



# APPENDICES

## A PLACE PLAN FOR **STRANRAER**

**2023-2033**



# HISTORIC STRANRAER

**1590s**

Declared a Burgh of Barony

**1617**

Declared a Royal Burgh

**1750s**

First harbour built: area's main port;  
developed further in 1820s

**1861**

Railway arrived: Stranraer-London line  
connects Ireland, Scotland, England

**1900s**

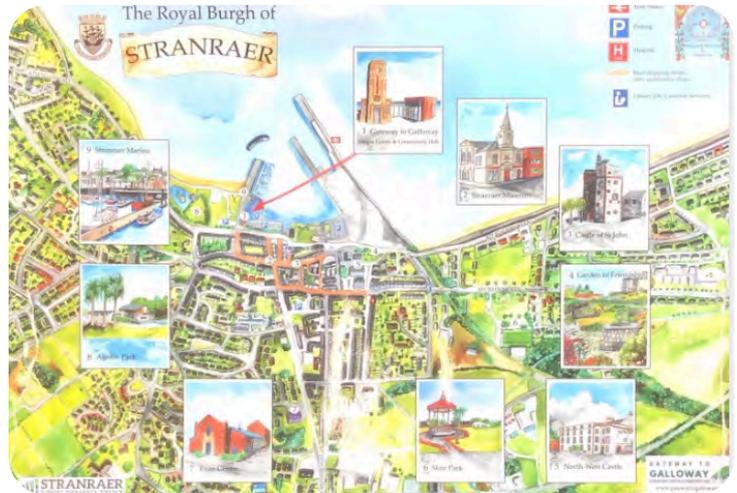
Ferries to Larne and Belfast sail from  
Stranraer daily for a century

**1965**

Local railway lines close:  
Portpatrick and Dumfries

**2011**

Ferries move out of Stranraer



## THEN

One version of our genesis is that Stranraer gets its name from 'Strand raw': a row of houses lying west of the Town Burn or strand (Scots for watercourse). South Strand Street and North Strand Street still run past St John's Castle, the ancient heart of the town, towards the sea.

## NOW

Celebrating the town's past, present and future, a mural by Tragic O'Hara on the wall of the new Creative Hub signals change... trailing the way for the George Hotel transformation, creating future Stranraer.



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# 1. STRANRAER PROFILE

In 2021, Scotland's Towns Partnership and Ekos, compiled a profile of Stranraer to compare it to similar sized Scottish towns. Along with 2022 information from the Development Trust Association of Scotland, this offers a snapshot of the town.

## LOCATION, POPULATION, EMPLOYMENT

- Stranraer is the second biggest town in the Dumfries & Galloway region, with a population of 11,000. It is the main town in the Rhins of Galloway: the peninsula facing Ireland.
- The Rhins is home to the Mull of Galloway, Scotland's most southerly point with its Stevenson lighthouse, it is part of a trail of 6 lighthouses marking out the coastline.
- Stranraer is the commercial hub for the villages of the Rhins ... Portpatrick, Lochans, Leswalt, Sandhead, Stoneykirk, Kirkcolm, Drummore, Port Logan, Dunragit, Castle Kennedy, New Luce, Glenluce and Cairnryan. A total population of 15,397.
- There are 148,000 people in the wider Dumfries & Galloway region, which stretches west to east; 3 hours travel one side to the other.
- Dumfries is the region's municipal hub with a population 3 times the size of Stranraer. A two hour drive east, the A75 and A77 roads are inadequate for the level of HGV traffic; there's no rail connection. Many locals have to drive this road regularly for work, meetings and medical appointments. Locals are more naturally inclined to travel north out of the region preferring to Ayr or Glasgow to shop and visit.
- There are long-standing issues with poverty and deprivation in Stranraer. Over half are categorised as 'Financially Stretched' compared to a third of the rest of the population. More than double the number of people in town are 'Poorer Pensioners', compared with the wider region. The town is one of five areas of deprivation in the region: (SIMD12 national quintile 1). Only 17% live in 'Comfortable Communities'; 42% for the rest of the region. Only 1 in 10 could be described as 'affluent' the national figure is double that.
- The population has fallen, with a significant decline in the number of working age people.
- Stranraer has a younger population profile than the rest of Dumfries and Galloway and an older population profile than Scotland. There are more people aged 0 to 15 and fewer people of working age; a challenge for the community, with fewer working people supporting a bigger non-working population.
- Almost half of the 4,100 jobs in Stranraer were located in the town centre.
- Employers include the Council, NHS, Lactalis creamery and Gentex helmet factory.

## TOWN CENTRE



- The historic town centre is densely built and compact; one of its key assets.
- Stranraer's 'high street' of mostly independent shops: 3 out of 4.
- The move to online shopping has affected Stranraer's town centre like every other town.
- Supermarkets, Lidl, Tesco and Morrisons are all within walking distance; critical for the 1 in 3 households that don't have a car.
- In 2020, national statistics recorded 215 businesses registered in Stranraer - just over 100 of them shops; a typical balance for Scotland. Almost 1 in 5 business units and shops were empty. Almost double the national average. Big buildings like the George Hotel affect this figure. The downturn post-Covid has played its part here like everywhere else.
- At the time of the Your Town Audit in 2021, vacancy rates were double the average with 36 units empty in the town centre: almost 1 in 5 of total units, compared to a national average of 1 in 10. 2 out of 3 of these were vacant retail units and this number has increased since then.
- Leisure services and other non-retail units - like churches and community halls - account for fewer than 1 in 5 buildings.
- There is a relatively high proportion of bars, cafes and restaurants open in the evening, reflecting the town's role as a regional centre for the Rhins and a destination for visitors.
- There is an ongoing need for targeted improvements to shopfronts and the general appearance of buildings around the town centre.

## THE WATERFRONT



- The waterfront stretches from the Cockleshore to Broadstone passing the East and West Piers, marina, harbour, watersports area and Agnew Park.
- The main shopping streets sit back from the sea front with limited views to the sea. Ensuring the regenerated waterfront is connected to the rest of the town will be vitally important to the long term health of the town centre.
- The waterfront has benefited from landscaping, the development of a marina, and the recent Dandelion/Stove cultural project: The Unexpected Garden and its Autumn Harvest festival.
- The Stranraer Watersports Association's Get Wet activities and World Skiffie Championships international boating event, along with the existing marina engage locals and visitors on the water and have started to build the town's maritime profile.
- North West Castle at the end of the East Pier was the first hotel in the world to have a curling rink and locals have gone on to be Olympic Champions. Its 73 bedrooms provide half the bed nights in the town and its curling rink and swimming pool attract visitors for leisure, conferencing & events.

## TRANSPORT & TRAVEL



- The Rhins has attracted domestic visitors for decades ... back to the days when Scottish families would decant 'doon the watter' for Fair Fortnight and other holidays. Just as many visitors have consistently flocked north from the North of England... for a not-too-far Scottish experience. Many of them have settled here.
- Stranraer was a busy port for over a century, running daily ferries to Larne and Belfast with a direct overnight connecting train departing daily for London.
- The railway station is located at the end of the East Pier, a 10 minute walk into town to reach connecting buses.
- Stena still leases the pier and plans to rent the space to haulage contractors
- This is significantly lower car ownership than the rest of the region where 4 out of 5 households have a car.
- The town centre has narrow pavements. Locals often park on double yellow lines and some exceed the speed limit. There's a move to make the town centre a 20mph zone.
- There is a high level of on-street parking and traffic in the small town centre which detracts from the attractiveness and accessibility of the town centre. A balance in parking provision (especially on the seafront) must be struck to make it accessible and pleasant.
- At its small scale, the town centre lends itself to pedestrianisation.
- Active travel - walking and cycling - has not been prioritised in the past.

## GREEN TOWN

- The town has electric car charging points at Hanover Square, on the waterfront, in Morrisons car park, and at the hospital. The town will need more to meet growing demand for EV charging points as we move to electric vehicles.
- The town needs infrastructure to support cycling - routes, shelters, storage and charging points - to meet the growing use of e-bikes following the government's interest-free loan scheme.
- The culture of lower car ownership will help the town move towards active travel - cycling and walking: good news for health and the environment.
- The pedestrianised Castle Square right in the heart of the town is an attractive feature with cafes and outdoor seating: a gathering place.
- Stranraer has recently been invited to join Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere - a status awarded in 2012 by UNESCO. There are more than 700 Biospheres around the world, a dynamic and interactive network working towards the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Every UNESCO Biosphere is a centre for learning and research, and for testing solutions to some of the most critical challenges of our time. The aim is to address climate change impacts, land use and the biodiversity crisis. Individual and community wellbeing is an essential part of the remit, encouraging a closer connection with the world around us and ensuring the sustainable provision of food, fibre and fuel.
- Allotments, growing and tending gardens and green spaces are delivered through the Unexpected Garden, Incredible Edibles in the hospital grounds and Potters Garden, caretaking green spaces like Agnew Park and Stair Park with inclusive play parks for all ages and the Gardens of Friendship.
- The peninsula is green and attracts visitors for outdoor activities... walking, golfing, sailing, fishing, swimming, cycling. The South West Coastal 300 Route, like the North Coast 500, identifies a route for explorers.

## CONNECTIVITY

- The town has 5G mobile coverage and access to superfast broadband.
- Compared to neighbouring Ayrshire, it has poorer connectivity, infrastructure and speed.
- Though companies sell fibre packages, we don't have fibre in 'the last mile home'.. the connection from the information superhighways to houses.
- The town must keep up with the national rollout of fibre, with investment to replace existing copper lines.

## CULTURE & LEISURE

- The historic Castle of St John and surrounding public realm was remodelled in a conservation scheme; now an attractive central gathering point with pavement cafes facing and inside, historic interpretation of the Covenanters and Bloody Cleavers and views over the town.
- The local Museum is being upgraded. It hosts collections related to the town's rural and agricultural history and our seafaring history - including the maritime disaster, the loss of the Princess Victoria and the story of Sir John Ross, Arctic explorer and astronomer whose home in Stranraer (now North West Castle) housed the nation's largest telescope - its lens now safeguarded by the National Museum of Scotland. His nephew, James Clark Ross, discovered the magnetic North Pole.
- Curling, rugby and football are all long-standing clubs in the local sports scene with local clubs and grounds in town for Stranraer Football and Wigtonshire Rugby Club. Stranraer's curlers have become Olympic champions from the curling rink in North West Castle hotel - the first hotel in the world to have an indoor curling rink.
- The Library is located right in the town centre.
- The George Hotel has secured funding to transform into an arts centre with workshops, studios, bunkhouse and climbing/caving centre. A temporary arts hub in King Street will trail the way to 2025 when The George opens.
- A town trail shares many of the town's stories... from a sculpture remembering local character, Blin' Johnny to the Agnew Park memorial to the loss of the Princess Victoria and a new mural, Cup O' Kindness, by Tragic O'Hara capturing key features of Stranraer's story.
- Stranraer Development Trust has developed a sense of pride through flower boxes throughout the town and manages the tourist information at Gateway to Galloway on the waterfront.
- Stranraer has fewer evening leisure options in town than the national average. 32 of the 37 leisure outlets are bars/pubs (9), restaurants (7) and takeaways (6). There are fewer people here to support these businesses.

## EVENTS



- The town has a long-standing Cattle Show (Agricultural Festival) each summer.
- ParkFest is an end-of-summer music festival aimed at local families and featuring local and visiting talent.
- The Oyster Festival is a showcase for Loch Ryan oysters held over a September weekend. This Autumn festival celebrates Scottish produce, food and drink and its unique offer and is targeted at the visitor market.
- In 2022, The Unexpected Garden project hosted a Harvest Festival to celebrate what this region is known best for... growing. This could be a welcome addition to the rural town's calendar.
- It is vital to sustain and grow these popular events for the continued health and vibrancy of the town centre and wider area.
- Stranraer Development Trust is doing positive work in this area with the Oyster Festival creating and promoting its unique status as the last remaining sustainable, native oyster fishery. Loch Fyne has made great capital out of its oyster reputation which we can learn from for brand recognition.
- The waterfront successfully hosted the World Skiffie Championships in 2019 and is bidding to host this again in 2025.
- Stranraer Watersports Association's Get Wet events have offered a great precursor to trail the waterfront development and watersports centre.
- Much of the event activity has been led by volunteers building skills for work, promoting social connection and improving health and wellbeing

## HOUSING

- The housing target is to build over 500 new homes between 2017 and 2029.
- In 2020, there were just under 1,100 houses in the town centre and just over 1,700 people living there - almost 1 in 5 of the local population; the same as the national average.
- Over the decade to 2020, the town centre population dropped by around 440 people. Other town centres have generally seen an increase in town centre living - up by 1 in 10.
- Just under half the housing is semi-detached, less than a third is terraced and a quarter is flats of 3-4 beds. Almost half of the housing stock in the town is privately owned.
- Stranraer town centre already has a relatively high level of housing (for example, Princes Street is entirely residential). This puts it in a good position to grow. Much of it was built in the 19th century.
- House prices are much lower than average eg £70,000 compared to £114,000. Most are in council tax bands A, B or C.

## PLANNING CONTEXT

- Planning and development in Dumfries & Galloway is guided by a Local Development Plan. The current version - LDP2 - was published in 2019 and runs until 2028.
- The Scottish Government's National Planning Framework (NPF4) guidance requires the Council to produce an Evidence Report of local need, due in March 2024. This will inform the next Development Plan - LDP3.
- The current planning objectives aim to consolidate Stranraer as the district centre, focus on synergies between waterfront and town centre and protect the natural environment and historic assets.
- In 2022, the Council explored potential to develop the area as a Green Freeport with a 45km boundary from Cairnryan to Newton Stewart. This did not progress. Stranraer falls within the boundary of the anticipated Belfast Freeport investment zone.



image: Scarlett Visuals

# 2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Our Place Plan refers to key Planning documents impacting on Stranraer. Dumfries & Galloway’s Local Development Plan (LDP) takes a long term view of housing needs, business site needs and protected open spaces. The current document is LDP2 which was published in 2019. The Scottish Government’s National Planning Framework (NPF4) guidance was published in February 2023. The Council has begun preparing LDP3 which is expected to be adopted late 2027. The first key stage in preparing LDP3 is the Evidence Report. Council will engage on this with local people prior to taking a final version to Committee for approval in mid-2024. Engagement will align with the Place Plan and harness numerous projects and strategies such as the Council’s *10,000 Voices* to reach young people. Development Plan Schemes (DPS) are published at least annually to provide updates on the LDP process including LDP3 consultation process and timescales. During the development of Stranraer’s Place Plan, we submitted an Expression of Interest to Dumfries & Galloway Council to begin the process of having this Local Place Plan registered to be taken into consideration by the Council and influence decisions on future developments in the town.

The Council’s recently adopted Active Travel Strategy 2 (ATS2) incorporates actions that align with this Place Plan. ATS2 will help the town attract funding for active travel projects.

