

Royal Four Towns Community Council

Welcome Pack

As a new resident or family, the Royal Four Towns Community Council welcomes you to this area and we hope that you soon settle in and enjoy living among us.

The Welcome Pack is designed to introduce not only the Community Council but also the services, features, activities and organisations of the Royal Four Towns (RFT), in order to make your settling in period easy and enjoyable. We sincerely hope that you find the contents useful and informative.

About Community Councils

Community Councils were introduced mainly to gather public opinion and pass these opinions on to local authorities and other public sector bodies.

For example, they have a right to be consulted about planning and licensing applications. They are part of Dumfries and Galloway Council's winter resilience scheme and many Community Councils have been issued with equipment such as salt bins and snow shovels. Community Councils have invaluable knowledge about vulnerable people in their communities who may need extra assistance at times.

Here are some examples of what you can expect your Community Council to help you with:

- How do we get a salt bin for our street?
- More detail about Planning and licensing applications.
- How do we get something done about potholes?
- Power cuts, water supply disruption – knowledge about vulnerable people to pass on to public sector bodies.
- Advice about antisocial behaviour.

Community Councils in Scotland are governed by the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils in Dumfries and Galloway. This sets out how they should operate including, elections, membership rules and meeting arrangements. The Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils in Dumfries and Galloway was originally adopted in 1997. Since then various amendments have been agreed by Dumfries and Galloway Council and you can download the most up to date version from the DGC Community Council website below:

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1297>

Royal Four Towns Community Council

In addition to RFT Community Councillors, any resident of RFT is welcome to attend meetings. Residents normally attend when they have an issue to raise with the council.

Meetings are normally attended by the Community Police Officer and Local Elected Members of Dumfries and Galloway Council (local councillors). The AGM is in July.

Minutes of the last meeting and the agenda for the next are put up in Hightae in the display cabinet (outside the old Post Office) and in the bus shelter (near RFT Hall) and in Greenhill in the display cabinet (on the village Green). Other notices for RFT CC are also put in the bus shelter.

A newsletter is produced irregularly and delivered to each residence in RFT.

Community Councillors (as December 2017)

Chairman	James Marshall	Nethergrange, Hightae	01387 810081
Vice Chairman	David McEwan	Tempus Fugit, High Road, Hightae	07801543688
Secretary	Freda Seddon	Hill-Bryde, Hightae	01387 811580
Treasurer	Graham Anderson	Newton, Low Road, Hightae	01387 810430
Councillors	Ian Collison	2 Smallholm Steading, Smallholm.	01387 810668
	George Erskine	Mossgrove, Hightae	01387 810328
	Stuart Bowe	Lake House, Heck	07775895818
	Cathy Robinson	Appletree Cottage, Hightae	07956423838

Community Council Status: established

District: Annandale and Eskdale

Maximum number of voting members: 11

Community Councillors (elected with voting rights): 8

Community Councillors (co-opted with non-voting rights): 0

Vacancies: 3

Local Councillors (ex-officio with non-voting rights): 0

Estimated population of CC area: 412

AGM month: June

Meeting frequency: approx. every 5/6 weeks except August.

**Note that we need people to join us as Community Councillors.
Contact any current Community Councillor**

Local Councillors		
Douglas Fairbairn	07825 633183	Douglas.Fairbairn@dumgal.gov.uk
Gail MacGregor	07825 633186	gail.macgregor@dumgal.gov.uk
Stephen Thompson	07825 633151	stephen.thompson@dumgal.gov.uk
Adam Wilson	07388 956546	adam.wilson@dumgal.gov.uk

Community Council website: <http://www.royalfourtowns.com>

This was set up in 2014 with a section for each organisation in the Royal Four Towns. It is frequently updated by the Community Council.

The contact for the website is Graham Anderson (see list of Community Councillors).

The Dumfries and Galloway Council website has information about Community Council:
<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1297>

Wind Farm Community Fund

The Royal Four Towns benefit from annual funds from the Minsca Wind Farm near Waterbeck, and from Harestanes Wind Farm at Ae Forest.

The Minsca fund in years 1 and 2 bought loft insulation and a new boiler for the RFT Hall, 3,4 and 5 bought the bus shelter in Hightae, year 6 paid for the website and year 7 paid for replacement windows for those which had been vandalised. 2015 is Year 8 and use of the grant has not yet been agreed.

Dumfries and Galloway Council (DGC) currently administer the Minsca Wind Farm Community Grant, but the community council acts as intermediary. The local community is invited to offer suggestions for the use of the grants, but the money is always used for the benefit of the local community.

