

Dumfries and Galloway Council

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2

Glencaple Village Design Statement

Implementing the Management Strategy for the Nith
Estuary National Scenic Area

Planning Guidance - November 2019



1. Introduction

Glencaple is located in the Nith Estuary National Scenic Area (NSA), one of the finest landscapes in Scotland. The character of the village, its traditional buildings and layout contribute to the unique quality of the landscape, as well as providing an important link to the past.

Although the rate of change is unlikely to increase radically in the foreseeable future, development will occur and this is critical to the future sustainability of the settlement. It is important that any change is managed sensitively and carefully in order that it continues to make a positive contribution to this nationally outstanding landscape.



Well considered design should occur everywhere but it is particularly important in an area where the landscape is valued. The quality of design can be difficult to define but in reality good development in a village like Glencaple involves that extra bit of time and thought being spent on the appearance and location of new buildings and alterations to existing ones to ensure that they are tailored to fit the setting and help retain the existing individuality of the place.

Glencaple Village Design Statement was produced by the people of the village through meetings, workshops and visits and is intended as a working guide for use by all who are considering implementing change in the village. It also considers styles of development which do not fit well in the village and which should be avoided in the future. It is hoped that the Village Design Statement will encourage respect for the historic fabric of the village while at the same time supporting good modern and innovative design and construction.

This Village Design Statement describes the valued qualities and characteristics of the settlement and provides guidance that could be used to help ensure new buildings respect local character. It respects the principles and policies contained in the Local Development Plan and goes into a greater level of detail and description to highlight the special features which contribute to making Glencaple unique. It is intended to help people understand and manage the impact that any new buildings will have on the village and the surrounding landscape. This is done by considering the scale, layout and materials associated with new developments, how they relate to adjacent buildings and how they fit against the landscape to ensure that they make a positive contribution to Glencaple as a settlement and its surrounding countryside.

To prosper Glencaple will continue to change and expand but it is important to understand the part the village plays in the scenic value of the area. Businesses need to expand, affordable housing is required for young families and people may want to extend and alter their homes. Mistakes have been made in the past and these can be avoided in the future with some careful thought and appropriate guidance.

1. Introduction



Illustration by James McAulay (used by permission of Hugh Bryden)

Who is it for?

All those who might have an influence upon planned change in the village. This would include owners, occupiers, developers, builders, architects, local authority officials, statutory undertakers, public utilities and the wider community.

How does it work?

The Village Design Statement should function as a supporting document to the Local Development Plan and provide a basis for the work of the Community Council and the wider community. It should also act as a guide for those intending to build in or affect the character of the village.

The Village Design Statement will be referred to by residents, the Community Council, the local planning authority and others when commenting on or assessing draft proposals and planning applications. It is expected that the Village Design Statement will be regularly reviewed so as to address changing trends.

Why do we need a Village Design Statement?

The village design statement is needed to augment existing controls and guidance and to ensure that the unique features that contribute to the character of the village are respected. Glencaple does not enjoy Conservation Area status and the only Listed structure is the quayside. Statutory controls such as the Planning Acts exist to govern new developments and of course these apply to the village, including greater and stricter policies for individual properties which are Listed for their historic and architectural merit.



2. Village Context

Geographical

Glencaple lies at the north of the mouth of the River Nith and the quayside and river frontage are key village features. The village lies entirely on the east bank of the river and the west bank is undeveloped. The surrounding land is principally farm land and managed estates.



Historical

The village was developed as a port for nearby Dumfries in 1746. The historic core of the village lies near to the quayside. In the late nineteenth century the village contained a boatyard as well as many small businesses associated with the riverside location. Some businesses remain on the quayside but the boatyard is gone. Further 20th century expansion of the village has taken place to the east with the majority of the development being one and two-storey properties laid out in typical late 20th century housing estate fashion. Today the village has a shop, hotel, school, former church, hall and housing.

The Development of Glencaple

Notes by Caerlaverock Primary School pupils

1850 Map

There were cobbles on the streets instead of pavements. Many people had wells and pumps in their gardens. Burnside House had a fancy garden in it and had a fountain. The Nith Hotel used to be called the Nith Coffee House. There used to be a Smithy in Glencaple. The Post Office is in the same place as it is now. There used to be a Ship building yard near the quay. The Nith Hotel burned down.