*Current planning objectives aim to consolidate Stranraer as the district centre, focus on synergies between waterfront and town centre and protect the natural environment and historic assets.*



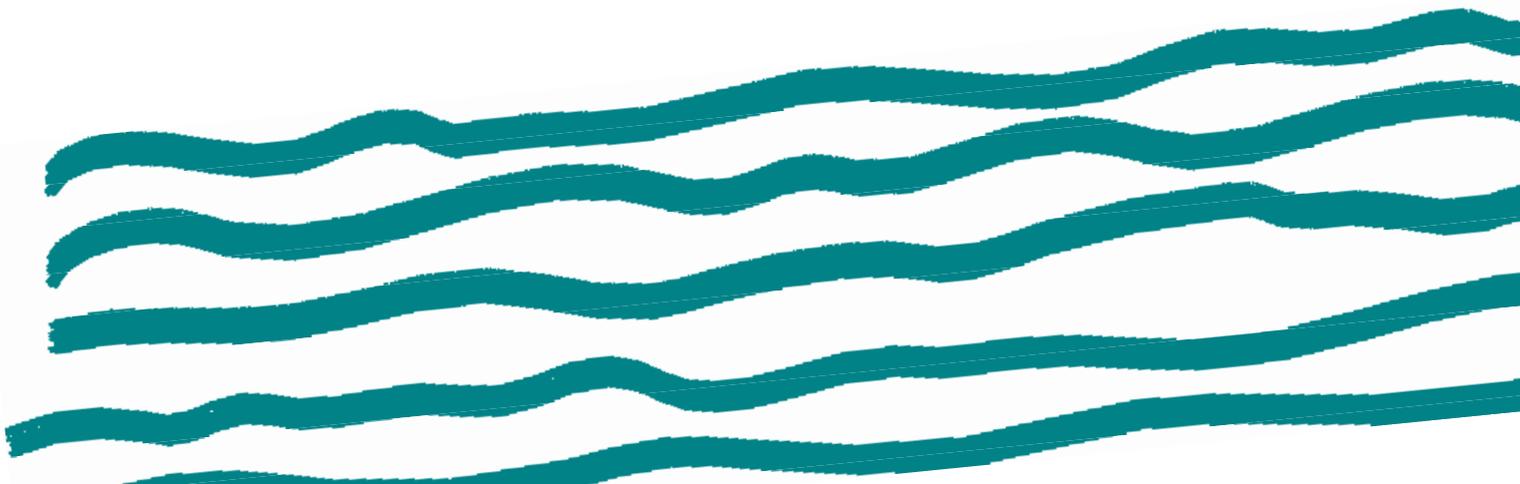
# PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

These are the key global, national and local frameworks our Plan supports:

## GLOBAL

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals:

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



## NATIONAL

- Scottish Government:
- National Performance Framework
- National Planning Framework 4
- National Strategy for Economic Transformation
- Shaping Scotland's Economy: Inward Investment Plan
- Scotland's Social Enterprise Strategy & Action Plan
- National Strategy for Economic Transformation
- UK Government Levelling Up
- Scotland: A Trading Nation
- Infrastructure Investment Plan
- National Transport Strategy
- Scotland's Vision for Trade
- Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan
- Fair Work Nation
- Net Zero & Environmental Strategies
- Community Wealth Building
- Culture Strategy for Scotland
- National Town Centre Action Plan 2
- Town Centre First Principle
- Digital Strategy



## REGIONAL

Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal  
SoSE Regional Economic Strategy  
Regional Skills & Investment Plan  
Dumfries & Galloway 5 Year Plan 2023–28  
Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2017–2027  
Poverty & Inequalities Strategy

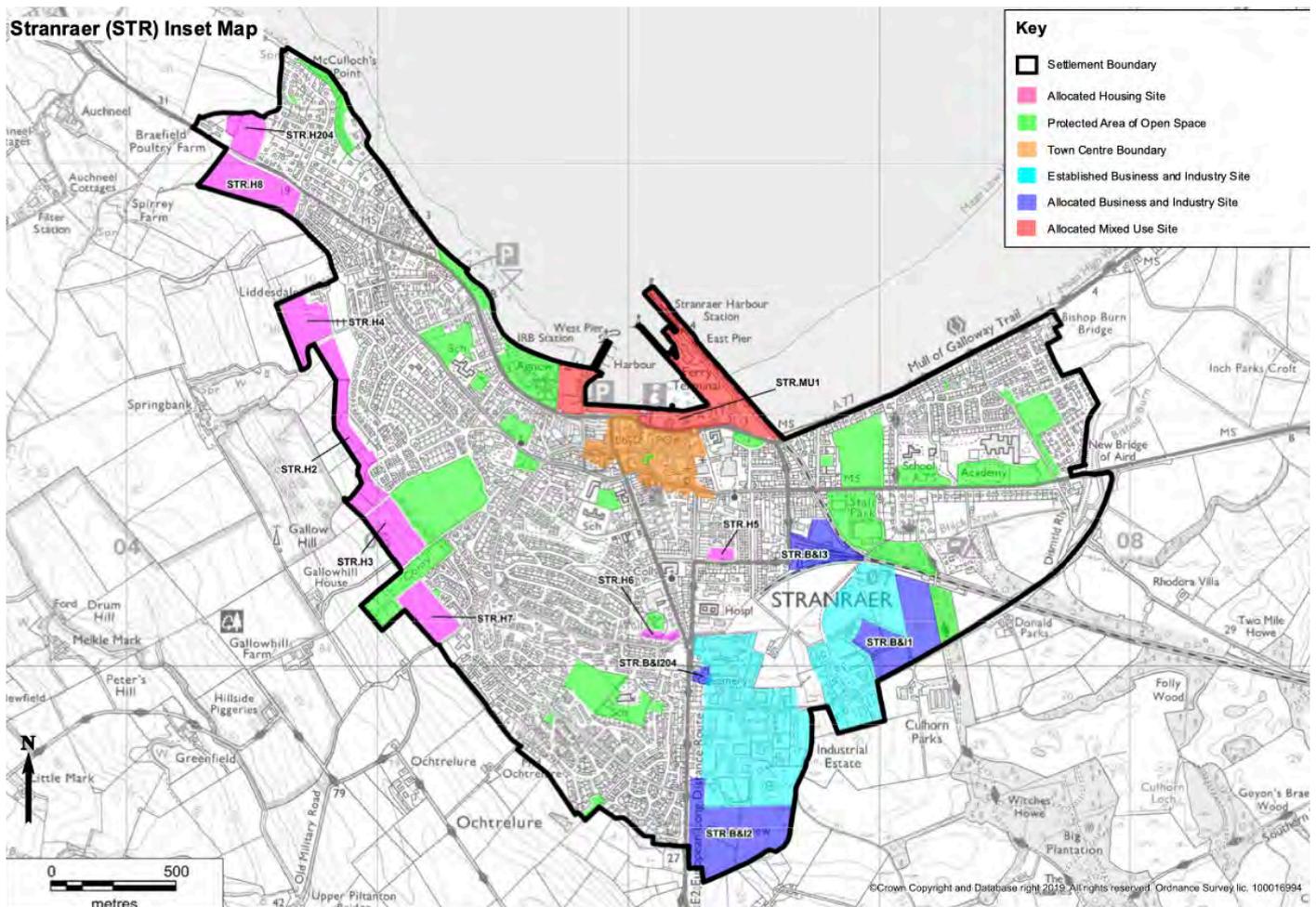
## LOCAL

Local Development Plan 2, 2019  
Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2017–2027  
Strategic Outline Programme: Reshaping Stranraer & the West Region

## Regional Economic Partnership VISION 2031

### Green, Fair & Flourishing

*We will be a region of opportunity – where natural capital propels green growth, quality of life is unmatched, communities are empowered and cultural identity is cherished, attracting a new generation to live, work, visit, learn and invest in the South of Scotland, and enabling those already here to thrive.*



## NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK (NPF4)

Stranraer is flagged as one of 18 developments of national significance in Scottish Government's National Planning Framework.

This supports the regeneration of Stranraer as a 'gateway town'.

Scottish Government recognises Stranraer's strategic location, a hub serving Scotland, Northern Ireland, Ireland, England.

### **NPF4 states:**

*"High quality place-based regeneration will help address socio-economic inequalities in Stranraer and to support the wider population of south west Scotland by acting as a hub and providing a platform for future investment. This will be supported by any strategic transport interventions including road and rail that emerge from the second Strategic Transport Projects Review which embeds the National Transport Strategy's sustainable travel and investment hierarchies.*

**"Need:** *Loch Ryan and Stranraer act as a gateway to Scotland. Reusing the assets in this location will support the wellbeing, economy and community in line with the regional growth deal. It will help to deliver our spatial strategy by driving forward regeneration of a key hub.*

It notes these key changes will contribute to the town's development and are of national significance: 'of a scale or type that is classified as 'major' by Town and Country Planning Regulations':

- a) Development contributing to Stranraer Waterfront regeneration*
- b) Marina expansion*
- c) Redevelopment of Stranraer harbour east pier*
- d) Sustainable, road, rail and freight infrastructure for access to Stranraer and/or Cairnryan*
- e) New and/or upgraded infrastructure for the transportation and use of low carbon fuels*
- f) Reuse of vacant and derelict buildings and brownfield land, including regeneration of Blackparks industrial estate.*

## STRATEGIC TRANSPORT PROJECT REVIEW 2022 (STPR2)

*Transport Scotland's national strategic review identifies Stranraer as a transport priority:*

*“Stranraer and the ports at Cairnryan act as an important gateway to Scotland for ferry passengers and freight. Improving the transport assets in this location would support regeneration in the South West of Scotland to benefit the economy and local communities.*

*“STPR2 recommends that safety, resilience and reliability improvements are made on the A75 and A77 strategic road corridors, in turn supporting placemaking opportunities. This would include, but is not limited to enhancing overtaking opportunities, widening or realigning carriageways and improving junctions. To encourage greater use of public transport and enable regeneration activities, consideration would also be given to upgrading or relocating the railway station in Stranraer.*

*“These would provide more resilient connections to the draft NPF4 national developments at Stranraer Gateway, Chapelcross Power Station Redevelopment and the ports at Cairnryan.*

*“Meets key objectives:*

- *Takes climate action*
- *Addresses inequalities and accessibility*
- *Improves health and wellbeing*
- *Supports sustainable economic growth*
- *Increases safety and resilience”*

## LOCAL OUTCOMES IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2017-27

Looking ahead 20 years, the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan envisioned:

*“It will be a thriving region with a sustainable economy built on sustainable principles that safeguard the landscape, natural and historic environment, promote growth, maximise the use of existing infrastructure and enhance connectivity.”*

Noting a vision and a need for Stranraer:

*“Stranraer waterfront will have been transformed into a sustainable extension of the town centre.”*

*“Need to progress a feasibility study into re-opening of railway line: Stranraer to Cairnryan.”*

# LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (LDP2)

This Place Plan takes cognisance of the current Local Development Plan, which identified the waterfront as Stranraer's key regeneration opportunity, as quoted below:

## **“Stranraer Settlement Overview**

*“Stranraer is identified as a District Centre in the Stranraer Housing Market Area. Relocation of the Stena ferry terminal further along the coast to Cairnryan has provided a regeneration opportunity to redevelop the waterfront.*

## **“Planning Objectives for Stranraer**

- 1. Consolidate and enhance Stranraer's role as a District Centre within the settlement hierarchy.*
- 2. Focus development towards the waterfront which will have a significant benefit for Stranraer and the region.*
- 3. Encourage and support the interrelationship between the waterfront and the town centre.*
- 4. Encourage and support the improvement of the town centre by building on the regeneration work at Castle Square.*
- 5. Supporting new housing in sustainable locations close to public transport and pedestrian links.*
- 6. Provide land at Blackparks industrial estate to encourage and support business and industry growth.*
- 7. Support in principle the redevelopment of brownfield opportunities including the redevelopment of the Garrick Hospital site.*
- 8. Recognise the historical and landscape characteristics of the settlement and ensure that development respects these, with any new buildings being constructed to a high standard of design quality with appropriate densities.*
- 9. Reposition Stranraer and Loch Ryan as a distinctive and successful marine leisure destination.*

The key issue that has emerged for the community-led Place Plan is the future of the East Pier and its impact on the town's fortunes. Locals want this to be available for community use and reimagined as civic amenity space rather than have it left somewhat abandoned, closed off with lorry park services contracted out by leaseholders, Stenaline.

The following excerpt is relevant. It's from *Strategic Outline Programme: Reshaping Stranraer 2018*. It summarises what happened when the ferries left and presents costed options for Stranraer's future - eg development of the East Pier. It cites £10 million promised to the town: £6 million from Scottish Government and £2 million each from the Enterprise company and the Council. Since then, Stena have tried and failed to develop the East Pier for housing, shopping, and leisure. Having reasserted the community's interest in using the space for public amenity, local people hope this Plan unlocks promised funds to bring the East Pier into community use.

*“Following the departure of Ferry Services, the Stranraer Task Force was established in 2012 to assist the ongoing reinvention of Stranraer and wider South West of the Region. It brought together Scottish Government, Dumfries & Galloway Council, the Community of Stranraer and key local partners to explore the potential for the future of the Stranraer Waterfront. The body was chaired by the Scottish Government’s Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure and Capital Investment.”*

*The last meeting of the taskforce was held in April 2013 and chaired by the then Deputy First Minister – Nicola Sturgeon.*

There were ten Strategic Veins identified by the Task Force, with subgroups assigned to the following Sub Groups of the Taskforce:

- 1. The promotion of Harbour Empowerment Orders to provide the most effective management of Loch Ryan for commercial and leisure activities*
- 2. Investment in infrastructure to facilitate the Waterfront redevelopment*
- 3. Renewable energy as inward investment opportunity to support the waterfront redevelopment*
- 4. Opportunities to develop sustainable housing demonstration projects*
- 5. Continuing investment in both the A77 and A75 roads to improve access to the South West*
- 6. Destination Marketing*
- 7. Continued development of rail services to Stranraer as a ‘gateway’ to the South West*
- 8. Opportunities for hosting major events, with a focus on water sports and Loch Ryan*
- 9. Trade links to Northern Ireland and Ireland*
- 10. Communications*

*“At the Stranraer Taskforce Meeting in April 2013 the Council defined the next phase of redevelopment activity as associated with the redevelopment of the former Stena Line Site of the East Pier and Port Rodie Frontage... Pledges of £6 million from the Scottish Government, along with £2 million from Scottish Enterprise and £2 million from the Council have been made towards the project.”*

# 3. BORDERLANDS FUND

Stranraer was invited to submit a 10 year Place Plan to Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal to unlock public funding. We are one of 5 towns bidding into a capital fund of £15 million. Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal covers the south of Scotland and north of England. The fund is administered by Dumfries & Galloway Council, Scottish Borders, Northumberland County, Westmoreland & Furness Council and Cumberland Councils. The programme aims to help places boost economic activity and recognises the importance of rural market and coastal towns to the local economy. Stranraer fits the brief as both a rural market town and a coastal town.

## Four Investment Themes

In fleshing out projects, we mapped citizen priorities and emerging proposals against Borderlands' four Investment Themes to check for fit.

- **Enabling infrastructure**
- Investing in the infrastructure needed to support improvements in connectivity and helping people to access the region.
- **Improving places**
- Revitalising places across the Borderlands region by investing in improvements to attract people to live, work and visit.
- **Supporting business, innovation and skills**
- Stimulating business growth to create a more diverse regional economy, and recognise that innovation and skills are central to success.
- **Encouraging green growth**
- Capitalising on our green credentials, decarbonisation and high value job creation to support low carbon energy generation and decarbonisation.

## Next steps

Sep 2023      Stranraer submits its Place Plan to Dumfries & Galloway Council for endorsement  
Endorsed Plan submitted to Borderlands Place Programme Board

The town will be invited to develop Borderlands Town Investment Plans (BTIPs) for the next phase: detailing cost-benefit of any priorities Borderlands agrees to support. Scottish Government reviews BTIPs and releases any agreed funding.