A business (AN CBC) has been set up to administer the Harestanes Wind Farm Community Grant and any organisation within the catchment area can apply for a grant directly to AN CBC. For information about this contact any Community Councillor (see Page 2) or go to the AN CBC website: <http://www.ancbc.co.uk/applications/>.

Community Resilience

DGC encourages community councils to develop a Community Resilience Plan which will be brought into action if there is local calamity, e.g. flood, severe weather, large scale accident. RFT CC has such a plan, which consists chiefly of contact numbers of people and organisations which may be needed if there is local emergency.

In addition, people should ensure that they have in place a **Household Emergency Lifesaving Plan (H.E.L.P.)** See the information and form enclosed with this pack.

Useful Numbers

Dumfries and Galloway Council (main number)	03033 333000
Emergency Services(Ambulance, Fire, Police, Coast Guard	999
NHS 24	0854 24 24 24
Police Scotland (Non-emergency 24 hours)	101
National Gas Emergency	0800 111 999
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (to arrange for a free home fire safety visit)	0800 0731 999
Citizens Advice Bureau - Annan	01461 201012
Citizens Advice Bureau - Dumfries	01387 252456
Scottish Water – customer services	0845 601 8855
The Samaritans	08457 90 90 90
Shelter Scotland	0808 800 4444
Solway Credit Union	01387 267200
South West Rape Crisis & Sexual Abuse Centre	01387 253113
TV Licensing	0300 790 6130
Welfare Rights - Dumfries	01387 266888
Women’s Aid – Dumfries and Stewartry	01387 263052 /07710 152772

Emergency Numbers

Electricity

Scottish power 0845 2727999

www.scottishpower.co.uk

Water:

SEPA 0845 988 1188

www.sepa.org.uk

999 is the emergency number for the police.

N.B. Smart Water is available from the community police officer at Lockerbie.

Call the police on 101 and ask for the Lockerbie Police Station, or pop in.

Smart Water is used to mark all you valuables, making them identifiable if they are stolen.

Local Services

Hightae

Refuse Collection

Low road on Tuesdays, all other areas Thursdays.

Note that the arrangements for kerbside refuse collection may soon change. You can find out more from the DGC website www.dumgal.gov.uk or if you prefer, wait for the council leaflet to be delivered.

Mobile Library

Call 01387 260210 or email yourlibrary@dumgal.gov.uk to find out more or request a stop.

Businesses

'High Standards Cleaning': Sarah Cowan, Auchlyne, Hightae offers help in domestic cleaning.

Tel: 01387 810593 or 07930 422180.

Hightae Inn: bar, home made meals, en-suite rooms. www.hightaeinn.co.uk

Tel: 01387 811711

Oil Delivery

Hightae Top-up Scheme: central heating oil delivered by Johnstone Wallace Oils. No set dates for delivery, but tends to be monthly in the winter and two to three monthly in the summer.

Contact 01387 750747 and ask to join the Hightae Top up Scheme.

Some local supermarkets (and Asda in Carlisle) have a delivery or online ordering service – it is worth asking them.

Lochmaben Shops and Services

Doctor

Lochmaben Medical Group, 42-44 High Street, Lochmaben, DG11 1NH

01387 811252.

www.lochmabenmedicalgroup.com

Dentist

'The Smile Centre', Blaemeadow Dental Practice, 16 High Street, Lochmaben, DG11 1NH

01387 811422

Chemist

Well Pharmacy, High Street, Lochmaben

01387 810262

Post Office

Pettigrew Shop, High Street, Lochmaben but check for times of opening.

Also pet foods, gardening supplies and fishing permits.

Town Hall Lochmaben – Library (Integrated with DGC Customer Service)

High Street, Lochmaben

Businesses in Lochmaben

Lochmaben & District Community Initiative 'Keep it Local' Directory of local businesses and trades people. Leaflet enclosed. www.lochmaben.org.uk

The Royal Bank of Scotland mobile bank stops at Lochmaben Primary School every Wednesday at 11.35. The Cash Machine still operates at the old Royal Bank of Scotland on the High Street, Lochmaben.

Lockerbie Shops and Services

Banks

Bank of Scotland, 81 High St., Lockerbie. 01576 202944

Royal Bank of Scotland, 47 High St., Lockerbie. 0844 736 2616

Santander, 55 High Street, Lockerbie. 0845 765 4321

Abbey - as Santander.

