

DELIVERING A

# BRIGHTER FUTURE

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE'S  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY  
2011 - 2016



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Aerial view of Dumbarton through to the Vale of Leven and Loch Lomond. Photo courtesy of Clyde Waterfront, Guthrie Aerial Photography.

# FOREWORD



In West Dunbartonshire we require to have a clear strategic approach to Economic Development which will make a positive difference to our community, local businesses and the area. The Council's Economic Strategy 2011-2016 delivers this clarity of approach.

The Scottish Economy has suffered since 2008, but is now showing some signs of growth. Recovery will however be slow and uncertain. Public Sector Budgets are reducing and investment from the Private Sector has all but stalled, although we remain optimistic that West Dunbartonshire can play its part in Scotland's economic recovery.

The Council and its partners have a strong track record of attracting external funding for economic development and regeneration projects from sources including the European structural funds and the Scottish Government's Town Centre Regeneration Fund. In the current economic climate it is essential that we explore all available opportunities for additional external funding going forward.

In West Dunbartonshire, the Council has developed excellent partnerships with national and local agencies and we have good working relationships with local businesses and the local Chamber of Commerce. This Economic Development Strategy has been developed following a consultation process which included workshops with internal and external stakeholders to ensure that better outcomes can be delivered through strengthened partnership working. It is through these strong partnerships and relationships we intend to deliver our Economic Development Strategy.

The progress of the Economic Development Strategy will be monitored and reported to our Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee on a six monthly basis.

I look forward to the Council working with the National and Local Partners, the Public, Private and Voluntary Sectors in delivering this strategy to enable West Dunbartonshire to grow and prosper in the future.

**Jim McElhill**

**Council Member & Spokesperson for Economic Development**

# 1

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The West Dunbartonshire Council Economic Development Strategy 2011 - 2016 provides a vision for the local authority area based on a detailed analysis of the economic characteristics and priorities of West Dunbartonshire and highlights the importance of West Dunbartonshire as a contributor to the economic growth of Scotland as a whole.

In this context, the strategy acknowledges the challenging economic climate and accepts that these difficult conditions are likely to prevail for much of the early part of the period covered by the Strategy. Nevertheless, it seeks to raise its sights to ensure that, as well as weathering short term economic storms, West Dunbartonshire can prosper over the longer term.

Importantly, the strategy has been developed through a comprehensive consultation process which included workshops with both internal and external key stakeholders. The final result is a planned approach which benefits from widespread support from all the key players.





Clyde Walkway, Clydebank. Photo courtesy of Clydebank Re-built.