1900 Map

There used to be a Convalescent Home in Glencaple. The Post Office had moved next to Sanderling. A pub used to be in Glencaple. There had only been 3 new houses and 2 extensions built in fifty years.



1950 map.

The pub was called the Ship Inn. There is still a Police Station and a Police House. There was a Smithy at the end of Wellington Street. There still are prefabricated houses which were built over. A dolphin came up the River Nith.



2000 Map.

Glencaple House changed its name. Some houses have garages because cars were designed. The Posts office moved back. There have been 53 new houses and 6 extensions built.



FOR REFERENCES PURPOSES ONLY; NO FURTHER COPIES MAY BE MADE
Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.
© Crown Copyright all rights reserved Dumfries & Galloway Council LA 100013348 2004

2. Village Context

Future Prospects

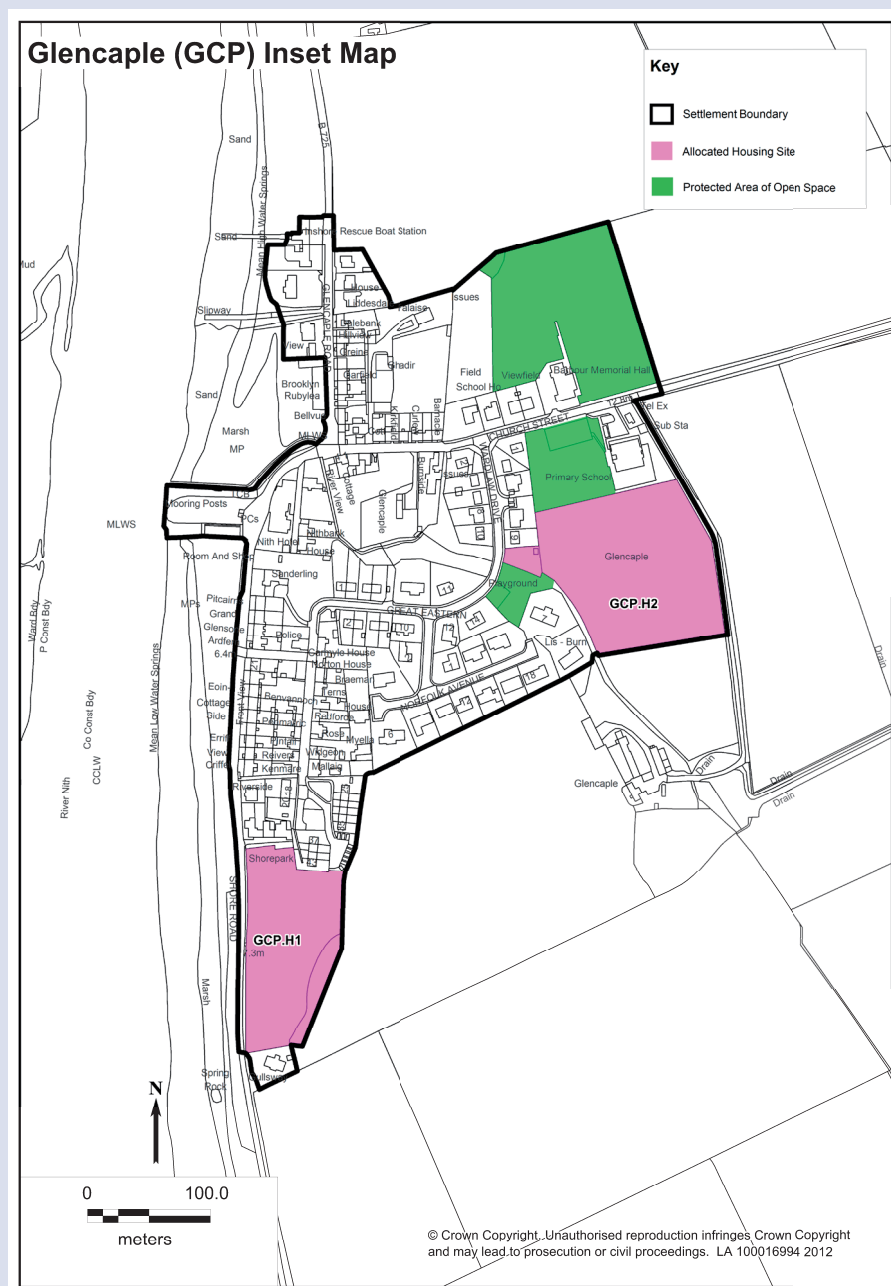
The Local Development Plan 2 identifies two sites suitable for further residential expansion of the village (see map below). They are to the south of the village adjacent to the public road (GCP.H1 Shore Road) and near the primary school (GCP.H2 Wardlaw Drive).

