galloway.

Private septic tanks and package plants may also be contributing to

watercourse pollution. The number, location and condition of these assets is unknown, an obstacle to schemes to support owners to maintain them.⁵

SEPA and Scottish Water currently have insufficient evidence to prioritise investment in New Galloway's wastewater infrastructure; an emerging group is committed to providing the citizen science to support this decision-making process.

The effect of afforestation can be felt across the Community Council area, but is particularly acute in rural areas like Mossdale. Increased forestry plantation is encroaching on the village, leading to a loss of light, views, and an increased risk of wildfires. This also has an impact on access to nature, with recently-erected deer fencing blocking pathways which have been habitually used by residents, and in some cases, locked gates illegally preventing residents from exercising their right to roam.

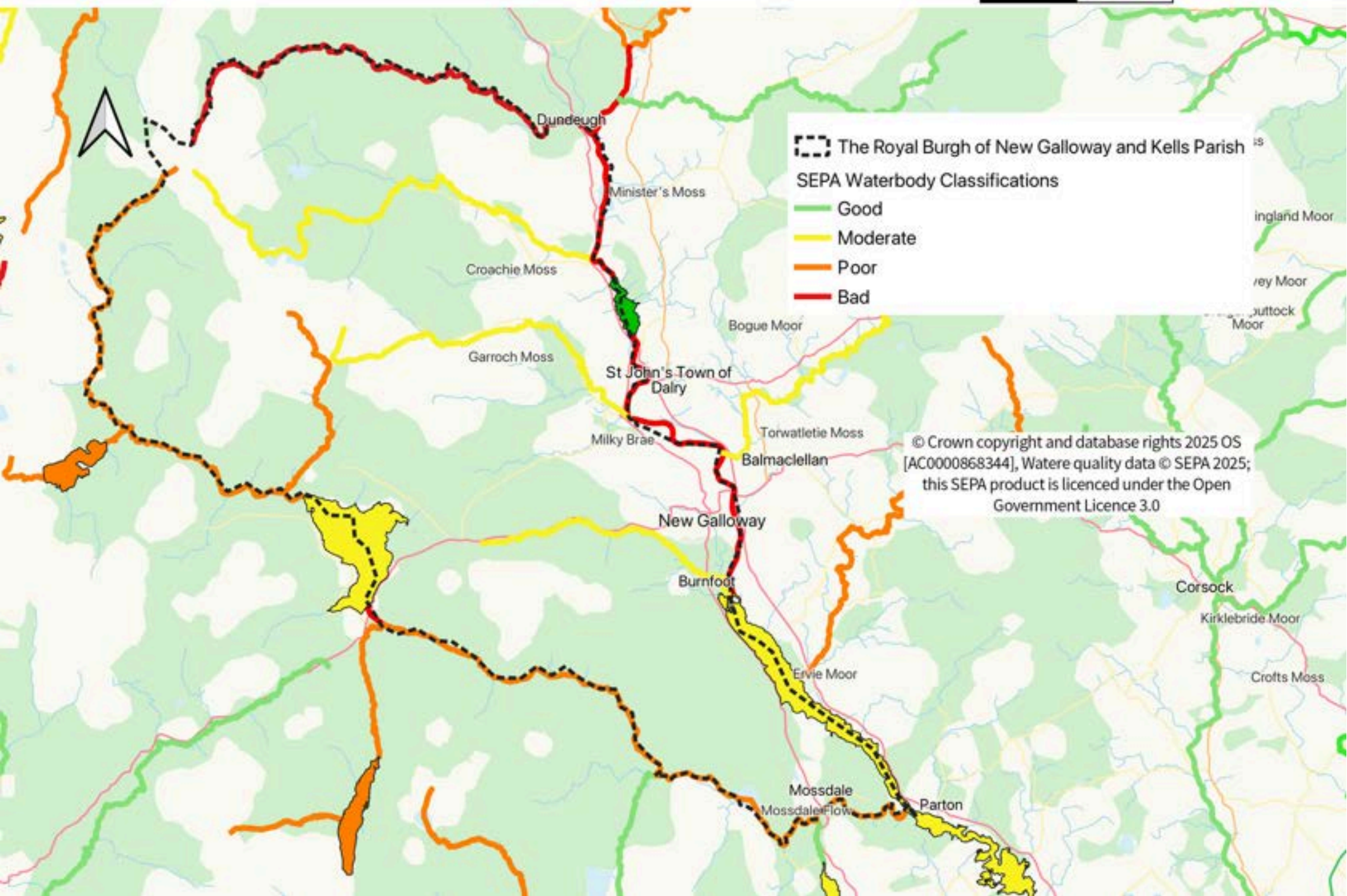
Although the risk of wildfires has increased as weather patterns change, there is currently no infrastructure for dealing with large scale fires; the introduction of fire posts and firebreaks should be considered in light of changing weather patterns.