## BORDERLANDS INCLUSIVE GROWTH DEAL

### **Borderlands Place Programme**

*A Place Plan is being developed for each town in the Borderlands area selected for support through the Place Programme. The purpose of a Place Plan is to articulate the long-term vision for the regeneration, resilience and growth of the town, and to describe how this will be achieved in practice. The Plan will focus on describing the overarching strategy for the Town, how this aligns with other key strategies (including the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal), the key proposed areas for intervention and why they are needed, and the evidence base to support the strategy.*

*The Plans will be specific to each town, tailored to their specific opportunities, assets and needs, and covering a broad range, scale and combination of intervention types (eg development of business space, public realm improvements, town centre regeneration, flood defence, housing developments, skills delivery, events and festivals to attract visitors, development of sustainable transport infrastructure and repurposing of local landmarks and heritage sites for new uses). The Plans cover a period of 10 to 20 years, encompassing investments eligible for support from the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal, as well as activities to be supported by other funding programmes (eg Town Deal, Future High Streets Fund, Heritage Lottery Fund, Scottish Government Regeneration Capital Grant Fund, South of Scotland Economic Partnership). Plans must be developed, delivered and owned by locally-led partnerships including local businesses, community groups and public sector bodies with an interest in the resilience and future success of the town.*

### **5 Place Principles**

*There are five principles underpinning the Place Programme, and the Place Plans will need to demonstrate how they address all of these principles:*

- 1. Place-Based: Assessing what assets are already in place and what investment needs and solutions for each place on its own terms: what the place wants to be in 20 years, what it needs, and what it offers. This should make the most of what makes the place distinctive using local heritage and culture.*
- 2. Collective: Looking at the contribution of each part to the whole: the added value to the place, the area, the region, and the country.*
- 3. Systemic: Bringing public, private, third sector, and community assets together as part of a single, integrated system supporting communities, services and the economy.*
- 4. Community-led: Putting communities at the heart of decisions about the solutions that the Place Programme brings to the challenges facing their towns.*
- 5. Prevention and Future Proofing: Investment and action directed towards preventing further deterioration in our towns and town centres, and ensuring they are equipped to respond to future change, including recovery from the impact of Covid-19 and Climate Change.*

# 4. INSPIRING MODELS

We cast our net high and wide to inspire thinking for Stranraer. We looked for great ‘aha’ moments, old and new, that we might adopt or adapt. It’s not always about money. Sometimes, it’s about smart ideas... alternative visions. Here are some of the models we discussed in meetings, workshops and conversations that might yet inform solutions.



*above: artist Andy Scott's iconic Kelpies in Falkirk's Helix Park have been a huge tourist draw and economic boost*

## INSPIRATION FOR THE EAST PIER

**Paisley, Greenock and Clyde Waterfront:** Paisley's £100M spend on cultural infrastructure, Port Glasgow & Greenock's £400M regeneration, the £78M Clyde Waterfront & Renfrew Riverside Project give a sense of relative budgets and put our £3M Borderlands project into perspective.

**Kelowna, British Columbia,** Canada: street art and murals transform buildings and spaces. We could run a series of murals on screens masking the empty pier space.

**Institute for X, Aarhus,** Denmark: a creative and cheap solution to transforming desolate waste ground at the old rail terminal beside their new concert hall to the creative and entrepreneurial community to use for free. A dynamic, inspiring community-owned place for growth emerged.

*Below: internationally acclaimed local artist, Andy Goldsworthy's Arches*

A photograph of Andy Goldsworthy's 'Arches' sculpture, featuring three large, rust-colored arches made of stacked stones, situated on a pier over water. The arches are reflected in the calm water below. The sky is a pale, clear blue.

*A light, beacon  
or other public  
artwork at the end  
of the pier could  
be a tremendous  
tourist draw... a  
reason to turn left  
coming out of the  
ferry terminals in  
Cairnryan.*

## INSPIRATION FOR SANCTUARY

**Men's Sheds:** a well-kent model for tackling mental health through positive action, our Pier and Unexpected Garden could provide a complementary space for a Men's Shed.

**Baltic Street Playground, Glasgow:** the East End of Glasgow lost a playground when land was taken over to build the Commonwealth Sports Village. Rather than going down the route of siting a sculpture in the space, Creative Scotland and the people of this impoverished community instead opted to develop a wild playground with fire pits, tree swings, raised beds, free hot food daily made by local men, challenging tired models of toxic masculinity

**Galloway Glens :** this biodiversity zone inspires our Black Stank Burn development.



## INSPIRING COMMUNITY LED-WORKING

**Langholm Initiative:** established 25 years ago, an alliance of community groups is working hard together to shape the town's future. They have built core team costs into projects to sustain. They work around any naysayers and opposition in the area... a challenge in most communities. They are using Community Asset Transfer to take on the crumbling, vacant Primary School. They've commissioned art for the town. They run courses, classes and opportunities for social connection. They work together to drive change.

**Tarras Valley Nature Reserve:** surpassing all expectations, the people of Langholm raised £3.8 million to buy and protect a swathe of wilderness as a community asset and eco-tourism attraction. They raised funds in 6 months from the Scottish Land Fund, South of Scotland Enterprise, John Muir Trust, Carman Family Foundation, Garfield Weston Foundation, Woodland Trust and £200,000 of crowd-funded donations. They secured funding first for 3 posts to achieve this.

**Connecting Threads** River Tweed placemaking project. Over 18 months, the team learned that sharing responsibility for project delivery among local groups was a recipe for success. Don't let one group dominate. It takes a village...

## AHA MOMENTS

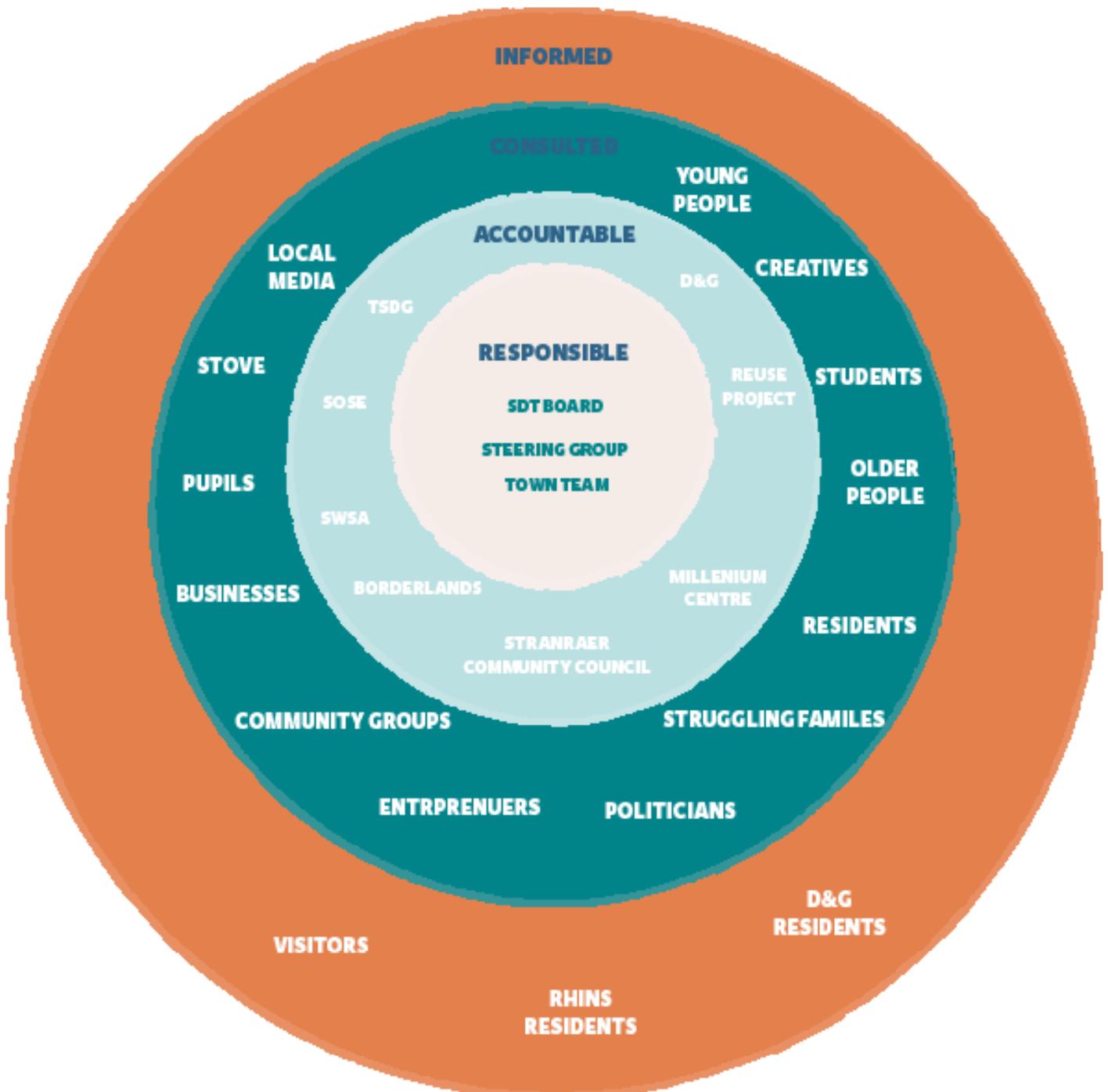
**National Theatre of Scotland:** an old but still inspiring solution to a long-standing problem (resolved many years ago now). The question was whether to site Scotland's new national theatre in Edinburgh (capital) or Glasgow (biggest city). This political hot potato stymied progress for years until the solution was clarified: stop assuming that a theatre is a building... theatre is an act. Instead of creating a theatre, the National Theatre of Scotland was set up to curate and touring theatre across Scotland. Everyone wins. Genius.

**Destination Barra:** instead of building a tourist information centre in Castlebay, the main town, tourist information is accessed 24/7 via QR codes posted on lamp-posts across the island... perfect for walkers and cyclists; protecting the island's environment. Resources are put into the website, not staffing an office that inevitably isn't always open.

# 5. ENGAGEMENT

## STAKEHOLDER MAPPING

In workshops, we mapped local stakeholders and began to reach out to invite individuals and groups to join the Place Plan conversation.

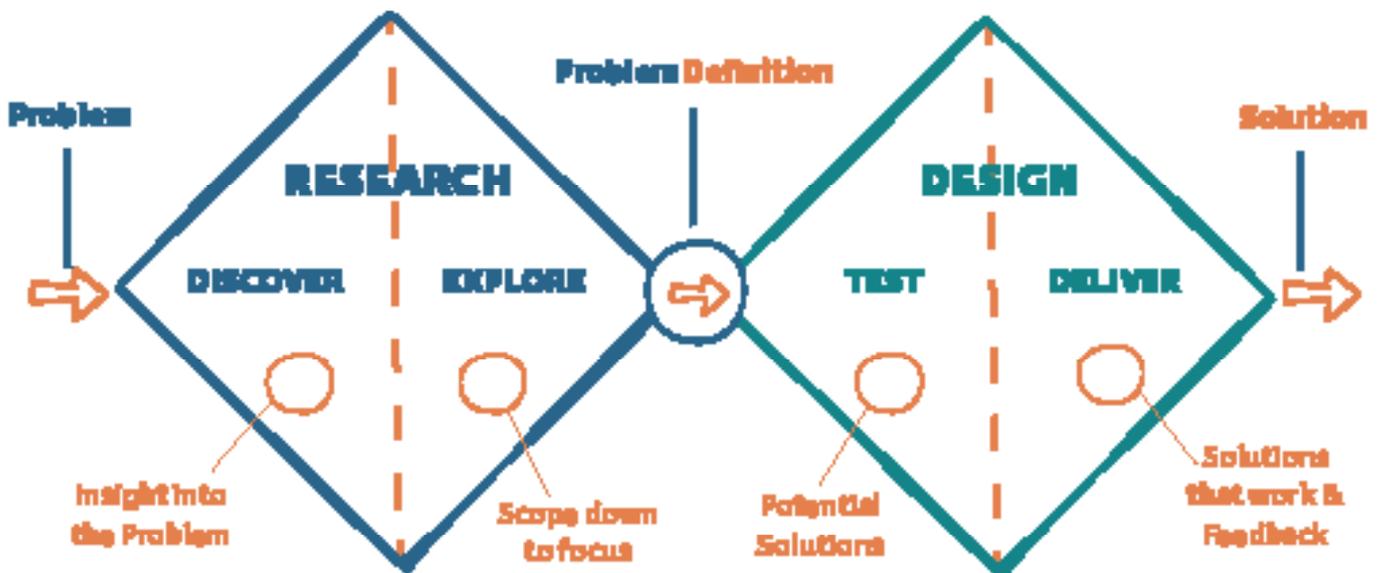




above: Rugby Club Public Meeting voting on priorities during engagement

## PLANNING CONSULTATION

Over 6 months, we put information on display in the town centre and took the conversation out to public meetings and workshops in the Millennium Centre, Ryan Centre and Rugby Club. We held focus groups with schools and students and interest groups. We talked to locals and visitors in the street. We facilitated workshops with partners from organisations, groups, charities, local authorities, enterprise and representatives of local people.



We adopted the Double Diamond model of service design practice to create a Community-Led Plan. This goes through phases of gathering broad ideas then narrowing them down to define the core issue, then do a similar process to imagine solutions.

**Rephad Values**

Creative    Respectful  
 Hardworking    Inclusive    Resilient

**Our Golden Rules**    **Our School Expectations**

**We look after property.**  
We take care of school or personal property.

**We are gentle and respectful.**  
We use positive words and actions with other people.

**We work hard.**  
We have high expectations of ourselves and others.

**We are honest.**  
We admit when we are wrong and do not cheat.

**We are kind and helpful.**  
We do the best for others.

**We listen to others.**  
We avoid interrupting.

**INCH**



WHAT DOES STRANRAER NEED?  
 Let's talk  
**PLACE PLAN**



PROPOSAL | **05 PROPOSAL** | Supporting Strategic Planning and Development

**EAT HAPPY**



Rephad Primary Pupils focus group

## STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

The most insightful engagement method is depth interviews: private conversations. This avoids 'grandstanding' - people over-talking, dominating - often the downfall of a public meeting, which often puts people off attending. Depth interviews offer a much more private exchange which often reveals views or helpful information that might not be shared in public; sometimes quite intimate sharing of crucial information that can affect the design of services.