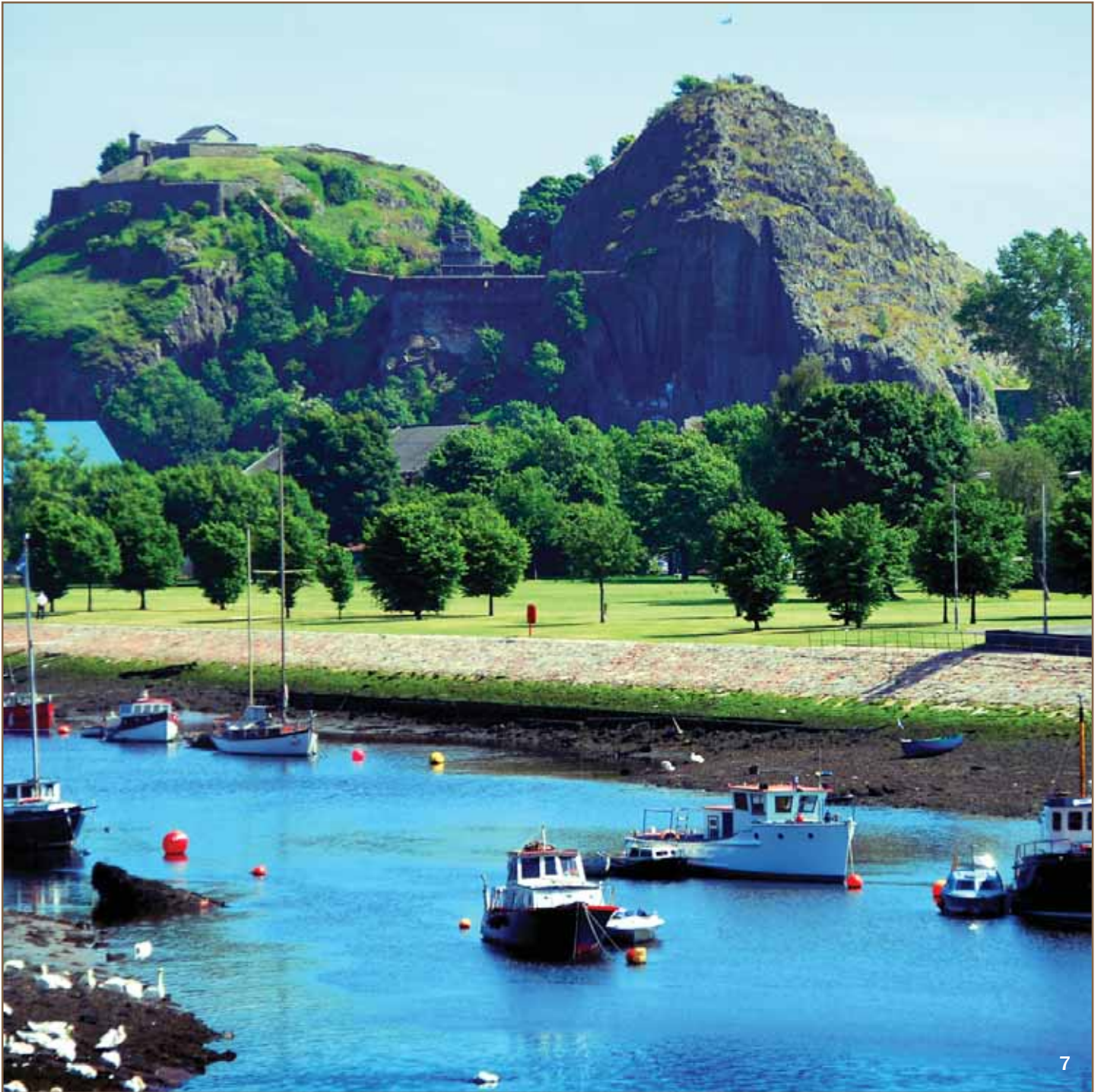
## 2

NATIONAL  
AND LOCAL POLICY

The West Dunbartonshire Single Outcome Agreement (SOA, July 2011) provides a framework to define our local priorities in alignment with the Government's strategic priorities and to quantify them in terms of measurable outcomes. It strives to provide a clear focus for West Dunbartonshire's economic activities, aligning funding and investment with partners and stakeholders. The Community Planning Partnership has already endorsed and supports this Economic Strategy.

With our partners in West Dunbartonshire, we must ensure that businesses can access support, that we invest in initiatives to increase skills, and that we work to ensure the area has sufficient, flexible business space to achieve sustainable economic growth.





Dumbarton Rock and Castle viewed from Dumbarton quayside.

# 3

## WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE'S ECONOMY

The Economic Analysis of West Dunbartonshire paints a picture of an area suffering from persistent, economic and structural challenges that characterise those areas formerly dependent on heavy industry.

