

The top two performers are **commuter** and **tourist** towns. Both of these have a clear modern day purpose that sustains their economy and communities. Their dominant economic function is relevant to twenty first century lifestyles.

Commuter towns have an impressive set of statistics and have benefited from their location. All of these towns are located within 30 miles of larger settlements with good road connections. Only 3 of the 9 towns have a railway station suggesting that access to public transport is not an essential component.

Tourist towns return the best results in education and employment sectors too. Investments made in facilities and attractions over time have sustained the local economy. This allowed these towns to retain the same main function they had 150 years ago.

Market towns have remained important throughout time. They have preserved their heritage with the original street patterns clearer here than in any other town type. However they do not hold the regional significance they once did. This is reflected in the average economic results across the board of data analysed.

Coastal towns have a geographical advantage over the others. As attractive places to live, they all demand higher than average house prices. However, results for other socio-economic indicators are less impressive. Contrary to the other categories, the defining factor of these towns is their location rather than function. Indeed, they have had varied roles over time and subsequently achieve mixed results.

The poorest performing categories are planned and industrial towns.

Planned towns, like coastal towns have had a varied existence. Planned towns expanded quickly to accommodate a waiting population or industry. Their figure grounds appear more coherent in the first 100 years than the other groups. However, this disintegrated in the last 50yrs with expansion largely ignoring the original street pattern. The planning of these towns, whilst interesting, did not secure their success over time.

Industrial towns are the least successful towns in this study. Employment or lack of employment opportunity has been detrimental factor. Overtime, the combination of undesirable physical qualities and a lack of purpose or reason for growth has left these towns stagnating or declining. Industrial towns have failed to find an appropriate role to play and struggle to meet the Scottish average in many of the socio- economic indicators tested.

Overall, the top performing categories appear to have a few notable common factors. Purpose and location are the most obvious. Conversely, the worst over all performers are those with a role that has failed to adapt to modern day life, as demonstrated with industrial towns.

Planned and coastal towns are difficult to compare with the other groups. The component settlements had a variety of different functions and are categorised by their physical characteristics rather than role. Subsequently, the overall performance may not accurately represent the success or failure of each category.

More than half of the towns studied have grown at a higher rate than the country as a whole. From 1951 – 2006 population of Scotland has risen by 0.26% where as 68% of the case studies have exceeded this rate. Many of those that have grown are situated in regions with a rising population and less isolated locations. For example, Banchory, the town that has grown the most in this study is situated in Aberdeenshire, the region with the greatest rate of growth. It is also a commuter town reliant on its vicinity to a city. However, Neilston, an industrial town with a dwindling population is also situated in a region experiencing major growth. This emphasises that function and purpose play a large part in the success of small towns.

The most prolific period of physical growth in this study was post 1950. 20th century development has tended to take the form of low density suburban housing. From 1950 onward the proportion of people living in towns and cities increased. This was coupled by the emergence of government subsidised housing schemes and volume house building. The impact on small towns has not always been positive with figure grounds revealing a total lack of connection to the central core of the town.

With the changing demographics of Scotland, a further increase in households is predicted with single person households to account for 42% of all housing by 2024. Combined with an ageing population and declining workforce, the 21st century will pose new questions for small towns. This morphological study offers an insight into the physical form of small towns and the processes that have shaped them. Acknowledging the past will help addressing the challenge of the future.

conclusion

This study has de-constructed fifty Scottish small towns, illustrating through figure ground a graphical record of their physical development and patterns of growth. Parallel historical background research and socio-economic statistics have revealed how the past has impacted on the current form and performance of each settlement today.

The purpose of this study was not to identify what their future is but to distinguish the key elements that have led to past failure or success. Small towns are an important part of the fabric of Scotland, it is vital that the Government invests in these settlements and that future development has a positive rather than a negative impact on them. Key to achieving this is to establish a thorough grasp of the morphological factors that have shaped these towns.

The realm of this study is endless. The next step, *20 Towns Under the Microscope*, investigates more common patterns shared by small towns including character assessment to add a further layer of depth to the study and reveal more about the effect the quality of the built environment has on small towns. The combination of *An Comann* and *20 Small Towns* provides an invaluable resource for urban designers, showing that important trends of the past provide the foundation to steer future development whilst respecting the integrity of our towns.

bibliography

General

Dicks, B and Gordon, G. (1983) *Scottish Urban History*. Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press.

