



# Dumfries and Galloway

## Council Plan | 2023–2028



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# Foreword

The Council Plan 2023–2028 sets out the vision and strategic outcomes that the Council wants to achieve over the next five years. It will guide activity across the Council and focus on how we will deliver better outcomes for the citizens and communities in Dumfries and Galloway.

The previous Council Plan 2017–2022 delivered on a number of important priorities which saw the Council:

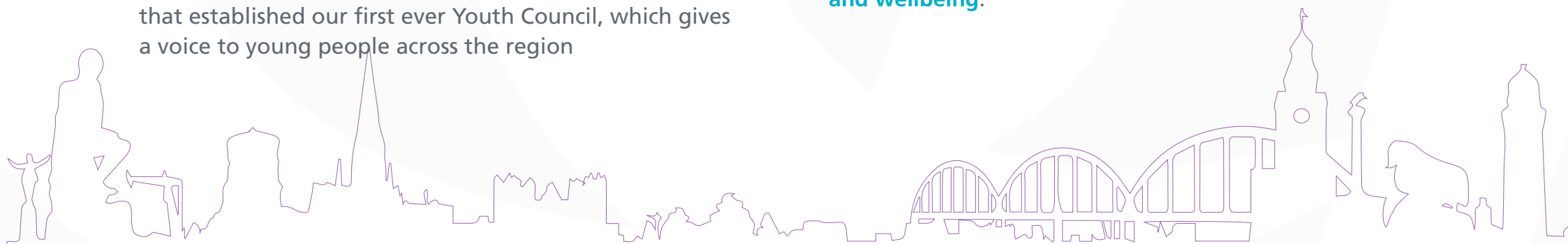
- Deliver the 1,140 hours early learning and childcare for all three, four and eligible two-year-olds
- Support communities, businesses and vulnerable people through the pandemic by providing grants and prioritising services
- Empower local communities through asset transfers and support for community led regeneration
- Secure long term investment into the region as part of the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal
- Develop a Youth Participation and Engagement Strategy that established our first ever Youth Council, which gives a voice to young people across the region

Our plan looks forward after the challenges of the past few years where local communities came together to support each other through the pandemic. New challenges have emerged since that time, including the rising cost of living for people and families.

There are opportunities for our region in the future and the Council is committed to working with our communities and partners to ensure these are realised.

Our Council will help Dumfries and Galloway to thrive and build a strong local economy that enables the region to grow, and we will create opportunities for businesses to invest, people to visit and our citizens and communities to reach their ambitions.

The plan centres on a core set of **principles**: Safeguard our future, Support our citizens, Support our Communities and Be a responsive Council. These principles will shape how we deliver our four themes: **economy**; **travel, connectivity and infrastructure**; **education and learning**; and **health and wellbeing**.



# Vision - 2028



“

Our ambition is to be a **successful region**, with a **growing economy**, based on **fairness, opportunity** and **quality public services**, where all citizens prosper. Working in partnership, with **connected, healthy** and **sustainable communities**.

The region will be **the natural place to live, work, visit and invest**.

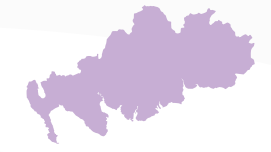
”



# Our Region

Dumfries and Galloway is shaped and defined by the people who call it home. They are its lifeblood and reflect the history, heritage and culture of the region.

Our population is dispersed across a rural area with a coastline that extends from Loch Ryan and the North Channel round to the Solway Firth and the Cumbrian coast in England.



There are around **70,000** households



The Dumfries and Galloway Council area is 6,426km<sup>2</sup>, and is the third largest Council area in Scotland

## Our largest settlements are:



**Dumfries**  
(48,000)



**Stranraer**  
(13,000)



**Annan**  
(9,080)

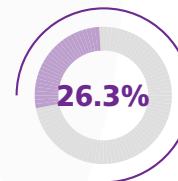
## The population numbers are forecast to decline as shown:



2021:  
**148,790**

2028:  
**144,575**

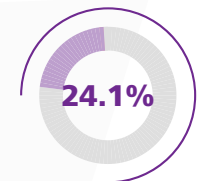
Change 2021-28  
**-2.83%**




of the population are 65 and over



The average age of the population is 46 years old (UK 40, Scotland 42)



of the population are 24 and under



Outstanding and beautiful natural landscapes, uplands, rivers and seascapes and abundance of open space and dark skies.