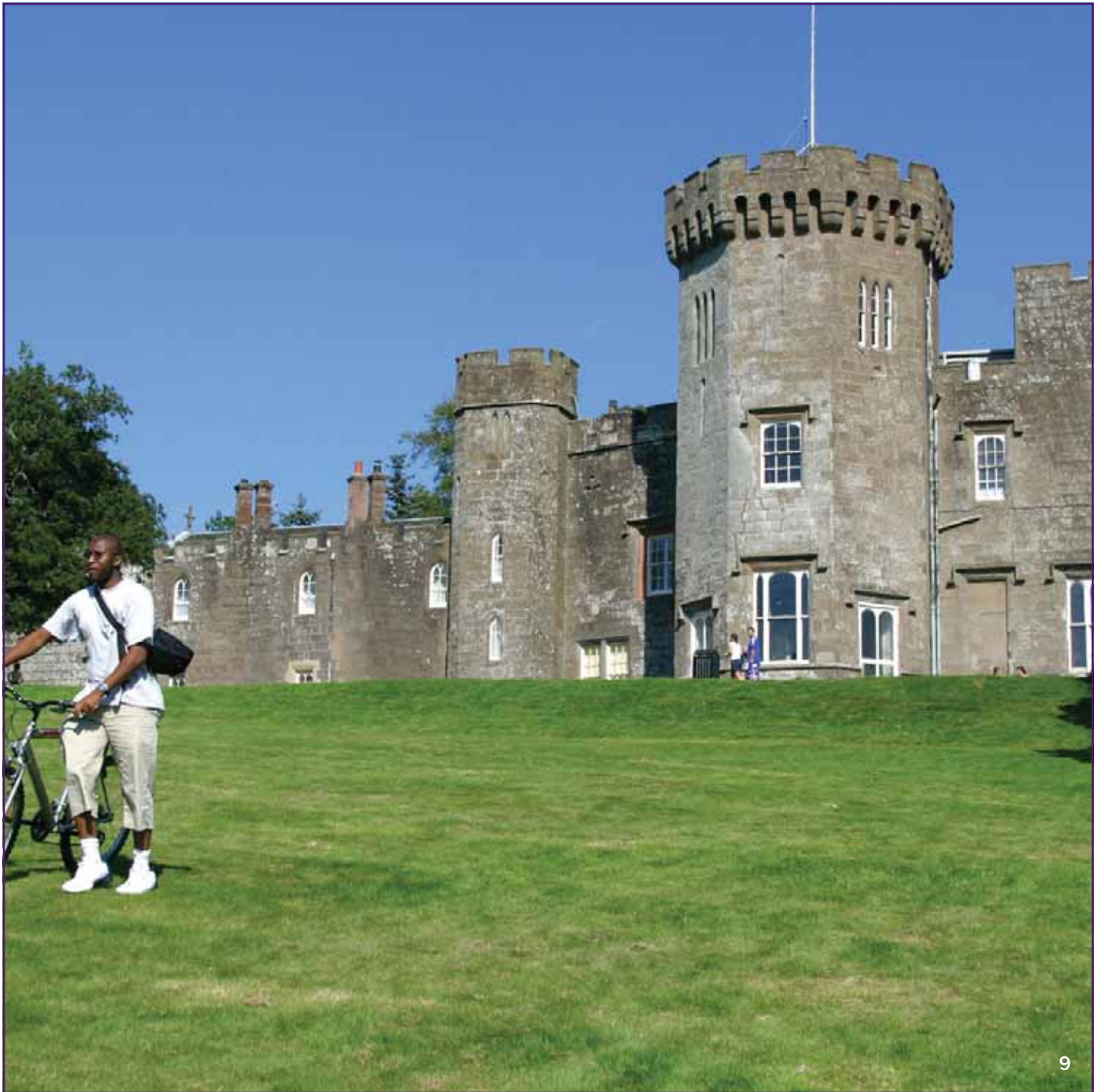
The area's overall economic performance ahead of the recession was significantly lower than the Scottish average. The area has traditionally suffered from high levels of deprivation, low levels of economic activity and a small business base compared with Scotland and UK levels.

Current employment in West Dunbartonshire is dominated by the service sector, and specifically, by public services and retail & catering, although there is growth potential in a number of other key sectors including tourism; construction; health/social care and financial & business services.

It is important that West Dunbartonshire continues to increase its rate of business growth and local job creation in key growth sectors, as well as harnessing its investment potential for place assets.



Glasgow Road, Clydebank



Balloch Castle, Balloch Park, Loch Lomond. Photo courtesy of Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park.



# 4

## OUR VISION AND HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE IT

### Our Vision



To develop West Dunbartonshire as a place where people choose to live, work, visit and invest. We will work in partnership to develop the skills of our people and encourage and support sustainable economic growth in the local economy in order that West Dunbartonshire Council can maximise the full potential of its communities and location.”

The vision for West Dunbartonshire is focused on increasing prosperity and economic growth while ensuring that this growth is distributed as equitably as possible throughout the area.

The key strategic drivers behind the strategy are therefore:

- **Stimulating economic growth and strengthening the business base**
- **Improving the skills of our people and supporting them into work**
- **Creating a place where people choose to live work and invest**
- **Building stronger partnerships and new approaches to delivery**

## 4.1 STIMULATING ECONOMIC GROWTH AND STRENGTHENING THE BUSINESS BASE

A balanced, growing business base is the anchor for sustainable growth and economic participation. West Dunbartonshire's location situated between Glasgow City Centre and Loch Lomond, combined with good transport links leaves us well placed to continue to develop our business base.