Encyclopaedia Britannica (2008) <http://info.britannica.co.uk> (Accessed July and August 2008)

Gazetteer for Scotland (2008) The Institute of Geography, University of Edinburgh. Edinburgh <http://www.geo.ed.ac.uk/scotgaz/gaztitle.html> (Accessed July and August 2008)

Gillespies (2002) *Transforming Lanarkshire's Town Centres*. Gillespies, Glasgow.

Larkham, P. (1996) *Urban Morphology and Typology in the United Kingdom*. http://archnet.org/library/documents/one-document.jsp?document_id=3798 (Accessed 28th July 2008)

Naismith, R. (1989) *The Story of Scotland's Towns*. Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers Ltd.

Ravenscroft. (2000) *The Vitality and Viability of Town Centres*. Sage journal. Volume. 37 (13), pp 2533 – 2549.

Scottish Borders Council, (2007) *Scottish SMALL TOWNS REPORT 2007-2013*. Scottish Borders Council, Melrose. <http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/pdf/18015.pdf> (Accessed July 2008)

Scottish Parliament, (2006) *Scotland with an ageing population: economic and demographic challenges we should have met by 2031*. Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh. www.scotlandfutureforum.org/assets/library/files/application/1213704292.doc (Accessed July 2008)

The Register General, (2007) *Annual review of demographic trends, Scotland's population 2006*. General Register Office for Scotland, Edinburgh. <http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/publications-and-data/annual-report-publications/rgs-annual-review-2006/index.html> (Accessed July 2008)

The Register General, (2008) *Mid-2007 Population Estimates Scotland*. General Register Office for Scotland, Edinburgh. <http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/publications-and-data/population-estimates/mid-2007-population-estimates-scotland/index.html> (Accessed July 2008)

The Register General, (2007) *Projected Population of Scotland (2006 Based)*. General Register Office for Scotland, Edinburgh. [http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/publications-and-data/popproj/projected-population-of-scotland-\(2006-based\)/index.html](http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/publications-and-data/popproj/projected-population-of-scotland-(2006-based)/index.html) (Accessed July 2008)

The Register General, (2006) *2006 SAPES*. General Register Office for Scotland, Edinburgh. <http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/files1/stats/06mid-year-estimates-settlements-table1.csv> (Accessed June 2008)

Trancik, R. (1986) *Finding Lost Space; Theories of Urban Design*. UK: John Wiley and Sons

Undiscovered Scotland, (2008) <http://www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/index.html> (Accessed July and August 2008)

Whitehand (2001) *British Urban Morphology: the Conzenian Tradition*. University of Birmingham, Birmingham. <http://urbanmorphology.org/pdf/whiteh522001.pdf> (Accessed July 2008)

Tables

The Scottish Government (2005) Economic Linkages Between Small Towns And Surrounding Rural Areas In Scotland. The Scottish Government, Edinburgh. <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/37428/0009554.pdf> (Accessed July 2008)

The Register General (2008) Census collection 1801, 1851, 1901, 1950, Edinburgh: General Register Office for Scotland (Accessed June 2008)

The Register General, (2008) General Register Office for Scotland, Edinburgh. www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/census/censushm/scotcen2/reports-and-data/scotcen8.html (Accessed July 2008)

The Register General. (2006) 2006 SAPES. General Register Office for Scotland, Edinburgh. <http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/files1/stats/06mid-year-estimates-settlements-table1.csv> (Accessed 11th August 2008)

http://www.home.co.uk/guides/house_prices_by_town.htm (Accessed 7th August 2008)

http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations_destinations/search.html (Accessed 11th August 2008)

Graphics

Digimap, (2008) University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh. <http://edina.ac.uk/digimap/> (Accessed July and August)

National library of Scotland, (2007) National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh. <http://www.nls.uk/> (Accessed July and August 2008)

Photos

All images sourced from;

Ayrshire Roots, <http://www.ayrshireroots.co.uk/Towns/index.html> (Accessed August 2008)

Dalry Burns Club 1845, <http://www.dalryburnsclub.org.uk> (Accessed August 2008)

Dunblane Development trust (2004) <http://www.dunblaneweb.co.uk> (Accessed August 2008)

Flickr (2008) <http://www.flickr.com/> (Accessed August 2008)

Geograph British Isles, (2008) <http://www.geograph.org.uk> (Accessed 2nd August 2008)

Google, (2008) <http://images.google.co.uk> (Accessed August 2008)

Kirkcudbright Community Website (2008) <http://www.old-kirkcudbright.net> (Accessed August 2008)

Mauchline Village, <http://www.mauchlinevillage.co.uk/> (Accessed August 2008)

Wikipedia, (2008) <http://en.wikipedia.org> (Accessed August 2008)
