

Small Towns

Some 30% of Scotland's population live in small towns*. The configuration of public services within these places, the ways in which their local public sector assets are deployed, and the potential wider benefits from leveraging these will have a profound impact on the future of these communities. Collaborative working is not only desirable in these small towns, but essential in pursuit of desired outcomes.

Potential scenarios were explored in selected small towns in order to identify a common suite of place based approaches for this scale of settlement. This involved engagement with two local authorities: Dumfries and Galloway and South Ayrshire.



Place based collaborations were subsequently facilitated, with SFT support, in three small places Tarbolton, Dailly, and Langholm. Each involved a range of service providers, community representatives and local stakeholders. In each case practical opportunities for working together were identified and a spatial framework developed for the delivery of joined up services as part of a well-managed place-making exercise.

These projects demonstrated the potential within small places for agencies to come together and challenge their approach to assets in a way which helps shape the whole place and informs investment decisions. In the case of Tarbolton and Dailly, new primary schools are now underway, and in Langholm the Council, NHS and local community groups have been exploring future options for the village. Getting the right people in the room to adopt a pragmatic approach to realising shared ambitions will it seems uncover new possibilities if done at the right time.

realising the potential from small settlements . . .

*Small Towns Task Group 2009