Lockerbie Library (Integrated with DGC Customer Service)

31-33 High street, Lockerbie. 01576 203380

Police Station

Main Street, Lockerbie,

999 in emergency, non urgent calls 101.

www.scotland.police.uk/police-stations/dumfries-and-galloway

Doctors

Lockerbie Medical Practice, Victoria Gardens, Lockerbie, DG11 2BJ.

01576 205505

www.lockerbiemedicalpractice.scot.nhs.uk

Dentists

Blaemeadow, 'Lochmaben Smile Centre', High Street, Lochmaben. 01387 811422

Lockerbie Dental Practice, 134 High Street, Lockerbie.

01576 204724

Annan

Town Hall

Town Hall, High Street, Annan, DG12 6AQ. 030 3333 3000

For other businesses in Annan and Lockerbie see the local telephone directory or Annan and Lockerbie Initiative websites.

Schools

Hightae Primary. Tel: 01387 810382

Lockerbie Academy. Tel: 01576 205170

Annan Academy. Tel: 01461 202954

Royal Four Towns Hall

We are lucky to have an excellent and well-maintained village hall in the centre of Hightae, run by a dedicated committee of local people on behalf of every resident of the RFT, to whom the hall belongs. It has regular users and is also available for hire, normally for an hourly charge. RFT Residents have a discounted hire rate.

RFT Hall Booking Secretary – Teresa McColm 01387 810702.

Regular users are:

Country Dancing; Tuesday evenings. Contact Dick and Margaret Byrne.

Tai Chi; Wednesdays – early evenings. Contact Minette Bell MacDonald.

Under 5's Group; Thursday mornings. Contact Sarah Cowan.

Old Tyme Dancing; Thursday evenings. Contact Brian Smith.

Artists' Group; Wednesday mornings. Contact Nick Bass.

Scottish Womens Rural Institute (SWRI). Contact Sue Rook.

Golden Years; contact Eileen Callander.

Coffee Stop; last Friday morning each month. Contact Margo Byrne.

The Hall has a 50/50 Club to help raise funds for the hall upkeep. As the name implies, 50% of the takings are paid out as prizes in a monthly draw and 50% goes to the hall.

Elections

RFT Hall is the local polling station.

Neighbourhood Watch

RFT is a Neighbourhood Watch area and many residents are members (there is no charge). NW offers advice on home and personal safety and you can arrange to have checks on your home when you are away.

For further information contact Brian Smith on 01387 810588 or his email address is

brian.smith593@hotmail.com.

Further information about your local Neighbourhood Watch is available from

www.dumfriesandgalwatch.co.uk and national information from

www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk

Public Transport

Houstons Coaches run daily buses to Lochmaben, Lockerbie and Annan and on Tuesdays and Saturdays to Dumfries. Buses stop at the bus stop near Hightae War Memorial and other points on the route by arrangement.

Bus timetables are in the bus shelter in Hightae or online at

www.houstonscoaches.co.uk/timetables

and on the D&G Council website www.dumgal.gov.uk

Houstons can also be contacted by phone on 01576 203874.

Train stations at Lockerbie, Dumfries and Annan. Timetables are at the stations or online at

www.nationalrail.co.uk

Annandale Transport Initiative is a charity which operates a community bus service. They offer vehicle hire, transport for individuals and day trips training. Drivers are volunteers and training is given by ATI.

Their office is in the High Street, Lockerbie. For more details phone 01576 203053 or go to their website -

www.google.co.uk/?gws_rd=ssl#q=annandale+initiative+transport

Local activities

Walking

Although the 'right to roam' exists in Scotland the Royal Four Towns benefits from a number of traditional and Core paths.

The Annandale Way, a 57 mile route from the Solway coast to the Moffat Hills, passes through the village. There is now a book about the Annandale Way, with detailed maps and information, available from www.rucs.com. The website for Annandale Way is www.annadaleway.org.uk

A leaflet 'Know the Code Before You Go' explains the Access Code and this and our leaflet of local walks is enclosed with this pack.

Dumfries and Galloway Council has way-marked 'Core footpaths' which it established all over Region. Booklets of local walks/core paths are available in local shops and libraries.

Some local footpaths are maintained by local residents. If you are interested in helping please contact any Community Councillor.

– **see our leaflet of local walks.**

Nature

There is lots to be seen in local lanes and footpaths

There are footpaths to Castle Loch, Lochmaben, which as well as having a path that circumnavigates the loch, is a good area for bird and wildlife watching. Castle Loch and its immediate surroundings have nature designations - Local Nature Reserve, SSSI, SPA and Ramsar Site. The Royal Four Towns are in the catchment area of the Castle Loch Community Trust, which owns and manages the site.