West Dunbartonshire also has a strong, stable, mature third sector with a healthy and sustainable organisation base. The Third Sector is one of the largest employers in West Dunbartonshire.

A focus of the strategy is not only to start good, strong businesses but to continue to support businesses to enable them to grow and prosper in West Dunbartonshire:

*The target between 2011 and 2016 is to raise the number of active enterprises in West Dunbartonshire by 10%.*

### INCREASING THE NUMBER OF NEW START BUSINESSES

Although West Dunbartonshire has the smallest business base in the West of Scotland it has witnessed a recent increase in business start-ups. The Council will implement a range of actions to provide appropriate support to develop the local business base and to promote growth and sustainability. This will include:

- Delivering entrepreneurial activities aimed at all sections of the community
- Promoting support available to increase the number of new local businesses formed - including high growth start-ups
- Providing potential entrepreneurs with the skills necessary to start and sustain a business
- Assisting with property requirements and tie in with all partner support including finance, legal, training, etc.



Change House, Clydebank.  
Photo courtesy of Clydebank Re-built.



### SUPPORTING ACCESS TO FINANCE FOR GROWTH

It is recognised that in the current economic climate access to financial investment for growth businesses remains a challenge. Investment funding is required to enable local businesses to maximise their growth potential. West Dunbartonshire Council will continue to assist local businesses to access financial investment through:

- **West of Scotland Loan Fund Ltd gap funding**
- **Provision of grant assistance towards growth investment funding**
- **Referral of businesses to partner organisations that provide specialist financial advice or support**

### SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF KEY GROWTH SECTORS

West Dunbartonshire supports the Scottish Government and Scottish Enterprise drive to assist key industries that have significant growth and high value added employment prospects. This includes:

- **Attracting professional business services to key sites and town centre areas**
- **Joining up West Dunbartonshire's offering to attract and support businesses in key growth sectors as listed below**
- **Promoting West Dunbartonshire and Loch Lomond as a key destination for tourism businesses**
- **Exploring new sectors such as Renewables to assess their suitability for exploitation from a West Dunbartonshire base**

Industry sectors identified as having future growth potential for the area include:

- **Tourism**
- **Professional & Business Services**
- **Creative Industries**
- **Software and IT**
- **Construction**
- **Renewables**
- **Retail**
- **Care**

## 4.2 IMPROVING THE SKILLS OF OUR PEOPLE AND SUPPORTING THEM INTO WORK

West Dunbartonshire's people and labour supply are critical to its future prosperity. A highly skilled workforce is essential for economic growth, business competitiveness and innovation. The Council will focus on reducing unemployment to ensure that all in society can play their part in and benefit from sustainable economic growth. This will include:

- **Assisting people back into work**
- **Meeting the skills needs for growth businesses**
- **Supporting young people in their transition to work**
- **Improving core employability skills**

*The target is to increase the employment rate from 66.6%, June 2010 to 71% by 2016.*



### ASSISTING PEOPLE BACK INTO WORK

West Dunbartonshire is one of the areas in Scotland which suffered the most from the economic downturn in 2008. A key priority is to support people back into work. This will require us to adopt innovative approaches to support people into work which will include:

- **Working with partner organisations to provide employability support programmes to assist people to obtain and sustain employment**
- **Developing new approaches to exploit employment opportunities within the Third Sector**
- **Adopting a co-ordinated and effective approach to employer engagement more closely matching employer needs**
- **Maximising funding opportunities available through European and Government funding streams to increase employability support for local people**

## MEETING THE SKILLS NEEDS FOR GROWTH BUSINESSES

West Dunbartonshire Council will support the skills development needs of growth businesses through:

- **Collation of better intelligence on the skills needs of growth industries**
- **Development of tailored skills interventions to support growing sectors**
- **Provision of a range of mechanisms that encourage employers to recruit new staff and up-skill existing employees**
- **Maximisation of training and employment opportunities created through major capital projects**



## SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE IN THEIR TRANSITION TO WORK

Our schools and colleges play a key role in preparing our young people for the world of work and addressing West Dunbartonshire's poor record on entrepreneurialism.