# Principles - delivering the outcomes

These principles are **how** we will deliver the outcomes in this plan.

## Safeguard our future

**Address the climate emergency:** urgently respond to climate change and transition to a carbon neutral region.



**Protect our natural capital:** protecting and enhancing our region's natural capital and habitats through conservation and sustainable development.

## Support our citizens



**Put customers at the heart of services:** provide responsive and reliable services that achieve high standards of customer care.

**Address inequalities:** assess the impact of change to ensure inclusivity, accessibility, celebrate diversity and secure social benefits of change.

**Support the most vulnerable and in need:** target resources to have a positive impact for the most vulnerable, people in need and those who are disadvantaged.

**Offer digital services:** embrace the opportunities and potential of digital technologies to improve outcomes and services for citizens and staff.

# Principles - delivering the outcomes (cont'd)



## Support our communities



**Empowering communities and individuals:** empower customers, communities and staff and build skills and confidence to enable people and communities to achieve their ambitions.

**Focus on local and place:** use places, wards and school clusters as the basis of local planning and delivery; and embrace the creativity and resilience of our places and people.

**Work in partnership:** ensure that service delivery is achieved, working alongside communities and with local, regional and national partners.

**Invest to enable change:** encourage and attract inward investment to deliver the ambitions of communities and local people.

## Be a responsive Council



**Communicate openly:** share ideas and invite contribution to decision making.

**Maintain sustainable finances:** balance spending and income to ensure finances are sustainable over the longer term and budgets are spent on achieving the Council Plan.

**Be organised to deliver:** be creative and responsive, organising services and workforce to ensure we deliver our Council Plan's strategic outcomes.

**Maintain high standards:** ensure transparency in decision-making and treat others with kindness and respect.

**Make best use of resources:** ensure that there is good governance and effective management of resources, with a focus on improvement, to deliver the best outcomes for local people.



# Themes

The plan has four **themes**, each with **strategic outcomes** - this is what the Council aims to achieve during the next five years.

The themes are:



Economy



Travel, Connectivity and Infrastructure



Education and Learning



Health and Wellbeing



# Economy



Dumfries and Galloway aims to be an attractive region for business by helping new and existing businesses flourish – all founded on inclusive growth<sup>1</sup>.

A strong economy is key to ensuring our citizens have access to training and high-quality jobs that pay well.

The Council is a lead partner in the South of Scotland Regional Economic Partnership – a forum that brings together a wide range of expertise and sets the direction of the South of Scotland economy. It has set out a bold vision for the South of Scotland to be green, fair and flourishing by 2031.

Together with partners, the Council will strive to promote a region of opportunity and innovation – where natural capital drives green growth, ambition and quality of life rivals the best in the UK, communities are empowered and cultural identity and heritage are cherished.

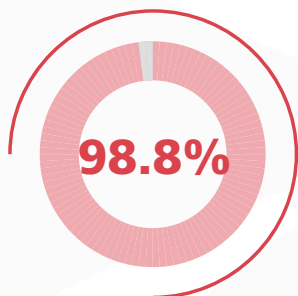
This will enable people to thrive and attract a new generation to live, work, visit, learn and invest in the South of Scotland.

<sup>1</sup>Inclusive growth means economic growth that creates employment opportunities and helps in reducing poverty

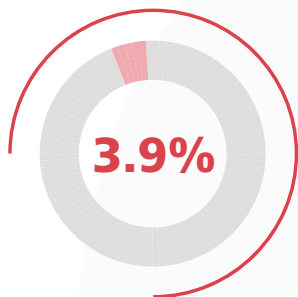
## Strategic Outcomes

- There is a diversified and growing local economy that benefits all
- Our workforce and their skills base are growing
- Rural communities and places are vibrant and thriving
- Enhancing the region's natural capital benefits local communities and businesses
- Businesses are supported to start and grow
- Investment in the region benefits communities and the local economy

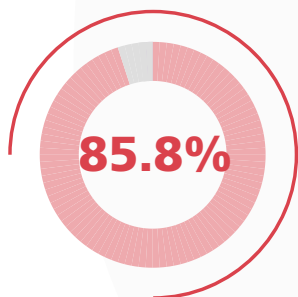




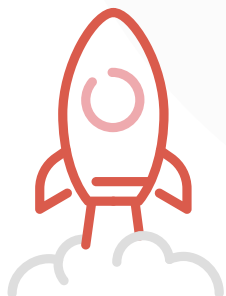
of our region's businesses are micro or small and employ between 0 and 49 employees



unemployment rate in the region



of the region's working-age population have NVQ Level 1 and above



**420**  
new start up businesses in the region during 2022



**£563.60**  
is the average gross weekly pay (one of the lowest in Scotland)

### TOP 5 Industries in employment numbers:



**15.94%**  
Human health and social work activities



**13.77%**  
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles



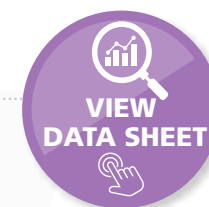
**13.9%**  
ABDE  
Agriculture, mining, electricity, gas, water and waste