<b>Supporters</b>	South of Scotland Enterprise, Dumfries & Galloway Council, Third Sector Interface D&G
<b>Key partners</b>	Stranraer Development Trust, Furniture Project, Millennium Centre, Stranraer Watersports Association, Stranraer Community Council
<b>Influencers</b>	MSP, Councillors, Rhins Community Councils/Dev Trusts, Rotary; catalysers: SMART group, authors of historic development reports; Galloway Community Hospital Action Group, churches, Free Press
<b>Young People</b>	Primary, secondary, young people, youth/community development, youth councillors, Community Police Youth Volunteers, College Student Association
<b>Inclusion/HWB</b>	ASN/vulnerable adults: Adult Resource Centre, Wigtownshire Stuff; NHS Recovery, local families, Fed Up Cafe, Better Lives Partnership, Active Travel, Change mental health group, Wigtownshire Community Transport, LGBTQ+ Service
<b>Economy</b>	Professionals/experts in employability/skills, vacant/derelict land Network Rail, Gentex, Love Milk, Barsolus Farm, Skills Development Scotland, Loch Ryan Oyster Fishery Company, Mid & East Antrim Council, This is Code Base, South Scotland Destination Alliance
<b>Culture</b>	Local artists, Sea Pyots, Museum/library, Events Officer, Oyster Festival, Parkfest, Creative Producers, The Stove, Ryan Centre, DG9 Music & Ents, Mull of Galloway Trust
<b>Environment</b>	Propagate, GSA Food Lab, Reuse Centre, SEPA, Nourish Scotland, Stranraer Allotments Group, Incredible Edibles, Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere and Dark Skies, Solway Coast and Marine Project
<b>Learning Housing Place</b>	Stranraer Academy, D&G College, Rephad and Park Primary Loreburn Housing Association, Wheatley Group Rattrays Kirkoswald, Langholm Alliance, Culture Collective, Tweed Connecting Threads, Tarras Valley Nature reserve



above: Stakeholder mapping in a Huddle  
below: Students Association meet-up



## SHARING RESOURCES

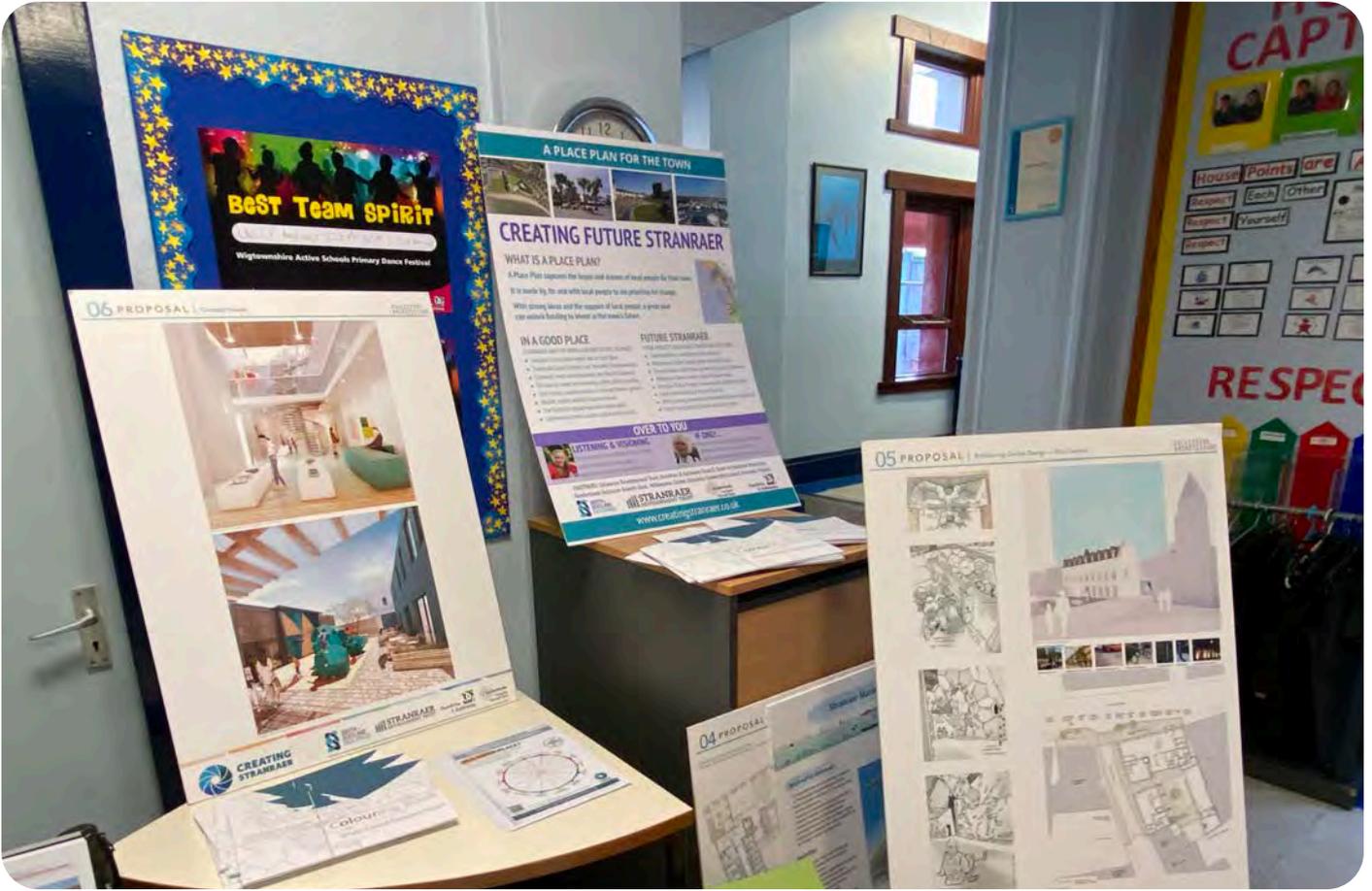
We partnered with others on engagement to make the most of resources and help the public make sense of who does what. We shared and collated responses to the We held events at the Millennium Centre, promoting its role as the key community centre in town. The Millennium Centre conducted a survey to inform Place Planning, supported by South of Scotland Enterprise. This showed clear support for the Centre as the town's main community hub. We promoted use of the national Place Plan Tool in digital communication and took printed versions of it to Listening & Visioning meetings and to focus groups. All provided different perspectives on the town and assessed how it was doing and how it could do better.



*What We Do Now arts project's colouring book, What Could Happen Here?*

*below: Ballot time... voting then prioritising projects to support*



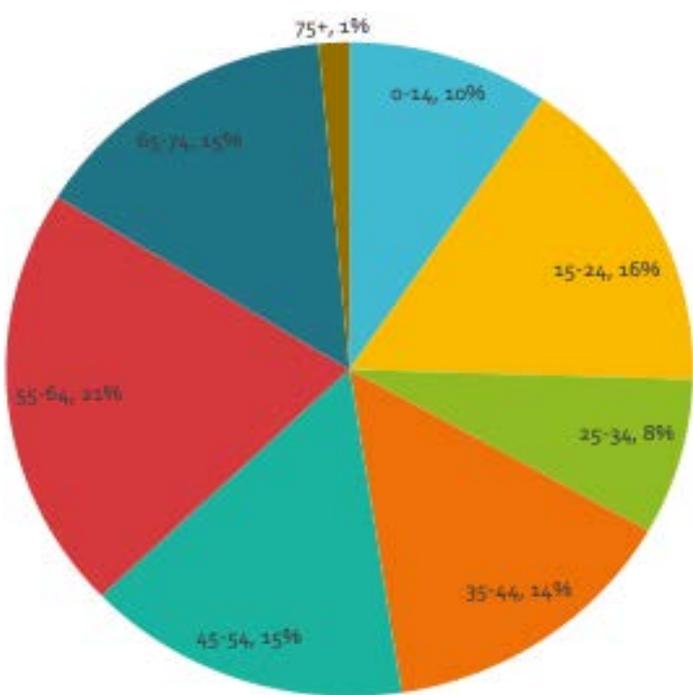
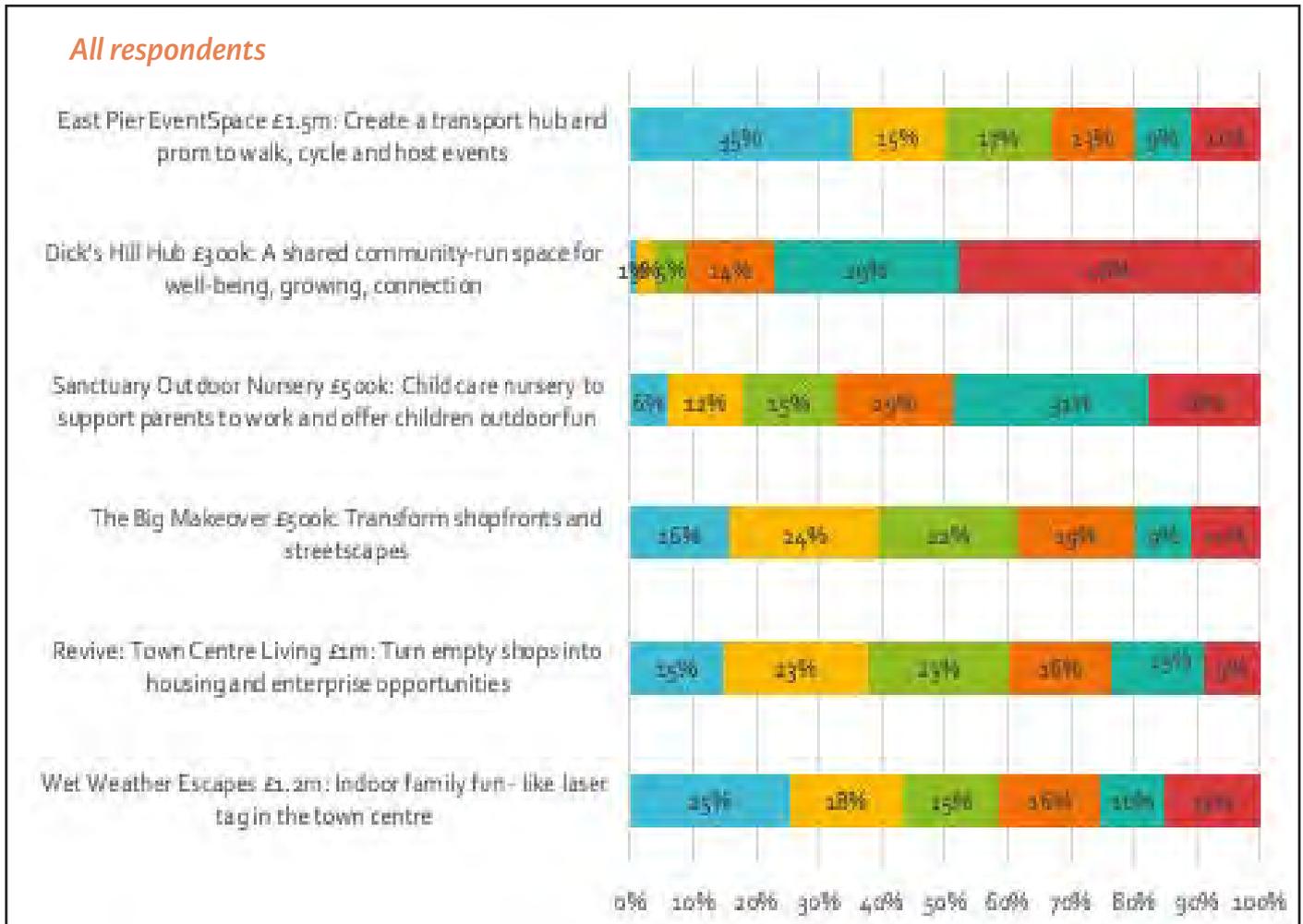


above: Park Primary Parents' Night resources  
below: Stranraer Academy Pupil Council focus groups



# CONSULTATION FINDINGS

Over 600 people took part in our month-long consultation to rank the Six Priorities for the Place Plan and offer feedback. The East Pier came out top along with Wet Weather Escapes. See table below and next two pages for ranking and comments.



The pie chart shows there was good engagement across all age groups. Participants aged from 12-75+ with slightly more in the 55-64 group.

## See comments on the top 2 of the Six Priorities

*Unsurprisingly, some comments are opposing*

### Priority 1: East Pier

- I worry about community ownership.
- It shouldn't be Community Asset Transfer.
- Should be more than learn to cycle
- Owners should be made to tidy up the Pier
- Should be a thriving Port - maritime heritage
- Need better rail connectivity to Ayr/Glasgow
- Include Cockleshore/Innermessan
- Relocate the Oyster Festival to the Pier
- Visitors need better transport connections
- Visitors at the Pier would spill over into the centre and spend
- Visitor parking: Watersports events will take over Agnew Park parking
- Cycle Route users need long term parking
- Perfect for a large skatepark - bring events (with local BMX champion Kriss Kyle's influence)
- Outdoor pool - cold water swimming good for mental health
- This can make a profit without public money
- Have large covered open space at entrance
- Transport Hub should be at the top of the Pier
- Being a harbour/Pier town puts us on the map; start at the Pier and work back
- Everything should be done to prevent a lorry park on the Pier
- Have a fish orientated cafe with local produce on Pier
- Control the number of HGVs, campervans and caravans parking at waterfront
- Move the station nearer town
- Have a ParkRun to attract tourist who 'chase challenges'

"We need a Transport Hub on the Pier with shelter, toilets, refreshments"

"We don't need a Transport Hub - few people use buses and trains"

### Priority 2: Wet Weather Escapes

- We need more for young people.
- There's zero to do.... makes it a miserable place to be
- Site a bowling alley on the waterfront/old Pier
- We need something for teens
- We need this for all ages (there are many older people here)
- Provide car parking nearby (save a trek in the rain)
- Have a shareable marquee at Agnew Park
- This would make the town a Mecca for anti-social behaviour
- Families don't have money to spend and we're a small town
- Needs to be future-proofed

"This is vital!"

"This would make the town a Mecca for anti-social behaviour"

## Priority 3: The Big Makeover

- Tidying up will only go so far
- Big 'NO' to pedestrianisation
- Make town centre for buses and deliveries ONLY
- Make it more beautiful - people will come and spend.
- Shop owners should look after their own property
- The building/frontages are what visitors first notice
- It's just painting over the cracks
- Shopfronts have had funding; focus on watersports
- How would we vet landlords for investment?
- Have prizes for before/after transformations

"I vote a big NO to pedestrianisation"

"Make the town centre for buses and deliveries ONLY"

## Priority 4: Revive-Town Centre Living

- Some shops as housing, yes; not private landlords making millions
- We need unique shopping/town experience
- We need social housing/right to buy
- Design town centre living for seniors
- No low status housing; owner occupiers
- Ideas to bring new opportunities to town are vetoed by businesses
- Use wasted town centre spaces to address housing shortage
- We lack accessible housing and retirement flats
- There's enough housing in Stranraer
- The town lacks affordable housing to get on the property ladder or rent

"We need social housing"

"There's enough housing in Stranraer"

## Priority 5: Stanctuary Outdoor Nursery

- Not another nursery! We need support for 6-17 year olds
- Don't displace private nursery provision
- Need more for older kids
- Encourage children to engage with nature and climate change
- It's infant care and childminders we lack
- Not enough locally... long lists, lack of childminders, inflexible hours

"Not another nursery!"