It is vital to the future success of the West Dunbartonshire economy that the Council maximises the opportunities available to our young people and ensures that they are equipped to take advantage of these opportunities. Support for young people will include:

- **Supporting entrepreneurship within educational establishments**
- **Providing work experience placements for school pupils**
- **Working with partners to support young people to enter training or employment through both national and local programmes**
- **Supporting graduates to enter employment within key growth sectors**

### 4.3 CREATING A PLACE WHERE PEOPLE CHOOSE TO LIVE, WORK AND INVEST

West Dunbartonshire is ideally located 30 minutes by train from Glasgow City Centre and forms the southern edge of Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park. A key factor in encouraging business formation and growth in the area is improving connectivity and infrastructure. The A82 is the main tourist route to the north and west of Scotland and runs through West Dunbartonshire, linking it to Glasgow and the motorway network, enabling goods and services to be transported easily.

Historically, West Dunbartonshire has suffered from the decline of traditional industries such as shipbuilding, manufacturing and heavy industry. This has led to it becoming one of the most deprived areas in Scotland. There is a significant amount of vacant and derelict land and whilst most of this is earmarked for development by the private sector, the current economic climate and restrictions on borrowing have slowed progress.



River Leven Walkway, Balloch

In terms of how these challenges will be addressed, we have a number of key objectives which will be a priority for West Dunbartonshire Council:

- Enabling the delivery of our major regeneration sites
- Creating attractive, competitive and safe town centres
- Creating an integrated and sustainable transport infrastructure
- Improving the quality and quantity of housing stock
- Developing a modern business infrastructure
- Maximising West Dunbartonshire's competitiveness as an investment location

*The target is to deliver £200 million of private sector investment in West Dunbartonshire by 2016.*

## ENABLING THE DELIVERY OF OUR MAJOR REGENERATION SITES

West Dunbartonshire has a number of major regeneration sites, and for some, progress has stalled in the current economic climate. Over the next five years and beyond, the Council will work with its regeneration partners, Clydebank Rebuilt and Strathleven Regeneration Company, developers and landowners to enable these sites to move forward. This will include:

- Developing an infrastructure investment plan
- Reviewing opportunities for modifying existing proposals
- Developing successful partnership models
- Identifying external funding streams
- Providing more certainty through the local development plan and supplementary planning guidance, early pre-planning application discussions and frequent liaison meetings

## CREATING ATTRACTIVE, COMPETITIVE AND SAFE TOWN CENTRES

The regeneration of the town centres of Alexandria, Clydebank and Dumbarton and related waterfront sites has been a major priority for some time. In the town centres the Council will:

- Take forward the existing town centre masterplans in partnership with the private sector, to deliver key sites
- Liaise with landowners, community and businesses representatives on a regular basis to address issues and identify opportunities
- Investigate Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) as a potential tool for delivering projects
- Reduce expenditure leakage and attract new investment



Dumbarton town centre

## CREATING AN INTEGRATED AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

This objective is crucial to strengthen West Dunbartonshire's links with the wider metropolitan area and will be achieved by the following:

- **Developing the concept of the provision of a relief road at the Exxon Bowling Site**
- **Upgrading of the A82 at key locations**
- **Progressing Fastlink between Glasgow and Clydebank**
- **Providing further park and ride facilities**
- **Developing water transport opportunities**
- **Investigating the reuse of the harbour and freight rail line at Bowling Terminal**



Aggreko, Lomondgate, Dumbarton. Photo courtesy of Strathleven Regeneration Company.

## DEVELOPING A MODERN BUSINESS INFRASTRUCTURE

The current offer for businesses wishing to invest in the area is limited and fragmented. The Council will seek to develop a modern business infrastructure by:

- **Improving the estate management of existing business locations**
- **Ensuring locations are well connected to public transport links for employees and clearly sign posted for clients and customers**
- **Encouraging new businesses at key sites such as Lomondgate, John Knox Street, Queens Quay and Clyde Gate**



Boat cruises on Loch Lomond

## MAXIMISING WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE'S COMPETITIVENESS AS AN INVESTMENT LOCATION

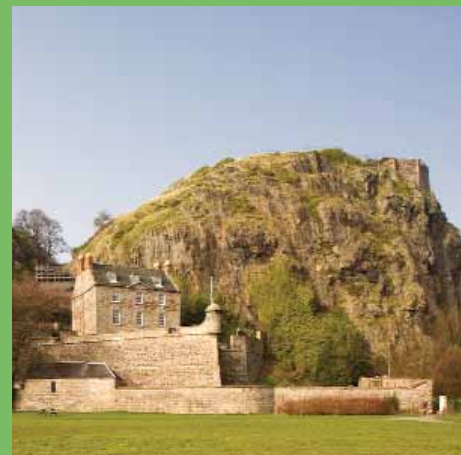
West Dunbartonshire's proximity to the metropolitan area of Glasgow whilst being at the edge of the National Park provides the opportunity to:

