

Rural Regeneration – A Themed Towns Approach

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Rural Regeneration – A Themed Towns Approach

- **Why are Scotland's small towns important?**
- **Background to Dumfries and Galloway**
- **Wigtown – Scotland's Booktown**
- **Kirkcudbright – Scotland's Artists town**
- **Castle Douglas Food town**
- **Conclusions**

Why are Scotland's small towns important?

Scottish Small Towns report 2007 – 2013

- 262 towns of between 2000 and 20,000 pop
- Act as economic drivers and service centres
- Centres of employment, social and cultural activities
- Key centres of tourism
- Are well placed to exploit future opportunities
- BUT, do face many problems and challenges

Why are Scotland's small towns so important?

Continued

- Deprivation
- Past their sell-by date
- Physical decay
- Poor connectivity and isolation
- Development pressures
- Policy vacuum in relation small towns

Dumfries and Galloway - Background

- **Third largest region in Scotland**
- **Population 148,000**
- **Largest town Dumfries – 32,000 pop followed by Stranraer – 11,000 and Annan 9,000**
- **All other towns have a pop of 4,000 or less**
- **Few international companies**
- **Large number of small businesses 79% with TO less than £250,000**
- **92% employ fewer than 10 people**

Dumfries and Galloway - Background

Continued

- **Over-reliance on the public sector and traditional industries for jobs**
- **Low unemployment/low wage economy**
- **Out migration of young**
- **Numbers of elderly increasing**
- **Skill shortages**
- **High levels of benefit dependency**

Dumfries and Galloway - Background

However

- **Attractive region**
- **Great natural assets – ‘The Natural Place’**
- **Emerging key sectors**
- **Strategic location**
- **Area of opportunity?**

Wigtown – Scotland's National Book Town

Why the need?

- Long decline in traditional rural industries
- Lack of business and employment opportunities
- Decline in population
- Deterioration of the built environment

What was needed?

- Revitalize the local economy
- Create a unique selling point for Wigtown
- Make it a visitor destination

Wigtown – Scotland's National Book Town

Why the theme?

- Hay on Wye showed that book towns worked
- There was demand for a National Book Town
- This was something different, a unique selling point
- Met the criteria to become the National Book Town
- Determined local support and lobbying



Wigtown – Scotland's National Book Town



How was it developed?

- Recognised as a long term job
- Won the nomination
- Set up a community led development and delivery model
- Attracted European Funding
- Attracted and accommodated book businesses
- Won a Townscape Heritage Initiative
- A makeover for the County Buildings
- Delivered profile raising events



Wigtown – Scotland's National Book Town

Core funded through European Programmes as three separately projects, at 50% of eligible cost

- **D&G 5(b) Programme 1994 / 1999 grant of £122.5k. Matched by Local Authorities and Enterprise Company**
- **South of Scotland Objective 2 Programme 2000 / 2006 grant of £90k Matched by DGC and SEDG**
- **South of Scotland Objective 2 Programme 2000/2006 grant of £148k. Matched by DGC, SEDG and Wigtown Book Town Company and includes the extension from 1 April to 31 October 2007**

Wigtown – Scotland's National Book Town



Community Benefit

- Now a vibrant community with an attractive streetscape and year round visitors
- Well established and successful literary festivals
- Proactive community – street market – events - music festivals
- Landmark community facilities – the County Buildings
- A Chamber of Commerce and a Literary Festivals Company formed as successors to the Book Town Co

Wigtown – Scotland's National Book Town

Economic benefit

- 13 book shops and 5 book related businesses where one previously existed
- 2003 evaluation estimated 280k visitors in that year
- 2006 Literary Festival ticket sales of £27.8k up 32% on the previous year
- It attracted £80k income and almost achieved a one for one return on public sector investment
- It generated an economic impact of £216k





Kirkcudbright Artists' Town

- Took a lead from the success of Wigtown
- Saw an opportunity to build on the town's historic connection with artists
- Community driven but delivered through partnership
- Began with the Homecoming 2000 exhibition and has hosted major exhibitions ever since

High quality art exhibitions have been attracted to Kirkcudbright ever since 2000...