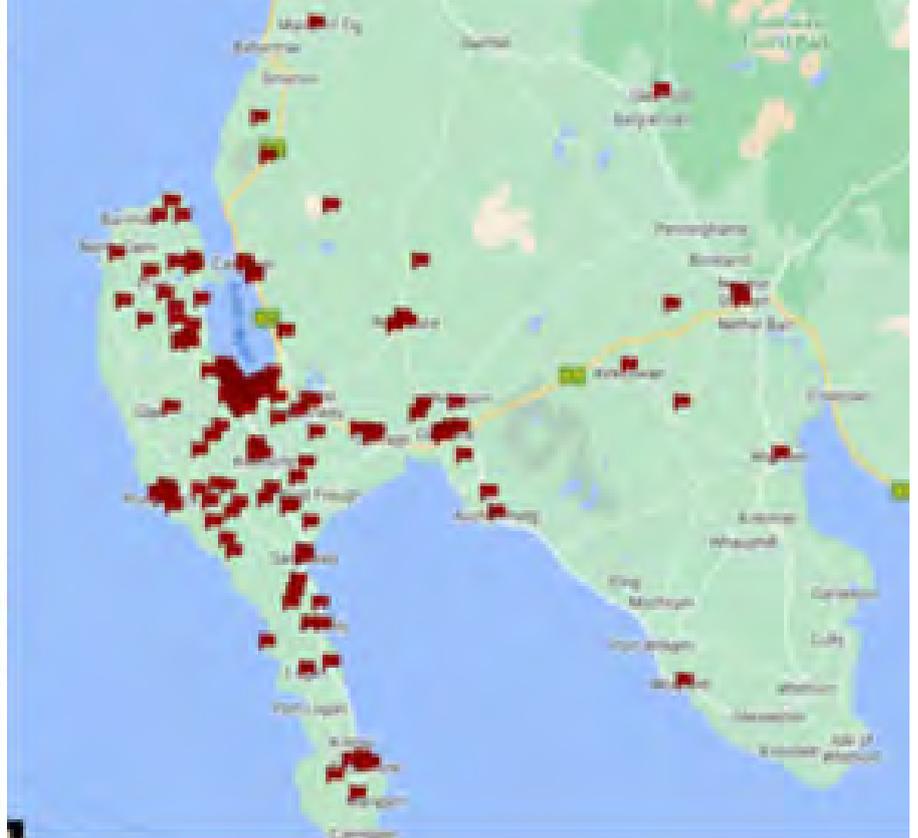
"We don't have enough childcare"

## Priority 6: Dick's Hill Wellbeing Hub

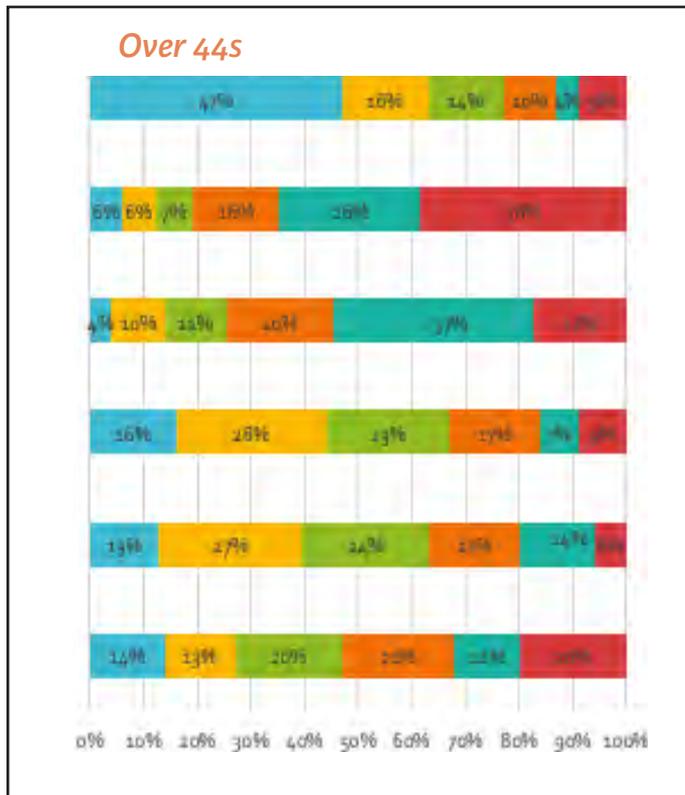
- Dicks Hill is not a priority
- Support Dick's Hill; may get funding elsewhere
- Support vulnerable as a priority
- Should be a priority to honour previous promise
- Why always Dick's Hill
- Will transform the community and the wellbeing of residents

"This is not a priority"

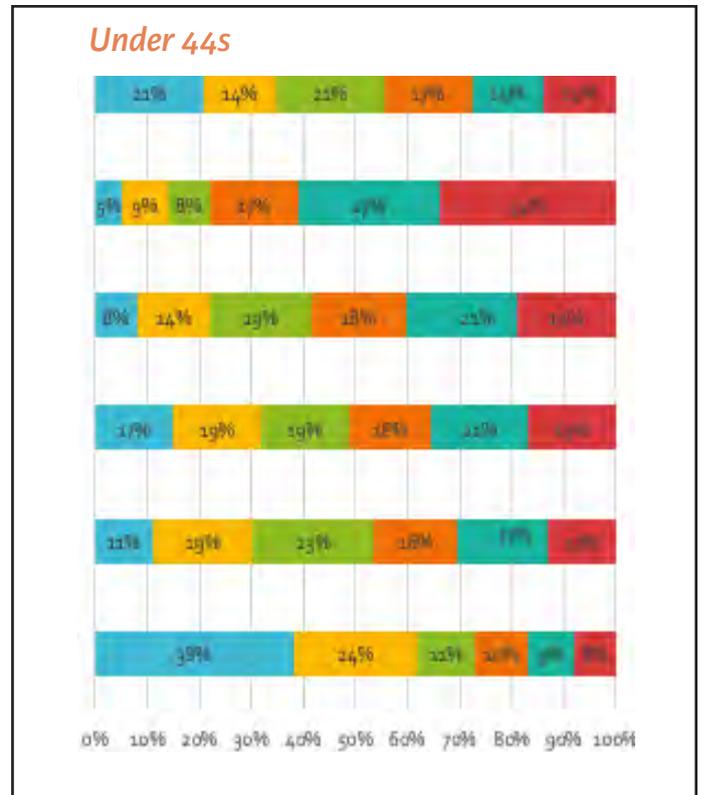
"Support vulnerable as a priority"



**DG9 (Stranraer) and DG8 (Rhins) postcodes dominated.**  
 Respondents came from across the region with a few participants from outwith the area.



**Almost half the over 44s voted the East Pier as their no.1 priority.**  
 Town Centre Makeover came next.  
 The outdoor nursery ranked lowest.



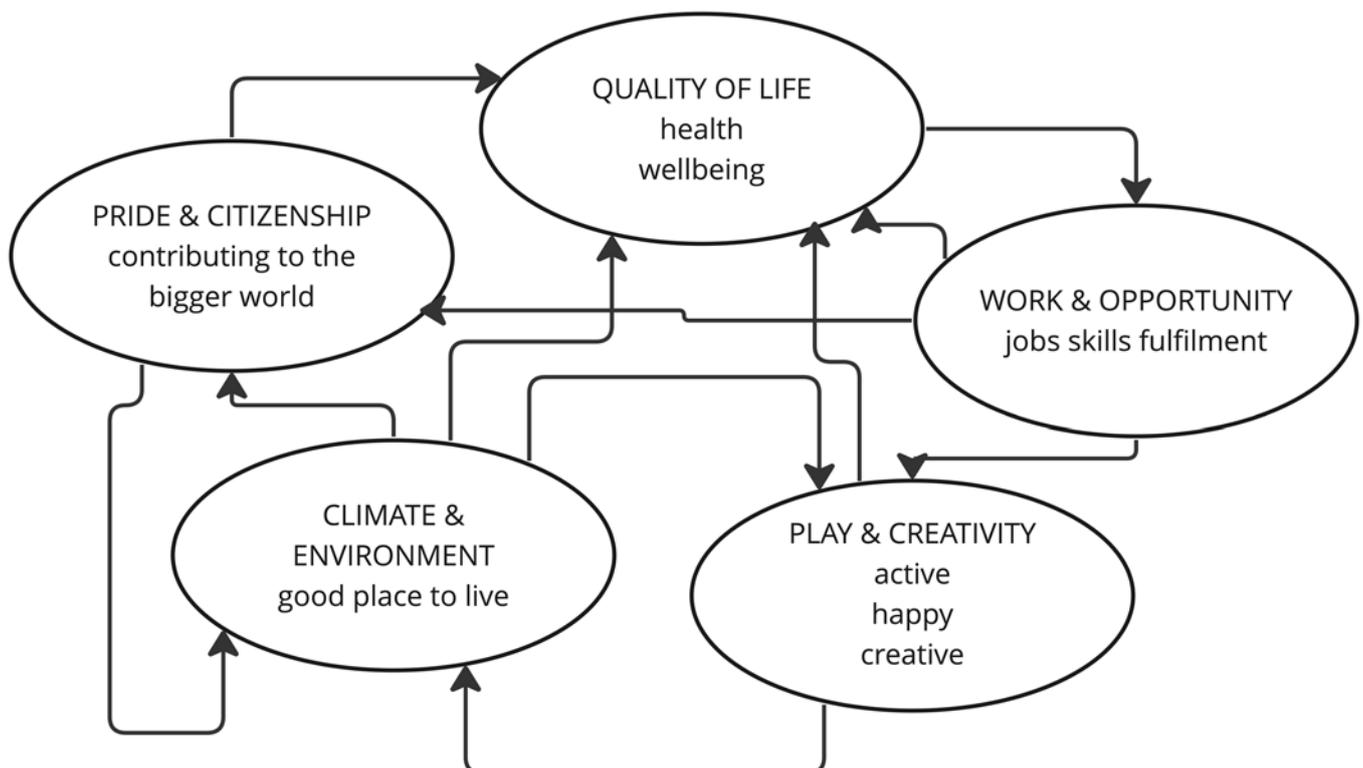
**Almost 4 out of 10 under 44s prioritised Wet Weather Escapes.**  
 This younger age group is more likely to have family life to think about.

# 6. THE FIVE STRANDS

These pages capture a flavour of the issues shared during engagement and the hopes and wishes of local people that form solutions. There's a huge amount of detail behind this from our many conversations. They are organised into 5 Strands.

Few of our solutions are oven-ready. Mostly, there's more work to go, continuing conversations and collaboration among the many organisations working across the town and building involvement of local people in shaping the future.

There are links and crossovers between our Five Strands. This can be a virtuous cycle if we get it right: eg we need health to be able to work; work helps us feel fulfilled and well; income improves quality of life and grows the local economy; transport helps us to get to work; how we travel impacts on the environment; a clean, green environment is likely to encourage us to be out and about more keeping fit (and keeping cars off the road); exercise, passions and pastimes, socialising and creativity all help us feel more balanced and enriched; fulfilled people are more likely to contribute to society.



Through local engagement, we gathered and sorted issues and solutions into themes: the Five Strands.



**Strand 1 : QUALITY OF LIFE**  
Healthcare \* Poverty \* Drink/drugs



**Strand 2: WORK & OPPORTUNITY**  
Transport \* Enterprise \* Employment



**Strand 3: PLAY AND CREATIVITY**  
George Hotel \* One Waterfront \* Playtime



**Strand 4: ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE**  
Climate \* Food Futures \* Environment



**Strand 5: PRIDE & CITIZENSHIP**  
Vacant/derelict spaces \* Democracy \* Destination Stranraer

Over the next few pages, we explore the issues and potential solutions for each of the Five Strands. We have woven these strands together to create the 4 Quarters that form the basis of our Place Plan.

The first Strand is Quality of Life where significant health and wellbeing issues lie. As cited by Cloe Allison, Youth Councillor, and a key member of our Town Team, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs paints a resonant picture:

*“We need to get the basics right - food, fuel, shelter - if we're to work our way up the pyramid towards living our best lives.”*

*Cloe Allison, Youth Councillor, Town Team*





# STRAND 1: QUALITY OF LIFE

## Strand 1.1: Healthcare

### PAIN POINT

#### Maternity services

- Maternity services at community hospital withdrawn - risk to life.
- Women have to travel 2 hours to Dumfries for check-ups and labour.

#### Specialist clinics

- Vulnerable people must travel to see consultants. Costs not always covered.
- Stranraer follows the Dumfries model - patients are routed to Edinburgh. The quicker, greener route (on a train line) is Glasgow.

#### Sexual health

- Pupil support for sexual awareness withdrawn - pregnancy and health risk
- Learners at Stranraer Academy have no safe space for guidance locally.

#### Mental health

- Increased issues post-Covid; social isolation; challenges for young men.

### SOLUTION

#### Wellbeing Hub

- Explore Community Asset Transfer of vacant Waverley Medical Centre for Health Hub
- Reinstate specialist clinics in town
- Offer sexual health support at Health Hub and in youth centres

#### Review routing to specialist clinics

- Grow Community Transport service to provide patient travel
- Work with young men to explore working with Unexpected Garden, Men's Shed and other projects to improve mental health.
- Link with Volunteer Hub.

### NEXT STEPS

- Health partners already working together on Place Plan identify other key service providers and service users to be involved in collaboration
- Project group explore issues and opportunities
- Further engagement with service users to map journeys, needs and gaps
- Co-design solutions with service providers and service users
- Scope and cost options for Health Hub including Community Asset Transfer and online support, using existing buildings and services where sensible.



*PARTNERS: NHS,  
Dumfries & Galloway  
Council, TSDG;  
Wigtownshire  
Community Transport, St  
John's Ambulance, taxis,  
Wigtownshire Wellbeing,  
Wigtownshire Women &  
Cancer; private sector*



# Strand 1.2: Poverty

## PAIN POINT

### Social housing

- Limited rental market; limited social housing; limited starter market; new developments don't deliver promises of social provision. Young people leave home with no secure destination; lack of housing for people with additional support needs and dementia.

### Employability

- Significant proportions of the population need support into work. (See Strand 2.)

### Funeral poverty

- Nearest green burial and crematorium are in Ayr - outside the region; issues of affordability, access to transport; additional stress and cost at a vulnerable time; climate costs.
- Lack of knowledge about end of life and funeral options leads to poor choices and creates financial hardship.

### Fuel poverty

- Locals forced to make unreasonable choices between eating and heating.

### Food poverty

- Families rely on food banks.

### Resettlement

- Need to make space for Ukrainian guests throughout our systems to avoid new Scots living in poverty or having poor experiences of Scotland

## SOLUTION

### Social housing

- Develop social housing with local providers (Wheatley Group and Loreburn).
- Explore opportunities to repurpose vacant and derelict buildings eg the Pier and town centre to animate the high street.
- Develop housing advice and support to meet user needs.

### Employability (See Strand 2.)

- Furniture Project's Pink Frog employability project provides qualifications and placements as stepping-stones to work for people with additional needs to build confidence, independence and get into work. Their reuse shop offers experience in retail, logistics, online sales, warehouse, clothing and more.
- Loreburn Garrick Housing Hub development supports employability.
- Dumfries & Galloway College training, courses and apprenticeships.

### Funeral poverty

- Explore funeral provision and opportunities with local people, funeral directors and Benefits Services. Potential: build a local crematorium; develop green burial ground; improve advance planning eg Death Cafes to improve knowledge. (See Strand 4.)

### Food and fuel poverty (See Strand 4.)

- Stranraer Welcome: involve local people and organisations (schools, college, businesses) with Resettlement Project and other initiatives to welcome new citizens - whether they are refugees (like Ukrainian guests, forced to leave their country to escape war, natural disaster or other risk to life), economic migrants (moving here for work) or immigrants (moving here to live).
- Link to Citizen Passport (See Strand 5.).