Scope exists for further economic activity in the form of home working or through greater intensity of use of the quayside buildings. Further possibilities also exist in increased tourism activity, perhaps on or near the quayside.

Special Considerations

Certain features that contribute to making Glencaple unique are worthy of special consideration. These include:

- in the core of the village the narrow streets have little, often no, pavement and therefore cars and people share the thoroughfare
- the 'gridiron' pattern of streets with buildings on the corners require drivers to drive very slowly due to lack of forward visibilities, it is felt that this 'passive' traffic calming can have positive effects.
- There are several small and self employed businesses within the village. The proximity of Dumfries means that many people also commute from the village for work. Due to its attractive location Glencaple is also a desirable location for retirement.
- There is a lack of affordable housing, particularly for first-time buyers. Development of GCP.H1 will help to address this.
- infrastructure provision - key factors which may from time to time impact on the life and character of the village include the capacity of the school (as more housing is built and occupied) and the availability of public utilities (particularly water and sewerage). Emergency access to and from Wellington Street and to any new housing is considered important. Any further development that would increase parking demand in Wellington Street should be resisted.



3. Village Character and Landscape Setting



Building scale

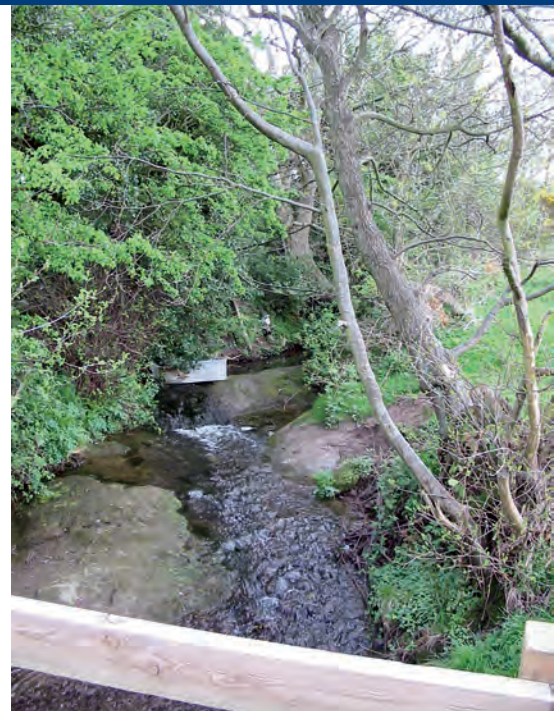
The older buildings in the village consist largely of one and two storey residences of varying styles and materials. The river frontage is dominated to the south by the strong line of larger terraced housing raised above the public road and the riverbank. To the north, lower largely single storey cottages face the river and have a prominent 'roofscape' including many styles of dormer windows and chimneys. The larger old buildings tend to be set back in their own grounds and have been buildings of some importance to the community like hotel, shop and pub. The older parts of the village have a modest scale of building.



Landscape setting

Set on the gently rising eastern bank of the Nith some streets and views to the surrounding countryside contribute to Glencaple's special character.

- The terraces facing the Nith are vital to the identity of the village.
- The view across the Nith and flood plain towards the large mass of Criffel is essential to the feel of the place.
- The tidal cycle of the Solway making the Nith rise and fall adds to the character of the place.
- The entrances to the village are as important as the historic core in terms of landscape impact. For example, the village, when approached from the east, nestles into the landscape and any new development should respect and maintain this feature.
- The wildlife of the area is important in terms of tourism and enjoyment by locals. Any new development should respect this. Developments that would threaten existing wildlife habitats should be resisted. On a more positive note, developers should be encouraged to consider how new development might create new wildlife habitats or enhance existing features which support local wildlife.



Spaces

Open spaces within the village are also important to the character of Glencaple and these include :-

Play park

Banks of the burn

Banks of the Nith

Quay end

Playing fields

School playing field

All weather pitch

New development should not prejudice or reduce the present complement of open space and a proportional increase in children's play area should be provided before new housing developments (GCP.H1 and GCP.H2) are occupied.