**8.70%**  
Manufacturing



**7.25%**  
Accommodation and food service activities



Council is a partner in the South of Scotland Regional Economic Partnership.



Unique industrial heritage linked to farming, fishing, forestry, textiles, food and drink.

# Travel, Connectivity and Infrastructure



The Council will support investment in the infrastructure needed to improve connectivity, active travel, help people access what they need in their community, revitalise places, and attract people to live, work, visit and invest in our towns and villages.

## Strategic Outcomes

- Roads, paths, cycling and walking networks in the region are improved
- Communities are protected from the impact of floods
- [Sustainable travel](#) in the region contributes to net zero<sup>2</sup>
- The Council is a low carbon organisation
- People have access to services that are modern, efficient and responsive
- Digital connectivity supports thriving rural communities

<sup>2</sup> net zero - when the amount of carbon we add to the atmosphere is no more than the amount removed

## The Sustainable Travel Hierarchy

Walking and wheeling



Cycling



Public transport



Taxis & shared transport



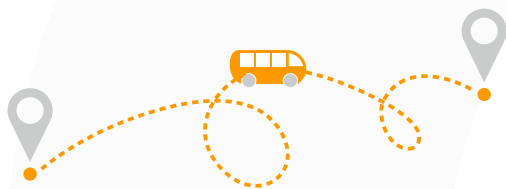
Private Car



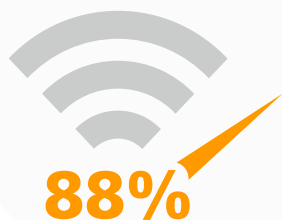


**4,201km**

of roads – third largest road network of any local authority in Scotland



**4.8 million**  
journeys on our bus network  
(2019 - Pre-Covid)



of households can access superfast broadband



**24** Customer Service Centres across the region



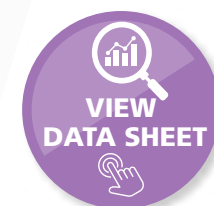
of Council vehicles are electric



electric-car charging points across the region



**30%** of citizens live at least 30 minutes' drive from a large community



Strategic location and transport corridor linking England, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

# Education and Learning



The Council will improve education and learning opportunities to help all our children, young people and citizens fulfil their potential. This starts with pre-school, then school, before progressing into further or higher education or transition into work.

We will work with our partners to create and promote lifelong learning opportunities so everyone in the region can live a meaningful and fulfilling life, and contribute to their community.



## Strategic Outcomes

- Places of learning are inclusive, sustainable and meet the needs of local communities
- We get it right for every child
- Children, young people and adults transition successfully through all life stages
- Young people and adults succeed in what they want to achieve
- Participation in creativity and play is part of early and lifelong learning experiences
- Local people can build their skills and confidence





secondary schools

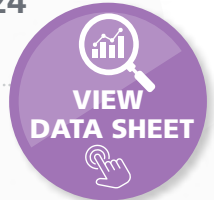
19,000



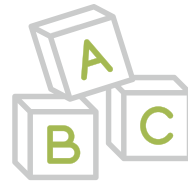
primary and secondary pupils



from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 we supported 709 Modern Apprenticeship starts. 49.1% of job starters in the local area were aged 16-24



primary schools



2,000

children in early learning and childcare



94.6%

of school leavers entering positive destinations<sup>3</sup>



school nurseries



10,485

adults engaged in lifelong learning activity



18


Number of non school facilities providing adult learning



550

online/digital classes per year for adult learners

<sup>3</sup> Positive destinations include: higher education, further education, training, voluntary work, employment, activity agreements.



Vibrancy, showcased through a rich and diverse tapestry of people and businesses, thriving artists and creative minds.

# Health and Wellbeing



Empowering local people to lead independent, happy and healthy lives is an important role for the Council. We also work with partners to ensure local people can access high-quality, affordable homes that support their wellbeing.