## NEXT STEPS

- Identify key service providers for collaboration
- Discussions with service providers on plans and opportunities
- Workshops with key partners to review user issues
- Further engagement with service users to map journeys, needs and gaps
- Action planning co-design with service providers and service users

*PARTNERS: NHS, Dumfries & Galloway Council, TSDG; Resettlement Project; housing providers; funeral directors; Furniture Project*





# Strand 1.3: Drink & Drugs

## PAIN POINT

### Risky behaviour

- High levels of drug and alcohol use = damage to individuals and families; impact on society.
- Poor identification of and support for individuals displaying risky behaviour.
- Local licensing allows 16 year olds to access pubs.
- Lack of visible action against dealers: “If my 14 year old pal knows where to find dealers, why don’t the Police”.

### Emergency to recovery pathways

- People have to be sober before being able to access support.
- Many Third Sector providers are jostling for funding in a crowded landscape that makes it hard for vulnerable individuals to navigate services. There’s poor signposting and referral into available services. There’s no joined-up approach to mitigate against risk and support individuals into recovery.

## SOLUTION

### Risky behaviour support

- Confidential reporting routes to flag risky behaviour in an open and supportive way eg families/friends/school to social services.

### Emergency to Recovery pathways

- Partnership working to provide one-stop support and referral system from awareness raising to risk management, emergency support and recovery.

### Positive alternatives

- Youth providers collaborate to programme alternative activities for young people - safe places off the street; evening programmes; drink-free zones.
- Need evening activities for people in recovery away from pubs (all ages).

### Legal action

- Review licensing laws; promote confidential reporting of drug dealers; prosecute drug dealers.

## NEXT STEPS

- Identify key service providers for collaboration
- Discussions with service providers on current services, routes and gaps
- Workshops with key partners to review user issues and identify routes in
- Further engagement with service users to map journeys, needs and gaps
- Action planning co-design with service providers and service users

*PARTNERS: Council Licensing; Licensed premises; Police Scotland; Dumfries & Galloway Council Social Work and Youth Services, Drug & Alcohol Partnership, Apex, Support in Mind, We Are With You, Wigtownshire Wellbeing*





# STRAND 2: WORK & OPPORTUNITY

## Strand 2.1: Transport

### PAIN POINT

#### Public transport timetables

- Public transport doesn't link up. Sporadic bus services lead to continued car use.
- Work and healthcare demands travel to Dumfries.
- Public transport can't get staff to work on time or young people to college in good time.

#### Bus routes

- Some rural buses do circular routes - passengers have to pay fare to a 'via' stop-off point they don't want to visit (paying to go the long way round)
- Need cycle paths round Rhins: from villages to town, in town, to ferry

#### Connections

- Buses and trains aren't timed to connect; buses stop a 10-minute walk short of the rail terminal - enough to miss a train; a risky, unpleasant walk; promotes car use.
- Few cycle paths, trails and bike lanes round Rhins: from villages to town, in town, to ferry.

#### Community safety

- Narrow pavements in town among traffic and unsafe parking.
- Unsafe walking around town (2 fatalities Stranraer>Castle Kennedy in recent years)
- Parking on double yellow lines goes unchecked.
- Quality of roads eg A75 to Dumfries - unsafe for level of traffic and number of lorries.
- The 10 minute walk along a desolate path to the train station is unsafe.

### SOLUTION

#### Transport Review / Transport Hub

- Start with no-low cost solutions like timetabling and routes.
- Seek economies - service changes that might save money.
- Develop a Transport Hub at Port Rodie/the Pier to ease movement between rail, buses, cyclists and pedestrians for the people, lorries and bikes that cross paths. (The Coast to Coast Cycle Route launches June 2023 potentially attracting 400 cyclists a day in the summer months.)
- Explore potential for a single hub at Port Rodie to link buses with trains, with live information screens for timetables and updates; coordinated timetables around the Rhins and with rail; bike lanes from hub connect with key routes. Tie in with engagement for Council's current Transport Strategy study.
- Look for innovative models and approaches eg Stirling Council's rural communities where bus services were replaced by call-a-cab services to meet need and save public money in a sparsely populated area
- Explore a care share / car club for locals to share rather than own vehicles
- Explore a bike scheme for the town, like city bike schemes with pick-up/drop-off points.

### Road safety

- Zone the whole town as 20mph.
- Review parking on the seafront - balance the need to welcome visitors yet reduce cars coming into town.
- Review pedestrianisation to develop car-free town centre zone
- Road markings and reflective Strands on roadside pathways across the Rhins.

### Paths/routes/trail

- Develop bike lanes across town to 3 main exit routes (to Kirkcolm, Cairnryan and Stoneykirk Road). Develop Rhins-wide bike lanes and paths (start with quick wins like the almost-intact old railway line to Portpatrick). Provide a bike lane to Cairnryan. Provide circular routes eg Innermessan to Broadstone up to King George V Park to Gallowhill community woodland, connecting back to Black Stank, Stair Park.
- Connect a new Transport Hub to the new Stranraer-Eyemouth Coast to Coast cycle route and its essential infrastructure.
- Commission a statement artwork on the cycle route to encourage visitors. (Strands 3 & 5.)
- Link to Active Travel strategy. (See Strand 4.)

## NEXT STEPS

- Review the current transport system with service commissioners, the Council, service providers, passengers and non-users (to understand why they don't use services and whether they would).

**PARTNERS:** *Dumfries & Galloway Council, Wigtownshire Community Transport, McCullochs, Scotrail, SWestrans.*



The image shows a brick building facade with a large sign. The sign features the letters 'DGC' in a bold, orange, stylized font. Below this, the text 'Dumfries and Galloway College' is written in a white, sans-serif font. To the right of this text, the word 'One' is partially visible. The building has several windows with green frames, and the sky is visible through them. The brickwork is a mix of reddish-brown and grey tones.

**DGC**

**Dumfries and  
Galloway College**

One



# Strand 2.2: Enterprise

## PAIN POINT

### Enterprise culture

- Limited start-up culture; despite original plans for Stranraer-based engine for change, no enterprise agency presence locally; no entrepreneurial skills building/sharing; no co-location or hot-desking spaces to promote collaboration; no support to de-risk start-up business.
- Limited trades capacity in town - difficult to get help for domestic jobs. Limited young people looking to pursue a trade or set up their own business. Without demand, the College can't run higher level construction courses which continues the shortage of trades people.

## SOLUTION

### Enterprise Hub

- Furniture Project/Reuse Shop expansion on Zero Waste Park site will provide support and infrastructure for new-starts.
- Develop as Stranraer's enterprise hub for advice, mentors, incubation.
- Explore Enterprise Zone benefits for Stranraer.
- Work with CodeBase or other skill providers to strengthen tech skill base.

### Rebrand Trades

- College/Academy should push Trades as a worthwhile destination

### Business Support

- Reintroduce Business/Enterprise Support to the town and district.
- Provide trailers/vans for pop-ups on the waterfront eg seafront seafood shack, bakehouse, street food. (See Strand 3.)

### 'Meantime opportunities'

- Work with agents to animate empty premises to model potential, bring life to the high street and offer entrepreneurs low cost spaces, de-risking start-ups. (See Strand 5.)

### Volunteering

- Link projects like Unexpected Garden growing to Volunteer Hub to grow skills for work.

## NEXT STEPS

- Work with partners to scope potential and focus efforts.
- Discussions with service providers on current services, routes and gaps eg Trades pathway or shared customer support systems for self-employed tradespeople
- Workshops with key partners to review user issues and identify routes in
- Further engagement with service users to map journeys, needs and gaps
- Action planning co-design with service providers and service users

**PARTNERS:** Dumfries & Galloway Council, Dumfries & Galloway College, SoSE, Business Gateway, enterprise support agencies, Stranraer Academy, Stranraer Development Trust



# Strand 2.3: Employment

## PAIN POINT

### Opportunities

- Low income jobs=working poor=health inequality in town.
- Lack of interesting work opportunities creates a talent drain among locals.
- Better paid/senior roles are based in Dumfries
- Shortage of tradespeople in town; trades not valued at school.
- Oyster processing goes down south; bad for carbon footprint; bad for jobs market and local people; oysters not available in local shops; higher value jobs are lost to the town.
- Lack of facilities in town makes it less attractive to relocators in choice.
- Project funding creates a cliff edge - support ends with no staff to continue.

### Skills Development

- Limited course range at college because of size of student population and demand.
- College apprenticeships are only open to people in full time employment.

### Volunteering

- Confusion about where to go and how to find out about opportunities.

## SOLUTION

### Volunteer Hub

- Develop physical and digital space to connect.
- Grow volunteer capacity and skills
- Share opportunities and promote benefits of volunteering

### Marine sector

- Develop oyster processing plant locally.
- Explore the Repeater Station and new build options to create a centre of excellence for marine studies.
- Explore FreePort status as a working port.

### Skills development

- Develop College curriculum and apprenticeships to train locals for emerging and developing sectors eg hospitality and customer service for George Hotel bunkhouse, 73 bedroom North West Castle hotel employing 65 staff and training instructors for Watersports Centre; provide professional level construction skills to build Trades capacity in town.
- Library Coding Club - develop digital skills for work.
- Businesses work with school and college on positive leaver destinations.
- College and employers explore skills gaps eg engineering.

### Inward investment

- Work with strategic partners to identify opportunities to bid for and attract new business to the area.



## NEXT STEPS

- Work with Enterprise company, Scottish Government and others to attract new business - like high value manufacturing - to the area.
- Explore potential with local oyster company.
- Work with the volunteer sector to review and coordinate efforts.
- Explore potential for a community asset transfer of the Repeater Station.

**PARTNERS:** *South of Scotland Enterprise, ScotGov, Dumfries & Galloway Council, Oyster Company, Furniture Project, College; Third Sector DG, Wigtownshire Wellbeing and others with volunteer opportunities*



*Skiff Worlds Festival in Stranraer:  
Volunteering grows skills for work and life  
photo: Kirstin McEwan, CT Productions*



STRANRAE SKIFFIE WORLDS  
7-13 JUL 2019

TEAM SKIFFIE WORLDS

STRANRAE'S SKIFFIE WORLDS  
VOLUNTEER



# STRAND 3: PLAY & CREATIVITY

## Strand 3.1: Creative Hub



*George Hotel now (left) and next (right)  
Collective Architecture*

### PAIN POINT

#### **Dilapidation**

- Crumbling George Hotel right in the centre of town.

#### **Lack of arts infrastructure**

- Historically, limited cultural services provision for locals and visitors in Stranraer.
- Stranraer loses local talent and attracts few creatives to locate in the area.
- Evidence shows cultural infrastructure is a major factor for relocators deciding where to move for work - this impacts on businesses in the area eg Helmet Factory struggle to recruit at a professional/engineer level.

#### **Reasons to visit**

- Need more reasons for locals and visitors to come into town.
- Cultural tourism: a key measure of a rich community, is missing in our economy.

### SOLUTION

#### **George Hotel transformation**

- £8.7 million secured for transforming the George Hotel as an arts hub with gallery, studios, printmaking and ceramics workshops.
- 30 bed bunkhouse on 3 floors provides budget accommodation for visitors, cyclists and walkers (and artists in residence).
- Climbing/caving playground in courtyard for all ages and skills.

### Culture Quarter

- Develop George Street/North Strand Street/King Street as a cultural quarter working with library and museum.
- Develop Creative Hub and activities trailblazing for the George Hotel, creating opportunities for artists residencies, exhibitions and creative networks.
- Explore potential for Gillespie's bakery to be a working museum.

### Art trails

- Work with Active Travel Plan to site artworks on routes and paths to promote an art trail to encourage exploration.

### What We Do Next / Unexpected Garden

- Continue artist-led projects to develop a culture of creativity in Stranraer.

## NEXT STEPS

- Building work on George to start 2023 and complete 2025.
- Continue to trail the way for the George through the Creative Stranraer project that has developed networks, artworks and King Street temporary hub.

**PARTNERS:** Dumfries & Galloway Council, Levelling Up Funding, Collective Architecture; Stranraer Development Trust, The Stove.

*George Hotel transformed (black and white building). Image: Collective Architecture*





# Strand 3.2: One Waterfront

## PAIN POINT

### Under-utilised waterfront asset

- Desolate East Pier dominates the seafront.
- Historic focus on ferries; not Loch Ryan as a space for leisure.
- 'No entry' signs at harbour discourage access to the sea.
- Loch Ryan is not designated as bathing water.

### Sea-centre disconnect

- Waterfront and town centre feel separate.

### Limited berths for marine tourists

- Need more capacity for visitors arriving by sea.
- Opportunity to develop marine tourism now ferries have gone.

## SOLUTION

### East Pier

- Deal with the issue of the East Pier to unleash the potential of the town's waterfront.

### Watersports Centre

- New outdoor activity centre for sailing, canoeing, kayaking and paddleboarding.
- Capitalise on Loch Ryan as a strategic amphitheatre of sport.
- Promote inclusive access to the water eg programmes like Get Wet fun.
- Develop a culture of outdoor physical activity.
- Introduce watersports into the curriculum.

### Stimulate commerce in the town

- Develop skills for work: train locals as instructors.
- Bid for and host events of national and international significance eg return of World Skiffie Championships 2025, Fin & Foil competition. (See 5.3.)
- Promote marine tourism in partnership with Marina, attracting visitors.

### Marina expansion

- £18 million Marina development increasing pontoon berths from 69 to 223.
- New breakwater; improve wave protection; enhance marine environment.
- Pontoons with berth spaces for residents and visitors; develop marine tourism.
- Improve shoreside facilities including commercial units to offer services to marina users.
- Tie in with the peninsula's wild wellness. (See 5.3.)

### Loch Ryan

- SCAMP project to protect sea life and coastal environment.
- Work with SEPA to improve bathing water quality.

### Agnew Park

- Upgrade the Park on the waterfront.

## NEXT STEPS

- Develop Watersports Centre - £5.16 million funding secured.
- £18 million earmarked for Marina development: £16 million from Borderlands and £2 million from Dumfries & Galloway Council.
- Building work to start on Watersports Centre 2023 and complete 2025.
- Align all waterfront projects for development, planning and promotion.

***PARTNERS: Watersports Centre: Dumfries & Galloway Council, Levelling Up Funding, Stranraer Watersports Association, South of Scotland Enterprise, Blue Sea Consulting, Kilgallioch Wind Farm, Holywood Trust; Marina expansion: Dumfries & Galloway Council, Scottish Government; Borderlands, SEPA, Marine Scotland, NatureScot, Stenaline.***



Photo: Finn Kerr



# Strand 3.3: Playtime

## PAIN POINT

### Venues

- Consistently voiced, unmet local demand: the priority: 10 pin bowling. Also roller discos, go-karting, an arcade, Escape Rooms, Paintball, LaserQuest.
- Community centre infrastructure failing: heating, tech (projector and recording studio at the Millennium Centre has never worked); Driftwood needs fixes.
- Coordination of programming across venues and events could be better.

### Parks and outdoor spaces

- Stair Park playground equipment needs to be upgraded.
- No outdoor exercise equipment in parks for adults.
- Need safe cycle and walking paths and circular routes.

### Support for young people

- Recognise young people need CHOICE. They are not a homogeneous group. They are a collection of tribes and humans with different needs at different stages. Offer a range of solutions.
- Young people want more, affordable activities.
- Limited support for LGBTQ; no local Pride - a standard across Scotland.
- Millennium Centre, Stranraer Development Trust, Council and charities all provide youth services and activities - confusing landscape.
- Little to do after 5pm - need safe, warm, dry spaces and activities that are not drink-related and help avoid drug risks eg teen chill zone.