4. Settlement Pattern

The pattern of settlement of the village may be traced through the series of historical maps included at Section 2 and key features considered important (sometimes unique) include:-

- Streets with cobbles and no front gardens



- Raised riverside terraced houses
- Varied house styles and heights along streets
- Terraces or linked dwellings predominate in the established/older village, these having small garden frontages or are built hard to edge of the road with no front garden.



- Important quay area and quayside buildings (an area of work-related activity having potential for further recreation and tourist activity and a central focus point for the village).
- Open spaces (located at various locations throughout the village).
- Occasional (but crucial) pathways (eg from Wellington Street to the river).



- More recent housing estate development with conventional roads and footpaths (introducing a style of development which, though familiar throughout the region, is not in keeping with the historic character of the core of the village).



4. Settlement Pattern

Settlement Guidelines

- The site lying to the south of the school (see GCP.H2 on map Page 5) is adjacent to modern housing consisting largely of individual, single-storey detached dwellings laid out along standard width housing estate roads with formal footpaths on either side. Whereas it is accepted that the present character of this area of the village is now largely set by this form of development, scope exists to introduce properties at this location which continue the tradition of the greater village in terms of massing, materials, form and character and in so doing the original village character would be reinforced rather than diluted. The Local Development Plan 2 (GCP.H2) calls for a high standard of design in respect of this site and it is considered important that this requires developers and their designers to include in their layouts components of housing which draw on the traditional settlement pattern (eg linked housing or terraces or hard areas forming frontages). This may be particularly suitable to the provision of affordable housing. Development proposals should also include other features considered to be important, such as exploring a safer pedestrian route to the school, increased and improved play area and the provision of a suitable edge treatment to the countryside to the east and south (perhaps by reinforcing avenues of trees and hedges).



- The existing settlement between Wellington Street, the river and south of the quayside is considered an important model for any new housing to be located further to the south (GCP.H1). Individual properties on large plots should be resisted in favour of a layout which extends the village to the south by the creation of a continuation of the 'terrace-like' feel of the existing adjacent properties. The Local Development Plan 2 (GCP.H1) calls for development proposals which support village extension drawing upon the features of the nearby properties, such as raised front gardens, footpath links east to west (perhaps linking to Wellington Street), 'hard' edge to terrace-like blocks, river-facing

frontage properties with car parking in accordance with Council parking standards. Rather than a conventional road layout the use of the 'shared use' concept, or similar, is considered to be more appropriate for this location where possible.

- Proposals for smaller infill developments should respect the form, massing and materials of neighbouring properties.
- In all of the foregoing it is understood that modern design and materials are appropriate as long as the over-riding principles regarding layout, massing and detailing are employed.



5. Buildings

Form

There are many styles of buildings throughout the village, and this variety contributes to the special character and sense of the place. The majority of the older properties (up to the early 20th century) are stone built (often painted white) with relatively steeply sloping roofs. The majority of these houses form strong lines of terraced property and the addition of dormers (or complete storeys) results in a variety of ridge lines. The historic core of residential buildings employ fairly standard local traditional styles including 'clipped' eaves and verges (only certain larger or civic buildings have large overhanging eaves). The properties have relatively narrow plans with occasional rear extensions.



More modern property consists predominately of single storey, detached dwellings with low pitched roofs and heavy roof overhangs. It is generally recognized that this 'housing estate' character is quite different from that of the more historic core. The lack of true local references (in layout, form and materials) means that although the environment is pleasant it is not locally distinctive. Windows traditionally have a vertical emphasis while the more modern properties often have a horizontal emphasis.

Form Guidelines

- introduce variety of scale and alignment
- windows should be vertically proportioned and the ratio between openings and solid walls kept low to reflect more traditional forms.



- introduce terrace-style (or linked) developments, particularly on the river frontage



- discourage low-pitched roofs, box eaves etc particularly when building in or near the historic core of the village
- new buildings should reflect the variety of forms present in the traditional village houses



- discourage large scale 'single block' developments
- generally avoid large, detached dwellings where the house is located in the centre of a large building plot (such development is only rarely a feature of villages such as Glencaple, for example a manse or local landowner's dwelling)
- discourage car parking in front of any new terraces on the riverside (cars to rear)



5. Buildings

Scale

The majority of the built form of Glencaple is relatively modest in scale. Larger buildings tend to be restricted to public buildings (eg church, school or Barbour Hall) or business premises (eg quayside and hotel). Terraced property on the south riverfront has raised ground floors (some with cellars) and consists of a variety of two, three and even four storey properties).