Fishing

Fishing permits for the River Annan are available for the Royal Four Towns Fishery from Pettigrew's Pet Shop, High Street, Lochmaben. There is no fee for RFT residents, but a permit is required.

Royal Four Towns Show and Gala

The Royal Four Towns Show and Gala is held every August. A pack with information about the activities and competitions will be delivered to every household. The event is organised and run by the Show and Gala Committee - a group of Volunteers.

Litter and Poop

We try to keep the Four Towns clean with regular litter picks organised by the community Council, and we encourage people to use the litter bins and doggy bins, or take their rubbish home.

If you feel so inclined, you can borrow litter-picks, gloves etc. from the Community Council to do some litter picking. Contact the Secretary, Freda Seddon (see list of Community Councillors on Page 2).

Castle Loch Community Trust (Scottish Charity 044045)

Castle Loch was purchased in 2014 by the Castle Loch Community Trust and is a registered Scottish Charity. Funding for the purchase was from the Scottish Land Fund. The catchment area is the areas covered by Templand, Lochmaben and the Royal Four Towns Community Councils, and anyone within those boundaries is entitled to become a member of CLLCT. There is no charge, but your membership demonstrates your support for the project. Volunteer help is also appreciated. There are currently almost 400 members.

Castle Loch offers a circular walk of approximately 3.5 miles with varied scenery, including woodland, marsh and the loch itself. It abounds in bird life, and red squirrels, roe deer and - if you are lucky - otter can be seen, and there are lots of dragonflies, butterflies and moths.

There are benches and picnic tables if you fancy a rest, and car parking spaces are to be found on the A709, Lochmaben Bowling Green, lay-bys along the B7020 and at Lochmaben Castle. Or if you are feeling active it is also a pleasant walk from the Four Towns to Castle Loch, via Heck or Castlemains Farm – follow the Core Path or Annandale Way signs.

You can find more details about Castle Loch on the website: www.castleloch.org.uk

- or go to the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/castlelochlochmaben>

If you require further information about the local area, or would like us to add an item to this pack, please contact any community councillor.

A Brief History of the Royal Four Towns

Robert the Bruce, King of Scots, founded the Royal Four Towns early in the fourteenth century during the Wars of Independence against the English. They are the villages of Greenhill, Heck, Hightae and Smallholm in Annandale.

In each settlement portions of land were entrusted to experienced soldiers who had served in the ruler's armies. They held their portions directly from the king and were known as the King's Kindly Tenants. In addition they shared the use of common fields, meadows and mosses and the resources of woods and water. They were able to pass portions from one generation to the next indefinitely or eventually to sell them. These were rare advantages for ordinary people in the Middle Ages. The communities must have been virtually self governing and the inhabitants were secure in tenure and possessed of all they might require for basic needs. A very independent community resulted.

In return the Kindly Tenants were obliged to provide food and other supplies and garrisons for nearby Lochmaben Castle whenever it was occupied by the ruler or his representatives. Although such services were eventually unnecessary the families of the original settlers or later owners of portions enjoyed the rights originally granted. To this day the community's fishing rights usually provide useful annual income for local institutions and associations as permits are sold to visitors.

After the common lands were enclosed in the eighteenth century mixed farming provided work for most but new methods were introduced on the separate farms created. Stone cottages replaced those of mud and thatch and several bear dates in three of the villages alongside others built in the nineteenth century and modern homes including 'prefabs'.

In the eighteenth century Hightae was known to house many craftsmen and cottagers were involved in producing woollen and linen cloths which were sold to the English. For a few years in the mid nineteenth century young women worked at home as 'flowerers' embroidering delicate white lace caps for babies. Local stonemasons and joiners were involved in building fine houses, churches etc. across the southwest of Scotland. A bacon curing business was established to process the carcasses produced by most families for the English market.

There was a parish school in Hightae from 1728 and the present building dates from 1876. Hightae Church was opened in 1798 and the Inch Burn Bridge was built in 1792 and repaired in the 1990s. In 1910 the Hall was built and financed by the local community with half the cost donated by Andrew Carnegie, the steel king.

Farmers built small round mills in their yards so the community mill was no longer needed.

Today few residents are employed in farming and some travel considerable distances to various towns. Others are retired from a wide range of occupations but most make some contribution to community life.

(*'Seven Centuries in the Royal Four Towns of Lochmaben'* by Anne Fairn is available in Dumfries and Galloway libraries).