### Programming/promotion

- No central 24/7 info point.
- No single What's On for the town (links to Destination Stranraer).
- Need itineraries, trails, maps and guides for locals and visitors.
- Need support for events: Oyster and Harvest Festival, Parkfest.
- Need transport to local attractions - venues, beaches, gardens.

## SOLUTION

### Venues

- Maintain existing infrastructure: Millennium/Ryan Centre, Youth Pavilion, Driftwood.
- Maintain Millennium Centre as primary community centre for social gatherings, classes, meet-ups, workshops, performances, events and hire.
- Identify options to meet unmet need: bowling, roller discos, youth zone.
- Protect and develop local museum and library with users.

### **Parks and outdoor spaces**

- Audit condition and offer across all parks.
- Stair Park skate park equipment being upgraded; Changing Places toilet.
- Ensure access to MUGA multi-use games area in evenings/weekends.
- Provide trampoline area in a park.
- Develop cycle lanes in town eg between Stair Park and Agnew Park, from Cockleshore to Broadstone, and circular routes.
- Provide cycle paths for people with additional support needs who use adapted bikes.
- Link cycle paths to Transport Hub for Coast to Coast Cycle Route.
- Provide adapted bikes and provide beach wheelchair access to shore for people with additional needs.
- Progress Pump Track 240 metres for BMX bikes.
- Develop Unexpected Garden, Moveable Feast (eg raised beds in temporary spaces) and allotments at King George V park.
- Provide goal posts and nets to support play in parks around town.
- Widen access to Academy's 4G pitch and pool outside school hours.
- Engage with teenagers responsible for vandalism to fix parks and leisure facilities, working alongside primary children to reduce fear of older children and promote positive relations.
- Have a calm corner in Stair Park.
- Promote seed bombing in identified areas.
- Review public toilet provision; ensure existing toilets are accessible.

### **Youth Hub/Chill Zone and Youth Network**

- Develop a Youth Hub and single point of contact/info for young people.
- Build support for LGBTQ youth eg support the town's first Pride, working with Unexpected Garden's Harvest Festival.
- Youth Hub should offer evening, indoor activities (weather proof): roller skating, disco, bingo, pool table, dartboard, vending machines, user-run cafe; user-designed Escape Rooms games; develop its youth cafe; continue Ocean Youth Trust adventures; fix and promote the recording studio for use by local bands.

### **Programming/promotion**

- ParkFest, Harvest Fest and Oyster Festival teams coordinate activities and maximise resources and reach.
- Provide interactive, digital What's On board in Castle Square and at Waterfront, centrally managed with content from all partners.
- Set up programming forum to coordinate offer: invite local programmers to come together to look at regular and event activity; future funding will be dependent on evidence of coordination and consultation with users.
- Support locals to use.
- Offer Community Transport and discounts to make local attractions more accessible.

### **Infrastructure review**

- Provide more park equipment: cross-trainers, trampolines, roller skating
- Provide more benches, bins and poo bins in the public realm: beach, waterfront, parks, gardens, paths.



## NEXT STEPS

- Audit venues - use of space, condition of kit, footfall, user profile
- Set up user groups and gather user feedback to inform planning
- Scope need and cost for upgrades to existing infrastructure
- Bring all youth service providers, groups and users together in one forum to map services and make the most of resources.

**PARTNERS:** Millennium Centre, Ryan Centre, Stranraer Development Trust, Youth Services, Council: Parks, Events, Facilities; Better Lives Partnership, Wigtownshire Stuff, Academy, College, Community Transport, Youth Council, 10,000 Voices, Unexpected Garden





# STRAND 4: ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE

## Strand 4.1: Climate

### PAIN POINT

#### Fuel costs and climate costs

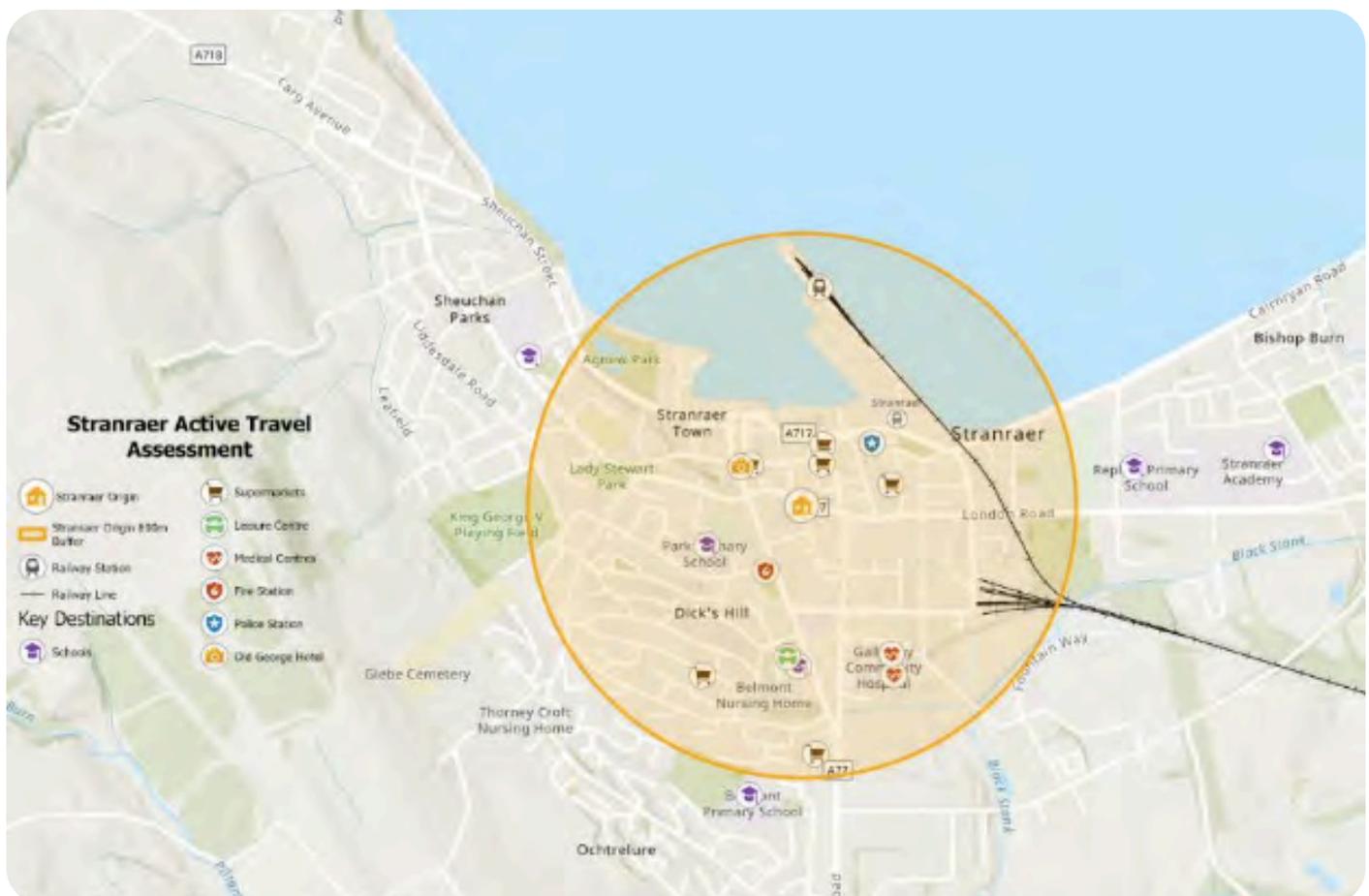
- Need more renewables in the local energy system to reach Net Zero targets.
- Need smarter energy production to fuel local services.
- Need to reduce waste and litter.

#### Carbon footprint

- Too much local reliance on cars - inadequate public transport.
- Need better routes and paths to promote Active Travel.
- Locals need to travel for healthcare and work.
- Supermarkets packaging force shoppers to take home plastic and buy in volumes bigger than they want which increases food waste.

#### Funerals

- No green burial options locally.
- Closest crematorium Ayr demands travel by car.



## SOLUTION

### Community Powerhouse

- Make strategic use of Community Benefit Funding to leverage long term gains, could be a better route than shared ownership of windfarms. There is very significant Community Benefit monies in the local area. Explore potential for self-sustaining renewables rather than power via the National Grid harnessing new technology eg a solar farm or hydrogen project.
- Collaborate with Northern Ireland on hydrogen/clean energy/green tourism.
- Create energy from composting to heat community greenhouses.
- Explore opportunities eg Community & Energy Renewals Scheme (pay up to 80% of project costs for decarbonising buildings); REAP Scotland for hydro and solar schemes.
- Use locally generated energy to power social housing, community centres, the hospital, school, college, public services and business.
- Ensure all new developments (George Hotel transformation, social and private housing) are designed to be carbon neutral.
- Explore setting local powers to limit supermarkets' use of plastics and packaging.
- Work with Unexpected Garden to develop Greta Guerillas: young green champions.
- Explore opportunities to develop renewables and access Community Benefit funding to leverage long term gains.
- Use Volunteer Hub to develop a Stranraer Squad for Spring Cleans, beach clean-ups and other community activities. (See Strand 5.)
- Walk, wheel, cycle to reduce cars in town; promote 'bike first' by 2032.
- Reward active travel to reduce use of cars; develop routes and paths in town; link to Coast to Coast Cycle Route. (See Strand 2 - Transport.)

## NEXT STEPS

- Commission feasibility study to explore renewable energy production.
- Workshops with key partners to identify and develop opportunities.
- Active Travel Strategy carrying out active travel assessments and preliminary designs for links from the Marina to the town centre, through the town centre and to Commerce Road Industrial Estate .
- Co-design change with service providers and service users.

**PARTNERS:** Dumfries & Galloway Council, South of Scotland Enterprise, Scottish Government, environmental agencies, Local Energy Scotland, Biosphere, Dark Skies, Reuse Shop/Furniture Project, third sector, supermarkets. **Active Travel:** Council, SWestrans, Stantec.



# Strand 4.2: Food Futures

## PAIN POINT

### Local produce

- Oysters - a USP for Stranraer - go to Cornwall for processing and are not available for sale in town.
- Loss of connection with locally grown food reduces sustainability.

### Growing/cooking skills

- Poor family legacy food knowledge forces reliance on expensive, processed food, increasing health risks (and plastic waste).
- Locals need space, seeds, skills and knowledge to grow our own food.
- Social isolation rising (especially post Covid)

### Food poverty

- Families choosing between fuel and food
- Families rely on food banks

## SOLUTION

### Local produce

- Work with Oyster Company to investigate potential of bringing its processing plant to Stranraer; keep food production local. (Links to 2.3.)

### Unexpected Garden

- Develop community growing projects beyond year 1 to improve growing skills and gardening/food knowledge; tackle food poverty.
- Develop Moveable Feast - a mobile project to develop food and growing skills around the Rhins. (Mitigates against risks eg ongoing availability of current site, growing on contaminated ground; and maximises rural sharing.) Tie in with a rural food bus.
- Explore Community Asset Transfer to set up Unexpected Hub in unused Council premises near Park Primary working with local pupils and parents/carers.
- Reduce social isolation by offering volunteering opportunities and social connection around cooking and eating together.
- Improve the public realm; provide a green sanctuary in the town centre.
- Promote a culture of diversity in unexpected, visible, open, safe spaces (eg as a host for Stranraer's first Pride tying celebrations with Harvest Festival).
- Provide seedbank for locals - free seeds=free food.

### Food Project

- Key partners develop and share a community food bus.. with kitchen and seating for wet-weather pop up around town and, working with villages, in rural areas, offering free/cheap food, cooking demos, social connection; promoting healthy eating and food knowledge.



### Food Futures SW Co-Lab

- Coordinate food and growing activities in the Rhins, exploring potential connections with networks regionally and nationally.
- Propagate Scotland help develop market gardens; small-producers cooperative; sustainable food production; Millennium youth cafe food.
- Every child learns about growing in the Academy's poly tunnel.

### Allotments

- Develop (and parcel into smaller lots) 50 new allotments at King George V Park.

### Cooking knowledge and skills

- Pink Frog project develop cookery training and food skills knowledge at Furniture Project/Reuse Shop as part of its expansion
- Provide cookery learning, recipe testing, cook books, aligning projects like What We Do Now and Stranraer Development Trust cookbooks
- Use Millennium Centre kitchen, cafe, hire space and programme to provide social connection around food events eg Youth Cafe, Ukrainian Cafe, Death Cafe.

## NEXT STEPS

- Discussions with service providers to prioritise areas of interest.
- Further engagement with locals to map journeys, needs and gaps.
- Co-design solutions with locals

**PARTNERS:** Food Project group: Apex Food Bank, Fed up Cafe, Millennium Centre Youth, Potters Garden; Furniture Project/Pink Frog, Dumfries & Galloway College, Kirkcolm Hub; Propagate Scotland, Glasgow School of Art Rural Lab.



# Strand 4.3: Environment

## PAIN POINT

### Green-blue environments

- Need walks and wildlife where we have vacant/derelict land.

### Marine protection

- Loch Ryan is not designated bathing water.
- Plastics on beaches reaching crisis point.

### Green credentials

- Stranraer has historically missed out on Dark Skies opportunities.
- Biosphere status is new.

### Waste/recycling/upcycling

- Need to grow the practice of recycling.

## SOLUTION

### Black Stank Sanctuary

- Work with SEPA and Council to redevelop wasteland around the old railway station, restore wetlands, create blue/green space, prevent flooding at the Black Stank burn, making walkways behind Stair Park towards the Approach Road and Westwood.
- Create a town sanctuary: walkways, rewilding, attracting wildlife.
- 'Green' the old Gas Works and Railway Yard.
- Sow seeds in dead public spaces.

### Marine protection

- Develop Solway Coast & Marine Project (SCAMP) to improve sealife and protect our natural environment.
- Work with SEPA to improve water quality in Loch Ryan.
- Explore developing a Centre of Excellence for Marine Studies.

### Biosphere

- Develop and promote Stranraer as part of the Galloway Biosphere project.
- Link potential Marine Studies Centre to Biosphere.
- Explore opportunities for eco-tourism.

### Waste/recycling/upcycling

- Support RIBA Stage 4 feasibility costs of the Furniture Project's £2.7 million expansion: more
- Increase the volume of goods reused locally over the next decade: reduce carbon footprint and tackle poverty.
- Pioneer private-social partnerships in environmental sustainability.

### Furniture Project/Reuse Shop: Pink Frog project

- New training kitchen to offer vocational qualifications in hospitality to people facing barriers to employment.
- Create opportunities for start-up businesses.
- Community classroom for young people to engage in reuse, recycling and environmental studies linking to Curriculum for Excellence.
- Community fridge/larder & tool library to access donations with dignity.

# NEXT STEPS

- Identify owners for key projects.
- Workshops with key partners to review user issues and explore solutions.
- Co-design change with locals.



*PARTNERS: Dumfries & Galloway Council, SEPA, Ayrshire & Galloway Biosphere, Scottish Land Fund, Unexpected Garden, Stranraer Development Trust, Incredible Edibles, The Stove, South of Scotland Enterprise, Furniture Project/Community Reuse*



# STRAND 5: PRIDE & CITIZENSHIP

## Strand 5.1: Vacant & Derelict Spaces

### PAIN POINT

#### East Pier/Station

- The East Pier is a desolate arrival point and a waste of prime space on the seafront.
- The train terminal is often unstaffed and unkempt. (See 2.1.)

#### Black Stank

- The Black Stank burn is a flood risk and a wasted asset running through wasteland in the middle of town.