High levels of health and wellbeing increase life expectancy, reduce the impact from illness and encourage positive outcomes for children, young people and adults.

By building resilience we can prevent problems from arising in the first place. By intervening early, we support people achieve better results.

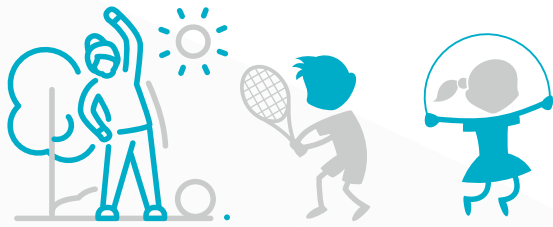
People and communities are at the heart of everything the Council does. Working with partners – the NHS and local Health and Social Care Partnership - is vital if we are to help our communities access health and care services tailored to their needs.

We will continue to promote positive physical and mental health, wellbeing and enable those who need social care to lead independent and fulfilling lives.

## Strategic Outcomes

- Prevention and early intervention assist people to have independent lives
- Access to personal support and care helps keep people safe
- People are active, resilient and improving their health and wellbeing
- Help is provided to tackle the causes and effects of poverty, inequality and increased cost of living
- People have access to high quality, affordable housing that supports their independence, prosperity and wellbeing





69% of adults<sup>4</sup> and 58.8% of children<sup>5</sup> in Dumfries and Galloway are achieving the physical activity guidelines<sup>5</sup>

## Life Expectancy

Dumfries and Galloway

**81.1yrs**

Female

**77.4yrs**

Male



Scotland

**80.8yrs**

Female

**76.5yrs**

Male



**83,603**

calls through to our support services

**13**



Council Leisure Facilities



**3,600**

individuals that we keep safe in their homes through use of technology



**4,405**

children receive free school meals



**4,034**

school children receive school clothing grants

**17**

Council Cultural Facilities ([dgculture.co.uk](http://dgculture.co.uk))



**24**

Council Libraries



**2,250,000** Care at home hours provided last year

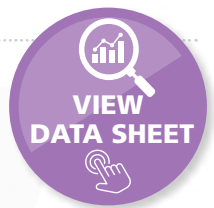
## The Scottish WELFARE FUND

**6,337** people claimed funding support of **£1.479** million in 21/22



**4,549**

adults and children reported improved mental health and wellbeing through the Council's lifelong learning activities



<sup>4</sup> Adult physical activity guidelines: at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity or 75 minutes of vigorous physical activity, or an equivalent combination of the two per week.

<sup>5</sup> Child physical activity guidelines: children should engage in an average of at least 60 minutes per day of MVPA, and minimise sedentary time



Passion for embracing the great outdoors, adventure, leisure and sport.



# Delivering the Council Plan

The Council Plan outlines the themes and strategic outcomes we aim to achieve between 2023 and 2028.

At the start of every financial year, the Council will produce an action plan.

It will set out how the Council intends to achieve its **strategic outcomes** that year and review its performance over the last 12 months.

The action plan will be published on the Council's website.



# Resources | Finance

## Where does the Council spend its money?

The Council's net revenue budget for 2022/23 is **£425M**. The budget is allocated against main areas for service delivery as follows:-

**Education & Learning**

**£155M**  
(36.5%)



**Social Work Services**

**£27M**  
(6.4%)



Children, families, and criminal justice

**Integration Joint Board<sup>6</sup>**

**£99M**  
(23.3%)



**Community Services**

**£66M**  
(15.5%)



**Economy & Resources**

**£36M**  
(8.5%)



**Core Council Budget**

**£42M**  
(9.8%)



## Where the money comes from?

**Scottish Government Revenue Support Grant**

**£273.9M**  
(64.5%)



**Council Tax Income**

**£71.1M**  
(16.7%)



**Ring Fenced Revenue Grants**

**£17.6M**  
(4.2%)



**Non-Domestic Rates**

**£51.4M**  
(12.1%)



**Social Care Funding**

**£10.4M**  
(2.4%)



**Use of Non-Recurring Funding**

**£0.6M**  
(0.1%)



### Financial Pressures

Exceptional levels of inflation across energy, fuel, food and wages.

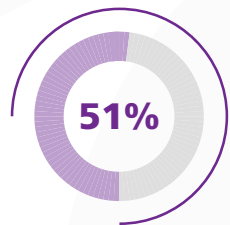
Reduction in real terms funding to the Council from Scottish Government - Further significant savings are required. In the previous 12 years the Council secured savings of £116m from its budget.