- **Maximise opportunities from our proximity to the National Park, Glasgow Airport, the Glasgow conurbation, Faslane Naval Base and our location partly within the Clyde Waterfront project area**
- **Maximise opportunities from the existence of unique destinations such as Dumbarton Castle and BBC Studios**
- **Actively promote to potential investors that the area is open for business**

Dalmuir Homes.  
Photo courtesy of Clyde Waterfront, McAteer Photograph.



Canalside, Clydebank.  
Photo courtesy of Clyde Waterfront, McAteer Photograph.



Historic Castle and Rock, Dumbarton

## 4.4 BUILDING STRONGER PARTNERSHIPS AND NEW APPROACHES TO DELIVERY

### West Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership

The Strategy can only be delivered through effective partnership working between key stakeholders and local communities. In the current financial climate it is vital that the Council works harder than ever to strengthen partnerships and collaborative working to achieve more with less and deliver better outcomes.

The West Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership aims to work in partnership to improve the economic, social, cultural and environmental well being for all who live, work, visit and invest in the area.

**The West Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) is a significant contributor to making West Dunbartonshire a better place to live, work and visit.**

### CLYDE VALLEY COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP (CVCPP)

The CVCPP is a partnership of key public sector agencies which includes West Dunbartonshire Council. The main role and remit of the CVCPP is to develop Glasgow and the Clyde Valley area as an economically competitive city region.

Over the next five years the CVCPP have identified a set of challenges, objectives and actions around 4 main themes for the strategy:

- **Stimulating economic growth and strengthening the business base**
- **Improving the skills of all our people and supporting them into work**
- **Creating a place where people choose to live work and invest**
- **Stronger partnerships and new approaches to delivery**



Loch Lomond Aquarium,  
Drumkinnon Tower, Balloch



Loch Lomond & the  
Trossachs National Park HQ,  
Carrochan, Balloch

## JOINT PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Private sector partnerships are an essential component in assisting with the regeneration and development of the local economy. West Dunbartonshire Council will continue to work in partnership with developers and investors to attract investment opportunities to the local area, as detailed within the action plan. Joint working arrangements with the public sector will take various forms including:

- **Service level agreements with key partner organisations**
- **Working in partnership with other local authorities**
- **Joint programme delivery with key partner organisations**



North Canal Bank, Clydebank town centre.  
Photo courtesy of Clydebank Re-built.

# 5

## DELIVERY OF THE STRATEGY

Delivery of the strategy will be achieved through co-ordinated action from both private and public sector partners. The integrated nature of the themes demands clear cross cutting working relationships between partners and also within organisations to ensure delivery of the outcomes.

A five year action plan has been developed to focus on delivery of the Strategy.

West Dunbartonshire Council's Regeneration and Economic Development Team will oversee the delivery of the strategy and will be responsible for the implementation of the action plan.

Progress will be reported on a six monthly basis through the Council Committee structure.



# 6

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

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The Strategy will be subject to review in two years time. Monitoring on a regular basis will assess the overall impact of the Strategy and re-align where necessary to ensure the efficient use of resources and ultimate delivery of the Strategy.



### Other formats

This document can be provided in large print, Braille or on audio cassette and can be translated into different community languages. Please contact:

**Corporate Communications  
Council Offices  
Garshake Road  
Dumbarton G82 3PU  
Tel: 01389 737000**

本文件也可應要求，製作成其他語文或特大字體版本，也可製作成錄音帶。

अनुप्राय पर यह दस्तावेज़ अन्य भाषाओं में, बड़े अक्षरों की छपाई और सुनने वाले माध्यम पर भी उपलब्ध है।

ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ, ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਅਤੇ ਆਡੀਓ ਟੇਪ 'ਤੇ ਰਿਕਾਰਡ ਹੋਇਆ ਵੀ ਮੰਗ ਕੇ ਲਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ।

درخواست پر یہ دستاویز دیگر زبانوں میں، بڑے حروف کی چھپائی اور سننے والے ذرائع پر بھی میسر ہے۔

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