#### Vacant/derelict assets

- High number of 'to let' signs in town centre: empty properties are a waste of prime location
- Dangerous, declining buildings including high profile Repeater Station at entrance to town on A77 and The Arches in Hanover Street.
- Historic buildings in town are in decline.

### SOLUTION

#### East Pier/Station

- Apply for Borderlands funding to help unlock the promised £6 million from Scottish Government - an offer to help the town's recovery when the ferries left a decade ago.
- Explore cost-benefit options of moving the station along the Pier or to the old Station Street location.
- Work with Stena meantime to clear up the East Pier (they have short term plans to provide two serviced lorry parks) with improved lighting. Keep in dialogue on Place Plan/future plans. Town Team connect with Stena/new haulage companies to secure match funding to improve presentation of public areas eg provide artwork for the pier working with Creative Stranraer, Transport Team, College Art & Design learners and professional artists. (See Environment.)

#### 'Meantime Opportunities'

- Negotiate short term, low cost leases agents in the town centre to animate the high street, improve the attractiveness of empty sites and provide short-term space to start-up businesses or artists as lower risk opportunities.

### Town makeover

- Develop Creative Stranraer art projects (mural, photo wall)
- Develop What We Do Next project with The Stove and artists to bring creative solutions to ugly spaces
- Use shopfront improvements grants and other schemes to Incentivise and support upgrading town centre premises... fix-up, painting, awnings, bunting.
- Promote community activities like Spring Clean and Beach Clean Up.
- Review and improve town centre. Ties in with Transport - review traffic speeds, routes and flow; create 'shared roadways'; review parking; widen footpaths; more street seating (some sheltered); 'green' public spaces; update visitor signage.

### Community Asset Transfer

- Consider cost-benefit and feasibility of taking assets into community ownership: Repeater Station as marine centre; hospital suite as health hub; unused Council building near Park Primary for a Wellbeing Hub; The Grapes (Stranraer's oldest pub) as a community pub zoning use/times to support people in recovery, young people below drinking-age; older people looking for social connection.
- Identify dangerous/unsightly/wasteful buildings for potential community ownership to employment.
- Create opportunities for start-up businesses.

## NEXT STEPS

- Identify community partners and set up forums advised by Council experts.
- Set key targets and commission research to scope high level possibilities.
- Work with Council and community to approach owners to negotiate change.
- Harness powers, regulations and laws as levers for change eg to take over derelict buildings and use Community Asset Transfer and other vehicles to build community ownership and facilitate transformation.

**PARTNERS:** Dumfries & Galloway Council; Scottish Land Fund, Unexpected Garden; Arts Hub; Stranraer Development Trust; Scottish Government; Stena; agents and landlords



Christian





# Strand 5.2: Democracy

## PAIN POINT

### Over-consultation

- Public sector constantly consulting locals; little sense of outcomes/change.

### Over- and under-representation

- Participating in meetings as a route to democracy favours articulate, confident people who have capacity, free time and means to attend meetings and engage.

### Fractured communities

- Neighbours who don't share values form separate community groups and compete for funding; this can create a toxic culture in a small town.

## SOLUTION

### Digital Democracy

- Develop Citizen Space platform to engage locals digitally: a single, coordinated point of information, consultation, engagement.

### Local democracy

- Council review its Scheme of Establishment for community councils with local community groups and local people to assess how well local democracy works.

### Governance

- Run governance workshops for 5 key community organisations: Stranraer Development Trust, Millennium Centre, Stranraer Watersports Association, Furniture Project, Stranraer Community Council to encourage community groups to survey members, carry out Board skills audit, identify and plug gaps, improve diversity of members and representatives; succession plan.

### Place Connections

- Develop resources to build on Creative Stranraer and Place Plan engagement to ensure ongoing dialogue and ownership on broad Place Plan issues.

## NEXT STEPS

- Run Governance workshops.
- Develop Citizen Space platform.
- Council, TSDG and partners explore democracy issues.
- Take outcomes back to local people to develop solutions.

**PARTNERS:** Dumfries & Galloway Council, TSDG, Stranraer Development Trust, Millennium Centre, Stranraer Watersports Association, Furniture Project, Stranraer Community Council.



# Strand 5.3: Destination

## PAIN POINT

### Profile

- Stranraer and the Rhins 'forgotten' part of the region: originally missed out on Dark Skies promotion.

### Reasons to visit

- Locals hosting visitors look for leisure offers (wet weather too) to visit town; they go to visitor attractions across the Rhins instead: reduces footfall in town; impacts on economy.

### Traffic / parking

- Lots of parking space on the seafront; handy but detracts from the waterfront.
- Unnecessary level of traffic in the small town centre.
- Lack of routes and paths promotes use of cars.
- Culture of parking on double yellow lines - unsafe.

### Connectivity

- Enhance digital connectivity by upgrading fibre infrastructure to 5G.
- Connect Stranraer and the Rhins to Biosphere, Dark Skies and other Galloway-wide tourism initiatives.
- Connect
- town and sea: link town centre to the waterfront by improved paths, navigation, sight lines, public art and environmental/public realm interventions eg creating a pedestrian zone down North Strand Street.



## SOLUTION

### Destination marketing

- Promote Stranraer and the Rhins' outdoor offer locally, regionally and to visitors from Scotland, England, Ireland and beyond: One Waterfront; part in UNESCO Biosphere: Galloway Forest Park & Dark Skies; South West Coastal 300 Route; Coast to Coast Cycle Route starting point in Stranraer; Southern Upland Way walking trail, Rhins of Galloway Coastal Paths; home-grown annual events like the Oyster Festival; bid for events like World Skiff Championships; Wild Wellness: outdoor, wildlife, bootcamp, bushcraft, swim, coast paths, fishing trips and cruises; promote cycle-stay-spend pointing visitors to bunkhouse.
- Promote our growing cultural offer: Creative Stranraer, arts hub (building momentum for The George Hotel) murals, art trail, artists studios.
- Build Loch Ryan Oyster brand (like Loch Fyne); sell oysters in town.
- Develop an iconic artwork on pier eg a beacon or lighthouse beam to identify the town/echo Rhins 6 lighthouses; compass celebrating explorer, James Clark Ross.
- Gateway to Galloway, run by Stranraer Development Trust coordinate and provide What's On information online, on screens in town and via QR codes on lamp-posts Rhins-wide
- Provide 1, 2 and 3 day itineraries 'island hopper' for the peninsula.
- Host and bid for events like World Skiffie Championships, cycle events, triathlons.
- Explore opportunities for harbour/marine: foot ferry, water taxi, sunset sail, tall ships.
- Bring Ocean Youth Trust sailing ship into Loch Ryan to dock - eg a pontoon.
- Promote a phone line to report issues like parking and dog mess.

### Traffic / parking

- Review the volume of cars, parking and pedestrianisation in the town centre. Evidence shows shoppers access the town a third each by foot, bike and car.
- Decriminalise parking offences so that they can be dealt with by Council rather than Police.
- Implement on-the-spot fines to pay for parking management staff.
- Link to Active Travel Strategy and pedestrianise town centre (see Transport).
- Town centre-Waterfront
- Develop pedestrianised, green public realm space between the Castle and the Waterfront

### Oyster Fest

- Programme events for young people and families eg Oyster Experience underwater.
- Align with programming and promotion of other festivals and events.

### Visitor infrastructure

- Provide power hubs for phone/bike/car charging in town - see Transport.
- Provide water fountains at both the waterfront and in town centre.

## NEXT STEPS

- SDT set up Destination Stranraer working group with partners and businesses.

**PARTNERS:** *Stranraer Development Trust/members, Stranraer Watersports Association, leisure and culture services, South of Scotland Destination Alliance, Visit Scotland, D&G College*

# Appendix 7: Risks

Stranraer Development Trust, Millennium Centre, Stranraer Community Council, Furniture Project, Stranraer Watersports Association are the five community organisations who are the key partners in the Place Plan. They have begun working much more closely together during planning to build capacity for delivering the Plan going forward. We attracted Community Led Vision Funding in 2023 to support Board development for these organisations. A

These are the key risks to the Place Plan's success.

AREA	RISK	MITIGATION
Scoping needs for Borderlands funding.	Not enough specialist knowledge in the community to accurately assess costs in the Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular reporting into Borderlands with the Place Plan Town Team to agree our process.</li> <li>Various groups continue to meet to scope solutions.</li> <li>Citizen Space deployed to enable local voting as proposals emerge.</li> <li>Support from Borderlands to work up proposals post Plan submission.</li> </ul>
Capacity and ability to deliver the Plan.	Success = large, complex projects for small community organisations to manage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Managers at Dumfries &amp; Galloway Council lead on development of next stage: Improvement Plans.</li> <li>Identify needs, roles and staffing and build roles into funding applications.</li> </ul>
Managing community relations and expectations post submitting the Place Plan to funders.	<p>Project Manager on a 6 month contract: no one to steer the project; project collapses.</p> <p>Capacity to deliver.</p> <p>Loss of community ownership and trust post Plan submission.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stranraer Development Trust currently hosts 2 short term development posts. We are working with Dumfries &amp; Galloway Council and SOSE to explore options to build capacity going forward.</li> <li>Scope need and ensure funding applications for roles are sufficient.</li> <li>Keep the Town Team going beyond the deadline for submitting a Place Plan to guide the process.</li> <li>Enterprise Company, Council and TSDG continue to build on the relationships created during Engagement.</li> </ul>
Community-led approach.	Beyond submission of Plan, loss of drive from local people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Citizen Space platform designed to be run by a collective of local organisations working in the community space. They will use this to prioritise the Plan's 'asks'.</li> <li>Roles being scoped to support ongoing community engagement.</li> </ul>

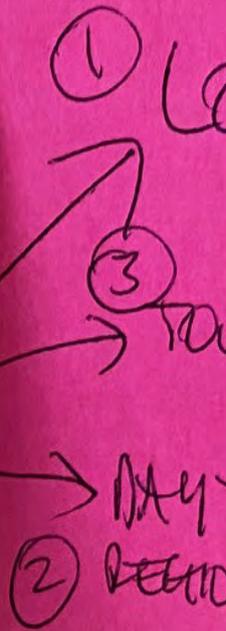
Skills for  
new  
industry eg  
wind farm

RENTING  
TO KEEP  
IT GOING

FIELD STUDY  
- ALWAYS  
A CLASSIC  
APPROACH  
(FIELDS OF  
EMPIRICISM)  
##:  
(SOME LAW)

LOCALS 1ST

HAS TO BE  
SUSTAINED  
LOCALLY



AWAY FROM  
WORLD  
CAREERS  
IN SCHOOL  
SETTING

"MEANTIME"  
- PEPPER CORN  
RENT (REUSE)  
- LAND ASSET  
TRANSFER

THE  
MARKET  
OWN  
(old days)

# Appendix 8: Insights

The following insights came from conversations with local people and from experience of the Place Planning process. They are offered in the hope they might help others, following in our footsteps.

ISSUE	SUGGESTIONS
<p><b>Local democracy is broken</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a small town, broken relationships between community groups can damage partnerships working for decades.</li> <li>• Some voices are over-represented and some under-represented. The same names/faces pop up on several Boards in town. Articulate, confident, white males still dominate conversations.</li> <li>• Working women also provide family care and are less likely to have the time to join community groups.</li> <li>• Consultation is at saturation point. Every publicly-funded project requires engagement and approaches locals/groups.</li> <li>• Old ways of community representation need to be refreshed. Few young people are interested in attending meetings.</li> <li>• It takes a significant amount of time to build relationships and build trust.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce digital engagement to reduce reliance on individuals representing communities. This can potentially reach more diverse people. (Ensure in-person, in print and facilitated options for those who are digitally excluded.)</li> <li>• Have a central Engagement role to coordinate consultation locally. This could manage the load on local groups, improve communication, build relationships, learn and improve.</li> <li>• Don't expect the public to come to you. Go where they already meet to engage.</li> </ul>
<p><b>No news isn't good news</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From a standing start, we had 6 months to build a brand, a website, content, a database, relationships and engagement tools, to communicate and engage on the Place Plan. This is too short a timescale.</li> <li>• The grapevine moves fast... much faster than newspapers and even beating social media. Any information gaps will be filled by assumptions and rumour.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with an existing organisation with strong communication channels.</li> <li>• Build communication skills/capacity into roles.</li> <li>• Issue regular, authoritative, reliable, trusted clear messaging.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Damned if you do...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locals consistently ask for a 10 pin bowling alley, yet when a Planning Application was submitted for one, locals objected.</li> <li>• It's a brave thing; delivering. The new mural in King Street was criticised for featuring a local woman (it doesn't). Then it was criticised for that character not being a local.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure there's good support for the project delivery team (eg a buddy system, Steering Group, supportive host organisation) to build resilience.</li> </ul>

ISSUE	SUGGESTIONS
<p><b>Promises promises</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local people are exhausted, having repeated the same messages in consultations for decades, still feeling unheard.</li> <li>Several individuals - councillors and community activists - have campaigned hard for years for Stranraer and some have given up hope.</li> </ul>	<p>Deliver promises!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Put as much effort into giving feedback to those who took time to engage as we put into engaging in the first place... this way we can explain the things that can't happen.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Money, money, money</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There's a lack of revenue funding to support essential roles in the town longer term.</li> <li>The levels of poverty mean our community centres are unlikely to make money; they'd do well to sustain.</li> <li>Organisations are exhausted by the endless need to apply for funding.</li> <li>Competition for funding doesn't promote partnership working.</li> <li>Short term funding doesn't help a town thrive. The Unexpected Garden is typical. A 1 year project - ironic in a growing project with community development and skills building at its heart.</li> <li>Borderlands funding is retrospective. Local groups don't have the cash flow to procure up front. Funders procuring on behalf of the community is seen as patronising and controlling. It isn't ideal for small, local businesses who don't have the scale to bid for/win tenders and aren't on the Government procurement platform.</li> <li>Funders often only cover capital costs and expect communities to be able generate income from projects to cover salaries. This is an unreasonable expectation. It isn't a commercial venture, running a community centre or project in an area impacted by poverty.</li> <li>The Council-managed Community-Led Vision Fund was advertised in January with an end of January application deadline. Funding of up to £50k had to be committed by the end of the financial year. This puts tremendous strain on small community groups trying to identify resources to apply for and commit funds in time and achieve quality outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide more long term, sustainable funding for projects.</li> <li>Longer term roles are needed to build community ownership and improve health and wellbeing.</li> <li>Funders should hand over procurement to local control to achieve faster delivery, lower prices and more work being placed locally.</li> <li>Allow reasonable timeframes for local organisations to devise funding applications and commit funding.</li> <li>Funders should offer flexibility between revenue and capital needs to support the town's needs and improve sustainability.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community building</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place Planning promotes a 'community led' process. A 6 month post isn't long enough to do this well.</li> <li>Over the years, many successful community development roles in Stranraer have disappeared. This leaves local people high and dry.</li> <li>It's helpful to showcase all the voices, accents and flavours of the diverse people engaged in community-building in Stranraer - see our Town Team film.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place the role in a mature organisation or allow more time to develop connections before beginning engagement.</li> <li>Build on the momentum of this Place Plan and build ongoing capacity for community development in the town.</li> <li>We could use a little more diversity. Keep championing change and welcome new people.</li> </ul>

GATEWAY TO

GALLOWAY

STRANRAER'S VISITOR & COMMUNITY HUB