Scale Guidelines

- introduce terraced-style development, particularly at the south riverfront site
- introduce a variety of roof lines
- generally 1, 1½ or 2 storey property would be appropriate (or even 3 storey where extending the riverside terrace form southwards) using the existing rooflines as a guide
- discourage single block large buildings (unless having a civic or commercial purpose and subject to location)



Materials

Whereas the historic core of the village employs a relatively restricted palette of materials later developments have introduced new and sometimes non traditional materials.

Slate predominates as a roofing material. Plain large sized concrete tiles have been widely used on low-pitched newer properties. These also tend to have large plywood fascias, eaves and verge overhangs. The use of these materials and forms set newer properties apart from the more traditionally styled older buildings.

Stone walling or wet-dash harling (often painted) is the predominant walling finish. Modern buildings frequently use dry-dash render together with a mix of other materials such as facing brick and re-constituted stone. Again, this tends to set these properties apart from the historic core.

Material Guidelines

- introduce use of local materials, based on the use and detailing of historic materials on traditional buildings in the area
- it is accepted that cost can sometimes preclude extensive use of natural materials. When cost dictates consideration should be given to incorporating local traditional materials in key public elevations. Consideration should also be given to employing the many good quality and readily available modern materials in a traditional way
- discourage non traditional and universal materials in favour of natural materials wherever possible.



5. Buildings

Features

The village has a number of features that are relatively rare or indeed unique to Glencaple. These combine to help to make our village special and should be retained, enhanced, reinstated and replicated where possible.

These include:

- cobbled streetscape
- water supply fountains on river frontage
- raised gardens and stone walls to river front
- shared use carriageways
- houses built hard to edge of streets
- cast iron fencing and stone walls
- chimneys and cans (pots)



Feature Guidelines

- incorporate some of these features in new developments
- development should preserve, enhance or replicate some of these features



6. Open Spaces and Boundaries

Key Open Spaces

These include:

- play park
- banks of the burn
- banks of the Nith
- quayside
- Barbour Hall playing fields
- school playing fields
- all- weather pitch
- surrounding countryside

These open spaces are important to the village and should be maintained and enhanced. The introduction of more housing will mean that further open spaces will be required. It is recognized that the potential of much of the open space is presently not fully realised. The lack of a central information point for residents and visitors has long been understood as a disadvantage and the quayside is the favoured location for any village signboards.

Stone walls are the usual form of boundary treatment in the historic core. A wide variety of boundary treatments are employed in the housing overlooking the river (mostly low walls or fences).

Tree planting of note includes the trees on the riverbank to the south of the existing terraced houses. These are an important feature of the village fabric and should be retained.



Historic avenues of trees at the village edge should be retained and owners encouraged to plant anew to maintain these features over time.

The quayside represents a prime opportunity for enhancement of the public spaces of the village and greater use of the open space should be encouraged.

The Merse is the dominant view from the village and all built development on these areas should be resisted. Scope exists for making more use of the tidal Merse in tourism and interpretation, including demonstrations of local fishing techniques. The burn which runs through the village is another local feature which should be seen as an opportunity for enhancement.



Open Spaces and Boundary Guidelines

- Provide tourist, local and interpretive information located at enhanced quayside
- Enhance and increase formal play area in line with increased demand
- Introduce stone walls as boundary treatment at key locations. These could be low walls to increase affordability.
- Retain tree belts and avenues and enhance and maintain
- Introduce appropriate tree planting in all new development
- Enhance burn, particularly in the vicinity of the existing play area



- Boundary treatments, tree planting, car parking and play areas should form a key component in proposals for development of new housing sites (GCP.H1 & GCP.H2)
- Discourage physical development on the Merse



7. Roads and Traffic

The streets and roads of Glencaple are distinctive and somewhat unique. The recently constructed 'housing estate' roads have 5.5 metre wide carriageway plus twin 1.8 metre wide pavements. These features are alien to the historic core of the village. Older roads with their lack of footpaths, narrow widths and lack of forward visibility require that drivers take utmost care. This 'shared use' concept is, on balance, a positive feature and as such should be retained and enhanced and considered as a potential model for village enlargement as envisaged in the Local Development Plan (GCP.H1 and GCP.H2)



The quay area is an important feature of the village and has potential to support further activity such as tourism, interpretation, public assembly and recreation. Operational issues include access for genuine work-related activities and undesirable use, such as inappropriate overnight parking.