42 GOOD REASONS TO VISIT
KIRKCUDBRIGHT
ARTISTS' TOWN
THIS AUGUST



Kirkcudbright Artists' Town logo, Kirkcudbright, 2002


**THE
FLEMING
COLLECTION**

KIRKCUDBRIGHT TOWN HALL
27th JULY TO 28th AUGUST 2002
OPEN DAILY, 10AM TO 7PM
ADMISSION FREE

GOOD REASONS TO VISIT
KIRKCUDBRIGHT THIS AUGUST


**THE
GLASGOW
TRADITION**

*A celebration of the Glasgow Boys (& Girls) and the Glasgow
School of Art in Scottish Painting from 1880 - 1940*

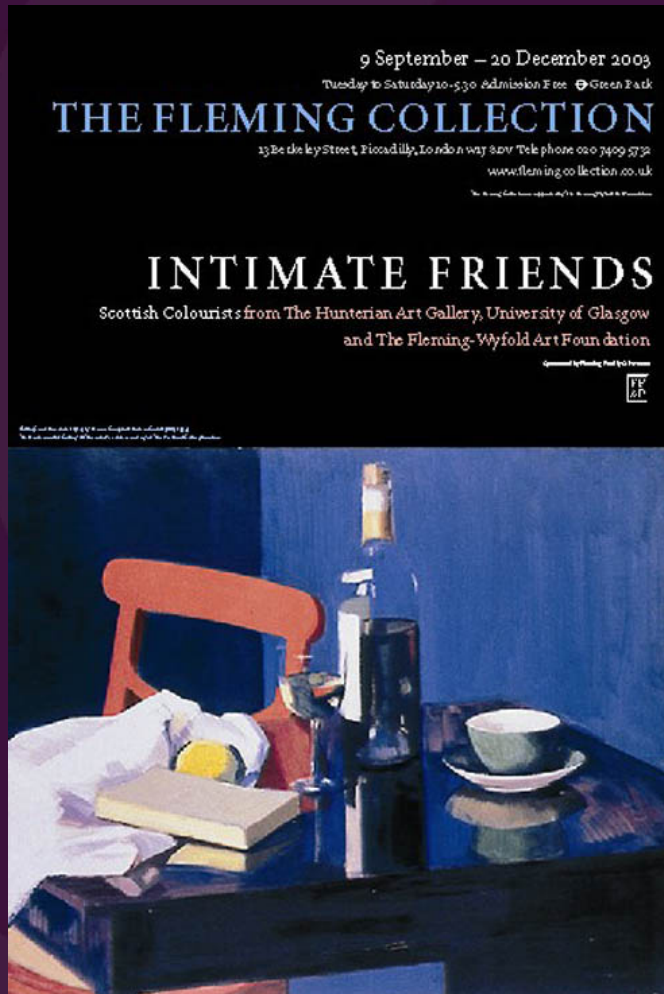


The Glasgow Boys (& Girls) and the Glasgow School of Art in Scottish Painting from 1880 - 1940

**KIRKCUDBRIGHT
TOWN HALL**
26th July to 31st August 2002
(open every day)
Admission £1 covers whole period



Kirkcudbright Artists' Town



The Fleming Collection 2004

Kelvingrove at Kirkcudbright 2005...



- Surpassed all expectation with an exhibition of Impressionist masterpieces by Van Gogh, Pissarro, Monet and many more.
- Thanks to partnership working with Kelvingrove Gallery and Glasgow City Council.
- 60,200 visitors recorded
- Economic impact of between £1.7m and £2m.