<sup>6</sup> The IJB commissions services from the Council and NHS who delegate planning and delivery to the Health and Social Care Partnership on a range of health and adult social care services.

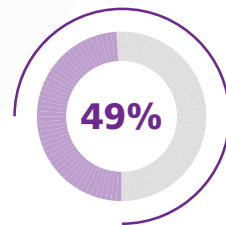
# Resources | People



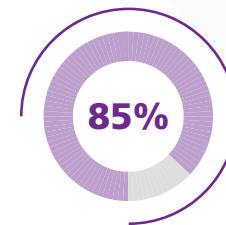
On 1 April 2022, we employed 6,475 people across a wide range of services. The Council's workforce comprises:



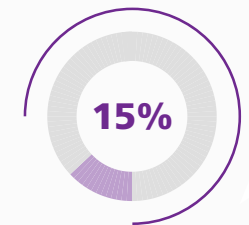
full-time



part-time



permanent



fixed-term

Our People Strategy outlines our **core behaviours**, which ensure colleagues working across the range of services delivered by Dumfries and Galloway Council work together to make this region the natural place to live, work, visit and invest.

Our **core behaviours** are:

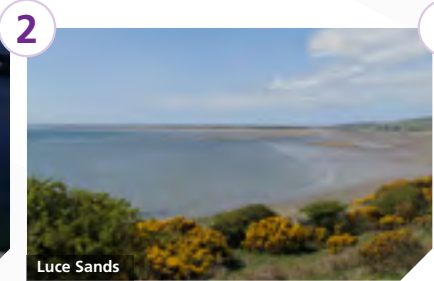
- Strengthen – our communities
- Understand – our children's needs
- Protect – our vulnerable people
- Promote – equality and diversity
- Open and transparent – at all times
- Respect – our environment
- Treat – each other with kindness