Residents have worked with the Local Authority to have light columns replaced in a more traditional location in order to retain and enhance village character. New lighting columns have enabled the removal of unsightly overhead wires and reduced light pollution.



Roads and Traffic Guidelines

- Discourage 'housing estate' type road layouts that incorporate standard geometric layouts. Consideration should be given to more informal 'shared use' means of accessing small housing groups
- Encourage replication of historic street style and materials in new development particularly to the south of the village (eg. consider the use of natural stone surfacing in appropriate locations)
- Ensure the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act are taken into account when considering the needs of the less able in terms of road and footpath layouts, levels and surface treatments.
- The proper control and management of the quayside area is considered essential to the future wellbeing of the village (eg to gain the full potential of this vital open space and to avoid non-essential overnight parking etc)
- Continue cohesive approach to street lighting to ensure low light pollution and appropriate location of columns eg. maintain column location on building side of river frontage.



8. Economic Development

Much of the working population of the village travel to Dumfries and beyond in order to seek employment. A number of businesses, including the hotel, the shop and a variety of trades businesses provide local employment, however the availability of further local employment and affordable housing is limited. Ample local employment and affordable housing for locals is a crucial requirement for the wellbeing of Glencaple. The need to maintain the school roll and to ensure the continuation of vital services such as the hotel, shop/post office and local bus services etc is a critical need. The Local Development Plan recognizes the need for affordable housing and the development proposals for these sites should include an element of affordable housing for local people. There may be scope to increase local economic activity through, for example, increased tourism (perhaps through an increase in bed and breakfast provision or through increased and appropriate home-working). The potential for the re-use of existing redundant buildings is generally to be encouraged, unless their re-use would constitute 'bad neighbour' or other problematic



"Haaf-net Fishers near the Solway"
by William Ferguson, 1885 (used by permission of Dumfries Museums)

development. Presently there are no obviously redundant buildings within the village however it is nevertheless considered important that, whenever properties fall into disuse, encouragement is given to their conversion to a suitable use so as to avoid the negative impact on visual amenity and economic vibrancy that such abandoned buildings often create.

Economic Development Guidelines

- Promote affordable housing for local people
- Encourage appropriate tourist initiatives (particularly on or near the quayside)
- Encourage small-scale and/or incremental increase in local business activity (particularly on or near the quayside)
- Encourage appropriate home-working opportunities
- Ensure that proposals developed for identified housing sites (GCP.H1 & GCP.H2) include due consideration of above, where applicable
- Encourage re-use of redundant buildings for suitable uses so as to avoid economic and visual blight.



Acknowledgements

The unique character of Glencaple village was researched and recorded by pupils from Caerlaverock Primary School in June 2003.

Their record of the village was presented and endorsed at a series of public exhibitions and forms the basis of the Village Design Statement.

A group of residents, working in association with Solway Heritage and supported by Caerlaverock Community Council, then developed the record into a draft design statement through a series of meetings, workshops and visits. During a consultation period in September 2005 over 130 copies of the draft document were distributed in the village, and an open meeting was held to gather comments. Copies were also sent to relevant agencies and organisations.

The Village Design Statement was adopted as Planning Guidance by the Economy and Resources Committee of Dumfries and Galloway Council in November 2019. The statement has been adopted as planning guidance to Local Development Plan 2 and will inform the application of overarching policies and planning objectives for Glencaple.

The development and production of the Village Design Statement was funded by Dumfries and Galloway Council, Scottish Natural Heritage, Leader+ and the European programme.

Drawings were provided by pupils from Caerlaverock Primary School and other illustrations were used by kind permission of Hugh Bryden and Dumfries Museums.

Photographs were provided by Michael Mabbott, Allan Devlin, Solway Heritage, Dumfries and Galloway Council, and the Solway Firth Partnership.

View of Criffel from the edge of Glencaple

Photo: © Allan Devlin