TIC Visitor Numbers in the Stewartry Area

	<u>2001</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>Overall Increase</u>
STEWARTRY TICs	102,138	123,161	+21,023

Kirkcudbright Artists' Town

SUMMARY

- Great opportunity for enhanced tourism profile and economic regeneration
- Universal appeal – trendy weekenders, 'empty-nesters' and the 'grey market', both with time and money
- Must-see destination right at the heart of D&G with national and international profile
- Permanent gallery/Artists' Town operates *all year round*
- 11 new commercial galleries have opened since 2000
- Locally driven project – and sustainable

THE BRAND

- Great brands grow over long periods of years....
- Kirkcudbright Artist's Town has developed it's 'brand recognition' since Kelvingrove@Kirkcudbright Exhibition which achieved national and international publicity.
- Kirkcudbright - Artists' Town can become a powerful brand if;
- A nationally significant gallery is delivered – The Council and National Galleries Scotland are committed to the project
- A greater number of working artists are attracted to the town and make their artistic mark in Kirkcudbright.

The Tolbooth houses the existing collection of the Kirkcudbright colony



Broughton House



Hornell and the original colony



Castle Douglas Food Town

Why the need?



The objective of Castle Douglas Food Town Initiative is to bolster the local economy by:

- (a) increasing visitor numbers to the town and region;
- (b) developing new types of visitors and customers for indigenous food producers, accommodation providers and retailers.

By achieving these objectives, it is intended that the town will benefit economically, socially and culturally.

Castle Douglas Food Town

Why the Theme?

The “Food Town” theme was identified in light of the particular strengths of Castle Douglas for its quality produce and retail outlets. The theme has never meant to be exclusive; indeed the aim of the Food Town Initiative recognises the overall quality of the town in its aim:

“to ensure that Castle Douglas becomes widely recognised as a market town of retail excellence, especially for locally-produced food and drink.”



Castle Douglas Food Town

The Process of Development

- The Food Town theme has always been driven by a core of business owners in the town, but it has gained the support of the wider community as the theme has strengthened.
- The Initiative organises key events throughout the year – Food town Day in May, the Christmas Extravaganza, the Stewartry Agricultural Show, and in the past, the Tour of Britain local events.
- In addition to its events, the Initiative works to enhance the brand of the Food Town and works with local stakeholders to try and strengthen the product at the local level. The main area of weakness for the Food Town is it's evening dining.



Castle Douglas Food Town

The Food Town Initiative currently receives core funding from the Council:

- 2007/8: £10,000
- 2008/9: £9,500
- 2009/10: £9,000

Funding for projects and events mainly come from the Area Regeneration budget, together with locally raised funds.

Castle Douglas Food Town



The Community Benefit

- Castle Douglas has been identified by the Scottish Small Town Report 2007-2013 as having used and promoted its distinctiveness as a town of retail excellence, and as such, has attracted both private and public investment.
- The Community Council is supportive of the work of the Food Town Initiative, and there are frequently partnerships developed in the town to develop projects with a wider target – such as the new entry signs for the Town stating “Dumfries and Galloway’s Food Town”.
- The benefit to the wider community is one of a strong, vibrant town with a quality range of retail businesses which attract people from across Dumfries and Galloway as well as repeat visits from tourists.

Castle Douglas Food Town



The Economic Impact

The Food Town Initiative employs one part time project co-ordinator.

Whilst the direct impact of the Food Town has never been measured, there has been a significant increase in the number of visitors to the town during the Summer of 2006 and Castle Douglas saw at least a 25% increase in visitors to Food Town day during the May holidays (measured by the TIC). This success will be built upon and an enhanced programme of events and joint working with business and community sectors will take place.

Rural Regeneration – A Themed Towns Approach - Conclusions

Positive

- Can act as a driver for economic growth
- Helps re-brand and reposition towns
- Acts as focus for community
- Attracts funding
- Katalyst for more holistic regeneration
- Business can buy in to concept

Negative

- Needs a champion
- Can be resource hungry
- Does not guarantee 'buy in'
- Need to develop exit strategy early to ensure is focussed on sustainability
- Not a panacea
- Avoid the 'if it is there people will come approach'

THANK YOU

SEE YOU SOON IN
DUMFRIES AND
GALLOWAY