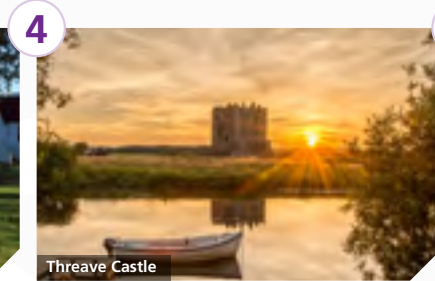
Stranraer Marina



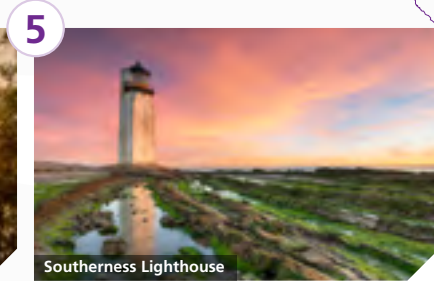
Luce Sands



Kirkcudbright Harbour



Threave Castle



Southernness Lighthouse

Stranraer and the Rhins

Mid Galloway and Wigtown West

Dee and Glenkens

Castle Douglas and Crocketford Abbey



Robert Burns Centre

North West Dumfries



Crawick Multiverse

Mid and Upper Nithsdale



Ae Forest / 7 Stanes

Lochar



Dumfries Guid Nychburris

Nith



Devils Porridge

Annandale South



Castle Loch Lochmaben

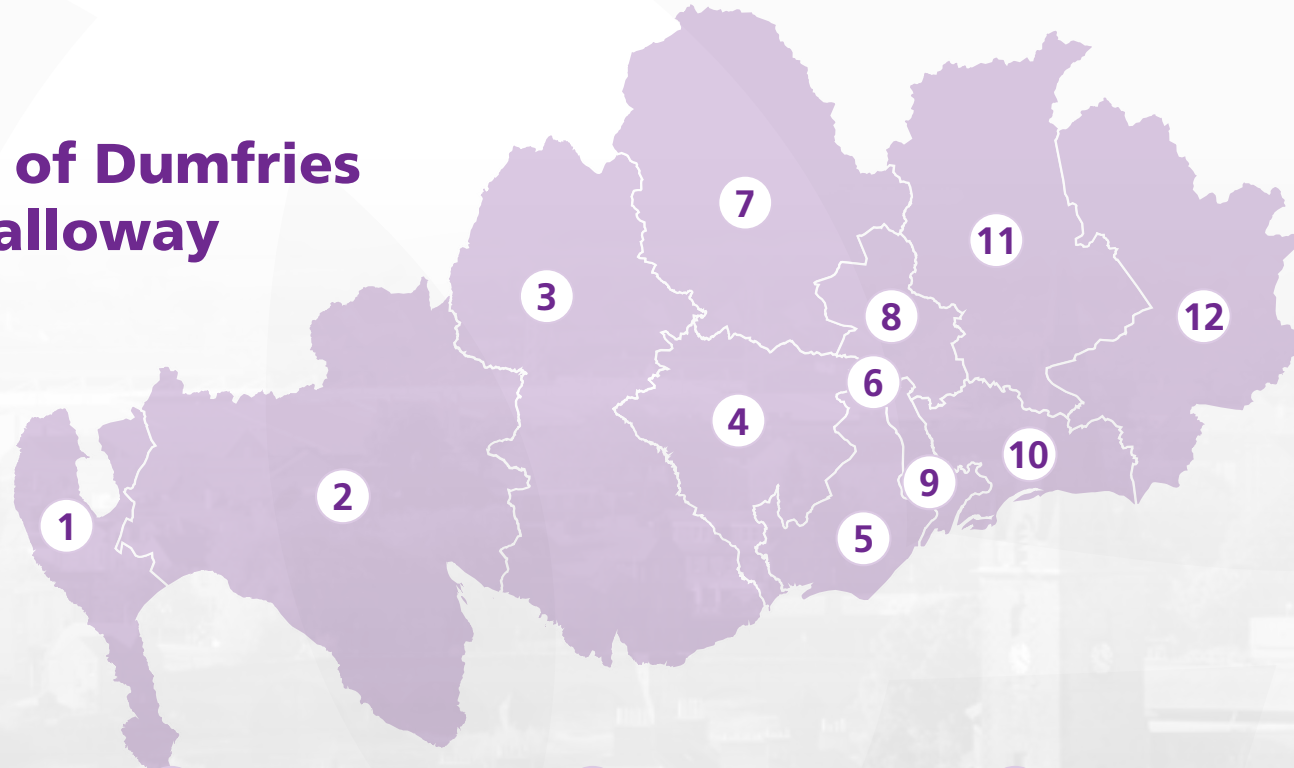
Annandale North



Langholm Common Riding

Annandale East and Eskdale

# Wards of Dumfries and Galloway





# Council Plan on a Page

**VISION:** Our ambition is to be a **successful region**, with a **growing economy**, based on **fairness, opportunity** and **quality public services**, where all citizens prosper. Working in partnership, with **connected, healthy** and **sustainable communities**.

The region will be **the natural place to live, work, visit and invest**.

## Principles

### Safeguard our future

- Address the climate emergency
- Protect our natural capital

### Support our citizens

- Put customers at the heart of services
- Support the most vulnerable and in need
- Address inequalities
- Offer digital services

### Support our communities

- Empowering communities and individuals
- Work in partnership
- Focus on local and place
- Invest to enable change

### Be a responsive Council

- Communicate openly
- Maintain high standards
- Maintain sustainable finances
- Make best use of resources
- Be organised to deliver

## Themes and Strategic Outcomes

### Economy

- There is a diversified and growing local economy that benefits all
- Our workforce and their skills base are growing
- Rural communities and places are vibrant and thriving
- Enhancing the region's natural capital benefits local communities and businesses
- Businesses are supported to start and grow
- Investment in the region benefits communities and the local economy

### Travel, Connectivity and Infrastructure


- Roads, paths, cycling and walking networks in the region are improved
- Communities are protected from the impact of floods
- Sustainable travel in the region contributes to net zero<sup>2</sup>
- The Council is a low carbon organisation
- People have access to services that are modern, efficient and responsive
- Digital connectivity supports thriving rural communities

### Education and learning

- Places of learning are inclusive, sustainable and meet the needs of local communities
- We get it right for every child
- Children, young people and adults transition successfully through all life stages
- Young people and adults succeed in what they want to achieve
- Participation in creativity and play is part of early and lifelong learning experiences
- Local people can build their skills and confidence

### Health and Wellbeing

- Prevention and early intervention assist people to have independent lives
- Access to personal support and care helps keep people safe
- People are active, resilient and improving their health and wellbeing
- Help is provided to tackle the causes and effects of poverty, inequality and increased cost of living
- People have access to high quality, affordable housing that supports their independence, prosperity and wellbeing



Distinct cultures, places and  
landscapes shaped by centuries  
of history and landmark events.