⁵ Scottish Water, 'Looking After Your Septic Tank', *Scottish Water* (n.d) <https://www.scottishwater.co.uk/Your-Home/Your-Waste-Water/Septic-Tanks/Looking-After-Your-Septic-Tank> [accessed 14 January 2026]



FIGURE 14: SEPA WATER ENVIRONMENT MAP

0 2.5 5 km



5: COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN PREPARING THIS LPP

New Galloway and Kells CC residents were offered a number of opportunities and methods to express their views for the LPP, with the consultation period running from January to September 2025. This included two drop-in events at the Town Hall and a stall at the Scottish Alternative Games, as well as two questionnaires (both as paper versions, available to collect and return at the Community Shop, the Town Hall and The CatStrand, and online via Google Forms).

Information about the consultation was shared online on the Glenkens Hub and LING websites, on social media, as well as on posters in New Galloway and in the Glenkens Gazette.

The initial stage of consultation offered residents the chance to express their thoughts through open questions on a variety of themes. The Place Standard Tool was also available, with volunteers from the LPP team on hand to answer questions at the Town Hall on January 18th. These responses can be found in our [supporting document](#).

102 responses were received to the first stage of community engagement, and a massive 1269 individual comments collected via questionnaires, post-it-notes and the Place Standard questionnaire.

Around 60 initiatives were identified from the responses to the first questionnaire. These were grouped under five themes in the second questionnaire, which asked residents to score each from 1 (unimportant) to 5 (very important). Following extensive community engagement, the Community Council is confident that this Local Place Plan represents the views of local residents and is widely supported.

PLACE PLAN TIMELINE

25 ATTENDED SECOND EVENT

2 MARCH 2025
SECOND
COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT
EVENT

103 RESPONSES RECEIVED

1 JAN-FEB 2025
INITIAL COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT EVENT
AND DATA
GATHERING:
RESPONSES
COLLECTED AND
ANALYSED



APRIL-JULY 2025
FURTHER
COMMUNITY
RESPONSES
INCORPORATED
AND
INITIATIVES
SURVEY
DEVELOPED

3

91 RESPONSES RECEIVED

4 AUGUST 2025
THIRD
COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT
EVENT



5 JANUARY 2026
LOCAL PLACE
PLAN
DRAFTED
AND
FINALISED

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Local Place Plan has been prepared by the Royal Burgh of New Galloway and Kells Community Council as the recognised community body. It was supported by a Local Place Plan Grant Fund financed through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to help with community consultation, design and printing costs.

Thanks for support from officers of Dumfries and Galloway Council in developing the plan, to Becca Nelson for her guidance and support throughout, to Malcolm Haddow of the South West Scotland Environmental Information Centre (SWSEIC) for advice and mapping data, to colleagues from Local Initiatives in New Galloway (LING), who supported the organisation and delivery of the consultation process, to Mike Brown, Paul Clarke, and Jane Mathieson for contributing to the text, and to Dominique Pope for designing the final document.

Most importantly, we thank all the residents, businesses, and community

groups who contributed their time, ideas, and local knowledge during the consultation. Their participation has shaped the priorities and proposals set out in this Plan.

All photos taken by Becca Nelson unless otherwise stated.

In compliance with legislative requirements a 28-day formal consultation period was held, running from Monday 26th January to Tuesday 24th February 2026. This Local Place Plan is the final version submitted 27 February 2026 following accommodation of responses to that consultation.

Steering Group: Anna Lawrence (NG&K CC), Lois Aitkenhead (NG&K CC), John Muir (LING), Dominique Pope (LING), Jeremy Sainsbury (NG&K CC)

Photo: Murray's Monument

